

HEBREWS AND THE CHANGE OF THE LAW

by Avram Yehoshua

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Proper interpretation of God's Word is vital for understanding what God means and ensures that we are walking out our faith in Messiah Yeshua the way that He wants us to, and not according to the traditions of the Church that nullify the Word of God. Most Christians wrongly believe that the Law of Moses was 'done away with' and not applicable for them¹ because of certain New Testament passages that have been misinterpreted or mistranslated and used as 'proof texts' against the Law, four of which are found in the book of Hebrews (8:13; 7:12, 18; 10:4). Once these verses are correctly understood, though, their use as scriptural proof against the Law disappears, and actually, the four verses uphold the Old Covenant and validate the Law of Moses for every Christian.

HEBREWS 8:13

THE OLD COVENANT IS OBSOLETE

Hebrews 8:13 is one of the truly reflexive verses in Scripture. By *reflexive* I mean a Scripture that the Church uses to support their anti-Law theology, but when the verse is allowed to speak for itself, it's plain to see that the Old Covenant is still valid.² The first part of the sentence, though, doesn't seem to be that way, and this appears to be what many build their false position on:

'And *when He said* a New Covenant, He has made the first obsolete' (Heb. 8:13a).

From just this part of the verse it seems that the Old Covenant is gone, and with it, of course, the Law of Moses, but before we get into the second part of the verse, which defines *obsolete*, note well what the author of Hebrews is actually saying when he writes, '*when He (God) said* a New Covenant...'. The author had just finished quoting from Jeremiah (Heb. 8:8-12), what God had said about a New Covenant, 650 years earlier.³ The very fact that God spoke of a New Covenant in Jeremiah immediately made the Old obsolete, meaning that, from that moment on it was on its way out, but obviously, neither God, nor the author of Hebrews, meant that the Old was literally done away with in the days of Jeremiah, as is evident from the verse itself ('the days are coming;' Jer. 31:31). This concept, of the Old being obsolete, yet still valid, is what the author of Hebrews intends for us to understand, even

¹ A common theological position on the Law of Moses is that only the so-called moral laws transfer over into the New Testament, but if the penalty for breaking the Sabbath was death (Ex. 31:12-17; 35:2), yet *stealing* livestock was forgivable (Ex. 22:1), which would seem morally greater in God's eyes? If disobedience to God is morally wrong, breaking His Sabbath is a sin of great magnitude. God, not Man, determines what is moral, and breaking any of God's laws is immoral and sin (Mt. 5:19; Rom. 7:7, 12; 1st John 3:4).

² Another reflexive Scripture is 1st Timothy 4:4-5, where the qualifications for what is 'food to eat' entails both prayer *and* the Word of God, which in Paul's day included the Old Testament dietary laws (Lev. 11; Dt. 14; 2nd Tim. 3:14-17). Christians usually 'miss' that the food is 'sanctified *by the Word of God and* prayer,' not just prayer.

³ Jeremiah 31:31 is the only place in the Old Testament where the phrase 'New Covenant' appears.

though the New Covenant had been inaugurated about 35 years earlier. He confirms this understanding in the next part of the verse.

In Heb. 8:13b he *qualifies* ‘obsolete,’ and reveals that even though the Old is obsolete (compared to when the New will be *fully* manifest), the Old was still as valid in his day, as it was in Jeremiah’s day:

‘Now, what is *becoming* obsolete and *growing* old is *ready* to vanish’ (Heb. 8:13b).

The three words in bold italics, ‘*becoming* obsolete...*growing* old’ and ‘*ready* to vanish,’ are all meant to emphasize that the Old Covenant, and by extension the Law of Moses, hadn’t been tossed into the trash bin of history when Hebrews 8:13 was written. Yet, Hebrews is dated about 35 years *after* the resurrection,⁴ when the Church would tell us that the Mosaic Covenant and the Law had *already* been done away with (at the cross). If Christian theology was right, one would have expected the author to have written this: “Now, what *is* obsolete and *has* grown old *has* vanished.” If that had been written, *then* the Church would be justified in tossing out both the Old Covenant and the Law.

Paul Ellingworth, a respected theologian, realizes the dilemma and writes, in his detailed commentary on Hebrews, that “the *continued existence* of the first covenant is *never* completely denied.”⁵ Although, as a Christian, he believes that it is (now) obsolete, it only shows us how, on the one hand, theologians can correctly translate the Word of God concerning the Law and the Old Covenant, but on the other hand, misinterpret it away. In this case they do that by appealing to the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, four or five years after Hebrews was written. The author, in speaking of ‘ready to vanish,’ wasn’t meaning the destruction of the Temple, but the ‘soon’ coming of Christ. Like all the writers of the New Testament, he envisioned the imminent return of Messiah Yeshua⁶ (i.e. the New Jerusalem; Rev. 21:1f.).

Ellingworth, commenting on the phrase ‘ready to vanish’ (‘soon disappear’ in some translations) says, “The statement falls short of saying that the old cultus has already disappeared.”⁷ Ellingworth makes a link between the Old Covenant and the ‘old cultus’ (i.e. the Temple and its sacrificial rites in Jerusalem), but there is no justification for this since the author of Hebrews has been speaking of the covenants, not the Temple, from Heb. 8:6-12, with 8:13 specifically dealing with both covenants. Nowhere does the author even hint at the destruction of the Temple, nor its equation with the ‘end of the Old Covenant,’ but this is the standard theological explanation of the verse in light of anti-Law theology. Theologians pin their theology, of the Law and the Old Covenant’s demise, on the Temple’s

⁴ J. D. Douglas, M.A., B.D., S.T.M., Ph.D., organizing editor, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, part 2 (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998), p. 629. A ‘date before 64 AD would be possible,’ or 67-68.

Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), p. 548. ‘It seems clear that the Temple was still in existence and the ritual still continued. The present tense is repeatedly used in this connection (8:4, 13; 9:4-9; 10:1-10; 13:10-11).’ Unger suggests a dating of Hebrews at 67-69 AD.

Geoffrey W. Bromiley, General Editor, Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, Associate Editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 692. ‘Before 70 AD.’

⁵ Paul Ellingworth, translation consultant, United Bible Societies; I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque, editors, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p. 418.

⁶ James wrote that ‘the coming of the Lord is at hand’ (Jam. 5:8; ca. 48 AD).

Paul writes in 1st Thess. 4:15-17; 5:4 (ca. 50 AD) about being alive when the Lord returns. In 1st Cor. 15:51-52 (ca. 52 AD) he says that not all of them will die (see also 1st Cor. 1:7; 7:29-31; 8:29). In Romans 16:20 (ca. 56 AD) he says, ‘The God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet,’ and in Phil. 4:5 (ca. 61 AD) he says that ‘*The Lord is near.*’

Peter’s writes, ‘for the end of all things is at hand’ (1st Pet. 4:7; ca. 62 AD).

Hebrews 1:1-2 speaks of it being the ‘last days’ (ca. 66 AD).

John says that ‘it’s the last hour’ (1st John 2:18; ca. 80 AD), and speaks of Messiah’s imminent return (Rev. 1:1-3; 22:20), and that the things he writes about would take place shortly (Rev. 22:6-7, 10, 12; ca. 95 AD; cf. Luke 19:11-27).

⁷ Ibid., p. 419.

destruction, but if the Old hadn't yet vanished by 65-66 AD, when Hebrews was written, their equating it to the Temple's destruction, and trying to use Heb. 8:13 to do it, is their idea, not God's, for Hebrews 8:13b definitively declares otherwise.

Donald Guthrie, another theologian of note, writes that the word for *obsolete* in 8:13a is in the perfect tense, "which suggests that the first covenant has already become obsolete," but he adds that the same verb is used in the second part of the verse "as a present participle, *becoming obsolete*,"⁸ which reveals that the Old Covenant hadn't yet been negated. This, too, though, is theologized away when he states that, in practice it was a "gradual process," which again confirms that the Old wasn't done away with 'at the cross,' which is a major problem for the Church's position. Guthrie, along with Ellingworth, say that when the Temple was destroyed the time for the Old Covenant and its Law had come to an end. One can only wonder what they would say about the future 'Temple of Ezekiel,' as it's called (Ezk. 40-48) with its Mosaic Law, Levitical high priest and sacrifices in full operation, and that, at the direction and authority of the Prince—the Messiah of Israel.⁹

Donald Hagner, a third Christian theologian 'witness,' confirms that the Old Covenant hadn't left the stage of history when the Letter to the Hebrews was written, stating, in relation to Heb. 8:13, that "it will soon disappear."¹⁰ He presents the usual Christian explanation of the verse by saying that from the perspective of the writer of Hebrews, the Temple is "outmoded and pointless and cannot last long."¹¹ It's interesting to compare this Christian evaluation of the Temple and its rites with all the Apostles, who not only met in the Temple, but also sacrificed there 25 years after the resurrection (Acts 21:20-24). Perhaps the Apostles didn't understand the Law as these Christian theologians do? Progressive revelation?

Thirty-five years after the resurrection, Hebrews 8:13 spoke of the Old Covenant being obsolete, but not yet gone. It wasn't gone in Jeremiah's day, even though the Temple was destroyed,¹² and it certainly wasn't gone when the Temple was standing, and it's not yet vanished in our day, either, even though there is no Temple. With Messiah's sacrifice the New Covenant came, and the Old, being obsolete,¹³ was sealed for extinction. The Old is obsolete and will vanish, but that won't happen until the New is fully manifested. Yes, Messiah's work of redemption is completely 'finished' (Jn. 19:30), and we walk in it, to a degree, but it's not fully manifested or fulfilled. Only when believers are glorified will the New Covenant be fully manifest. Until then, the Old, with its written code (i.e. the Law of Moses), remains (for every believer in Yeshua). This is what the author of Hebrews is saying.

The chronic inability of theologians to properly *interpret* what the author of Hebrews presents in 8:13, and also, throughout the New Testament where the Law is spoken of, is endemic.¹⁴ This is nothing

⁸ Donald Guthrie B.D., M.Th., Ph.D., author; Leon Morris, M.Sc., M.Th., Ph.D., general editor, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Hebrews* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), p. 178.

⁹ Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-13; 19:19-22; 32:1; 33:20-24; 66:23; Ezk. 40-48; Luke 1:32; Rev. 20:4-6. Ezekiel 34:24 and 37:25 both speak of the Prince as God's servant David, which is a euphemism for the Messiah, who is the Son of David (2nd Sam. 7:1f.; Mt. 1:1, 6, 17, 20; 9:27; 20:31; 22:42f., etc.). So, when Ezekiel again speaks of 'the Prince' (Ezk. 44:3; 45:7, 16, 22; 46:2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 161-8, etc.), it's not unreasonable to think that it's the Messiah that Ezekiel is speaking about there, too.

¹⁰ Donald A. Hagner, author; W. Ward Gasque, New Testament editor, *New International Biblical Commentary: Hebrews* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), p. 124.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² I realize that Yeshua hadn't come with the New Covenant in the days of Jeremiah and the destruction of the First Temple, but the point is that just because the Second Temple, its priesthood and sacrifice, stopped in 70 AD, it doesn't mean that it ended forever. God built the Second Temple under Ezra and Nehemiah, and will build the Third Temple for the Millennial Kingdom of Messiah Yeshua in 'this' Jerusalem (Ezk. 40-48).

¹³ *Obsolete* doesn't mean done away with, at least not yet. My 2009 iMac is obsolete, as Apple doesn't make it anymore, but it's still in good working condition. The written Mosaic Law is also obsolete, and on Judgment Day it will disappear, but its rules and commandments were specifically designed by God for New Testament believers, even without the Temple, while they are on this Earth. God's Law, given at Sinai, always had a New Covenant purpose. God made it that way.

¹⁴ Endemic: a disease or condition regularly found among a particular people.

less than Christian Pharisaism.¹⁵ The Pharisees, too, had their theological reasons and erudite explanations involving Scripture for all their traditional interpretations that nullified God's Word (Mt. 15:1f.).

Why Did God Destroy the Temple?

God destroyed both the the First Temple, in 586 BC, and the Second Temple, 656 years later, in 70 AD, by using the armies of pagan nations that were the world power of their day, Babylon and Rome, respectively (Jer. 25:9; 26:18; Mt. 24:1f.). If the Old Covenant, though, was *fulfilled* (i.e. 'done away with') when the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, why do we see Temple, Levitical priesthood and ritual sacrifice (i.e. the 'heart' of Old Covenant Law) showing up again in Ezekiel 40–48 for the thousand year reign of Messiah Yeshua from this earthly Jerusalem (Rev. 20:1-6)?

The Jerusalem Temple was supposed to be an earthly reflection, a true and holy copy of the heavenly Tabernacle or Temple, the *dwelling* place of the Father, where Yeshua is the High Priest, just as the original Tabernacle and First Temple symbolized.¹⁶ The controlling leadership of the Temple, though, after Yeshua's ascension into Heaven, never turned to accept Him for who He is, nor for what He accomplished for them and all Israel, and therefore, the Temple was no longer *a true copy* of the Tabernacle or dwelling place of God the Father and His high priest in Heaven, with its sacrifice on the heavenly Altar (Rev. 11:1).¹⁷

The reason that God the Father ordained the destruction of the Second Temple, 40 years after the death and resurrection of His Son, was because for 40 years it had blatantly failed to be an accurate reflection of its heavenly counterpart, not because its destruction signaled the end of the Mosaic Covenant. Forty is the number of testing.¹⁸ God the Father gave the high priestly leadership, the earthly authority of the Jewish people, 40 years to repent for rejecting His Son, and because they didn't, the Father authorized the destruction of the Second Temple.

The Lord's *copy* of what is in Heaven will be re-established in Jerusalem for the earthly presence and reign of Messiah Yeshua. It will then be a *perfect copy*, meaning that it will be a *true copy*, as seen from what Peter says, just after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on that historic *Shavu'ot* (Pentecost) after the resurrection, and what James says in Acts 15 (about 18 years later):

“Repent, therefore, and turn to God, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of

¹⁵ Christian Pharisaism began around 100 AD, when the Roman Catholic Church, despising the Jews and 'everything' Jewish, even Jews who loved Yeshua, threw out the 'Jewish' Law. To justify it they denounced the Law as evil and 'done away with by Christ.' When Protestantism came on the scene in Europe (ca. 1500 AD) there were a number of important changes made to Christianity, but the Reformers overlooked Catholic theology on Mosaic Law. It wasn't until the 1970s that the Holy Spirit began to open Christian eyes to the truth of the Law as the believer's guideline for walking out their faith in Messiah Yeshua.

¹⁶ Ex. 25:8-10, 40; 26:30; 40:18f.; Is. 6:1-2f.; 1st Chron. 28:9-12f.

¹⁷ Yeshua's eternal, one time for all, sacrifice is a reflection of the daily sacrifices (Ex. 29:38-43; cf. Lev. 6:12-13) because a lamb was always to be on the bronze Altar of Sacrifice, always calling to remembrance the sacrifice of the lamb in Egypt that secured Israel's preservation of their firstborn sons and their freedom from Egyptian slavery, a symbolic eternal picture of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Although it doesn't specifically say that 'the Lamb' is on the heavenly Altar, it does speak of Him as being seen by John as a lamb that had been sacrificed (Rev. 5:6), and the fact that there is a sacrificial altar on Earth implies its counterpart in Heaven (Rev. 6:9; 11:1, and possibly, also 14:18; 16:7), with a sacrifice on it, the eternal sacrifice, which corresponds to the daily sacrifices of the earthly Tabernacle and Temples. These, along with the fact that Yeshua is the heavenly *High Priest*, and the primary function of a priest is mediation between God and Man through sacrifice, point to the Altar in Heaven having the Lamb on it. This sacrifice will remind all of us, through eternity, of the cost to Yeshua for the forgiveness of our sins and our glorification. (Also, John writes of Yeshua being the Lamb of God slain, and that, before the foundation or Creation of the Universe; Rev. 5:6, 12; 13:8).

¹⁸ The number 40 symbolizes testing: Yeshua fasting in the Wilderness (Mt. 4:2f.); the 12 Hebrew spies in Canaan for 40 days (Num. 13:25); and Israel in the Wilderness for 40 years because of their refusal to trust God to bring them into the land that He had promised to them (Num. 14:33-34), etc.

refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Yeshua the Messiah, who was preached to you before, whom Heaven must receive *until the times of restoration of all things*, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21)

“And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, ‘Men and brethren! Listen to me! Simon has declared how God, at the first, visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His own name, and with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written: ‘After this I will return and will rebuild the Tabernacle of David, which has fallen down. I will rebuild its ruins and I will set it up so that the rest of mankind may seek Yahveh, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says Yahveh, who does all these things.’ *Known to God from eternity* are all His works.’” (Acts 15:13-18)

God has taken the Temple away for a long season (1,982 years and counting), but this is conceptually similar to what He did with the First Temple, in the days of Jeremiah, because of the nation of Judah’s rebellion against His ways (the Law) and their propensity for sacrificial-sexual idolatry.¹⁹ Yet, as He brought the Temple back, in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, so too, He will bring it back for Israel in the latter days. This is what the thousand year, Messiah led, Temple of Ezekiel pictures—the glorious fulfillment of the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Davidic Covenants. With Messiah Yeshua reigning for a thousand years as the Prince (i.e. King of Israel),²⁰ the earthly Temple will be a true reflection of what is in Heaven; Mosaic Law and Levitical sacrifice will be instituted and the Law will be kept the way that God always desired for Israel to keep it, from the inside-out, by His Spirit.

God’s holy Law was given to Israel ‘after the flesh,’ but God gave the Law to Israel at Mt. Sinai with Israel ‘after the Spirit’ (Gal. 6:16) in mind. His holy ways and rules are His holy ways and rules both before and after Christ, with Yeshua showing us the essence of some of the laws and how amplified they are for those in His Kingdom. The Father set His Law in motion on the first *Shavu’ot* (Pentecost)²¹ at Mt. Sinai, when He gave the Law to Israel, and 1,470 years later,²² on another *Shavu’ot*, He sent His Spirit to indwell Israel (Acts 2:1f.). Now, with His Spirit, Israel, both Jew and Gentile who love Yeshua, can walk in God’s holy laws, *just as Messiah Yeshua did* (1st John 2:6; 3:3-4). After all, isn’t Yeshua supposed to be our example in all things?

As for the Law of Moses being the guideline for living out one’s faith in the Messiah of Israel, this is explicitly presented by Yeshua when He revealed the essence of some of the commandments of the Law. For instance, He said,

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You must not commit adultery,’ but I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28)

Yeshua explained the deeper and more profound meaning of the Law for *His Kingdom* on this Earth (Mt. 5:17ff.). It’s certainly not meant for Heaven, and it certainly wasn’t possible for Israel to keep it without being Born Again and filled with His Spirit. *This is* the New Covenant—the writing of the

¹⁹ Jer. 2:20; 3:6; 7:31; 19:5; 32:35; Ezk. 16:4-25; 20:31. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* explains that the reason for the destruction of both kingdoms was because the people of God were infatuated with sacrificial-sexual cult harlotry: ‘The captivity of the half-tribe of Manasseh resulted from their participation in the *religious prostitution* connected with the Canaanite gods (1st Chron. 5:25). The same can be said of the fall of both the northern and southern kingdoms as the idolatrous practices they followed included such rites (Ezk. 16:16-58).’ Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one, p. 617.

²⁰ Ezk. 34:24; 37:25; 44:3; 45:7, 16, 22; 46:2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22.

