

Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts : Pt 1

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Jewish Legalism Seriously Encroaching On Our Christian Faith, Apostle Paul Disapproves Of Imposing Circumcision On Gentile Believers, Paul's Stinging Rebuke To The Galatian Brethren, Jerusalem Was In Bondage To Mosaic Law, Jesus Died To Free Us From Sin Death And Bondage To Laws Of Moses, Apostle Peter Is Criticized By Jewish Legalists, Paul Attends Church Meeting In Jerusalem To Resolve The Issue Regarding Jewish Legalism, Peter James And John Were Jesus' Inner Circle, The Apostle In Jerusalem Only Impose Four Restrictions On Gentile Converts, Faith In Jesus And Nothing Else, Church Elders In Jerusalem Never Mandated That Gentile Believers Must Keep Mosaic Law, Sabbath Observance Was Not Enforced On Gentile Believers By The Jerusalem Church, Our Faith Has Been Politicized By The Christian Legalists And Zionists, Our Kingdom Is Not Of This Present World, We Are God's Ekklesia Or The Called Out Ones, Mosaic Law Was Not Intended For Gentile Nations, The Laws Of Moses Represented God's Covenant With The Children Of Israel, One Legalist's Attempt To Twist Meaning Of Verses In Exodus, "One Law For All" Deception, Strangers Who Dwelt Amongst The Children Of Israel Were Required To Adhere To The Mosaic Law, Definition Of "Sojourn", Obligation To Obey The Laws Of One's Host Country, Due To Rebellion And Sin Jews Were Dispersed To Gentile Nations By Way Of Three Diasporas, Circumcision Was Mandatory For Foreigners Who Partook Of Passover Meal And Was Path To Citizenship For Strangers Who Dwelt Amongst Children Of Israel, Story Of Dinah And Shechem, Every Man In The World Must Be Circumcised According To Legalist's Interpretation Of Exodus, Spiritual Circumcision Of The Heart Through Faith In Christ Is All That Matters, Some Judaizers And Legalists Hate Apostle Paul And Condemn His Epistles, Bondage To Mosaic Law, List Of Known Legalists Judaizers Zionists And Sabbatarians

As I candidly mention in the article called "Jesus Christ or Yeshua Messiah?: More Christian Zionist Legalism", as well as in the controversial series entitled "Welcome to the Greater Israel, USA!", one rather disturbing development which I have observed within our Christian faith in recent years, is the fact that many of my brethren have succumbed to a spirit of Jewish legalism. This problem -- which is really like a type of spiritual disease -- manifests itself in different ways. It can be as simple as observing the Sabbath, in lieu of the traditional Christian custom of attending church services on Sunday. With more diehard legalists and Christian Zionists -- who I generally refer to as Judaizers -- it can also include observing the various Jewish feast days, maintaining a kosher diet -- meaning to only eat foods which are approved by God in the Scriptures of the Old Testament -- referring to both God our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ by their Jewish designations, and of course, being a strong supporter of the state of Israel.

For all I know, some Christian Judaizers may have even fallen under the deception that they need to be circumcised as well. However, as I mention in other articles, the Apostle Paul was strongly against imposing circumcision on those Gentiles who had newly converted to our Christian faith. This becomes very evident by the following verses which are taken from several of Paul's Epistles:

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."
Colossians 3:9-11, KJV

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."
Romans 2:28-29, KJV

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
Galatians 5:6, KJV

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."
Galatians 6:15, KJV

"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision."
Philippians 3:2, KJV

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."
Titus 1:9-11, KJV

As you can see by some of the previous verses, when those false Jewish brethren tried to convince the new Disciples in Galatia that circumcision was still necessary, the Apostle Paul wrote a very strong letter to them in which he rebuked them for allowing themselves to be persuaded by those false brethren, and thus being brought back under that legalistic bondage of the flesh, as we can see by the following set of verses as well:

"And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"
Galatians 2:4, KJV

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I

learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain."

Galatians 3:1-4, KJV

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? . . . Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Galatians 4:9, 21-26, KJV

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage"

Galatians 5:1, KJV

As a point of clarification, the reason why Paul mentions Jerusalem in the previous verses, and how she is still in bondage, is because the false brethren who arrived in the region of Galatia came from Jerusalem, which was the actual center of the First Century Church. You see, the legalism of the Mosaic Law was still extremely strong in Jerusalem, despite the fact that Jesus had already died on the Cross, and set us free from the same, exactly as He told the Jews in the following verses:

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John 8:31-32, 36, KJV

"And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4:17-19, KJV

To demonstrate how powerful of a hold Jewish legalism still had on some of the Disciples in Jerusalem, consider that when the Apostle Peter returned to Jerusalem after visiting Paul in Galatia, the circumcised Jews criticized Peter for having eaten with uncircumcised Gentiles, as we see by these verses:

