

## Does the Law Apply to Gentile Believers?

I recently released an issue paper examining what it would mean if the Law has been abolished. The implications are truly disastrous. One reader suggested that I should go a step further and examine whether the Law (Torah) applies to Gentile Believers, since many of those visiting my web site are not Jewish. This paper is my response to that request.

**Point 1.** Salvation is by faith, not by works. So do not try to read this paper as suggesting that we believe you can earn your salvation by keeping commandments. That simply is not the case.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9, NKJV.

When we keep God’s commandments, it is because we have been saved by faith. As our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” John 14:15, NKJV.

**Point 2.** Not all of the commandments, statutes and judgments in the Law are intended to apply to every person.

For example some of God’s instructions apply only to the priests, such as the prohibition against drinking wine or intoxicating drink before serving in the Tabernacle or Temple.

“Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying: “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.”” Leviticus 10:8-11, NKJV.

Likewise, some apply only to women, such as those concerning childbirth.

“Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. She shall then continue in the blood of her purification thirty-three days. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled. ‘But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her customary impurity, and she shall continue in the blood of her purification sixty-six days. ‘When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who has borne a male or a female. ‘And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons—one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.’”” Leviticus 12:1-8, NKJV.

Some can only be performed in the city of Jerusalem at the Tabernacle or Temple, such as sacrifices and tithes.

“But you shall seek the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go. There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.” Deuteronomy 12:5-7, NKJV.

**Point 3.** Since different commandments are for specific target audiences, are there any that apply to Gentiles as well as to Jewish people? Yes, there are.

First, let us look at our father Abraham. He is often cited in the New Testament for his faith. In fact, the Scriptures are clear that “he [Abraham] believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.” Genesis 15:6, NKJV.

The Apostle Paul recounts this in the Book of Romans, when he says, “For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”” Romans 4:3, NKJV.

Remember that Abraham was a Gentile. He would be an ancestor of the Jewish nation and for many Gentile nations. Yet, the Scripture records for us that Abraham, a Gentile, was obedient to the commandments of God.

“And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” Genesis 26:4-5, NKJV.

It was because of Abraham’s obedience to the commandments, statutes and laws of God that God promised Abraham the blessings of many descendants, possession of the land of Israel, and that he would be the progenitor of the Messiah!

In the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), we find several references to the commandments applying to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. For example –

“And if a stranger dwells with you, or whoever is among you throughout your generations, and would present an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord, just as you do, so shall he do. One ordinance shall be for you of the assembly and for the stranger who dwells with you, an ordinance forever throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one custom shall be for you and for the stranger who dwells with you.” Numbers 15:14-16, NKJV.

The phrase “the stranger who dwells with you” refers to the Gentiles who choose to dwell with the Jewish people. These are a picture of those the Apostle Paul referred to as “cut out of the

olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree.” Romans 11:24, NKJV (excerpt).

While Christian theologians usually cite the Apostle Paul as teaching that the commandments of God are not applicable to the Gentile Believers, on the contrary, he taught that “Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.” 1 Corinthians 7:19, NKJV.

Paul is quite clear that whether you are born a Jew or a Gentile, keeping the commandments of God is very important. Here, he essentially echoes the determination of King Solomon, who said,

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, NKJV.

It was the same King Solomon who wrote that, “One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.” Proverbs 28:9, NKJV.

What did our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) teach? He said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” John 14:15, NKJV.

But this was not all. He further taught that disobedience to God’s commandments demonstrates a lack of love for Yeshua and His Father..

“Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.” John 14:23-24, NKJV.

Notice that Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) did not replace God’s commandments. Rather, He said the words He speaks are from the Father.

Again, “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” John 16:9-10, NKJV.

The Apostle John further explains that acting contrary to the Law (Torah) is the very definition of sin.

“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.” 1 John 3:4, NKJV.

Do Gentiles sin? Yes. Remember the Apostle Paul said that “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23, NKJV. If sin is acting contrary to the Law, and Gentiles sin, then Gentiles are acting contrary to the Law. This is only possible if the Law applies to

Gentiles. Have we forgotten that Adam and Eve were Gentiles? Yet, when they disobeyed God's commandment, it caused the fall of mankind.