²¹ *Shavu’ot* is an annual Sabbath. See *Shavu’ot—Learning to Walk in Freedom* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/pentecst.html> or ask for its PDF to see how both the Law (the Word of God) and the Spirit were given on the same day, *Shavu’ot* (also known in English as the Feast of Weeks), coming 50 days or 7 x 7 weeks plus one day after First Sheaf in Passover Week (Ex. 34:22; Lev. 23:4-16; Num. 28:26; Dt. 16:9-10, 16).

²² 1,470 years breaks down into interesting numbers: 700 plus 700 plus 70, or 777. Seven is the number of holiness and completion, as first seen in the seven day week of Creation.

Law, as understood and interpreted by Messiah Yeshua, on our minds and hearts (Jer. 31:31-34, esp. v. 33). It is only by His Spirit that we have the potential to keep the Law, as God always intended for it to be kept, just like Messiah did, and specifically as Yeshua spoke of (Mt. 5:17-19). For now, though, the Temple, Levitical Priesthood, and Mosaic sacrifice have been ‘put on hold,’ but it’s not because Old Covenant Law has ceased to be valid for believers in Christ Jesus.

The earthly Temple was destroyed, just as Yeshua said it would be (Mt. 24:1f.), because its leadership never embraced Him as part of God the Father’s New Covenant. The earthly Temple didn’t reflect what was in the Heavens. If the focus of the earthly had been on Yeshua, the earthly would have remained. One day the Temple will be re-established in Jerusalem, with Prince Messiah being the central person and focal point. Temple life and sacrificial rituals will be done in accordance with what is in the heavenly realm and then the earthly will be a *true* copy and reflection of what is in the heavenly:

“In that hour Yeshua rejoiced in the Spirit and said, ‘I thank You, Father, Lord of the Heavens and the Earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, but revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight’ ...Then He turned to His disciples and said privately to them, ‘Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen them, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard them.’” (Luke 10:21, 23-24)

In these last days, the God of Israel has unearthed His treasure, Mosaic Law, from the dustbins and cobwebs of Christian theology. Now is the time that He has chosen to reveal more of His words and His ways to the Body of Messiah, in preparation for Messiah’s imminent return and reign.

Father Abraham and the New Covenant

An Old Testament illustration of the concept behind the phrase, ‘He has made the first obsolete,’ (Heb. 8:13a) is seen in the promise that God gave to Father Abraham. God promised that He would give him many descendants, the land of Canaan and that He would be their God,²³ but *Abraham never owned a single acre of land in Canaan* except for Sarah’s and his burial plot, which he bought with his own money! This is spiritually significant—‘death to self’ being needed *before* the promise is fulfilled or manifested. In Joshua, *four hundred years later*, God *began* to fulfill the promises—after the Sons of Israel had ‘died to self’ in their 40 years of aimless wanderings because of their contempt and unbelief (Num. 13-14), but their many sons came into the land of Canaan and it became Israel’s, and Yahveh was their God. The final earthly fulfillment of the Old Covenant will be when Yeshua, the Son of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and King David, reigns for a thousand years in Jerusalem (Rev. 20:1f.).

In Yeshua’s death and resurrection, God *began* to fulfill the New Covenant, which He had spoken of 600 years earlier. The promises given to us for today are realized in being Born Again, forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit and transformation of our nature, but who is glorified? Who is in the New Jerusalem with God, now?²⁴ We, unlike Father Abraham,²⁵ have an immediate down payment of the promise, but no one is glorified except Yeshua. Even the Apostles await Judgment Day, when all flesh shall stand before the King. It’s *then* that the *promise* will come to fulfillment (‘until all is fulfilled,’ as

²³ Gen. 15:1-21; 17:1-22; Dt. 9:4-5; 10:22.

²⁴ Mt. 3:11; 9:6; Mk. 2:10; 10:30; Lk. 5:21, 24; 12:12; John 3:15; 6:54; 10:28; 14:26; 20:22; Rev. 2:7, 10; 3:5, 12; 21:1-3f.

²⁵ Abraham’s ‘down payment’ came later with the birth of Isaac, the son of the promise. God promised Abraham a son by his barren wife Sarah, in Gen. 17:16, 19, when Abraham was 99 years old, 24 years after he first came into the land of Canaan at God’s direction. God again promises Abraham a son by Sarah in Gen. 18:10, 14, and makes good on the promise when Abraham is 100 years old (Gen. 21:2-5). The number 100 signifies fullness and points to Gal. 4:4, which speaks of Messiah coming ‘in the fullness of time.’ Messiah, too, is *the* Son of the Promise (Gen. 3:16; 2nd Sam. 7:12-14; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:1-5; Micah 5:2, etc.).

Yeshua says in Mt. 5:18), and *then* the Old Covenant and the Law will be obsolete *and* vanish away, but not a moment before that. On Judgment Day God’s promise that *the Law* would be *written on our hearts will be fulfilled* (Jer. 31:33)—it will be our nature because the Law is the verbal/written reflection of the character and will of God, and our nature will reflect it, just as Yeshua’s nature does, or more properly, the written code reflects Yeshua’s nature. That’s why it’s holy. *This* is the promise we await—that we will be *exactly* like He is now, only that He was always God the Son, while we will be deity by creation, through His sacrificial blood.²⁶ He is the God-Man and we shall be the God-Man’s Bride. This is our faith—we wait for the promise to be fulfilled, just as Father Abraham did.

The Mosaic Covenant is *obsolete*, when compared with the New Covenant’s *fulfillment*. This is what Heb. 8:13a/b means, but it will only *vanish* on Judgment Day when the New is fulfilled. The written Law, as interpreted by Messiah Yeshua for His Kingdom, is still needed because we are in earthly vessels of clay, and God’s Law isn’t fully written on our hearts, but that’s what the Holy Spirit is trying to do—write the Law of Moses on our hearts. Jeremiah 31 is the only place in the Old Testament where the term, *New Covenant*, is literally spoken of, and reveals some of God’s purposes in giving the New Covenant, one of which is to write the Law of Moses on the heart of every Christian:

³¹“Behold! The days are coming,’ says Yahveh, ‘when I will make a *New Covenant* with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah—³²not according to the covenant that I made with their Fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,’ says Yahveh, ³³‘but this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, says Yahveh—I will put My Law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be My people! ³⁴No more shall every man teach his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know Yahveh!’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ says Yahveh. ‘For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.’” (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

God always intended that Christians would walk out their faith in Jesus through the Mosaic Law (Acts 21:20f.). Many Christians are already walking in some of the laws of Moses. Any Christian who truly loves God and his neighbor is walking in the two great commandments of the Law (Dt. 6:4-5; Lev. 19:18b), and any Christian who tithes and gives offerings is walking in the Law’s commandments to do so. These are all found in Torah (the Law of Moses).²⁷

The two great commandments are the essence of all the laws of Moses, and God wants us to keep all the other commandments that apply to us, just as Yeshua,²⁸ Paul²⁹ and John³⁰ declare³¹ because all the other commandments are *God’s definition of love* (Mt. 22:35-40). The point is that even though the

²⁶ Rom. 8:29-30; 1st 15:48-49; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:15, 18; Heb. 10:12; 2nd Pet. 1:2-4; 1st John 2:25, 29; 3:2.

²⁷ *Torah* is the Hebrew word for the Law of Moses (commonly seen as the first five books of the Old Testament), which contain both laws and narratives, but can also be used for all of the Old and New Testament because *Torah* means teaching or instruction, not law.

²⁸ Mt. 5:19.

²⁹ Acts 21:20-24; Romans 3:31; 7:7, 12, 14; 1st Cor. 7:19.

³⁰ 1st John 3:1-4; Rev. 12:17; 14:12.

³¹ See *Law 102* at <http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/law102.html> or ask for its PDF, for more ‘proof text’ cites the Church uses, but with their correct biblical interpretation concerning the Law.

See also *The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21* for why the two Scriptures of Acts 15:20-21 form the New Testament’s foundation for all Christians to walk in the Law of Moses. You can read two chapters of the book, the *Introduction* and *Acts 15:10–Some Concerns (The Yoke)* at <http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/LiftingTheVeil.html> or ask for their PDFs.

Three other PDFs to ask for are:

The Law of Moses and New Testament Faith in Jesus

Summary of the Law in the New Testament

Mosaic Law—Still Valid

Church's understanding of Hebrews 8:13, and the Law of Moses, is heretical, Christians are walking in some of the laws already, and today, God is opening the eyes of many Christians to see the false teachings of the Church against His Law. His Bride is being set free from Pharisaic Christian slavery to walk out her faith in Jesus the way that He wants her to walk it out.

The Old Covenant was the covenant that God ratified with Israel through Moses in Exodus 24. This covenant was an extension and amplification of the covenant that God had made with Abram in Genesis 15, and amplified in Genesis 17, when He changed Abram's name to Abraham, gave him circumcision as the sign of the covenant, and promised him a son through Sarah (Gen. 17:5, 10-19). The three covenants are an organic whole—God's covenant with Abram was the 'seed' that 'went into the ground,' and what sprang up from it was the 'stem'—the Mosaic Covenant and the House of Israel. Yeshua and the New Covenant are the rose upon the stem of the Old, drawing Israel into His Kingdom. This is God's design for Israel. He only made the New Covenant with Israel, but invites the Gentiles to become part of Israel.³²

The covenant that God made with Abram entailed 'many descendants inheriting the land of Canaan and Yahveh being their God,' which was extended to the Mosaic Covenant (Ex. 6:1-8). The New Covenant further extends it, saying that we who believe are all sons of Father Abraham (many descendants), who will live in the Land of Eternity (the New Jerusalem) and that Yahveh will be our God. It's an organic whole—truly progressive revelation.

The Law of Moses comes into the New Covenant, as God Himself spoke of (Jer. 31:33), with some commandments being either changed or modified, etc. The difference in the High Priest of Israel for the Old and the New Covenants is one such place where the Law is changed, but not done away with.

HEBREWS 7:12 AND THE CHANGE OF THE LAW

The author of Hebrews speaks of a change being made in the Law,³³ which many misinterpret to mean that the Law is nullified and invalidated, but that isn't what the writer meant. Here's what he wrote:

“For the *priesthood* being *changed*, of necessity there is *also a change of the Law*.”
(Hebrews 7:12)

A more literal translation of the verse reads: “For (when) being changed *the priestly office*, of necessity also a *change of law* occurs.”³⁴

The verse speaks of 'a change of law,' in the specific area of the high priest of Israel. It doesn't speak of the nullification of the entire Law, but quite the contrary, with this change in the Law it conversely affirms that the rest of the Law remains.

Messiah Yeshua is the eternal, sinless high priest. The verse reflects that the high priest of the Old Covenant came from the tribe of Levi, through Aaron and his Sons, as Mosaic Law requires,³⁵ but that the high priest for the New Covenant comes from the tribe of Judah, as the author of Hebrews de-

³² Jer. 31:31-34; Is. 42:6; 49:6; Rom. 11:11-36; Eph. 2:11-14.

³³ When I speak of the Law I mean Scripture from Genesis through Deuteronomy, not just the Ten Commandments, even though *Torah* (literally, instruction or teaching) can be used of all Scripture.

³⁴ From Robert K. Brown and Philip W. Comfort, Translators, J. D. Douglas, Editor, *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990), p. 771. The basis for this interlinear is The United Bible Societies' Third Corrected Edition of the Greek New Testament. This is the same text as the 26th edition of *Novum Testamentum Graece*, by Kurt Aland, M. Black, C. Martini, A. Wikgren and Bruce Metzger.

³⁵ Ex. 27:21; 28:1, 12, 41, 43-44; 29:1f.; 30:30; Lev. 8:1f.; Num. 3:1f.; 33:38; Dt. 10:6.

clares.³⁶ It means that a part of the Law (i.e. what tribe the high priest came from) has been changed or altered *for* the New Covenant. Both covenants still have high priests, as Hebrews 8:1-13 speaks of, and both covenants are now running concurrently. It's not as though the office of the high priest in the Old ceased to exist the moment the New Covenant was enacted.³⁷

This *change* in the Law, for the New Covenant, actually has its roots in the Law of Moses, in Genesis 14:18-20, where Abram offers a tithe to a hitherto unknown (high) priest named Melchizedek, who obviously, was known to Abram. His name, as the author of Hebrews brings out (Heb. 5:6-7:1f.) literally means, 'my king is righteous,' and who, as the *priest-king* of the city of Salem (*shalom*—perfect peace),³⁸ which would become Jerusalem ('founded upon peace'),³⁹ is symbolically seen as the (eternal) High Priest of God Most High—the King of Righteousness and Peace, which, of course, is Yeshua the Messiah. Even though it's not literally written in the Law that the Messiah would be a priest-king like Melchizedek,⁴⁰ it's *embedded* in the Scripture of Genesis 14 for God to flesh out later in Psalm 110 and Zechariah 6:12-13. The concept of a *secret* is a legitimate form of biblical interpretation, and in this case conveys that the ancient reader didn't necessarily understand the full ramifications of Gen. 14:18-20.⁴¹

In Psalm 110:4 and Zechariah 6:12-13 God revealed that the Messiah would be both the High Priest and the King of Israel, but the point is that it was *already* 'in the Law,' with Abram (the Father of all Israel) offering his tithe to God through Melchizedek. We also see this concept with Yeshua's answer to the Pharisees, about divorce, being *already* established in Torah (that *in the Beginning* God made them male and female and they were to be *one* [including their child], which is a reflection of the triune God), and that what God had brought together, Man was not to tear asunder (Gen. 2:24). In other words, there was no divorce in the Law, *in the Beginning*, even though it's written in the Law that a man could divorce his wife (Dt. 24:1f.; Mt. 19:3-6f.)!

In the New Covenant the concept for a divorce is radically amplified to reflect 'the Beginning' because the standard of holiness is infinitely magnified with the example and sacrifice of Messiah Yeshua *and* the giving of His Spirit. Consequently, sin in the Kingdom of Yeshua is also amplified (e.g. adultery isn't just the physical act, but also the lust behind it). The point is that *in the Beginning* is also part of Torah. Yeshua isn't making anything up—He's interpreting the Law of Moses *for New Testament believers*, and this is *His* definitive answer to those who say that He did away with the Law, or that the Law doesn't matter for Christians, because both laws, the physical sin of adultery and the soul sin of lust, apply to the believer today (This also applies to the Sabbath and Feasts, etc.). With

³⁶ Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14-15; 5:5-6; 6:20; 7:3; 9:11, etc., see also Psalm 110:4; Zech. 6:12-13; Rom. 8:34.

³⁷ See Acts 23:1-5 where, of all people, the Apostle Paul acknowledges the authority of the Sadducean high priest of the Temple by backing down from a wrong done to him (at the behest of the high priest) and quotes part of Exodus 22:28 to justify his reversal (cf. Acts 21:20-24f.; 24:18; 25:8).

³⁸ Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p. 720: מלְכִיזֶדֶק.

³⁹ Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* vol. 2 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), p. 437, 'founded by of Salem.'

Hebrew to English Dictionary and Index to the NIV Old Testament: Derived from the Zondervan NIV Exhaustive Concordance, n.p. Accordance electronic edition: Jerusalem, 'foundation of Shalem [peace].'

⁴⁰ Ask for the PDF, *Melchizedek*, to understand why he symbolized Yeshua, but wasn't Yeshua.

⁴¹ There are four concepts of biblical interpretation in Judaism known as Paradise (*Pardes*), from the first Hebrew letter of each concept. David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), pp. 11-12:

1. The first is the 'simple' (*P'shat*), which is the plain or literal meaning of the text.
2. The second is the 'hint' (*Remez*), a truth not conveyed by the plain or literal meaning.
3. The third is the 'search' (*Drash*), which is an allegorical or homiletical application of the text (reading one's own thoughts into the text).
4. The fourth is the 'secret' (*Sod*), a mystical or hidden meaning of the text.

the Holy Spirit, one is able to walk, or at the very least, to struggle to emulate, Yeshua's divine level of keeping Torah amplified, from the inside-out.

In the Old Testament Yahveh revealed that the Messiah would be both a high priest and a king when He stated:

“Yahveh has sworn and will not relent, ‘*You (the Messiah) are a (high) priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*’” (Psalms 110:4)

“Then speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says Yahveh of hosts, saying: ‘Behold! The man whose name is the Branch! From His place He shall branch out, and He shall build the Temple of Yahveh. Yes, He shall build the Temple of Yahveh! He shall bear the glory and shall sit and rule on His Throne. So, He shall be a (High) Priest on His Throne, and the counsel of peace *shall be between them both.*’” (Zechariah 6:12-13)

Four hundred years after Moses wrote Genesis, King David penned Psalm 110:4, speaking of the Messiah as the eternal high priest and king, after the order of Melchizedek, and five hundred years after David made his son Solomon king of Israel, God spoke through Zechariah the prophet and declared that His (living) Temple (i.e. the Body of Messiah) was going to be made by a man called the ‘Branch.’⁴² This Branch would be both the King of Israel (‘sit and rule on His Throne’) and the High Priest of Israel (‘shall be a Priest on His Throne’) something that was impossible under a traditional interpretation of Mosaic Law because the priestly line came from the tribe of Levi, through Aaron, while the kingly line would come from David's tribe, Judah (Gen. 49:10; 2nd Sam. 7:8-16). As we've seen, though, God had sown this *change in the Law*, that the author of Hebrews speaks of, into the very Law itself (Gen. 14:18-20).

The *change of the Law* that Heb. 7:12 speaks of doesn't mean that Mosaic Law is invalid, but that there has been a change in the Law, a shifting from Aaron and his Sons as high priests, to Yeshua, whom Melchizedek pictured, for the New Covenant's eternal high priest. It was always there, ‘in the Law,’ waiting for the Father to bring it out through King David, Zechariah and the author of Hebrews, and of course, the revelation of His Son.

Hebrews 7:18—Annuling the Commandment

The author of Hebrews goes on to speak of the change in the Law for the high priest (Heb. 7:12) by saying that the commandment, about the high priest coming from Levi, has been annulled. Of course, this verse too is used by many to declare Mosaic Law void, but as we've seen it has nothing to do with that. The Aaronic high priest was annulled because neither he, nor his sacrifices, could perfect or glorify anyone. Yeshua, though, as High Priest and sacrifice, can:

¹⁸“For on the one hand there is an *annulling* of the former commandment, because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹for the Law made nothing *perfect*, on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” (Hebrews 7:18-19)

“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained *eternal redemption.*” (Hebrews 9:12 NKJV)

“And having been perfected, He became *the author of eternal salvation* to all who obey Him,” (Hebrews 5:9 NKJV)

⁴² *Branch* is a prominent title for the Messiah in the *Tanach* (Old Testament), having its beginning with the staff/branch of Moses in the Wilderness when God called him to deliver Israel from Egyptian slavery (Ex. 3:1ff.). His staff would be used to perform the plagues against Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea, as well as squelching the rebellious hearts of Israel, specifically in relation to Aaron, the first High Priest of Israel, when that dead branch came back to life (Num. 17:1-11). For more on why the Messiah was called the *Branch* see *Spiritual Reality* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/nltr5.html> or ask for its PDF.

The Aaronic high priest, even endowed with the Holy Spirit, was still subject to sin and death (Heb. 7:23f.). Neither he, nor the commandment that made him a high priest,⁴³ nor the Levitical sacrifices, could make anyone *perfect* or glorified, not that they were supposed to, for this is the ‘end’ or the ‘goal’⁴⁴ and the glory of Messiah’s sacrifice and priesthood:

“by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. Also, there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore, He is also *able to save to the uttermost* those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7:22-25)

“to the general assembly and congregation of the firstborn, registered in Heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made *perfect*,” (Heb. 12:23).

Immediately before Heb. 7:18 the author of Hebrews speaks of the new high priest being like Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-17). As with ‘obsolete’ in Heb. 8:13, and ‘changed’ in Heb. 7:12, the law of an *Aaronic* high priest is changed or annulled for New Covenant law, but it’s obvious that Mosaic Law was still in effect because the author states that if Yeshua were here on Earth *He wouldn’t be a (high) priest* because He came from Judah, not Levi:

“For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since *there are priests who offer the gifts (sacrifices) according to the Law*” (Hebrews 8:4)

“For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.” (Hebrews 7:14)

With the author’s use of the present tense (‘there *are* priests’),⁴⁵ it’s understood that the Temple was still standing and sacrifices were still being performed, and that Mosaic Law was directly effecting New Testament law. That’s not to say that Yeshua wasn’t the high priest of the heavenly Kingdom, He was, but He wasn’t the high priest of the earthly Temple even with the ‘annulling and change’ that the writer speaks of. While these Heavens and Earth remain, Yeshua will never be an earthly high priest because the Aaronic priesthood is still in effect. Therefore, in his speaking of the commandment being annulled he speaks in relation to the heavenly Kingdom of Israel, not the earthly one. In the eternal Jerusalem⁴⁶ there will be only one high priest, Yeshua, and yes, He is our high priest now, but until Judgment Day, the Law, and its high priest from the Sons of Aaron, is still valid. The Aaronic high priest will see his fulfillment in the millennial reign of Yeshua, who will sit on the Throne of His father David (Luke 1:32). His entire reign will be one of *shalom*, symbolized by the name of the son of David who ruled Israel, Solomon. *Solomon* means ‘His peace,’⁴⁷ which speaks of the Messiah, who is *the* Son of David, who will rule Israel, and who was truly David’s peace.

The author of Hebrews wasn’t coming against the Law of Moses in Heb. 7:18, with his *annulling* of the commandment. He was just explaining that the commandment for the Old Covenant’s high priest, to come from the tribe of Levi⁴⁸ and the family of Aaron, was replaced by the New Covenant’s high priest, who came from the tribe of Judah, because the Aaronic priesthood couldn’t perfect or glorify anyone. This means that the rest of the Law was still intact for New Testament believers.

⁴³ See p. 8, note 35, for Scripture that speaks of God making Aaron the high priest (also, Heb. 7:28).

⁴⁴ Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 809-810. *Perfect*, ἐτελείωσεν (*ehtelie’osen*) from τελειόω (τέλειος *telay’oltelay’os*) 3rd per. aorist active indicative, ‘bring to an end, finish, accomplishment...bring to its goal...bring to full measure...of the perfection of just men who have gone on before...make perfect...someone...Heb. 10:1 ..become perfect’ (i.e. glorified; see also Heb. 6:1; 7:11; 10:1; 11:40).

⁴⁵ See p. 2, note 4 (Unger), for more instances of the present tense in Hebrews in relation to the Temple.

⁴⁶ Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:10; 6:20; 12:22; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10.

⁴⁷ Koehler, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* vol. 4, p. 1541. See also Isaiah 9:6 where one of the titles of the Messiah is the Prince of Peace (*Sar Shalom* in Hebrew).

⁴⁸ Exodus 29:9; 40:15; Num. 3:10; 18:1, 7; 25:13; Ezk. 44:15; 48:11.

The high priest of the New Covenant is greater than the Old because the Aaronic high priest sinned and died, and couldn't bring anyone, including himself, to glory. On the other hand, Yeshua is a sinless and eternal high priest who does bring His followers to glory/glorification. This promise, the author states, is firmly established because the Father has made Yeshua the High Priest⁴⁹ of the New Covenant by an oath,⁵⁰ while Aaron and his Sons, as rooted and established as they were in Torah and history, having served God for more than 1,500 years, by the writer's time (1440 BC to 66 AD), *weren't* established by an oath of God,⁵¹ consequently, how much *more established* and firm is the priesthood of Yeshua?

Not only is Yeshua's priesthood established by the Father's oath (and is eternal⁵² versus the mortal priesthood of Aaron and his Sons⁵³), but the New Covenant promises to us, that the author of Hebrews enumerates, are sealed and ratified by the sacrificial blood of the Father's very own Son!⁵⁴ How, then, can the Father not fulfill His promises to us?! Therefore, as solid and incontrovertible as the Father's promises to Father Abraham were,⁵⁵ that He would give Abraham a son, and that He would multiply Abraham's descendants from that son, and give them the land of Canaan, which in the writer's time were self-evident, God having proved His faithfulness to His previous promises, the promises to New Covenant believers are even more established, sure and certain.⁵⁶ Of course, the one that I want to emphasize is not the aspect of future glorification, as incredibly awesome as that is, but God's desire to inscribe the Law of Moses on the soul of every believer.

According to the author of Hebrews some of the better promises of God, for New Testament believers, are:

1. That God the Father will be the God of all New Testament believers,⁵⁷
2. That God the Father will forgive all the sins and transform the nature of all New Testament believers,⁵⁸
3. That God the Father *will write the Law of Moses upon the hearts of New Testament believers* (i.e. their nature will reflect the Law) versus the stone tablets and parchments that it was originally written on,⁵⁹ and
4. That God the Father will glorify (perfect) Christians and make them as Yeshua is now,⁶⁰ so that Messiah can marry His Bride (Rev. 19:7, 9; 21:2, 9, 17), for only one 'after its kind' can marry or mate with each other (Gen. 1:21, 24-25, 26-27; 2:18-24, esp. v. 20; cf. 1st Cor. 12:27).

The annulling of the Aaronic Priesthood, the Law of Moses and the Old Covenant will happen on Judgment Day, when the entire Old Covenant vanishes and the New Covenant comes fully into existence. Until then, both covenants run concurrently, and the Law, as interpreted by Messiah Yeshua, is the Father's guideline for believers to walk out their faith in His Son because the Law of Moses is the Lord's holy standard of living for His people Israel, both Jew and Gentile.

⁴⁹ Heb. 5:1-11; 7:17, 21

⁵⁰ Heb. 6:17-20; 7:15-22, 28; cf. Ps. 110:4.

⁵¹ Heb. 7:21; cf. Ex. 27:21; 28:1, 4, 12, 29-30, 35, 38, 41, 43; 29:1-44, etc.

⁵² Heb. 5:19; 7:15-17, 24, 26.

⁵³ Heb. 5:1-3; 7:23, 28; cf. Lev. 16:32; Num. 20:23-29.

⁵⁴ Heb. 1:1-2, 5; 7:26-28; 9:11-28; 10:10-14; cf. Ps. 2:2, 6-7; Prov. 30:4.

⁵⁵ Heb. 6:13f.; cf. Gen. 12:1-4; 15:1-21; 17:1-27; 22:1-18; Josh. 1:1-10f.; 6:10; 8:35; 21:45; 23:14; 24:1-31.

⁵⁶ Heb. 6:16-19.

⁵⁷ Heb. 8:10; 11:16; cf. Jer. 31:33.

⁵⁸ Heb. 10:14, 17; cf. Jer. 31:34.

⁵⁹ Heb. 10:16; cf. Jer. 31:33.

⁶⁰ Rom. 5:2; 8:18; 9:23; 1st Cor. 15:43; 2nd Cor. 3:18; Col. 1:27; 3:4; Heb. 2:10; 5:9; 9:12; Rev. 21:11.

HEBREWS 10:4—AN OBTUSE VERSE

Unlike the reflexive verse of Hebrews 8:13, where one can plainly see that the Old Covenant isn't yet done away with by just reading what the whole verse actually says in English, an obtuse verse is one that distorts the meaning of the Greek text and comes into English as something that doesn't make biblical sense. This is due to the translator's ignorance and/or bias against the Law. Hebrews 10:4 is such a verse. In English Bibles it usually reads that the blood of bulls and goats *didn't* take away sins, as these three different translations attest to, and as some Christians hold up against the Law:

NKJV—"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." (Hebrews 10:4)

NASB—"For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." (Hebrews 10:4)

KJV—"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (Hebrews 10:4)

We know that the above English translations cannot be the meaning that the author of Hebrews intended to convey because of these two biblical reasons:

1. In the Law of Moses, God specifically speaks of forgiveness of sins through animal sacrifice, especially the yearly sacrifices of the Day of Atonement, where the sacrifice of bulls and goats forgave Israel of all her sins,⁶¹ which is what Hebrews 10:4 is alluding to (see Heb. 10:1, 3).⁶²
2. Only 19 verses before Hebrews 10:4, in 9:13, the author of Hebrews states that the blood of bulls and goats *did* offer forgiveness of sins (purifying/sanctifying the flesh), as the same three Bible translations write of:

'For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh' (9:13 NKJV).

"For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh" (Hebrews 9:13 NASB).

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh" (Hebrews 9:13 KJV).

In Hebrews 9:13 the sacrifice of animals did 'cleansed the flesh' (forgive sin), so how can it be that the author of Hebrews would reverse himself in Hebrews 10:4 (and 10:11, which repeats the thought of 10:4)?⁶³ A correct meaning of the Greek word for *sins* in 10:4 would translate it as *sin nature*:

'For *it is not possible* that the blood of bulls and goats could take away the *sin nature*.'

Hebrews 10:1-3 speaks about the yearly sacrifices of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:1f.) that couldn't purify the Israeli from *a consciousness of sins*. The Greek word for *sin* has different shades of meanings. The word can obviously be translated as *sins*, but for the two biblical reasons stated above, it should *not* be translated as *sins*, but as *sin nature* because this is what the sacrificial blood of the bulls and the goats on the Day of Atonement couldn't touch or transform—the Adamic, carnal, *sin nature*. That can only be transformed by the blood and Spirit of Messiah Yeshua, and that, after 'death to self.' This is part of the glory of the New over the Old.

The Greek word for *sins* that is used in Hebrews 10:4 (and 10:11) is 'ἁμαρτία *hamarti'* *ahs* and the

⁶¹ Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7; 16:1-34; 19:22; Num. 15:25-26, 28.

⁶² For an article on the day of atonement and its messianic significance, see *Yom HaKipurim—The Day of Atonement* at <http://seedofabraham.net/yomkipor.html> or ask for its PDF.

⁶³ "And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins" (Hebrews 10:11 NKJV).

meanings of it that are pertinent to us are, ‘a *principle* or *cause of sin*, Rom. 7:7; proneness to sin, sinful propensity,’⁶⁴ which is the sin nature, the Adamic nature, the condition of sinful man.⁶⁵ The *Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains* says that it’s ‘an integral element of someone’s *nature*,’⁶⁶ while the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* defines it as,

‘the nature of man...of human nature in hostility to God⁶⁷...the whole sinful nature of man⁶⁸...a state which embraces all humanity,’⁶⁹ the ‘carnal reality of man,’⁷⁰ which ‘characterizes the NT concept of sin...in the sense of distance from God and opposition to Him.’⁷¹

Hebrews 10:4 and 10:11 speak about our Adamic nature, not specific sins, or even sin in general. Even though the Greek word can mean an actual sin, the context for verses 4 and 11, as well as what God says about the blood of bulls and goats taking away Israel’s sins in Torah,⁷² dictates that the author of Hebrews meant Israel’s *sin nature*, not actual sins committed.

Was the Old Covenant or the Law of Moses defective in that it couldn’t transform our sin nature? No, not anymore than one can fault a car for not being able to fly like a plane. Neither the Law, nor the animal sacrifices, were meant to transform our nature, but in the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son to die on our behalf (Gal. 4:4) so that by His blood sacrifice and Spirit we might be brought to *perfection* (glorification; Heb. 12:22-24), which is the promise that awaits us on the Sabbath that is eternal.⁷³

To have English translations of the New Testament state that the Mosaic sacrifices were not effective for forgiveness of sins is a gross distortion of God’s Word. Most English translations of those two verses are defective because the translators don’t fully understand the Gospel (just what Jesus came to set us free from—sin, disease, Satan and death, not God’s holy Law). So, they choose *sins* instead of *sin nature*, not realizing their glaring, senseless and obtuse theological error because it should have been obvious to those translators that the sins of Israel *were* dealt with by the sacrificial blood of the bulls and goats because both the Old and the New Testament declare it. The *sin nature* is what the author of Hebrews is speaking about in 10:4 and 10:11 because the blood of bulls and goats couldn’t *take away* or transform the Adamic nature, nor was it meant to. Only Messiah’s sacrificial blood can do that.

⁶⁴ Wesley J. Perschbacher, editor, *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publications, 1990), p. 17. The verb can also mean, ‘error; offence, sin.’

⁶⁵ Bauer, *A Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, p. 43. Section 2: In John’s writings it’s man’s ‘condition or characteristic quality...sinfulness.’ Section 3: In Paul’s letters, ‘everything was subject to it (Gal. 3:22); men serve it (Rom. 6:6), are its slaves (v. 17, 20)’ and ‘it dwells in man (Romans 7:17, 20).’ This is the Adamic nature, the essential problem with Man, and what Yeshua came to address. *All sinful acts stem from a sin nature*. Section 4: ‘In Hebrews (as in OT), sin appears as the power that deceives men and leads them to destruction, whose influence and activity can be ended only by sacrifices.’

⁶⁶ Johannes Louw and Eugene A. Nida, editors, *Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, vol. 1 (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), p. 755.

⁶⁷ Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, editors; Geoffrey W. Bromiley, translator and editor, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. I (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), p. 295.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

⁷² Lev. 16:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 14-17, 25, 27, 30, 33-34. See also Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7; 19:22.

⁷³ See both articles, *Mosaic Sacrifice and the Blood of Jesus*, and *Sacrifice in the New Testament* at <http://Seed-ofAbraham.net/sacrific.html> or ask for their PDFs for a greater understanding of Messiah’s sacrifice and how the Mosaic sacrifices parallel what the Holy Spirit desires to do in the heart of every believer. All the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant pointed to the ultimate sacrifice of Messiah Yeshua (Is. 53:1f; Dan. 9:24-26; John 1:29, 36; Rev. 5:5-6, etc.), but each one had a specific theme, and is a picture of the Holy Spirit’s dealings with every believer.

GOD'S DEFINITION OF LOVE

The letter to the Hebrews doesn't do away with the Old Covenant, nor the Law of Moses, and it's not the only letter in the New Testament that supports the biblical concept of walking out one's faith in Yeshua by His Spirit and through the Law (cf. Rom. 3:31; 1st Cor. 7:19, etc.). Many have rightly said that Jesus is the ultimate and final authority on anything that He speaks about. Concerning the Law, the Savior said that it would continue *until the Heavens and the Earth didn't exist*. Also, He emphatically declared that He *hadn't* come to do away with the Law:

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill”⁷⁴ (Matthew 5:17).

“For assuredly, I say to you, *until* Heaven and Earth *pass away*, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Law until all is *fulfilled*” (Matthew 5:18).

In v. 18 Yeshua emphasized that nothing of the Law would cease to be operative until Judgement Day. The *jot* is the smallest Hebrew letter (the ך *yod*), while the *tittle* is not even a letter at all, but a decorative embellishment, for aesthetic appearance, that is added to some Hebrew letters in the scribal (hand) writing of a Torah scroll. The *tittle* has nothing whatsoever to do with changing the meaning of the letter, or the word that it's found in.⁷⁵

What God the Son was saying, by hyperbole, was that the Law was a set fixture of His Kingdom. It wasn't going to 'pass away' until the Earth and the Heavens did, so how can the Church teach otherwise? The Church says that 'all was fulfilled' at the crucifixion, but it confuses *fulfilled* with Yeshua's *finished* work of redemption (Jn. 19:30; 1st Pet. 1:18; Rev. 5:9). According to the very words of Jesus, the Law would continue after His death and resurrection—until there were no more Heavens, nor Earth. Yeshua also said something immediately after that that should be of great concern for every Christian—the Christian's position in His Kingdom. Yeshua said that those who break even the *least* of the Law's commandments, and teach others to do the same, would be least in His Kingdom:

‘Whoever, therefore, breaks one of the *least* of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called *least* in the Kingdom of Heaven, but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called *great* in the Kingdom of Heaven’ (Matthew 5:19).

Obviously, the *least* commandments mean a lot to Messiah Yeshua. Some might say that the Lord was only speaking 'of His time' (i.e. before His crucifixion), but the Kingdom of Heaven didn't officially begin until *after* His resurrection. He wasn't speaking of a time before that.⁷⁶ What is it about the commandments, statutes and ordinances of the Law that are so special? In Matthew, Yeshua implies that all the laws are God's *definition of the two great commandments*. When asked what the greatest commandment was, He quoted the law's commandments of Dt. 6:4 and Lev. 19:18c and said:

‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as yourself. *On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets*’ (Mt. 22:37-40).

⁷⁴ See *Seven Ways Yeshua Fulfilled the Law* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/fulfill.html> or ask for its PDF. None of the seven ways support that Jesus 'did away with the Law.'

⁷⁵ Today the *tittle* might be comparable to a serif font's small finishing strokes on the end of a letter (e.g. Century or Georgia). Sans serif fonts, like Arial or Verdana, don't have them.

⁷⁶ Some might point to English translations that speak of Yeshua saying that the Kingdom of Heaven is 'in them,' but other translations properly speak of it being 'among them,' or 'at hand.' Wherever Yeshua went, the Kingdom of Heaven went, for He is the Kingdom. A believer has both Yeshua dwelling in him, and also, he dwells in Yeshua (he is 'in Christ'). No one, though, could dwell 'in Yeshua' before His resurrection, and this, no doubt, made John the Baptist less than the least in Messiah's Kingdom (Mt. 11:11), and why Yeshua speaks of 'the Law and the Prophets' as being 'until John' (Lk. 16:16). It doesn't mean that the Law or the Prophets was passing away, but that everyone wanted to be in God's Kingdom, or rather, 'in Messiah.'

The Law, as interpreted by Yeshua, not the Rabbis,⁷⁷ nor the Church, is *God's definition* of how to love God and *how* to love our neighbor as ourself. Yeshua declared that the keeping of the Mosaic commandments, ordinances and statutes is loving God and neighbor the way that God wants us to love Him and our neighbor. The Law, then, is nothing less than the Creator's understanding and instruction of how to walk out the two great commandments of love. That's why all the other commandments are so important for us to know and to observe and to teach to our children.

Christian scholar Robert Mounce, although no keeper of Mosaic Law, nevertheless speaks of the commandments and judgments of the Law as the basis for observing the two great commandments when he defines the Greek word for 'hang' (Mt. 22:40) being like that of a hinge on a door:

“(Gr. *kremannymi*, ‘To hang...As a door hangs on its hinges, *so the whole Old Testament hangs on these two commandments*,’ *BAGD*, p. 450). All the other precepts and instructions in the Old Testament are ways in which these two” commandments “find expression.”⁷⁸

According to Mounce, Yeshua said that all the laws of Moses serve as ways of expressing the two great commandments. Jewish-Christian scholar Alfred Edersheim (1825-1889) was the foremost authority in his day on Talmud and its relation to Messiah Yeshua. He states that the Jewish people knew ‘what it meant that the Law and the Prophets *hung on*’ the two great commandments because it,

‘was a Jewish expression (תלוין *talvin*). He taught them, not that any one commandment was greater or smaller, heavier or lighter than another—might be set aside or neglected, but that *all sprang from these two as their root and principle*, and stood in *living connection* with them.’⁷⁹

The two great commandments are the *hinge* on which *all the other commandments swing* or have their reason for existing. It's *God's way* of teaching us how to live out the two commandments of love. The Church has greatly erred in teaching that the Law of Moses isn't valid for Christians and for portraying it as against God's grace and salvation. The Law of Moses is God's definition of love and we're to walk out our faith in Messiah Yeshua through all the laws of Moses that apply to us.⁸⁰

The Father's sacrifice of His Son didn't do away with His holy Law (which Yeshua co-authored). It did away with Satan's stranglehold upon Israel. It freed Israel from Satan's Kingdom, sin, sickness, rebellion and death, and filled with His Holy Spirit anyone who wanted to become part of the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16) so that this Spirit-led Israel could walk in God's holy and loving Law, of which Israel without the Spirit had rebelled against since her days in the Wilderness. Yeshua's sacrifice made a way for our sin nature to be done away with, not God's holy Law.