John also echoed the sentiments of Messiah Yeshua discussed above when John said –

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” 1 John 5:3, NKJV.

Is the New Testament written only to Jews? Certainly not. Then for Gentiles as well as for Jews, breaking the commandments of God is sin.

Moreover, John reminds us that this is not anything new.

“This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.” 2 John 1:6, NKJV.

According to the Apostle Paul, some sins are so serious that anyone who commits them will not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, NKJV.

When Paul wrote this, he was addressing the Gentile Believers in the church at Corinth. And, this is not the only church to whom Paul wrote such things. Here is what Paul said to the church at Ephesus --

“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” Ephesians 5:3-5, NKJV.

And, here is what Paul said to the church at Galatia –

“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21, NKJV.

Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) confirms Paul's warnings –

“Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually

immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.” Revelation 22:14-15, NKJV.

Again I ask, is the New Testament written only for the Jews? No indeed.

Consider for a moment the words of the Great Commission spoken by Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) after His resurrection.

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” Matthew 28:18-20, NKJV.

Clearly, all the nations include the Gentiles. What were the disciples to teach all the nations? They were to teach them to observe all things that Messiah commanded. And, who is Messiah but God from all eternity.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” John 1:1-5, NKJV.

Then, this Word became flesh – our Messiah Yeshua is God incarnate, elsewhere called *Immanuel* (Hebrew meaning God With Us).

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14, NKJV.

Even the New Testament prophecies reveal that saints (Believers) in the Tribulation Period will keep the commandments of God.

“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, NKJV.

Again,

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12, NKJV.

Most Gentile Believers would agree that all people must follow the “moral” commandments of the Law, such as prohibitions against murder, theft, etc. However, there is no such division of the commandments in Scripture into moral versus ceremonial.

So, the rest of this paper will specifically address three types of commandments which the traditional church doctrine would classify as ceremonial, and irrelevant to Gentile Believers -- Sabbath, Biblical Festivals, and Unclean Foods.

**Point 4.** The Sabbath was sanctified on the seventh day of creation, long before there were any Jewish people. It was a permanent statute for all people.

“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.” Genesis 2:1-3, NKJV.

At the time the Sabbath day was blessed and sanctified, there were only Gentiles. There would not be a Jewish person born for about two thousand years.

In the Ten Commandments, God specifically says the Sabbath applies to Gentiles.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:8-11, NKJV.

As discussed above, the phrase “your stranger who is within your gates” refers to the Gentiles who choose to dwell with the Jewish people. These are those whom the Apostle Paul referred to as “cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree.” Romans 11:24, NKJV (excerpt).

Why did God keep mentioning the strangers? Remember that when Israel left Egypt in the Exodus, they did not leave by themselves. Rather, there was a large mixed multitude that accompanied them.

“Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. A mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds—a great deal of livestock.” Exodus 12:37-38, NKJV.

Who were the mixed multitudes? They were Gentiles that were grafted into the Jewish people by their faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They were with the Jewish people at Mount Sinai when Moses brought the tablets to the people. When Moses read the Law to the people, did the mixed multitude say “thank our pagan deities that we don’t have to follow these commandments?” Were they free to gather food on the Sabbath? No! Rather, having decided to be strangers in the gate to the Jewish people, the commandments were binding on them as on the Jewish people.

“Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh *is* the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does *any* work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.” Exodus 31:15, NKJV.

The Sabbath is extremely important to the children of God, for it is the sign that we worship the true and living God.

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.’”” Exodus 31:12-17, NKJV.

Notice the permanence of the Sabbath, as the Scriptures clearly states it is a sign forever.

The Sabbath may be compared to the wedding ring. When I wear my wedding ring, it symbolizes that I belong to my wife and to her alone. By the same token, the Sabbath is the sign that we belong to God, and not to any pagan idol.

The prophet Isaiah stressed the application of the Sabbath commandments to the Gentiles. First, he reiterates the permanent nature of the Sabbath.