⁷⁷ The Rabbis are the spiritual descendants of the Pharisees and Scribes. Yeshua warned us about their teachings in Mt. 16:6, 11-12: ‘Beware of the *leaven* of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.’ Their *leaven* means their corrupt teachings (see also Mt. 15:1-14; 23:1-36; Mk. 7:5-13; Gal. 5:7-9). The Sadducees, even though they didn't walk in the Traditions of the Elders, also failed to correctly interpret the Word of God, as is seen by their preposterous question, and Yeshua's incredible answer to them (Mt. 22:25f.; Mk. 12:20f.; Lk. 20:29f.).

⁷⁸ Robert H. Mounce, author; W. Ward Gasque, New Testament editor, *New International Biblical Commentary: Matthew* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), pp. 210-211. *BDAG* is the authoritative lexicon by Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 450.

⁷⁹ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), p. 753.

⁸⁰ Not all the laws in the Law apply to us. For instance, the Law speaks of the Aaronic high priest and his functions and what he could do (e.g. be married), and what he couldn't do (e.g. marry a woman who was divorced), etc. All those laws don't apply to believers today because no believer is the high priest, and they also didn't apply to 99.99% of ancient Israel, but the laws that apply to us we do, just as ancient Israel did, as well as Yeshua and His Apostles. Things that we can't do (e.g. national things like allotment of land in Canaan and cities of refuge for unintentional murder; Dt. 19, etc.), we can't do.

What is Sin?

Nothing can, nor should be added to the finished work of Messiah's sacrifice for our salvation. His sacrificial death is sufficient for us to enter into the Kingdom of God and to keep us there. Now, though, in His Kingdom, do we continue to sin? If not, *how do we know what sin is?* What is God's standard that reveals what is sin? The Apostle Paul, in his greatest theological letter, wrote:

“What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? ***Certainly not!*** On the contrary, ***I would not have known sin except through the Law!*** For I would not have known covetousness unless the Law had said, ‘You must not covet’...Therefore, the Law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good...*For we know that the Law is spiritual*, but I am carnal, sold under sin” (Romans 7:7, 12, 14; see also 1st Cor. 15:56).

The Apostle explains that it was through the Law that he understood that covetousness was wrong. Consequently, it's only through the Law that we know that the 7th day Sabbath, Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles are what God wants us to walk in, and *also*, that Sunday, Easter, Christmas and the eating of pork chops, bacon and shrimp are wrong—they are sin in God's eyes.⁸¹ Paul says that the Law *is* holy and spiritual (present tense), yet most Christians think that ‘Paul did away with the Law.’ Obviously, one must either gloss over these verses in Romans and Matthew, or have another interpretation of them.⁸² The Law, though, was the standard by which Yeshua was judged to be sinless.⁸³ Torah was also the standard by which the Apostles, and all the Jewish believers, knew what sin was, and consequently, God's will (e.g. Passover versus Easter) 25 years *after* the resurrection:

“And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord and they said to him, ‘You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed and *they are all zealous for the Law*’” (Acts 21:20).⁸⁴

Nowhere in the New Testament does the Law clash with belief in Jesus and eternal life, unless one thought that the keeping of the Law would save (justify) them. This is reason why Paul rebuked his ‘foolish Galatians.’ They thought that the keeping of the Law, symbolized in physical covenantal circumcision (PCC), was necessary for eternal life, along with faith in Jesus. They were wrong and Paul told them so. After having given them some reasons and illustrations, in Galatians 3–4, about why it was not God's will for them to try and keep the Law for salvation (justification), Paul finishes by summarizing it for them and for us:

‘You have become estranged from Christ, *you who attempt to be justified by Law*; you have fallen from grace’ (Galatians 5:4).⁸⁵

⁸¹ See Lev. 11:7; 23:1f.; Dt. 12:28-32; 14:8. Also, see *Law 102* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/law102.html> or ask for its PDF.

⁸² Some point to Romans 14:5-6 and say that one can worship and keep any day holy that he wants to, but Paul wasn't speaking about the Sabbath. He was dealing with two groups of Christians at Rome; one group said that their day of fasting was holy and should be recognized by the other group, and they, no doubt, saw meat as being *ceremonially* unclean, even though the meat was clean, and so they only ate vegetables (v. 2). The other group thought that they could eat the meat which had been sacrificed to an idol (and most likely, had been bought in the marketplace). Paul's directive, about ‘the day,’ spoke of the days of fasting of the first group, not that one could make any day a holy day. He wasn't rewriting God's Word and giving license to choose whatever day one wanted to make holy (e.g. Sunday instead of Sabbath). Note well what he says in v. 6, about one who eats and one who doesn't eat, as both doing it unto the Lord, having just spoken of one who *esteems* one day above another. Paul isn't speaking about the holy 7th day Sabbath, but a day esteemed by the vegetarian group for fasting. For an article on this ask for the PDF *Romans 14*.

⁸³ John 8:46; 2nd Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1st John 3:5; 1st Peter 2:22.

⁸⁴ **Acts 21** is seen to have taken place anywhere from 54 to 59 AD:

Bromiley, *ISBE*, vol. one, p. 692: 54 AD.

Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1976), pp. 486-488: 58 AD.

Douglas, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, part 1, p. 281: 59 AD.

Obviously, those Galatians thought that they could be justified (saved/inherit eternal life) by being circumcised. Physical covenantal circumcision, though, didn't get any Jew into the *New Covenant*, nor keep him there, and the same would apply for the Gentile.

It's generally seen that the Apostle Paul wrote Galatians first and then Romans.⁸⁶ In Galatians, Paul comes against those who would have the male Gentile believers circumcised as part of their salvation and faith in Jesus. Paul comes against them because nothing can be added to the sacrifice of Yeshua for salvation. Paul's position is clear. He's not coming against the Law, *per se*, but against the keeping of the Law, symbolized in PCC, as a means of salvation or of what is required for salvation.⁸⁷ The only thing that justifies us is faith in Yeshua, plus nothing else. Someone might say, then,

'If all I need is faith in Jesus, why do I need to keep the Sabbath day holy, or why must I refrain from eating pork chops?'

Obedience to God's will is part and parcel of what New Testament faith in Jesus is all about,⁸⁸ and anyone who eats ham is sinning against Jesus and himself, whether he does it intentionally or in ignorance. Those who truly love Jesus and want to please Him will obey Him and His Father. God's will is found in Torah, and the New Testament affirms this and further reveals it at a greater depth than had been previously seen.⁸⁹

The Law declares the will of God in terms of what is sin and what is righteous. That's what Paul was saying in Romans 7:7, 12, 14 and that's why all the Jewish believers were keeping the Law of Moses in the book of Acts, including Paul. Was it wrong for all the Jewish Apostles to keep the Law? If so, there's nothing in the book of Acts, nor anywhere else in Scripture, that comes against their position. The mantra of the Church, as exemplified by Guthrie and Hagner, is that the Apostles didn't fully understand the ramifications of Christ's sacrifice, but 'in time' the Law would disappear because it was a 'gradual process.' The strange thing about that position is that nowhere in Acts does the Law disappear, nor does anyone say that it was wrong to observe it. Actually, the opposite is true.⁹⁰ In one

⁸⁵ See *No Longer Under the Law? Two Important Phrases*, at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/nlul.html> or ask for its PDF for how that phrase, and 'works of the Law,' are meant to be understood.

Also see *Law and Grace* at http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/Law_and_Grace.html or ask for its PDF.

⁸⁶ **Galatians** was written by Paul from Ephesus anywhere from 52 to 58 AD:

Bromiley, *ISBE*, vol. one, p. 692: 52-53 AD.

Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, pp. 486-488: 57 AD.

Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 233: 58 AD.

Romans was written by Paul from Corinth anywhere from 54 to 58 AD:

Bromiley, *ISBE*, vol. one, p. 692: 54 AD.

Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 233: 57 AD.

Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, pp. 486-488: 58 AD.

⁸⁷ For why the Gentile should not be physically covenantally circumcised 'for the right reasons,' or in order to keep Passover, or in alleged obedience to the Law (Gen. 17:10-14; Ex. 12:48-49), even if he thinks that he's not doing it for salvation or justification, see *Gentile Circumcision?* at http://SeedofAbraham.net/Gentile_Circumcision.html or ask for its PDF.

⁸⁸ Mt. 7:21f.; 12:46-50; John 14:15, 21; 15:10; 1st John 2:6; 3:4-5; Rev. 12:17; 14:12.

⁸⁹ For example, hate is equal to murder in the New Covenant, while in the Old the emphasis was on an actual murder that was sin and prohibited.

⁹⁰ In Acts 16:1, 3 Paul circumcises (Jewish) Timothy. If the Law was no longer valid, why did he do this? Twice in Acts Luke speaks of Paul taking the Nazarite Vow (Acts 18:18; 21:20-26; Num. 6:1f., see also Acts 23:1-5; 24:17-18; 25:8; 28:17.). Why does Paul desire to be in Jerusalem for 'this coming feast' (Acts 18:21), and in Acts 27:9 Luke writes of 'the fast,' which is the Law's Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:26-32). For more on how Acts is pro-Law, see *Paul & Acts* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/PaulAndActs.html> or ask for its PDF. Also interesting to realize is that there are a number of places in First Corinthians where Paul uses the Law to establish his point. This would be meaningless if the Law had been done away with:

1. Paul encourages the Corinthians to keep 'the Feast' (1st Cor. 5:6-8). This can only be Passover as he's just spoken about unleavened bread (Ex. 12:14-20; Lev. 23:6).

sense, though, Guthrie and Hagner are right. ‘In time’ the Law would disappear, but it wasn’t the Apostles, nor the New Testament, who caused it to happen—it was the Church of Rome (what would become the Roman Catholic Church) about 100 AD.

With the Jewish revolt in Judah and Galilee (66-70 AD) the Roman Empire destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. About one million Jews were killed in the war⁹¹ and about one hundred thousand were sold into slavery. When Jewish people all over the Roman Empire found this out they rioted, and Rome, not being one ‘to turn the other cheek,’ responded with force and brutality to put the riots down. Rome also persecuted Jews and anyone ‘looking like a Jew’ (i.e. any Gentile who kept the Sabbath) and *that’s* why the church of Rome changed Sabbath to Sunday, Passover to Easter, and threw out the Law of Moses—they didn’t want to be persecuted for walking in God’s holy ways. It had nothing to do with the Apostles, the resurrection, or the New Testament. Because it was so long ago, though, and because the Church has demonized the Law to justify and hide their sin since then,⁹² we see scholars, like Guthrie, not being able to correctly interpret God’s Word in the area of the Law. They are blinded by the traditional church paradigm that nullifies God’s Word. They can’t evaluate what they rightly translate, when Scripture plainly points to the validity of Mosaic Law for the believer. Be that as it may, most Christians don’t know the history of what happened to the Law and the reason it was devalued, hence, the need to be able to explain why both their general interpretations of the Law, and their specific interpretations of Scriptures concerning the Law, aren’t biblical.

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2. He sums up his ability to receive funds from the Corinthians by citing the Law (9:8-9f., cf. 2nd Cor. 11:7-9).
 3. He tells them that women should not speak in the assembly, again citing the Law (14:34-35).
 4. In 16:8 Paul speaks of staying at Ephesus until Pentecost, which is the Greek word for the Law’s holy day of *Shavu’ot* (the Feast of Weeks; Lev. 23:15-22; Dt. 16:9-10, 16). Why would Paul ‘note time’ to *Gentiles* by an ‘outdated’ Jewish feast unless he still kept the Law and taught it to them (see also Phil. 3:17; 4:9)?

⁹¹ Samuele Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath To Sunday* (Rome, Italy: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977), p. 171, and also note 17 (p. 102 in the PDF, and also note 21). This is the definitive work on the issue of Sabbath vs. Sunday and presents authoritative historical references for when the Sabbath and Passover were changed, and why, and that it was the Roman Catholic Church that changed them. Church history reveals that the 7th day Sabbath and Passover didn’t begin to give way to Sunday and Easter until about 100 AD, 70 years after the resurrection and 30 years after Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed. It was the Roman Catholic Church who threw out the Law and gave Christianity Sunday, Easter, Christmas and the eating of pig, and who mock Protestants today, whose motto from the Reformation is *sola scriptura* (‘only Scripture’ for one’s faith and practice), for not having any Scripture to support Sunday over God’s 7th day Sabbath, boasting that there is no Scripture in the New Testament for such a change. They readily admit to having changed it, saying that God gave them authority to do so. (See *Sunday—The Catholic Sabbath* at http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/Sunday_Catholic_Sabbath.html or ask for it’s PDF.)

After the 70 AD war the Jews were also marked out for a special fiscal tax, which was incumbent on any Gentile believers ‘who lived like Jews’ (ibid. p. 172; p. 102 in the PDF). Bacchiocchi notes that the Gentile Christians in Rome began to differentiate themselves from ‘Judaism’ (i.e. the keeping of the Law and the Sabbath), so that they wouldn’t be persecuted and unduly taxed (ibid., p. 167f.; p. 99f. in the PDF).

⁹² One of the first theological reasons that the so-called Church Fathers gave for the Sabbath giving way to Sunday had nothing to do with the resurrection, but that it, along with the Law, was given to the ‘wicked Jews’ only until grace and the Christ would come. Justin Martyr, writing about 140-150 AD, in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, states:

‘We, too, would observe your...Sabbath days, and in a word, all your festivals, if we were not aware of the reason why they were imposed upon you, namely, because of your sins and your hardness of heart’ (Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath To Sunday*, p. 224, Justin, *Dialogue* 18, 2, Falls, *Justin’s Writings*, p. 175).

Justin’s theological reason for God giving the Law to Israel was because it was a curse because Israel was sinful and stubborn, and that the Law would come to an end ‘in Christ,’ but this completely goes against Scripture (Dt. 4:5-8; 7:1f.; Is. 2:2-3; Psalm 119:1f.; Mt. 5:17-19; 22:35-40; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:31; 7:7, 12, 14; James 2:8-11; 4:11-12; 1st Jn. 3:4; 5:3; Rev. 14:12). It’s not the Law that’s a curse, but anyone who doesn’t obey it (Dt. 27:26; Gal. 3:10-13), hence, the reason for the substitutionary sacrifice of Messiah and the believer’s ‘death to self’ so that the Law cannot condemn him (Rom. 6:1f.). Now he can live ‘in Christ,’ using the Law’s righteous rules as his guideline for what is pleasing in God’s eyes and what is not.

Three False General Interpretations

Today, most Christians don't realize what happened to the Law after the Apostles died. They have been so brainwashed against the Law that they can't fathom anything else. In relation to most any New Testament Scripture on the Law one person might say, 'Well, I've got a different interpretation of that,' and he well might have, as there are plenty of Christian interpretations that 'explain away' Scriptures about the Law, but as we've seen with the four passages from the book of Hebrews, God's interpretation 'rings a bell'—it just sounds right! This is also borne out through prayerful communion and study of the Scriptures, all the Scriptures, and knowing that if Messiah and the Apostles didn't do away with the Law, interpretations that do aren't biblical.

Someone else might say, 'It's impossible to keep the Law!,' as if the keeping of the Law depended on doing it sinlessly. I usually ask the person, 'What commandment is it that you can't keep?' Most don't have an answer for that, only parroting that 'no one can keep the Law.' Then I say,

'The commandment that no one could keep was to love God with all his heart. If one failed at that it didn't matter if one kept the others, or that he thought that he did.'

Then I ask him if he's able to keep that commandment all the time 'in Christ?' Of course, anyone that's honest has to say, 'No,' but the beauty of it is that whether we fail at this commandment, or any other commandment, we can turn to the Lord and ask for forgiveness—and that's the point. Anyone under the Old Covenant could do the same. Keeping it 'perfectly,' without sin, was never the Lord's criteria for Israel because He knew that Israel was 'flesh and blood' (carnal). That's why He instituted the Mosaic sacrificial system, which is a reflection of Messiah's sacrifice, and we, too, are still flesh and blood, even with the Spirit, and so, we need to call on Messiah's sacrifice when we fail and sin.

Someone else might say, "Well, the Law's good for the Jews, but not for us Gentiles." This position, though, presents two major theological problems:

1. When Gentiles finally began to come into the New Covenant, the first one being Cornelius the Roman centurion⁹³ about eight or nine years after the resurrection, and also the Gentiles at Antioch (Acts 11:19-20) are we to think that they didn't follow the Jews who believed, in how they walked out their faith in Jesus? Are we to think that the Gentiles (or the Jews!) assembled on Sunday and Easter, instead of the 7th day Sabbath and Passover? Who was teaching whom about this new faith in the Jewish Messiah? As Acts 21:20f., plainly brings out, *all* the Jewish believers, including the Apostles and Paul, walked out their faith in Messiah Yeshua through the Law of Moses.⁹⁴
 - a. Also, the decision of the Council of Acts 15 reveals that the Gentile believers were going to the synagogues (both believing and unbelieving) *to learn the Law of Moses* (Acts 15:21).⁹⁵ Besides all that, Sunday, Easter, Christmas and the eating of ham, catfish and octopus, didn't come into the Church until after all the Apostles were dead.

⁹³ Acts 10:1f.; 11:17-18; 15:7.

⁹⁴ F. F. Bruce, not Torah observant, nevertheless, writes that Paul, in the book of Acts, was fully observant: 'Christianity' for Luke is 'no innovation *but the proper fulfillment of Israel's religion*. He is at pains to present Paul as a loyal and law-abiding Jew. This comes out particularly in the speeches made by Paul in his own defense in Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Rome' (Acts 22:3-21; 23:6; 24:10-21; 25:8, 10-11; 26:2-23; 28:17-20). 'In those apologetic speeches...Paul claims to believe *everything* in the law and the prophets and to have done nothing contrary to Israel's ancestral customs' (Acts 24:10-21; 25:8; 26:1-20; 28:17-20). 'The *one point at issue* between him and his accusers is the *resurrection faith*: by this he means the faith that Jesus rose from the dead...Jesus' resurrection is for him *the confirmation of the Jews' national hope*.' F. F. Bruce, author; Gordon D. Fee, general editor, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Book of the Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), pp. 9-10.

⁹⁵ For the biblical interpretation of this verse read *The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21*, specifically the chapter, *Acts 15:21—Go to the Synagogue?! p. 173f.* (p. 177f., in the 4th edition) or ask for its PDF.

2. The second theological problem with the position that the Law ‘is good for the Jews, but not for the Gentiles,’ is that Jesus came to make the Jew and the Gentile *one* in Him (John 10:15-16; Eph. 2:11f.; 1st Cor. 12:20; Eph. 5:30).
 - a. It would hardly be *one Flock* if it was sin for a Jewish believer to eat catfish and bacon, but not a Gentile (Lev. 11:1f.; 1st Tim. 4:4-5; note well Paul’s two qualifiers for eating food).
 - b. It would hardly be *one Flock* if it was sin for a Jew to buy and sell on the 7th day Sabbath, but a Gentile could buy gasoline for his car and take his family out for lunch at McDonald’s.
 - c. It would hardly be *one Flock* if it was sin for a Jew to keep pagan days like Christmas, Easter and Sunday (Dt. 12:28-32), but a Gentile could do those things with impunity.

Christianity, as it’s practiced today, is a perverse hybrid religion that no Apostle, including and especially the Apostle Paul,⁹⁶ would have recognized or condoned, but on the contrary, would have vigorously condemned, as the Apostle to the Gentiles did with his foolish Galatians. The standard for sin and what is pleasing in God’s eyes has always been Mosaic Law, and today, the Holy Spirit is revealing that to many Christians. God always wanted Israel to keep His Torah, and now she can, from the inside-out because of the sacrificial blood and the Spirit of God the Son.

Paul the Apostate?

Yeshua didn’t come to set us free from God’s holy Law that He gave to Israel, but to set us free from slavery to our sins, our sin nature, and the Kingdom of Satan, so that we could live in His Kingdom. Yeshua said that the rules of His Kingdom would be the Law of Moses (as interpreted by Yeshua; Mt. 5:1ff.). Paul continues in the vein of his Master and speaks about the Law being *for us* in our lifetime, just as Hebrews has spoken of it. The Apostle Paul rhetorically asks, and decisively answers, the issue about the Law and its validity for believers in Messiah Yeshua today, in his greatest theological letter:

“Do we then make *void the Law* through faith? ***Certainly not!*** On the contrary, we ***establish*** the Law!” (Romans 3:31)

Is the Law void because of our faith in Jesus? The Church says, ‘Yes!,’ but the Apostle Paul answers with a resounding, “***Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the Law!***” What could the Apostle Paul, who, more than any other writer of the New Testament,⁹⁷ has been posthumously credited with ‘doing away with the Law of Moses,’ have meant? Some have suggested that Paul was saying that the Law was good—for the Jews who *didn’t* believe in Jesus, but aside from the fact that he was writing to *believers* in Rome, would the Pharisees and other non-believing Jews in Jerusalem need to hear from Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:11; 13:9), whom they would undoubtedly have called an *apostate*, that the Law of Moses was ‘established’? Of course not. They would have laughed in his face. *They* knew that the Law ‘was established.’ The Law for them was the pinnacle of God’s revelation to Israel, surpassing even the great salvation–deliverance out of Egyptian slavery because it contained the will and character of Yahveh their God, which was rightfully precious even in their sight. They didn’t need an apostate, someone who believed that a dead man was the Messiah of Israel, to tell them that the Law was established, holy, and also, that it revealed what sin was—*every* Jew knew that.

What Paul meant by the Law being established, *with faith in Jesus*, is that for much of his life, he, like all the other Pharisees and Jewish people, had thought that the keeping of the Law was his ticket to

⁹⁶ Wasn’t Paul just being ‘a Jew to the Jews’? I deal with that in the PDF ‘A Jew to the Jews?’

⁹⁷ There were nine writers of the New Testament and they were all Jews except for Dr. Luke (Col. 4:10-14). Five of them knew Yeshua before His crucifixion: Matthew, John, Peter and Yeshua’s two half brothers, Judah (Jude), and Yakov (James, or more properly Jacob), with possibly a sixth knowing Yeshua before His crucifixion, Mark. The five who knew Yeshua before His resurrection wrote 10 of the 27 letters/books of the New Testament, while the four who didn’t wrote 17 letters/books. Paul wrote 13 of the 20 letters of the New Testament. Only Paul, though, is interpreted as speaking against the Law. Isn’t that a little strange, for only one of the nine writers of the New Testament to speak of the Law’s demise?

the New Jerusalem, but what he had come to find out was that the Messiah was the only Way to the heavenly city.⁹⁸ The Pharisees, whom this false belief had originated with, had put the proverbial ‘cart before the horse.’ They had no authority from God (Scripture) to teach that the keeping of the Law would save Israel (i.e. give her eternal life), but they did it nonetheless, and everyone believed them, including Paul, until his encounter with his chief adversary on the road to Damascus.

Now, though, Paul knew that Yeshua was the only way for eternal life *and* that the Law was the standard to live by, as it had been in the days of Moses and King David. *Now* the horse was pulling the cart! *Now* the Law had its proper, divine place—it had originally been *established* by God as the guideline for Israel to walk out her covenant faith in Him, and subsequently, in Messiah Yeshua. It was never intended to be a vehicle for salvation or salvation through *works righteousness*. The Law was given to Israel *after* they were *saved* from Egyptian slavery, and it’s the same with us. The Law was always intended to engender *works of righteousness* coming forth from one’s love for God. The Law is God’s wisdom to His beloved people Israel, both Jew and Gentile (Dt. 4:5-8; Is. 42:6).

This way, of walking out one’s faith in Yeshua by the power of the Holy Spirit through God’s Torah, also presents the true picture of the Messiah to the Jewish people that don’t yet believe in Him. The other way, the way of the Church and the so-called Messianic Jewish community, only drives the non-believing Jew further away from Yeshua. Religious Jews believe, and rightfully so, in Moses (i.e. the Law), but how can they believe in a Christ who condones breaking the dietary laws and eating catfish, shrimp, bacon and pork sausages, etc., and in pagan holy days like Sunday, Easter and Christmas, and that, to the exclusion of God’s holy 7th day Sabbath and Feasts? A ‘Law-less’ Christ is a biblical oxymoron and a demonic stumbling block to the Jewish people because it presents a false and sinful Messiah to the Jewish people.⁹⁹ A Law-less Christ should also be an oxymoron to every Christian.

Our God is a consuming Fire,¹⁰⁰ and so our very nature and being must conform to His if we are going to live in His presence. *We* must be changed and *that* is what the New Covenant is all about, the other covenants leading up to it. When the Father fully manifests, these Heavens and this Earth will literally melt away because He is Living Fire. Our God will fill up the eternal universe with His presence and,

‘The mountains will melt under Him and the valleys will be split like wax before the Fire, like water poured down a steep place’ (Micah 1:4).

The Apostle Peter adds that we should be,

‘looking for and hastening the coming of the Day of God, on account of which the Heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will melt with intense heat!’ (2nd Peter 3:12)

It’s then, *and only then*, that the Mosaic Covenant and its written code will be obsolete and vanish, as the author of Hebrews presents in 8:13. On Judgment Day we will be glorified and have Yeshua’s essence and character as our nature and being, which is reflected in the written code, *to the glory of God the Father and God the Son!* Yeshua is fully human and fully divine, and we will be, too,¹⁰¹ but until that day, as Hebrews 8:10 clearly speaks of, the Law of Moses, as interpreted by Yeshua, is the written guideline for both Jew and Gentile who believe in Yeshua, as to how we are to walk out our faith in the Messiah of Israel. Yeshua said it best when He said,

‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every* Word that proceeds from the mouth of Yahveh’ (Matthew 4:4, quoted from the Law; Deuteronomy 8:3).

⁹⁸ The heavenly city is the New Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10).

⁹⁹ The Hebrew word מָשִׁיחַ *Mashiach* comes into English meaning, ‘the anointed one.’ The term *Christ* comes into English from the Greek New Testament’s χριστός *Christos*, which means the same thing.

¹⁰⁰ Ex. 24:17; Dt. 4:24; Heb. 12:29.

¹⁰¹ Rom. 8:29-30; 1st Cor. 6:15; 15:48-49; Eph. 1:3-5; 5:30-32; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:15, 18; 2nd Thess. 2:13-14; 2nd Peter 1:2-4; 1st John 3:2.

The Church and Israel

Today we see two totally different religions for the Church and for Israel, but it wasn't like that in the days of the Apostles. The Greek word for *church* in the the Septuagint was used of the 'Congregation of Israel' as early as the book of Deuteronomy, to describe the assembly of Israel at Mt. Sinai (Dt. 4:10; 9:10; 18:16; see also Dt. 31:30; Judg. 20:2). It's used extensively throughout the Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament). In other words, in the days of the Apostle Paul it wasn't a new word, but one that spoke of Yahveh's people Israel, hearkening back 'to the Beginning,' of the nation and that's why Paul used it in speaking of the congregations or assemblies of Jews and Gentiles who believed in the Jewish Messiah. He was extending it to include the Gentiles. He didn't make it up 'for Christians,' and it certainly wasn't used to artificially distinguish a Christian assembly from a Jewish one.

F. F. Bruce, in commenting on the Greek word for 'church' (*ekklesia*) in Acts 5:11 says that it,

"has both a Gentile and a Jewish background. In its Gentile sense it denotes chiefly the citizen-assembly of a Greek city (cf. Acts 19:32, 39, 41), but" its Jewish usage "denotes the community of believers in Jesus. In the Septuagint," *ekklesia* "is one of the words used to denote *the people of Israel* in their religious character as Yahveh's assembly. *It's a pity* that in so many English versions of the New Testament it's rendered by the term 'church,' which is absent from the English Old Testament. Readers of the Greek Bible can draw their own conclusions from the use of *ekklesia* in Old and New Testament alike, as could the readers of William Tyndale's English translation when they came upon the word 'congregacion' in both Testaments."¹⁰²

"In Deuteronomy and the following OT books, except Jeremiah and Ezekiel, *ἐκκλησία*" (*ekklesia*-church) "is the regular LXX" (Septuagint) "rendering of Heb. *qahal*, 'assembly;' in the first four books of the OT, as in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, *qahal* is regularly represented in LXX by *συναγωγή*" (*suna'gogay*, i.e. synagogue) "which is also used throughout LXX as the rendering of *edah*, 'congregation'... The Christian *ἐκκλησία* *ekklesia* was both new and old: new, because of its relation and witness to Jesus as Lord and to the epoch-making events of his death and exaltation and the sending of the Spirit; old, *as the continuation of the 'congregation of the LORD'* which had formerly been confined within the limits of one nation, but now, having died and risen with Christ, was to be open to all believers without distinction."¹⁰³

Bruce calls Israel, in the days of Moses, 'the *church* in the wilderness,' where God set 'forth the divine order.'¹⁰⁴ How very true that is, which further cements the concept that God's holy Torah is for all who believe in Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, pp. 107-108.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 108, note 23.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 130.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 77, Bruce writes,

"The apostles continued to live *as observant Jews*, attending the set services of worship in the Jerusalem Temple. The two principal daily services accompanied the offering of the morning and the evening sacrifices' (Ex. 29:38-46), and this is where and why we find Peter and John going up to the Temple in Acts 3:1-10, where Peter healed the lame man from birth. It was 'at the ninth hour' or 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, in time 'for the service of prayer which accompanied the evening sacrifice.'"

This explains why we never see a central 'church' established in Jerusalem by the Lord's Apostles. They never broke away from the Law and the 'outmoded and pointless' Temple, as Hagner wrote of (p. 3). They were Law observant unto their deaths, even with the Temple not existing (Rev. 14:12).

THE PRIESTHOOD: JUST WHAT HAS CHANGED?

The book of Hebrews *compares* the two covenants, their high priests and sacrifices, and explains why the New is better. It doesn't negate the Old Covenant, nor the Law. Here are some of the changes in the Law of Moses for the New Covenant:

Reference	Aaron	Yeshua
1. High Priest	Sinned	Sinless
2. High Priest	Died	Eternal
3. High Priest	Tribe of Levi.....	Tribe of Judah
4. High Priest	High Priest of Israel	High Priest and King of Israel
5. High Priest	Had the Spirit—not able to give it ...	Has the Holy Spirit and gives it to all who believe
6. Sacrifice	Done yearly ¹⁰⁶	Done once
7. Sacrifice	Sins forgiven.....	Sins forgiven and nature transformed
8. Sacrifice	Fresh start in life	Fresh start in life and the promise of glorification

In comparing the two covenants the author of Hebrews speaks of Aaron, the Old Covenant's first high priest of Israel, as being weak in the flesh and having sinned¹⁰⁷ and eventually dying (at 123 years old; Numbers 33:38-39). On the other hand, Yeshua, the New Covenant's high priest, never sinned and is eternal. It's easy to see who is greater. Aaron and his Sons, even though they could empathize with carnal man, sinned and died. Yeshua knows what it is to be made of flesh and blood, and so, He can not only empathize with our faults, weaknesses and sins, and pray for us,¹⁰⁸ as Aaron did, but Yeshua is also able to give us the Holy Spirit (Heb. 6:4), which strengthens us to overcome our temptations and sins. In other words, Yeshua is the perfect high priest, the one Aaron imperfectly symbolized.

The author of Hebrews speaks of the sacrifices for the Day of Atonement continually being offered (once a year), but contrasts them to Yeshua's sacrifice, which was done once. This doesn't do away with Mosaic sacrifice, as Acts 21:20-24, 26 clearly reveals,¹⁰⁹ but as the writer himself speaks of, Yeshua died 'once for all...to bear the sins of many.'¹¹⁰ In other words, Yeshua doesn't have to come

¹⁰⁶ This speaks of the once a year sacrifice on the Day of Atonement for the nation of Israel.

¹⁰⁷ Heb. 5:2; 7:28. Aaron sinned in the Gold Calf incident (Ex. 32:1f.); he also rebelled against God, along with his sister, by verbally attacking his brother Moses (Num. 12:1f.); and he was a partner with Moses when they both rebelled against God, striking the rock instead of speaking to it (Num. 20:1-13).

¹⁰⁸ Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15; 7:23-28. Unlike Aaron, though, because Yeshua is God the Son, we don't have 'to wait on line' in order for Yeshua to hear our prayers, and He is continually interceding for us (Is. 53:12; Heb. 7:25; cf. Rom. 8:26-34).

¹⁰⁹ The passage clearly reveals that sacrifice was still in effect for believers, and Paul, because v. 23 speaks of a vow and v. 24 speaks of the shaving of the head, both of which can only be the Vow of the Nazarite (Num. 6:1f.). The *offering* of v. 26 are the animal *sacrifices* that would have made for each of the four men and Paul to be ceremonially clean in order to enter into the Nazarite Vow, with its three animal sacrifices for each of the men and Paul at the end of the vow (Num. 6:14f.), which Paul was also going to pay for. All this, so that everyone would know, 25 years *after* the resurrection, that the Apostle Paul kept the Law (Acts 21:24). The taking of the Nazarite Vow seems to have been a common thing for the believers as the four men were already walking in it before Paul came (Acts 21:23-24; v. 25 speaks against Gentile circumcision).

¹¹⁰ Hebrews 7:27-28; 9:12; 10:10.

back in every generation to sacrifice Himself for each generation (Heb. 9:24-26). ‘Once for all’ does not speak against the Mosaic sacrifices—it demonstrates the power and efficacy of Yeshua’s sacrifice, which was only needed once versus the countless sacrifices, over the centuries, that were made every year by the Aaronic high priest on the Day of Atonement for Israel’s forgiveness of sins.

The sacrificial blood of bulls and goats that the Aaronic high priest sacrificed once a year, to cleanse himself, and all Israel of her sins, so that they could start with ‘a clean slate,’ has its counterpart in the sacrificial blood of Yeshua. His blood is better than the blood of bulls and goats because it is living, eternal and on the very Altar in Heaven, always available, not only for forgiveness and cleansing from sin for a fresh start in life, but also able to transform one’s nature into His, along with offering eternal life and glorification. Even though Israel could obtain forgiveness and cleansing through animal sacrifice, they couldn’t obtain a new nature, nor eternal life and glorification, nor the Holy Spirit, which in the Old Testament was generally given to certain prophets, priests and kings. Israel was left with her Adamic nature and death, hence, the better sacrifice of Messiah Yeshua and the better covenant.

Also, the high priest of the New Covenant doesn’t come from the tribe of Levi, not that that’s bad in and of itself, but the tribe of Judah, the kingly line. With this, the New Covenant’s high priest is also the King of Israel, combining the two offices into His one person (Ps. 110:4; Zech. 6:12-13; Heb. 5:1ff.), which wasn’t possible through a traditional interpretation of the Law.

In the Mosaic Covenant only men of the Sons of Aaron could sacrifice and be priests, and only men of the tribe of Levi, the Levitical priests, could be their helpers. In the New Covenant, though, all those who believe in Yeshua, both men *and* women, are His assistant priests.¹¹¹

In the thousand year reign of Messiah Yeshua, from this earthly Jerusalem (Rev. 20:1-6), there will be the reinstatement of Mosaic sacrifice.¹¹² A glorious Temple will come into existence in Jerusalem and the Prince (the Messiah) will rule over Israel and the world. This Temple will have a high priest descended from Levi and Aaron, of the family of Zadok, offering sacrifices,¹¹³ not Yeshua, for He will not be the earthly high priest. Even Yeshua glorified doesn’t assume or take that position, or negate the laws for the high priest of Israel on this Earth. With daily sacrifice in the millennial Kingdom of Messiah Yeshua (Ezk. 40–48; see also Rev. 20:1-6) it certainly reinforces that neither the Mosaic Covenant, nor the Law, has vanished, yet. It truly is a gradual process.

The New Covenant’s ultimate place of assembly and worship isn’t the Tabernacle that Moses made in the Wilderness, which was a picture of the one in Heaven (Ex. 25:8f.), nor the Temple in earthly Jerusalem, although the Apostles and Jewish believers assembled and worshipped there,¹¹⁴ but it is the Tabernacle in Heaven itself—the New Jerusalem.¹¹⁵ The word *tabernacle* means *to dwell* and in this case it speaks of the literal dwelling place of God Almighty. Believers have God dwelling within them (1st Cor. 6:19), but they will dwell and live forever in the very presence of God Almighty when the New is fulfilled:

“And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold! the Tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.’” (Revelation 21:3)

This echoes, and is the fulfillment of God’s promise to Father Abraham, that He would be the God of Abraham’s *Seed*, for that is the word translated as *descendants*, and give them a Land flowing with milk and honey, which the Land of Israel pictures, but is truly the heavenly city, where the High Priest and King of Israel will reign forever and ever with His beloved people Israel.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ 1st Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6.

¹¹² Ezekiel 44:3; 45:17-18, 21-25; 46:1-7, 12, etc.

¹¹³ Of the line of Zadok, from Aaron the first high priest: 2nd Sam. 8:17; 15:24; 1st Kings 1:34, 39; 2:35; Ezk. 40:46; 44:15-31; 45:18-25. For sacrifices: Ezk. 40:38-46; 41:22; 43:18-27, etc.

¹¹⁴ Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:20; 21:26; 22:17; 24:18.

¹¹⁵ Heb. 12:22; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10.

¹¹⁶ Ex. 3:8, 17, 13:5; Dt. 11:8-15f., etc.

MOSAIC LAW AND THE BELIEVER

Christianity is the only religion in the world that doesn't fully emulate its founder. This isn't because of Messiah's living example, nor what He said about the Law of Moses (Mt. 5:17-19; 22:35-34; Lk. 16:17), or even what is written in the New Testament, but because of the Church's heretical interpretations of some Scriptures in the New Testament,¹¹⁷ like the four passages from the book of Hebrews that the Church uses as proof texts against the Law, but,

1. Jesus kept the seventh day Sabbath holy all His life. If He hadn't kept it it would have been sin for Him and we know that He didn't sin, so His keeping of the seventh day Sabbath is a biblical certainty.¹¹⁸ Why isn't the Sabbath still holy for Christianity?
2. Jesus kept the Passover and the week long Feast of Unleavened Bread all His life, as well as all the other Feasts of Israel (Lev. 23), but Christians don't. If He hadn't kept them it would have been sin for Him and we know that He didn't sin, so His keeping of all the Feasts of Israel is a biblical certainty. Why aren't the Feasts of Israel still holy for Christianity?
3. Jesus never ate pork, shrimp, catfish, clams, oysters, fat, blood, ham or bacon because to do so would have been sin for Him, the breaking of the dietary laws (Lev. 3:17; 11:1f.), nor did any of the Apostles, including Peter (Acts 10:14), but Christians eat those unclean meats. His keeping of the dietary laws all His life is a biblical certainty, so how can Christians eat things that Jesus and His Apostles never ate?