“Thus says the LORD: “Keep justice, and do righteousness, For My salvation *is* about to come, And My righteousness to be revealed. <sup>2</sup> Blessed *is* the man *who* does this, And the son of man *who* lays hold on it; Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And keeps his hand from doing any evil.”” Isaiah 56:1-2, NKJV.

Then, he explains that the Sabbath is not just for Israel, but for all people.

“Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, And to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants— Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant— Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, “Yet I will gather to him Others besides those who are gathered to him.” Isaiah 56:6-8, NKJV.

Later, Isaiah gives us a view of what life will be like in the Messianic Kingdom.

““For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the Lord, “So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass That from

one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the Lord.” Isaiah 66:22-23, NKJV.

Do Gentiles have flesh? Yes, indeed. Then all of us, Jew and Gentile alike, will keep the Sabbath in the Messianic Kingdom when Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) rules over all the earth.

The prophet Ezekiel agrees with Isaiah.

““And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. In controversy they shall stand as judges, and judge it according to My judgments. They shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, and they shall hallow My Sabbaths.” Ezekiel 44:23-24, NKJV.

Do you want to rule and reign with Messiah Yeshua for the thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom? If so, then you will hallow the Sabbath.

Since the Apostle Paul instructed the Gentile Believers at Corinth to “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1, NKJV), we should examine what Messiah Yeshua’s custom was concerning the Sabbath.

“So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.” Luke 4:16, NKJV.

Messiah Yeshua’s custom was to honor the Sabbath day. What was the Apostle Paul’s custom?

“Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.”” Acts 17:2-3, NKJV.

But, didn’t Paul teach against keeping the Sabbath in Colossians? No, he did not. Let us look at this particular teaching in more detail.

“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.” Colossians 2:16-17, NKJV.

Many theologians believe that Paul is saying that we are to cease observing Biblical commandments concerning the Sabbath. But these verses are totally misunderstood.

The verses themselves do not say whether we should avoid being judged for breaking the commandments or for keeping them, do they? So, either Paul says we should break these commandments with impunity, or he is cautioning us to keep them. Which is it? We must carefully consider the context.

First, notice Paul says the commandments relating to the Sabbath have their substance in Yeshua the Messiah. This means that they have value in their ability to teach us about Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) and His role in mankind's salvation.

Now, let's look at the next two verses, which continue the teaching.

“Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.” Colossians 2:18-19, NKJV.

The emphasis in these two verses is on avoiding false humility and worship of angels. God's commandments do not teach us to seek false humility or the worship of angels. In fact, these things are contrary to God's commandments.

So, Paul is admonishing the Believers not to allow their former friends to talk them into giving up the commandments of God that teach about Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) and go back to their old Gnostic religion that emphasized false humility and worship of angels. He said in essence – Do not go back to your old ways. How can we know for sure that this was Paul's intent? Because in the same teaching Paul says –

“Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.” Colossians 2:20-23, NKJV.

The “basic principles of the world” do not refer to God's commandments, but to the unrighteous principles of Ascetic Gnosticism for which the Colossians were known. Notice Paul's emphasis on “**according to the commandments and doctrines of men.**” *Ibid* (emphasis added). Paul is not warning against following God's commandments. Just the opposite – he is warning the new Believers not to renounce God's commandments to return to their old manmade traditions. Those old manmade traditions have an appearance of wisdom, and constitute self-imposed religion as opposed to God ordained religion, but ultimately have no value at all. Paul is not writing against God's commandments, but in favor of them.

**Point 5.** The Biblical Festivals are listed for us in Leviticus 23. There, they are called *mo'edim* in Hebrew. This means they are appointed times, meaning they teach about the times that God will interact with men through our Messiah Yeshua. The spring festivals teach of Messiah's first coming, and the fall festivals teach of His second coming. Take a moment and read Leviticus 23 if you have not done so recently.

Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) died on Passover. He was buried at Unleavened Bread. He was resurrected at the Feast of First Fruits. And, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Believers in Acts 2 at the feast of Weeks.