As I've already brought out in the section, *What is Sin?*¹¹⁹ all the Apostles, including Paul, were keeping the Law of Moses 25 years after the resurrection, which means that we should be keeping it, too. Those who do not keep the three points above, as well as all the other laws that apply to them, are following the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and their hatred of the Jews (anti-Semitism). Even if one is a Protestant or Pentecostal, he is following the anti-Law theology of the Roman Catholic Church and their denigration of everything "Jewish."¹²⁰

The three points, the seventh day Sabbath, the Feasts of Israel, and the dietary laws are three major pillars of the Law that apply to everyone today—Jew, Gentile, male and female. There is one law that applies to only the Jewish male (physical covenantal circumcision),¹²¹ and there are some that apply to only women (e.g. laws of menstruation; Lev. 15:19-30), and some laws that apply to only men (e.g. a full, untrimmed beard;¹²² Lev. 19:27, and tassels or *tzit'ziot*;¹²³ Num. 15:37-41). There are also laws that apply to only farmers (Dt. 22:9-10) and there are laws that only apply to a Nazarite (Numbers 6:1-21), while there is another pillar that applies to everyone (the law on tithing).¹²⁴

While we are on this Earth we are to keep all of God's commandments that apply to us because they are God's blueprint for how we are to walk out our faith in His Son. Yeshua didn't come to do away with the Law, but rather, to amplify it (Mt. 5:1ff.), etc. The principle that we follow for Torah observance is that we do all the laws that apply to us that we can do. Obviously, with no Temple, Levitical

¹¹⁷ See *Law 102* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/law102.html> or ask for its PDF for some other Scriptures that the Church uses against the Law of Moses, and why the Church's interpretation of them is not biblical.

¹¹⁸ John 8:46; 2nd Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1st John 3:5; 1st Peter 2:22.

¹¹⁹ Page 17f.

¹²⁰ For more on this see *Sabbath Denigration* at <http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/sabbdenig.html> or ask for its PDF.

¹²¹ For why this is so see *Gentile Circumcision?* at http://SeedofAbraham.net/Gentile_Circumcision.html or ask for its PDF.

¹²² For why God desires all men to wear full, untrimmed beards see *The Biblical Beard* at <http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/beard.html> or ask for its PDF.

¹²³ For why the commandment to wear *tzit'ziot* applies to only men ask for the PDF *Tzit'ziot and Women*.

¹²⁴ See *The Tithe in Ancient Israel* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/tithe.html> or ask for its PDF.

animal sacrifices are put on hold and some parts of the laws of ceremonial cleanliness (e.g. the sacrificial part), but as for *if* we should do the laws that we can do the scriptural answer is a resounding ‘Yes!’ This is supported from the first book of the New Testament to the last (Mt. 5:17-19; Rev. 14:12 and also, Acts 21:20-26) and what is called Ezekiel’s (future) Temple (Ezk. 40–48) where the Lord commands animal sacrifice. Many Christians rightly believe this Temple will be for a thousand years, with the Prince who is mentioned being Messiah Yeshua (Rev. 20:1-6).

No one person, including Yeshua, ever kept all the laws of Moses because some laws only applied to the high priest, while others only applied to farmers. Were fishermen, then, guilty of breaking the laws that applied to farmers? Of course not. Only the laws that applied to any one individual were required by God to be kept by that individual. Only the high priest was authorized by God to offer up the sacrifice of the goat for the sins of Israel on the day of Atonement (Lev. 16). Yeshua, while in Israel, never did that because He wasn’t the high priest, but Yeshua kept all the laws of Moses that applied to Him. Obviously, though, there were many laws that Yeshua didn’t keep because they didn’t apply to Him. It should be the same with us. We’re to keep all the laws of Moses that apply to us.

The Covenants (and the Law, which arose from the Mosaic Covenant) are an organic whole. The New Covenant, what I also call the Yeshuic Covenant, is the divine Rose on the Stem of the Mosaic or Old Covenant, which sprang from the Seed of Abraham, the Abrahamic Covenant. Another way of looking at its inherent oneness is to behold God’s love to Father Abraham by choosing him from everyone else on Earth, and after his death, saving his descendants, through the lineage of Isaac and Jacob, from Egyptian slavery, giving them His divine rules for living, and the land of Canaan as their inheritance and possession, and then sending the Messiah of Israel through that lineage to be crucified for them, and any Gentile who attaches himself to Israel through faith in Yeshua.

Lukyn Williams, in commenting on the only place in the Old Testament that literally speaks of a New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34), says that God never intended to do away with His Law, but to make Israel to walk in it (by His Spirit):

‘God’s words through Jeremiah do not announce the coming of a new Law, but of a new principle of keeping the Law, according to which God forgives the sinner, writes the Law on his heart, brings him into a new relation to Himself, and makes Himself known to him.’¹²⁵

Every law in the Old Covenant either flows directly into the New Covenant, staying the way it is, or is amplified, changed or modified, etc., because of the sacrifice of Messiah and His Spirit within us. The following is a partial listing of laws that illustrate six conceptual points, in relation to New Covenant believers and the Law on Earth for believers now, followed by some explanations:

1. Amplified	2. Changed	3. Modified	4. Negated	5. Put on hold	6. Unaltered
Adultery	High Priest	Fellowship	Gentile Circ.	Dead bones	Beard
Feasts	Sacrifice	Punishments	Oaths	Land allotment	Dietary laws
Love God		Tithes		Levitical sacrifice	Discharges
Murder					Farming laws
Ox–Don’t Muzzle					Give to poor
Remember!					Menstruation
Sabbath					Prohibitions
					<i>Tzit’ziot</i>
					Vows

¹²⁵ David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), p. 686. A. Lukyn Williams, *Manual of Christian Evidences for Jews* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1919) I; p. 184.

1. Amplified Commandments

1. Adultery—It's still a sin to commit adultery, but Yeshua says that one must not look upon a woman to lust after her, for that is equal to the sin of adultery in His Kingdom. The essence of the Mosaic commandment always contained 'lust' (Ex. 20:17) but it took Yeshua to reveal it.
2. Feasts of Israel—The sanctity of the Feasts, especially Passover, where Yeshua is seen as the Lamb of God, are God ordained events for honoring the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God originally made them with the New Covenant in mind, so there's no need for pagan holy days that have nothing to do with Jesus Christ and whose origin is in idolatry.
3. Love God—with all your heart, soul and strength (Dt. 6:4-5). This is amplified when seen in the light of Yeshua crucified. *This* is God's standard of love, that while we were yet His enemy, He sacrificed His Son for us. As He has done for us we must do for others, even our enemies.
 - a. This was seen in Mosaic Law in helping (loving) one's enemy by helping him pull his ox out of the ditch (Ex. 23:4-5)—It's amplified by Messiah for those enemies who attack us (love them and turn the other cheek; Mt. 5:39).
4. Murder—It's still a sin to murder, but Yeshua emphasized that in His Kingdom hatred is viewed as an act of murder. The essence of the Mosaic commandment always contained 'hatred,' but it took Yeshua to show it to us.
5. Ox—Don't muzzle the ox that treads out the grain (Dt. 25:4). This also pertains to supporting those in full time ministry (1st Cor. 9:14).
6. Remember!—Remember every day the day that God saved you from Egyptian slavery and Pharaoh's oppressive yoke (Ex. 13:8; Dt. 16:3). This remains, and our salvation from sin, sickness, Satan's yoke and death should also be part of our daily remembrance and thanksgiving. The Gentile, one with Christ and Israel, was 'in the loins' of Father Abraham, and so, the Gentile is 'one with Israel' that was enslaved by Pharaoh (1st Cor. 10:1-2f.; Eph. 2:11f., cf. Heb. 7:1-10) and is able to thank the Lord for saving him from Egyptian slavery.
7. Sabbath—The holiness of the 7th day Sabbath has been amplified because we now know that the Sabbath is a perfect reflection of Messiah Yeshua as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.¹²⁶

2. Changed Commandments for the New Jerusalem

1. High Priest—Yeshua comes from the tribe of Judah, not Levi, and His priesthood is located in the Heavens, not on the Earth. Yeshua is the King and High Priest of Israel forever, according to the oath of God the Father (Ps. 110:4), and when He returns for His thousand year reign over Israel, He, as King, will be the authority over the Levitical high priest who will perform the earthly, Mosaic sacrifices (Heb. 7:20-28).
2. Sacrifice—one sacrifice, eternal, on the Altar in the heavenly Tabernacle in the New Jerusalem (Heb. 8:1-2; 9:23-24; for the heavenly Altar see Rev. 6:9; 11:1).

3. Modified Commandments

1. Fellowship—Israel was not to associate with Gentiles, but to be a separate, holy people unto Yahveh.¹²⁷ The commandments that separated the Jew from the Gentile are modified in Yeshua (Acts 10:1-11:18; Eph. 2:11f.). Jewish believers can, and should, *fellowship* with Gentile believers, but neither of them should *fellowship* with non-believers, which is the same principle of ancient Israel not fellowshiping with pagan Gentiles.
 - a. Also, a believer must not marry one who doesn't believe in Yeshua, for 'what fellowship has Light with darkness?' (1st Cor. 7:39; 2nd Cor. 6:14-15) This is the parallel to someone in ancient Israel not marrying a pagan.

¹²⁶ See *Sabbath and Yeshua* at http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/sabbath_and_yeshua.htm or ask for the PDF, and also, the PDF, *Sabbath—How to Keep God's 7th Day Sabbath Holy*.

¹²⁷ Ex. 23:32-33; 34:12, 15; Lev. 20:22-26; Dt. 7:3-11; 23:6; Josh. 23:1-15; Ezra 9:1-10:44; Neh. 13:1-3, 23-28.

2. Punishments—With no Mosaic theocracy today the stoning of witches, homosexuals and blasphemers is put on hold. It seems, though, that physical punishment (Dt. 25:1-3) and the death sentence will be upheld in the Kingdom of Yeshua on this Earth from Jerusalem when He rules the nations for a thousand years ‘with a rod of iron’ (Rev. 12:5; 19:15; Rev. 20:1-6). The difference between Yeshua not condemning the woman caught in adultery (Jn. 8:2-11), and His punishing homosexuals, witches and adulterers, etc., with death in His earthly reign, is that when He was in Israel 2,000 years ago He wasn’t ‘an authority figure’ (e.g. a judge; Lk. 12:13-14), and He hadn’t come to condemn anyone, but when He rules for a thousand years He will be the King of Israel, and Mosaic Law will be in effect, howbeit, as God the Son He is able to know the heart and adjust the sentence or pardon, accordingly. He did it with David when David committed murder and adultery (2nd Sam. 11:1–12:25).
3. Tithes—With no Temple, nor Levitical priesthood in operation, tithes and offerings are transferred to those who are full time ministers who function in the Body like the Levitical priests, as far as teaching and instructing the people in holiness and righteousness, in word and example, for all the tithe is God’s (Lev. 27:30f.). When the millennial Temple is built, tithes and offerings will revert back to the literal Levitical priests (Num. 18:26f.).

4. Negated Commandments

1. Gentile Circumcision—New Testament Scripture comes squarely against it, so the Gentile must not be physically circumcised ‘in order to be Torah compliant.’ With the New Covenant comes a new sign of entry into the covenant, the circumcision made without hands—the circumcision of the heart, the new nature.¹²⁸
2. Oaths—The ancient taking of an oath (swearing) established that one was telling the truth, etc. (Ex. 22:11; Lev. 5:4; Dt. 10:20). This has been set aside in the New Testament for a believer who should only need to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ (Mt. 5:37) because the word that comes out of his mouth should be pure and true. He doesn’t have to support it with an oath, which in Yeshua’s day, was lightly entered into, hence, one reason why Messiah said what He did.

5. ‘Put On Hold’ Commandments—until the Millennium

1. Dead bones—Touching dead persons or bones, and having to be cleansed on the third and seventh days by the ashes of the red heifer in water (Num. 19:1f.) will be practiced when the Temple is operating, but with no Temple and no ashes we should bathe or shower and ask Yeshua to cleanse us.
2. Land allotment—The land of Israel will be divided up between all the tribes of Israel, and also, the stranger (believer) in her midst who loves her (Ezk. 47:21-23; 48:1f.).
3. Levitical sacrifices (Lev. 1:1–5:1f.) As with the Sabbath and the Feasts, the meaning of each Mosaic sacrifice is amplified to include a concept of redemption found in the sacrifice of Messiah Yeshua. Although Levitical sacrifices aren’t practiced today, they were in the days of the Apostles and they will be in the millennial reign of the Prince of Israel.
 - a. The daily sacrifice (Ex. 29:38-43).
 - b. The yearly Day of Atonement sacrifices (Lev. 16:1f.).
 - c. The Sabbath, monthly and Feast sacrifices (Num. 28:1ff.).
 - d. The Levitical high priest, from the lineage of Aaron through Zadok, will assume the priesthood in the days of Messiah Yeshua (Ezk. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11).

6. Unaltered Commandments

1. Beard—A full, untrimmed beard for the man (Lev. 19:27), which is one of God’s distinguishing marks for the men of Israel.

¹²⁸ Why the male Gentile must not be physically circumcised, ‘to keep the Law,’ is further explained on p. 34f.

2. Dietary laws—Prohibitions against eating unclean meats, fat and blood, and of food that has been contaminated by dead animals, etc., falling into food containers, etc. (Lev. 3:17; 11:1-47; Dt. 14:1-21), for Israel’s health and well being.
3. Discharges (Lev. 15:1-33)—For example, not to go to work if one has a head cold so that he doesn’t pass it on to others, nor to be intimate with his wife during his time of sickness, or during her menstrual time (Lev. 20:18).¹²⁹
4. Farming laws—For instance, letting the land lie fallow in the 7th year (Lev. 25:1-7) and not sowing two different kinds of seed in the same area (Dt. 22:9-10).
5. Give to the poor—Ex. 23:14; Lev. 19:10; 23:22; Dt. 15:7-11; 24:14-15.
6. Menstrual cycle—No sexual intercourse for at least the seven days of one’s flow (Leviticus 15:19-30). Although this commandment also speaks of ceremonial cleansing, with sacrifice, sacrifice was for entry into the Temple. When the Temple is built we will follow that, but with no Temple a woman should bathe or shower and ask Yeshua to cleanse her.
7. Prohibitions against witchcraft, divination and conjuring up the dead, etc. (Lev. 20:6; Dt. 18:10-12).
 - a. A man must not lie with his father’s wife (Lev. 20:11; 1st Cor. 5:1f.).
 - b. Homosexuality is still a sin (Lev. 20:13; 1st Cor. 6:9).
 - c. All the sins listed in Leviticus 20, with the punishment modified to expulsion from the congregation. The sin brings eternal punishment, if not repented of.
8. *Tzit’ziot*—The wearing of *tzit’ziot* or tassels (Num. 15:37-41) is still in effect and is another one of God’s distinctive *marks* for Israel, like the beard, the Sabbath and the Feasts, that distinguish His people from the world. Also falling into this category is the *mezuzah* on the doorpost (Dt. 6:9; 11:20).
9. Vows (Num. 30:1-16; Dt. 23:21). Vows can pertain to the Nazarite Vow, or to any vow that one makes to the Lord. Of course, the sacrifices for the Nazarite Vow are on hold.

The six major points listed above reveal a conceptual theme for walking out the Law of Moses, with some commandments amplified and some unaltered, etc. Also, some commandments overlap to another point. There’s no one concept that applies straight across the board for all the Law, but each commandment, statute and ordinance, etc., is seen in the light of the New Covenant. The following are some commandments that need a little more explanation, and fall into four of the above categories (amplified, modified, negated and ‘put on hold’).

¹²⁹ A woman doesn’t have to go to a traditional Jewish *mikva* (ceremonial pool of water) because taking a bath or a shower fulfills the biblical requirement (Lev. 15:13f.). Ceremonial cleanliness is related to the Temple, but the menstrual cycle is related to all women, wherever they might live. One must not cohabit with a man during her time. At the very least, for the seven days when she is flowing she should be ‘set apart,’ which means no sexual relations during that time. Also, not working outside the home is a biblical consideration for this time because a ‘woman in her time’ is drained of her energy, her body preparing for possible conception. Of course, many of today’s accepted drugs mask a woman’s energy level, such as caffeine (in tea, coffee and soda) and white, refined sugar, and pain medications. Also, where a woman in her menstrual time sits should have a towel or some such object on it so that if another wants to sit in that chair or couch, with the removal of the towel, he can, although the place where she sits can be ‘her place,’ with the towel left there so that she can sit there whenever she wants to. This concept, of her being ceremonially unclean, applies both to the one who might come in contact with where she has sat (possible ‘accidents’) and also extends to her when the Temple will be in operation and she would want to go there.

God says in Lev. 15:f., that we are to be separated when there is ‘an issue’ from our body (e.g. flu, nasal, diarrhea, etc.) and wait until we are healed, bathing (or showering) after it, which not only cleans us physically, but also ceremonially. In other words, if one has a cold he should stay home and not infect all that he might come in contact with. With semen issuing from the body and coming on fabric (e.g. bed sheets) the person need only shower and wash the sheets and will be ceremonially clean in the evening. He can go to work during the day, as the ceremonial uncleanness for the day only effects a time in the Temple.

Amplified Commandments

Divorce

In the Old Covenant, God granted divorce for ‘uncleanness’ found in a woman (Dt. 24:1-3). In the New Covenant, divorce between two believers shouldn’t happen unless fornication occurs (Mt. 5:32). Biblical fornication is *not* adultery, sexual immorality or even pre-marital sex, as the Church teaches, and it’s certainly not ‘incompatibility,’ because if it were, it would make those sins unforgivable by Yeshua, and we know that can’t be true (John 8:2-11; Acts 13:39). Biblical fornication is the sin of cult prostitution (Mt. 5:32; Acts 15:20).¹³⁰

Divorce is not an option for two believers even though Dt. 24 says that God granted divorce. Yeshua states that it was because of the hardness of their hearts, and goes back, ‘to the Beginning.’ In other words, ‘no divorce’ was already embedded within Torah, waiting for the time of Christ and the New Covenant, when our heart (nature) would be able to be transformed by the Holy Spirit and the blood of Messiah. Because of this, and that Yeshua has forgiven us of all our sins, our standard of living is much greater than Israel’s was under Moses, as Messiah teaches (Mt. 5:20ff.). We are able, with God’s transforming power, to not only forgive an offending party for adultery, but to also love and pray for him. If he truly repents and asks for forgiveness then healing of the marriage can take place, if not, then separation is advised, but not divorce (1st Cor. 7:10-11).¹³¹ This way was not open to ancient Israel before Yeshua’s death because they didn’t have the transforming power of the Spirit to help them walk in the *essence* of the great commandment, to love our neighbor, which is forgiveness.

Yeshua’s Kingdom has a heart transplant available for every believer so that divorce is not necessary *if* they will both submit to Him, as believers should. Yet, how many divorces take place among believers today because of improper teaching on marriage and divorce? In 1989 I asked the County Clerk of Tulsa, Oklahoma USA what the percentage of divorce among Christians was compared to those who were non-Christians and the answer shocked me. No difference! What a terrible witness to those in darkness, and also, the ruining of many Christian lives because Christians have been wrongly instructed in what constitutes a biblical New Testament divorce. In Yeshua’s Kingdom it shouldn’t be like that. God gives us His heart (Ezk. 36:24-27), if we are serious with Him and ourselves. Divorce is granted and essential in the New Covenant only if the believing spouse walks in a sin that severs him from Yeshua (apostasy), but it’s not a ‘catch-all,’ as it was in the days of Yeshua, and in our day.

Enemies

In the Old Testament, Israel went to war and killed her enemies, but there were people within Israel who could become an enemy of an Israeli—another Israeli! Yahveh spoke of doing good to this enemy, which is the kernel of Yeshua’s ‘love your enemy:’

“If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you must surely bring it back to him again. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you must surely help him with it” (Ex. 23:4-5; see also Prov. 25:21-22).

In the New Covenant, Yeshua commands us to love our enemy and to ‘turn the other cheek,’ which is symbolically seen in this commandment by casting aside anger, revenge and bitter feelings one might

¹³⁰ See *The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21*, the chapter on *Jesus and Divorce*, p. 87f. You can read two chapters of it, the *Introduction* and *Acts 15:10–The Yoke* at <http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/LiftingTheVeil.html> or ask for their PDFs. Also, ask for the chapter on *Jesus and Divorce* for why biblical fornication is cult prostitution, which constitutes a biblical divorce.

¹³¹ This speaks of two believers. If the sinner is not a believer then she may divorce him (1st Cor. 7:12-15).

have for his enemy, and helping him in time of need. Yeshua amplifies this and calls us to bless our enemies and those who abuse us (Matthew 5:43-48), which we can only do by His blood and His Spirit, as we war against the spiritual enemies of our soul and body:

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12, see also Eph. 6:1-13).

In the New Jerusalem, when the New Covenant is fulfilled, there won't be any wars, nor any enemies.

Modified Commandments

Illegitimate Children

Under Mosaic Law children born out of wedlock weren't to enter the congregation of Yahveh (Dt. 32:2), which shows us how serious God is about sex outside of marriage. Also, the Moabite and the Ammonite were not to enter, either. Sins, though, like murder, adultery, and being an illegitimate child, or *persona non grata*, that were not able to be forgiven under the Old Covenant are forgivable and forgiven through the precious, powerful and eternal blood of Yeshua in the New Covenant:

‘Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him everyone who believes is justified *from all things* from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.’ (Acts 13:38-39)

The illegitimate child, as well as the Moabite and Ammonite, may enter the congregation of the Lord today in the mighty name and through the sacrificial blood of Messiah Yeshua. It seems, though, that what this Mosaic law now speaks of, symbolically, for the New Covenant, would be anyone not truly Born Again, or the person who despises the things of the God of Israel, that is to say, the Moabite or the Ammonite, who, even though they were related to Father Abraham through his nephew Lot (Gen. 19:30-38), had descendants who would become enemies of Israel. Many times, the enemies of believers are their own relatives and those of their own home.

Redemption of Firstborn Sons and Male Animals

In the Old Covenant God commanded that all the firstborn sons were to be redeemed with five shekels of silver (Num. 18:14-16, cf. 3:47)¹³² and all firstborn (clean) male animals were to be sacrificed to Him. The unclean donkey (Ex. 13:1f.) was to be redeemed by the sacrifice of a lamb. If it wasn't redeemed it was to have its neck broken, which pictures our redemption through Yeshua, the Lamb of God, for we are all like the stubborn, unclean donkey, but Yeshua redeemed us, dying in our place.

With no Temple and Levitical priesthood, those who are farmers, cattlemen and shepherds should slaughter the firstborn male animals and give the food and/or the funds from it to the poor, and/or to a full time minister who doesn't have a salary, but lives by faith in Messiah Yeshua. The firstborn son, though, should be redeemed with a piece of silver (coin), or its monetary equivalent and given to a full time minister who lives by faith in the Risen Savior and/or to the poor and needy, in the name of Yeshua. (This, the redemption of the firstborn animals, doesn't include the tithe. In other words, if a shepherd had 20 newborn lambs, and three of them were firstborn males, those three would be given to the Lord for 'the redemption of the firstborn,' and two more lambs would be given for the shepherd's tithe unto the Lord.)

¹³² The biblical silver shekel weighs approximately 11.3 grams or 0.4 ounces. Five times that amount is about 56 grams or 2.0 ounces. In today's market (19 Aug. 2012), with silver about \$28 an ounce, it would be about \$56 (or a dollar a gram).

The Blessings and the Curses

In the Mosaic Covenant, God spoke of blessing Israel if she obeyed Him, and cursing her if she didn't (Lev. 26:1f.; Dt. 28:1-14, 15-63). This hinged on obeying His voice (i.e. the commandments and statutes, etc.). It's the same for us today. When a believer fails to keep, for instance, the Sabbath day holy, he may not realize it because he doesn't have something to gauge it by, but at the very least he is missing the physical benefits of not working, and resting, on the day as well as the spiritual benefits of walking in the holiness of the day with his Lord, which is the refreshment that God made for man, once every seven days (Mark 2:27).

Yahveh is gracious and slow to anger, and as the Apostle Peter says (2nd Pet. 3:9, 15), we shouldn't mistake His not implementing punishments, because of His graciousness and long-suffering, with condoning sin. After all, it was literally more than seven *centuries* before He turned over the northern kingdom of Israel to the King of Assyria (721 BC), because of their pagan practices of sacrificial-sexual idolatry, and the southern kingdom of Judah to the King of Babylon (586 BC), one hundred and thirty five years later, for the exact same thing. How much longer, then, will He suffer with the believer who loves Jesus, but who ignorantly sins against Him by desecrating His holy Sabbath? There are consequences, though, for not keeping His holy commandments.

The Old Covenant promises good things to Israel concerning the Land and what God has in store for her (e.g. peace, abundance and Israel's exaltation among the nations, when the Messiah returns). The New Covenant promises a glorified eternal life, and we, like Father Abraham, must persevere and die to self to obtain it. Peace, prosperity and no sickness will be the rule of the day in the thousand year 'Old Covenant' reign of Messiah Yeshua from Jerusalem (Ezk. 40-48; Rev. 20:1-6), for all who obey Him and His Torah, and many of the blessings are ours today as we press into Messiah and His way of life. Obedience always brings God's blessings.

Speaking about 'blessings,' I want to share that we Jews don't bless the food before we eat, we bless the Food Giver. Blessing the food is like having someone give you a thousand dollars and you turn around and bless the thousand dollars instead of thanking the person who gave it to you. (The food is the blessing.) After we eat we also bless/thank the Lord because He specifically requires it (Dt. 8:10).

The Stubborn and Rebellious Son

Under the Old Covenant the stubborn son was taken to the elders and stoned to death (Dt. 21:18-21). Under the New Covenant the parents should take him to the congregation's elders, if he's old enough, and the elders and the parents should cast him out of the congregation and out of their home. This might seem harsh to some parents, but it's for the benefit of the son. It's a 'wake-up' call to him that he needs to order his life around Yeshua (1st Cor. 5:1-13; 2nd Cor. 6:15-18; Heb. 12:3-13) and stop being rebellious to God in the form of his believing parents.¹³³

Tithes to the Priests

Under Mosaic Law all the tithes went to the Levites, who in turn, passed on a tenth to the Sons of Aaron (Num. 18:21-32). The Sons of Aaron also received the first fruits of the ground and the first born of the clean animals, along with free will offerings, etc. (Num. 18:1-20).

With no Temple for the Sons of Aaron and Levi to minister in, the tithes and offerings should go to those who are ministering unto the Lord in full time service who don't have a salary, but who live by faith in the risen Son of God and/or to those who are poor and needy.¹³⁴ Paul said that those who labor

¹³³ For the biblical discipline of our children ask for the PDF *Children-Gifts from God*.

¹³⁴ See *The Tithe in Ancient Israel* at <http://SeedofAbraham.net/tithe.html> or ask for its PDF. The reasoning be-

full time for the Great News should receive from those who are ministered to:

“Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live from the gospel.” (1st Corinthians 9:14)

Although he wasn't speaking of collecting the tithes, for in his day the Temple stood, the concept of receiving funds for ministering full time is certainly seen. When Yeshua reigns from the earthly Jerusalem the tithes and offerings will revert back to his believing priests and Levites.

Where to Celebrate the Feasts

Some commandments, like the Feasts, are amplified because the Redeemer has been revealed in them, while others are modified (not being able to celebrate them at the Temple in Jerusalem), and put on hold (Levitical sacrifices for the Feasts). Under the Old Covenant it was commanded that wherever the Ark of the Covenant was, there Israel was to assemble and celebrate the Feasts because resident over the Ark was the very presence of the God of Israel. In the days of King David, God chose Jerusalem to dwell in, forever,¹³⁵ but even in the days of Yeshua, those living outside the land of Israel still kept Passover and the other Feasts in the countries where they were, with modifications. For example *Sukote*, the seven day Feast of Tabernacles, God commands only those in Israel to dwell in a *suka* (singular for the plural *sukote*), a booth made of branches, for the seven day feast, which seems to be God's concession for those in colder climates (Lev. 23:42).

Today there is no Temple in Jerusalem to keep the Feasts at, but each one of us is 'an Ark of the Covenant' (the place where God resides; 1st Cor. 3:16-17, 19; 2nd Cor. 6:16) carrying our God wherever we go. Therefore, the Feasts can be kept wherever we are, at least until Yeshua returns. In the millennial reign of Yeshua it specifically speaks of *Sukote* and Yahveh commands *everyone* in the world to come to Jerusalem and worship the King (Zech. 14:16-21) during that feast, which is another confirmation of Torah being in effect in the Millennium, and consequently, for every believer in Yeshua today.

Negated Commandments

Physical Covenantal Circumcision for the Gentile

In the Mosaic Covenant the Jew and the Gentile were circumcised in order to enter into the covenants of Abraham and Moses (Gen. 17:9-14; Ex. 12:43-49). In the New Covenant the Jewish baby boy is still circumcised, but the Gentile must not be circumcised for covenantal reasons (Acts 21:20-26).¹³⁶ Proponents of physical Gentile circumcision always avoid calling it a circumcision 'in order to be saved,' because Acts 15 and Galatians 3-4 expressly come against that. They teach that their physical circumcision for the Gentile is only being Torah observant (Gen. 17:10-14; Ex. 12:43-48). They can call it being 'Torah observant' all they want, but the truth is that it's the sign of the covenant that God made with Abraham (and continued with Moses). The covenant has changed and so has the sign.

hind giving to a minister who has no salary is because one who is salaried doesn't need the funds in the sense that he knows how much money is coming to him every month.

¹³⁵ 1st Kings 11:13, 32, 36; 2nd Chron. 6:6; Zech. 3:2.

¹³⁶ See Acts 15:1-21; 1st Cor. 7:17-19; Gal. 2:1-3; etc. This is a sticking point for some Christians who say that the New Covenant is different from the Old (which it is), and want to deny *all* the laws because the Gentile is prohibited from doing this, but the circumcision made without hands (Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11) allows the Gentile (and the Jew!) to covenantally enter into Messiah's Kingdom and partake of His Passover and keep all the laws that apply to him. Baptism in water is the new sign for the New Covenant, reflecting the 'circumcision made without hands,' replacing the former physical sign for the Gentile.

God forbids PCC (physical covenantal circumcision) in the New Covenant for the Gentile because it's not the way of entry into the New and it overrides Yeshua's sacrifice (Gal. 5:2), placing the Gentile *under* the Old Covenant and its Law, which can only condemn a person to Hell for sinning.

The New Testament's position on the Gentile being circumcised is seen in Cornelius, the first Gentile to come to faith in Messiah—he was never circumcised. Cornelius was filled with the Holy Spirit about eight years after the resurrection, in 38 AD (Acts 10:28, 34-35; 11:1-18), and was still not circumcised ten years later when Peter, speaking at the Council in Acts 15:7-11 (48-49 AD), brings up the fact that God hadn't required it of Cornelius. It was at the Council of Acts 15 that PCC was struck down for the believing male Gentile. No amendments to the decision were ever given, either in Acts 15 or anywhere else in Scripture, to allow the Gentile to be physically circumcised 'in order to obey Torah.' Cornelius, as well as Titus (Gal. 2:1-3f.), and every other Gentile in the New Testament, remained physically uncircumcised all their lives.

Those who teach that the male Gentile believer should be circumcised 'for the right reason,' or 'to obey Torah,' are quick to say that it's not for justification because that is what the ruling that Acts 15 spoke against, and if they realized it, they would also deny that theirs is a covenantal circumcision, saying it was just 'a physical circumcision in order to obey Mosaic Law.' Their position, though, is wrong because Old Covenant Gentile circumcision was expressly done so the Gentile *could* enter into covenantal relationship with God and Israel. Therefore, their circumcision *is* a physical covenantal circumcision, and they don't even realize it.

Also, those who teach that the Gentile should be physically circumcised in order 'to fully obey God,' usually break the very Mosaic Law that they profess to teach. Torah demands that the sign of circumcision be done immediately for any Gentile coming into covenant with the God of Israel, and that anyone not having it is 'cutoff' because he has broken God's covenant (Gen. 17:10-14). Yet, most Gentiles are given time 'to digest' this position, which can take months or even years before they are circumcised in the flesh. These false teachers don't seem to realize that water baptism, which pictures the circumcision of the heart (death to self; cf. Dt. 30:6), is the new sign for the New Covenant, which allowed Cornelius, Titus and Dr. Luke to partake of the Passover all their believing lives without being PyCC (physically covenantally circumcised).

Many new Gentile believers in the time of the Apostles didn't know the difference between Adam and King David, nor who the God of Israel was that had saved them, nor what He expected of them, and so, some were persuaded by false teachers (Galatians) that in order to be saved (justified) they needed PCC (Ex. 12:43-49; Gal. 3:1-5:4). The nation of Judah, the city of Jerusalem and the Second Temple were still in existence, and all the male Jewish believers were PyCC. It was a great pull to do the same, but it went against God's express will and words in the New Covenant for the male Gentile.

Keeping the Law (symbolized in circumcision) was how the Pharisees thought that one was saved, which was wrong, of course, but the Gentile believer being PyCC meant that he was *adding* to the finished Work of Messiah's atoning, covenantal sacrifice in order to enter into God's New Covenant. This is a major heresy because it's works righteousness. Paul declares it as such and reveals that it's not the Law, *per se*, that he was coming against in Galatians, but the Law (symbolized in physical circumcision) *used as a vehicle for salvation* (Gal. 5:4). The Church fails to see this distinction and throws the baby out (the Law) with the bath water (the Law, symbolized in circumcision for salvation). The false teachers of the so-called Hebrew Roots Movement steer clear of saying that their circumcision is for salvation, but they don't realize that their circumcision brings the Gentile into the wrong covenant and negates their faith in Yeshua and the New Covenant. PCC brings the Gentile into the Israel 'after the flesh' that is dead in her sins. It's the wrong Israel, and so the spiritual lines are cross-circuited.

Also, the sin of presumption¹³⁷ is inherent in this false teaching because it negates everything in the

¹³⁷ The sin of presumption is best illustrated in God saying to Israel that He was going to take her into the land of Canaan, but changing His mind due to her wanton unfaithfulness, whereby God commanded her to wander in the Wilderness for 40 years, until all of the men died, and then He would bring in their sons. Some Is-

New Testament that speaks of Gentile circumcision. There's nothing in the New to support their position, and hence, why they only teach it out of the Old, but everywhere the New speaks of it it either forbids it or implies that it's not for the Gentile (e.g. 1st Cor. 7:17-19; Gal. 2:1-5).¹³⁸

Only faith in Yeshua is proper for justification before God, which results in salvation (eternal life). One cannot add anything to it, but one shows his gratitude by heart-felt submission and obedience to Messiah and His will for our lives, which includes the very Law that He kept. The basic paradigm for all of us who take Yeshua seriously, and want to walk out our faith in Him through Torah, is that every law, statute, commandment, ordinance and judgment passes through into the New Covenant, except where it is explicitly negated, and PCC for the male Gentile believer is negated. The Jew continues to PyCC his sons on the eighth day of life (Gen. 17:12; 21:4) because he is literally still part of the covenant that God made with Abraham, but the Gentile is not.

The way of covenantal entry into the New Covenant has changed. For the covenants of Abraham and Moses it was PCC, but with the New Covenant it's the circumcision made without hands (Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11) reflected in water baptism. This constitutes the only conceptual difference between the Jew and the Gentile who believe in Messiah Yeshua. The Gentile must not be PyCC because it denies what the Father has done for him in sacrificing His Son in order to enter into the New Covenant. It's not the covenantal way of entry into the New Covenant, which is the New Birth, symbolized in water baptism (Jn. 3:1ff.; Rom. 6:1ff.; cf. 1st Cor. 7:17-19).

Physical covenantal circumcision was given as the *sign* of the Abrahamic covenant, but Yeshua came with the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Mt. 16:19; Heb. 7:1-8:13; Gal. 6:16). PCC for the male Gentile is the wrong sign for the wrong covenant. This, unfortunately, doesn't stop Hebrew Roots/One Law people from teaching this perverse doctrine, saying at one end that Paul was a false Apostle, because they see him as the culprit negating Gentile circumcision (e.g. 1st Cor. 7:17-18; Gal. 2:3), although Paul was only following official Apostolic doctrine (Acts 15:1f.), while at the other end, they twist and misinterpret New Testament Scripture to make it fit into their carnal theology.

Put On Hold Commandments—Until the Millennium

Stone the Witch!

Stoning witches (Ex. 22:18), murderers, false prophets and homosexuals, etc., and breaking down pagan altars (Ex. 23:23-24), and killing people who worship the sun, the moon and the stars (through the daily horoscope), as right as it was in the Land of Israel in the days of King Josiah,¹³⁹ is not right for us. That's not because God looks favorably upon these practices today, but the government of Josiah was a Mosaic theocracy. No nation practices that today.

Under Mosaic Law, sinners were taken to court, and on the testimony of two or three witnesses (Dt. 19:15-21), if found guilty, they were stoned to death.¹⁴⁰ This was a form of social restraint so that all Israel would obey the laws of holiness and righteousness and not engage in the practices of darkness. It was God's way of curbing the flesh. After all, who wants to be stoned to death?

raelis, though, harkening back to God's first commandment, of going into the land, and not listening to what He later said, presumed that they could still go into the land. Moses warned them not to go, but they went and were killed and routed by the inhabitants of Canaan (Num. 13:1-14:45).

¹³⁸ The Gentile can be circumcised for medical reasons (health), but not for covenantal or biblical reasons. Yes, the two circumcisions may look the same 'in the natural,' but their substance is entirely different (just like salt and sugar). For a full article on why Gentiles must not be PyCC see *Gentile Circumcision?* at http://SeedofAbraham.net/Gentile_Circumcision.html or ask for its PDF.

¹³⁹ 2nd Kings 22:1-23:25.

¹⁴⁰ Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Num. 35:16f; Dt. 7:1f; 12:2-3; 13:1-5; 17:2-7; 18:10-11, 20-22; Rom. 1:26-27; 1st Cor. 6:9-11.

In the New Covenant, where no nation, not even Israel today, keeps Mosaic Law as the law of the land, the believer has no authority ‘to take the Law into his own hands.’ While on Earth, though, before Messiah returns, congregations do have authority to deal with adulterers and witches, etc., in a way that speaks of their eternal destiny. Even though the believer is constrained from carrying out the physical punishment of death, for say, adultery, the adulterer, if unrepentant, should not be allowed to remain in the congregation, but should be cast out of it. This is equivalent to, but also greater than, physical death under the Mosaic Law. The witch should have the demons cast out of her so that she can give her life to Messiah and be filled with His Spirit and walk in Torah, to the glory of Yeshua!