The Rapture and Resurrection will come at the Feast of Trumpets, if God fulfills the fall feasts as He did the spring feasts. Messiah will set His feet on the Mount of Olives for the Second Coming on the Day of Atonement for Armageddon to end the Great Tribulation. Finally, He will establish the Messianic Kingdom on earth at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Notice that God says these festivals are to be kept forever.

Regarding Passover and Unleavened Bread -- “You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.” Leviticus 23:14, NKJV.

Regarding the Feast of Weeks -- “And you shall proclaim on the same day *that* it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on *it*. *It shall be* a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.” Leviticus 23:21, NKJV.

Regarding the Day of Atonement -- “You shall do no manner of work; *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.” Leviticus 23:31, NKJV.

Regarding the Feast of Tabernacles -- “You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. *It shall be* a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month.” Leviticus 23:41, NKJV.

So, these Biblical festivals are to be kept forever. But, are they for the Jews only, or are they also for the Gentiles? Remember that these are described in Scripture as the Lord’s feasts, not Israel’s feasts or Jewish feasts.

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, these *are* My feasts.’” Leviticus 23:1-2, NKJV.

And, “These *are* the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.” Leviticus 23:4, NKJV.

And, “These *are* the feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day—besides the Sabbaths of the Lord, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the Lord.” Leviticus 23:37-38, NKJV.

And, “So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the Lord.” Leviticus 23:37-38, NKJV.

And, “What will you do in the appointed day, And in the day of the feast of the LORD?” Hosea 9:5, NKJV.

And, “Afterwards *they offered* the regular burnt offering, and *those* for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and *those* of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the Lord.” Ezra 3:5, NKJV.

Lastly, “Behold, I am building a temple for the name of the Lord my God, to dedicate *it* to Him, to burn before Him sweet incense, for the continual showbread, for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths, on the New Moons, and on the set feasts of the Lord our God. This *is an ordinance* forever to Israel.” 2 Chronicles 2:4, NKJV.

Are these feasts of the Lord just for Israel? Consider what the Prophet Zechariah has to say about all of the Gentile nations that survive the Tribulation period and enter into the Messianic Kingdom.

“And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” Zechariah 14:16, NKJV.

The nations referred to above are Gentiles. They will keep the Feast of Tabernacles every year. If not, they will get no rain.

“And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain.” Zechariah 14:17, NKJV.

And no rain means no harvest, hence no food. So, the Gentile nations will all come celebrate the feast of the Lord.

Consider also the Prophet Isaiah’s word on the future Messianic Kingdom.

“For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass *That* from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD.” Isaiah 66:22-23, NKJV.

The reference to “one New Moon to another” refers to the feasts and the festivals of Leviticus 23, which are timed by the lunar calendar.

“They shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, and they shall hallow My Sabbaths.” Ezekiel 44:24, NKJV.

Again, the reference to “all My appointed meetings” refers to the feasts and festivals of Leviticus 23.

Ezekiel chapter 45 gives further details about keeping the feasts and festivals in the Messianic Kingdom with Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) on the throne ruling as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Regarding Passover and Unleavened Bread -- “In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.” Ezekiel 45:21, NKJV.

Regarding the Feast of Tabernacles – “In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast, he shall do likewise for seven days, according to the sin offering, the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the oil.” Ezekiel 45:25, NKJV.

If the Gentiles will participate in the Messianic Kingdom after the Tribulation period is finished, they will celebrate the feasts and festivals, which the Apostle Paul reminds us “are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.” Colossians 2:17, NKJV.

**Point 6.** There is an entire issue paper on why Believers should not eat unclean foods. I will not repeat the entire paper here, as it is available on my website at [www.john1415.org](http://www.john1415.org) on the “Q&As” page. So, let it suffice to remind us of the Apostle Paul’s warning to the Gentile Believers at Corinth.

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.” Therefore “Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.”” 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, NKJV.

In this teaching, Paul takes Scripture written specifically to Israel in Isaiah 52 and applies it to the Gentile Believers of the church at Corinth. Originally, God commanded Israel not to eat unclean foods, like pork, shrimp, lobster, etc. because He was going to dwell in the midst of their camp.

“For I *am* the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I *am* holy.” Leviticus 11:44, NKJV.