If Paul would have told the Corinthian believers to stone to death the believer who had slept with his father’s wife (the punishment under Mosaic Law; 1st Cor. 5:1-8ff.; Dt. 22:30), the Roman authorities would have arrested the zealous stone throwers, tried them for murder and killed them. Paul tells the Corinthians to judge the offender and to cast him out of the congregation, extinguishing his hope for eternal life. Being ‘outside the congregation,’ as the man now was (after they read Paul’s letter) was tantamount to eternal punishment, unless he repented, which he did (2nd Cor. 2:5-11). The punishment (and prayers) had the desired effect upon him—true repentance and restoration of a brother.

Under the New Covenant, sinners who will not repent should be cast out of the congregation. Yeshua gave that authority to the Apostles, and it filters down to the elders of a congregation, that he whose sin is forgiven is forgiven, but he whose sin is retained is retained (Mt. 18:15-18; John 20:23).

The Holy Spirit

Although not a commandment, the Holy Spirit is seen in both the Old and the New Covenants. Under the Old Covenant only certain prophets, priests and kings had the Holy Spirit, along with a few others, like Bezalel (the craftsman of the Tabernacle; Exodus 31:1f.) and Samson, etc. In the New Covenant the Holy Spirit is given to everyone who believes in Yeshua. Because we have Messiah’s Spirit, and have seen what Yeshua did, so that our sins could be forgiven, the Mosaic commandments ‘to love’ have been infinitely amplified. It’s still Mosaic Law, but at an extremely deeper spiritual level. To whom much is given, much is required. This is what the Sermon on the Mount reveals.

Yes, there was ‘an eye for an eye’ in the days of Moses and King David, which, contrary to what many think of it today, was a righteous form of justice for a people *without* a circumcised heart because it kept the offended party from exacting vengeance (e.g. to kill someone in retaliation for an insult; Gen. 4:23-24). Also, ‘an eye for an eye’ *wasn’t* done by a man taking the law ‘into his own hands,’ but by a court, where the man was brought to justice.

It was a great way to restrain the carnal man because all Israel knew ‘an eye for an eye,’ and anyone getting into a fight already realized the consequences of taking the other’s eye out, or causing him bodily harm, let alone taking his life. In Messiah’s Kingdom, though, with the Holy Spirit, we are commanded to ‘turn the other cheek’ *and* to love our enemies, a much higher form of loving one’s neighbor and exhibiting God’s forgiveness, love and sovereignty, which allows God to transform our heart into Messiah’s (Ezk. 36:24-27), and to move upon the heart of the perpetrator. This leaves vengeance in the Lord’s hands (Dt. 32:35). As we saw, this divine love and forgiveness was embedded within Torah (Ex. 23:4-5). By struggling to walk like Messiah, dying to self and being ruled by the same Spirit that He submitted to, God’s love, forgiveness, sovereignty and Light can be seen in this world of hatred, revenge and darkness.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ For more on the concept of God’s justice with ‘an eye for an eye,’ ask for the PDF *An Eye for an Eye*.

CONCLUSION

Salvation and the Law

God saved Israel from Egyptian slavery by His grace and the blood of the lamb (Ex. 12:1f.), and *then* He brought them to Mt. Sinai to give them His words, His *teaching*, His *instruction*, His *wisdom*, His ways—commonly called the Law of Moses. The Hebrew word *Torah* תּוֹרָה which is translated as ‘law,’ literally means ‘to teach’ or ‘to instruct.’ It became ‘the Law’ when it was first translated into Greek in the Septuagint (ca. 250 BC; Greek νόμος *nomos*), and the New Testament continued to use that designation for *Torah*. It is ‘law,’ for much of Torah is God’s rules, and He commands us to keep them, but the underlying conceptual basis of them is God’s instructions or teachings for His beloved Israel in how to live a holy and righteous life so that she could be blessed.¹⁴²

It’s not by the keeping of any law that anyone is saved, either out of the Kingdom of Pharaoh or out of the Kingdom of Satan, but once saved, God established rules of behavior, relating to Him and one another, that He expects us to walk in. When we fail to follow His rules or commandments we are sinning, whether we realize it or not, and sin always has its consequences. God gave His laws to Israel at Sinai knowing full well that one day Torah would also be the guideline for how to live out our faith in Messiah. What most Christians call restrictions God calls boundaries to live within—God’s holy lifestyle for us. Much of what Christians call freedom and grace God calls harlotry and sin. What God said to Israel through the prophet Hosea certainly pertains to Christianity today:

‘My people are destroyed for lack of *knowledge*...Because you have forgotten the *Law* of your God, I also will forget your children.’ (Hosea 4:6; cf. Mt. 7:21-23)

As it was in the days of Peter and Paul, so it is today—the Rabbis have polluted the Jewish soul with the perverse doctrine that the keeping of the Law will save a Jew (i.e. give him eternal life). This is works righteousness and is nowhere found in the *Tanach* (Old Testament). It’s of little consequence to the Rabbis, though, who elevate their perverse writings and their own carnal mentality above God and His Word.¹⁴³ On the other hand, the Church has, for 1,900 years, demonized God’s holy Law, and so, most Christians think that they’ll lose their salvation if they even discuss it, let alone embrace it, but the Holy Spirit has lead hundreds of thousands of Christians, all over the world, into Torah so that they can walk as the Apostles walked, to the glory of Messiah Yeshua.

God’s Law is like gravity—it’s an established fact. As we observe the Law in our lives, through faith in Yeshua, who is our righteousness, the propitiation for our sins and the one who has given us His nature, and by His Spirit, we, like the earthly Tabernacle of Moses in the Wilderness, reflect the heavenly reality. The law of gravity can be superseded by the law of aerodynamics (propulsion). Birds do this when they fly, overriding the law of gravity with their wings, but gravity still exists and when they stop flapping, they fall and glide back down to the Earth. The law of gravity exists ‘to ground’ the bird when not in flight. It exists for order, so that the bird can exist in this world and live on this Earth and reproduce, eat, and raise its young, etc. The law of propulsion, through the power of its wings, allows the bird to fly into the heavens. So it is with us, too, to have an earthly life, to walk in the Law, with a heavenly purpose, through the transforming Spirit, just as it was for Messiah Yeshua.

¹⁴² Torah also includes narrative stories like the Creation and God’s covenants and dealings with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Israel, etc.

¹⁴³ Not all the writings and traditions of the Rabbis are perverse. For instance, the taking of the Lord’s Supper, with its *matza* (unleavened bread from the Passover) and wine is one half Law (the *matza*; Ex. 12:8, 15, 18; 13:6-7; 23:15; Lk. 22:1f.), and one half Jewish tradition (the wine). Nowhere in the Passover regulations is wine mentioned. By the days of Yeshua it had become a tradition to have wine at the Passover Table, red, to symbolize the blood of the Passover lamb in Egypt. Yeshua sprang off of this Jewish tradition, speaking of it being His own sacrificial blood, the blood of the Passover Lamb of God, to give us the Lord’s Supper (1st Cor. 11:20f.).

Hebrews and the Law

The author of Hebrews never denigrates the Law, nor the Mosaic Covenant, despite the Church using Hebrews 7:12, 18; 8:13 and 10:4 as proof texts against the Law and the Old Covenant. The author compares the two covenants and explains why one is better in terms of its sacrifice, its high priest (a sinless, compassionate and eternal high priest who offers the Holy Spirit to all), and what it does for the believer eternally (glorification). Under Mosaic Law the Day of Atonement sacrifice, while offering forgiveness of sins, could not change or transform the Adamic nature. Only Messiah's sacrifice did that, hence, why the New Covenant is better than the Old, but the Law of the Old is the Law of the New, enhanced, but still Mosaic Law, and it will remain with us until Judgment Day when we are transformed into the very image of Messiah, and no longer need a written code, which is the written reflection of the divine character and will of our Father and His Son (Jn. 5:39). Until then, as Yeshua states in Mt. 5:18, the written Law remains, and those who reject it, or fail to keep parts of it that they should keep, sin against their Messiah, even if they do it in ignorance. Ignorance of a law is not a justifiable defense in a court of law, and this is also true before God Almighty (Lev. 5:17-19), as Yeshua Himself teaches:

‘And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself *or do according to his will*, shall be beaten with many stripes, but *he who did not know*, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.’ (Luke 12:47-48)

Yes, the First Covenant is obsolete, but it and its standard (Mosaic Law as interpreted by Yeshua) will stay with us until the New Covenant is fully manifest. Then the Law will truly be written on our hearts, as God *promised* Israel in Jeremiah 31:33. Until then, God’s holy standard remains, with amplifications, modifications and further instructions by Yeshua and His Apostles.¹⁴⁴ All believers are part of God’s Israel, whether they realize it or not, by faith in the Jewish Messiah.¹⁴⁵ Therefore, all believers should walk in all the laws of Israel that apply to them because Messiah’s sacrifice didn’t do away with God’s holy Law—it opened up a way for Israel to keep it through His blood and Spirit. The Apostle John, who followed His Master in all His ways, admonishes us to do the same:

‘But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him *ought himself also to walk just as He walked*.’ (1st John 2:5-6)

Is John only speaking of the moral commandments of love? Not according to his very last writing:

‘Here is the patience of the saints—here are *those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus*.’ (Revelation 14:12)

Practical Suggestions

Many believers, who have come into the understanding of walking out their faith in Yeshua through the Law and His Spirit, are not sure about how it all fits together. It’s also very normal, in the first few years, to go through times of questioning whether Torah is really for us or not, especially when family and well meaning friends accost us with their interpretations of Scripture ‘that prove’ that the Law isn’t for Christians. This is why I have written about the four ‘proof texts’ in Hebrews and included this last section, which lays out some of the Mosaic laws and how they are effected by the New Covenant while we’re still on Earth. This way one has an idea of how any law might be seen and applied.

¹⁴⁴ Jer. 31:31-34; Mt. 5:21ff.; 2nd Peter 3:2, 14-16f., etc.

¹⁴⁵ Luke 1:31-33; Rom. 11:11-12:3; Eph. 2:1-22; Rev. 21:1f.; 22:16.

There are basically four major pillars of Torah that apply to all of us: the Sabbath, the Feast days, the dietary laws and the laws on tithes and offerings. I've included references to articles in the footnotes so that you can see 'the greater picture' and learn how to understand and celebrate them.¹⁴⁶ Of course, it goes without saying that everyone should be Born Again, filled with His Spirit, totally dedicated to Messiah Yeshua and walking in the two great commandments. That's the nucleus and starting point.

When I first began walking in the commandments and statutes of Torah I made mistakes (sins), but Messiah Yeshua didn't lose His compassion, nor His ability to forgive my sins. If I sinned against a brother by getting angry with him, I repented and asked him, and our Father, for forgiveness. Any sin of Torah is like that, whether it's dealing with an offended brother, God's 7th day Sabbath, or the wearing of *tzit'zot* (tassels; Num. 15:37-41), etc., etc., etc.

Most ritual, ceremonial laws pertain to entering the Temple area, where the presence of the Living God was, hence, the necessity for ceremonial cleanliness. Many laws, though, pertain to both the Temple and to everyday life (like discharges). We should do all that we can do. Some might say that 'God freed us from following (OT) rituals,' but what Christian would deny the ritual of water baptism, or the taking of the bread and the wine? All of God's rituals are for our protection, blessing, understanding and wisdom, that we may walk with Him.

We don't have to know all the Torah that applies to us and how to keep each commandment perfectly before we take the first step. We just have to begin the journey, with a heart for the Lord, remembering that His sacrificial blood is our covering. Yeshua, the Good Shepherd, is faithful to lead us, feed us and teach us along the way. May we have a heart like Ezra the Scribe:

'For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of Yahveh and to *practice* it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel' (Ezra 7:10).

As one reads and re-reads Torah, asking the Father for understanding, the Lord Himself will impress upon you which commandments to begin to walk out, and will deepen your knowledge of the commandments that you're already walking in. Some people try to do all the commandments at once, but that's a prescription for failure. Read Torah and follow the Lord's leading as to what to begin with and what to add on.¹⁴⁷ God is very patient in dealing with His children, just as a loving mother trains her daughter to cook and sew and how to be a faithful wife and a loving mother.

Of course, there are those who are quick to point out to us that the Father wants people to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth (Jn. 4:23-24), as though God's Torah and His Truth are mutually exclusive, but just the opposite is the case. Yes, Yeshua *is* the Way, the Truth and the Life (Jn. 14:6), and these three nouns were synonyms for *Torah* before He was born in Bethlehem. Scripture speaks of Torah *being* God's Way,¹⁴⁸ God's Truth¹⁴⁹ and God's Life,¹⁵⁰ and Yeshua said that He was aligning Himself with Torah because it is the Word of God, and Yeshua is the Living Word of God, the living Torah—both reflecting each other (Jn. 5:39). What Yeshua said to the Samaritan woman meant that the Father is looking for those to worship Him by believing in His Son (the living Truth), being filled with the Holy Spirit and walking in His Torah (the written Truth). As King David, and every Jew realized, the Law of Moses is God's Truth:

'Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness and Your Law is Truth.' (Psalms 119:142)

'You are near, Oh Yahveh and all Your commandments are Truth.' (Ps. 119:151)

¹⁴⁶ I've listed all the articles that are referenced in this paper on p. 44, under *Articles Cited*, so you can see all of them at a glance and ask for any PDFs that you would like to have.

¹⁴⁷ A fine, biblical *Scripture Reading Schedule* can be found at <http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/scripture07.htm> or ask for its PDF.

¹⁴⁸ Dt. 9:12, 16; 31:29; 11:28; Jer. 3:21; 5:4-5; 6:16 (where *path* is equal to *way*); Ps. 119:1, 30.

¹⁴⁹ Psalm 119:30, 43, 142, 151, 160; Mal. 2:6; Rom. 2:20; 2nd Tim. 3:16-17; cf. John. 17:17. God's Truth, in written form, is Torah. For an excellent article on God's Truth and Torah ask for the PDF *Hesed Veh'Emet*.

¹⁵⁰ Dt. 30:15-16, 19-20; Ps. 119:93; Mal. 2:4-5f.

Our Well Meaning Friends and Family

God's Truth is in Torah, but He never intended it to be used as a vehicle for salvation. Most Christians aren't able to see the difference between New Testament Scripture that rightly strikes down the Law as a means of salvation, and the Law as a holy lifestyle once one is saved. They can't see the Law for what it is because of Church *tradition*, and are just as blind in this area as the Pharisees were to Yeshua being the Messiah. We don't keep God's holy Law to be saved—we keep it because we are saved and it's God's express will to do so. Even though the Law was given at Sinai it was always God's intention for the Christian.¹⁵¹ Just because He gave it before Christ doesn't mean it ended with Christ. On the contrary, now Israel has His Spirit to walk in His holy Law.

Some might say, 'Jesus Christ summarized the Law as love and that's all we have to do,' but Yeshua wasn't the first Jew to summarize the Law of Moses, which means just that—it was a summary of the Law, not a summary execution of the Law.¹⁵² Isaiah summarized the Law (33:16-17), as did Micah (6:8), and also Hillel, a Jewish sage who lived a generation before Yeshua, but none of them thought that they were negating all the other commandments by doing so, and neither did Messiah Yeshua (Mt. 7:12; 22:35-40).¹⁵³

God's wisdom and understanding are seen in all His laws (Dt. 5:6-8; Mt. 22:35-40), and all His laws are His definition of loving Him and our neighbor as ourselves. Now that we have the Spirit and the sacrificial blood of Yeshua we can walk out His wisdom, forgiveness and love as Yeshua did (John 13:34).

Many Christians say that "we're not under the Law, but under Grace," which is true, but they don't realize the biblical understanding of what it means to be *under the Law*.¹⁵⁴ When we die to self we're no longer under the Law's jurisdiction to condemn us for not keeping its laws perfectly (Dt. 27:26; James 2:10). It doesn't mean that we can disregard the Law, as the Apostle Paul writes:

"For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under Law, but under grace. What then?! Shall we sin because we are not under Law, but under grace?! Certainly not!" (Romans 6:14-15)

The Law reveals what is holy and what is sin. It's one thing to aim for the mark and miss it, which is sin. It's quite another to say that the mark doesn't exist, which is a foolish sin. As the Apostle John wrote, concerning sin and the Law, "Everyone who sins breaks the Law—in fact, sin is lawlessness" (1st John 3:4; cf. James 2:9). John had been a Christian for 55 years when he wrote that in 85 AD. He was still walking in the Law, but now the Law couldn't condemn him because he had died to self in Messiah Yeshua and was no longer under the Law, but under Grace.

Just as it's not a question of keeping, flawlessly or sinlessly, Yeshua's reiteration of the commandment to love our neighbor (Lev. 19:18c; Mt. 22:35-40) so too, it's the same with the rest of Torah. If keeping Torah flawlessly was God's criteria none of us would make it to the celestial city. God requires that we follow His procedure when we sin, when we miss the mark. He has provided the sacrifice of His Son for forgiveness and cleansing, just as He provided the Mosaic sacrifices for Israel

¹⁵¹ Jer. 31:33; Ezk. 36:27; Mt. 5:17-19; Rom. 3:31, etc.

¹⁵² "A summary execution is (an) execution in which a person is accused of a crime and then immediately killed without benefit of a full and fair trial. This includes show trials." From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summary_execution. Many Christians, who speak against the Law, act as judge, jury and executioner, not wanting to listen to biblical reason. With some standard proof texts from Scripture to support their anti-Law position they don't seem to be able to truly dialogue about it because their minds aren't able to understand anything other than what they've been taught. The Word of God in the New Testament, upholding Torah, is totally foreign to them, and so, they cannot process it. Only the Holy Spirit can open their eyes, which are blind to this divine truth.

¹⁵³ Ask for the PDF *Law—Rabbinic Concepts* (Mt. 5:17-19; 22:35-40).

¹⁵⁴ See *No Longer Under the Law? Two Important Phrases* at <http://www.SeedofAbraham.net/nlul.html> or ask for its PDF.

when they missed the mark.¹⁵⁵ No one can keep all the commandments of Torah flawlessly, but with the New Covenant, which gives us Messiah's sacrifice and the Holy Spirit, God wants us to keep all the laws of Moses that apply to us, just as all the Apostles and all the believers did:

‘And the Dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God *and* have the testimony of Jesus Christ.’ (Revelation 12:17)

‘Listen to Me!, you who *know righteousness!* You people *in whose heart is My Law!* Do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their insults. For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool, but *My righteousness* will be forever and My salvation from generation to generation.’ (Isaiah 51:7-8)

‘He will not fail nor be discouraged until He has established justice in the Earth, and the coastlands shall wait for His Law...Yahveh is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake—He will exalt the Law and make it honorable.’ (Isaiah 42:4, 21)

‘And if it seems evil to you to serve Yahveh and His Law, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the laws which your Fathers served at First Baptist Church on the other side of the river, or the laws of the Church of Hollywood and Vine, in whose land you dwell, but as for me and my House, we will serve Yahveh, His way! (Joshua 24:15 my paraphrase; see also 2nd Tim. 2:15; 3:10-17)

¹⁵⁵ Before the birth of Messiah, the New Testament calls Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth righteous and blameless (Luke 1:5-6). Does that mean that they never sinned? Of course not. It means that they, like all the Hebrews before them who had a heart for Yahveh, followed His prescription for righteous living. When they sinned they brought a sacrifice to the Lord and were able to walk in righteousness and be considered blameless by God because they followed His way of dealing with sin. See also 2nd Kings 22:1-2; 23:24-25, where King Josiah did what was right in the sight of Yahveh. That's what God wants of us.

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¹⁵⁶ *The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21* (3rd edition) is 296 pages and can be purchased for \$14.99 at Amazon at http://www.amazon.com/LIFTING-VEIL-ACTS-15-20-21/dp/1426972032/ref=tmm_pap_title_0

¹⁵⁷ This article was finished, with much help from Messiah Yeshua, on 23 October 2012.