They were not to ask God to dwell in uncleanness, since He is holy.

Likewise, since the Holy Spirit indwells Gentile Believers as He does Jewish Believers, the Apostle Paul tells us to avoid the unclean foods. Would you ask the Holy Spirit to dwell amongst uncleanness?

Have you noticed that you do not see pigs mentioned very often in the New Testament? They are mentioned in Matthew 8, where Messiah Yeshua casts the demons into the swine and they are all drown in the sea. That shows what He thought of swine, doesn’t it?

But where in the New Testament do you read about someone eating pork? Nowhere.

Do a computer search for swine in the New Testament. You find the demon possession incident mentioned above, as well as a caution not to cast your pearls before swine.

Do a computer search for pig in the New Testament. No results.

Do a computer search for pork in the New Testament. No results.

Do a computer search for ham in the New Testament. No results.

Why do you suppose that is? If everyone is sitting around eating ham sandwiches, why is there no mention of it? Remember the Scripture says, “Surely the Lord God does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.” Amos 3:7, NKJV.

**Point 7.** There were false teachers in the first century church teaching that God’s Law was no longer relevant to Believers in the New Testament era. We read about them in Revelation.

“But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.” Revelation 2:6, NKJV.

Again, “Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.” Revelation 2:15, NKJV.

How does God feel about the deeds of the Nicolaitans? He hates them. So, what was their doctrine that God disapproves of so vehemently?

The Nicolaitans held a doctrine called antinomianism. Simply put, antinomianism means we are saved by grace so should no longer follow the commandments of the Law.

We are saved by grace. But that does not mean that we are free to ignore the commandments of God. Remember what the Apostle Paul said when he addressed this very question.

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” Romans 6:1-2, NKJV.

And remember how the Bible defines sin.

“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.” 1 John 3:4, NKJV.

So lawlessness (that which is contrary to the Law), is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans – and it is sin.

**Point 8.** But don’t we as Believers in Messiah Yeshua have liberty? Yes, we do. But, what is liberty? Consider the words of the psalmist.

“Let Your mercies come also to me, O Lord— Your salvation according to Your word. So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me, For I trust in Your word. And take not the word of

truth utterly out of my mouth, For I have hoped in Your ordinances. So shall I keep Your law continually, Forever and ever. And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts. I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, And will not be ashamed. And I will delight myself in Your commandments, Which I love. My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, Which I love, And I will meditate on Your statutes.” Psalm 119:41-48, NKJV.

According to the psalmist, to keep the Law is to walk at liberty. James, the half-brother of our Lord expressed the same principle.

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.” James 1:22-25, NKJV.

Again James refers to the Law as the law of liberty.

“For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.” James 2:10-13, NKJV.

Moreover, James clearly states the principle that obedience to the Law is how Believers demonstrate their faith.

“But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?” James 2:18-20, NKJV.

James is not teaching that we are saved by works of the Law. Rather, that we who are saved by faith demonstrate our faith by our obedience to the Law.

Never forget that it was our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) who said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” John 14:15, NKJV. And, it was He who said –

“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 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 5:18-19, NKJV.

Do you love the Lord? Then, obey Him.

Do you want to be great in the kingdom of heaven? Then, obey Him.

Do you love your neighbor? Then you are fulfilling commandments. As Paul taught --

“Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law.” Romans 13:8-10, NKJV.

If you love your neighbor as yourself, you will not break the commandments of the Law. Notice Paul does not say there are no commandments to be followed anymore. Rather, he teaches what it takes to keep the Law.

**Point 9.** Are we as Gentiles not called to repent of our sins? When Peter pleaded with his Jewish brethren at Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks from Leviticus 23:15-21), notice that he included the Gentiles in his call to repentance.

“Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”” Acts 2:38-39, NKJV.

To repent is to turn away from your sins and come back to God. Since sin is lawlessness (what is against the Law of God), to repent means to stop doing what God prohibited and start doing what He commanded His children to do.

The words “repent” and “repentance” appear at least 56 times in the New Testament.

Have you repented of your sins? If you believe the Law does not apply to you, then from what did you repent?

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