"And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And

when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them."
Acts 11:1-3, KJV

I have pointed out before that this problem regarding Jewish legalism in the Church became so great, that the Apostle Paul was finally forced to go to Jerusalem in order to come to an agreement with the Church Elders there. As you can see by the following verses, the Apostles in Jerusalem agreed with Paul that circumcision -- and other Jewish laws, traditions and customs -- were not applicable to the Gentile converts, and were not necessary for Salvation. As we know from the four Gospels, Jesus personally appointed Peter, James and John as His inner circle of leaders. Thus, they are also the central leadership in the Book of Acts, and it is in fact Peter and James who voice their opinions in the following verses. Let me mention here that for the sake of brevity, I have only included the key verses below. I encourage you to read the entire chapter, as your time permits:

"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren . . . Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."
Acts 15:7, 10-11, KJV

"And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me . . . Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."
Acts 15:13, 19-20, KJV

"And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment . . . For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."
Acts 15: 23-24, 28-29, KJV

Allow me to call your attention to a few things in that set of verses. First of all, notice that Peter says "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved." You can't get any clearer than that. Peter is saying no other laws, customs, traditions or conditions; just Jesus. Next, the Apostle James only outlines four things -- and not hundreds of statutes of the Mosaic Law -- from which Gentile Believers should abstain themselves. They are idolatry, food which contains blood, meat from animals that are strangled, and fornication. These four things -- and only these four things -- are included in the letters which they send to the

Gentile brethren, insofar as any kind of laws are concerned.

Furthermore, the core leadership of the Church in Jerusalem makes it clear that they personally never issued any kind of order stating that Gentile Believers had to be circumcised. They write "we gave no such commandment". But that isn't all. Notice what else their short letter states. Not only do the Apostles clear their own name by stating that they never gave an order for Gentile converts to be circumcised, but we also see that they gave no commandment to "keep the law". It is right there in black and white. What law are Peter, James and John referring to? Obviously the Mosaic Law. They are clearly writing that they never gave any order for Gentile Believers to keep the Laws of Moses. They in fact refused to place that burden on Gentile Believers, as Peter clearly states above.

Now, besides the hundreds of statutes that form a part of the Mosaic Law, do you notice anything important that is missing from the Apostles' letter that is heavily stressed by so many Christian legalists and Judaizers today? If not, as I mention in "Are Christians Obligated to Keep the Sabbath?", it is the Sabbath. So that we have no doubts regarding what was said to the Gentile Believers, those four abstentions are mentioned twice in the previous verses, and not once is observing the Sabbath mentioned among them. The three individuals who Jesus appointed as His inner circle, and who became the leaders of His First Century Church, did not enforce Sabbath observance on First Century Gentile converts. So where did this modern legalism come from? Certainly not from Jesus or the Apostles.

Christian Judaizers sometimes inform me that one reason why they like to observe the Sabbath and other Jewish feast days, follow kosher laws, and do all of the other things that they do, is not because they believe that it saves them, or helps God to save them, but because they are convinced that they are pleasing God by obeying Him. Quite frankly, my personal impression is that the real reason why they bow to so much Jewish legalism is because they are trying to improve their Jewishness -- even though they are Gentiles in the flesh -- and show how much they love and support the state of Israel.

As I have mentioned before, in the USA at least, the problem with Jewish legalism and Zionism encroaching on our faith has become so great -- due to a number of popular preachers and pastors who promote this particular point of view -- that a lot of Christians now hold the view that if a person does not support Israel in her war against the Muslim nations, he is really not even a Christian. In short, they have politicized our faith, which is something which Jesus never intended in the least.

Our faith is supposed to be based on faith in Jesus Christ alone, and not on some secular political or military agenda. After all, as I have clearly explained so many times before, our Kingdom is not of this present world. As a result, we are not supposed to engage ourselves in the affairs of this life any more than what is absolutely necessary. We are supposed to remain God's "called out ones"; that is, His "ekklesia". If you doubt that this is so, then please seriously consider what both Jesus and the Apostles of the First Century taught regarding this same issue. There is no denying what these verses state, because their meaning is sufficiently clear:

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."
John 15:19, KJV

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."
John 17:14-15, KJV

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."
John 18:36, KJV

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"
2 Corinthians 6:17, KJV

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."
Colossians 3:1-2, KJV

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."
2 Timothy 2:4, KJV

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."
Hebrews 11:13-16, KJV

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."
James 4:4, KJV

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."
1 John 2:15-16, KJV

However, the real irony of the Jewish legalism which has now infiltrated the modern Christian Church is found in the fact that -- just as the Apostles clarify above -- the Scriptures clearly reveal that the Mosaic Law was never even meant for

the Gentile nations. The Apostles must have known this, and that is why they limited their letter to mentioning only four abstentions to the Gentile brethren. If you doubt that this is so, then please consider the following verses, and notice how we are repeatedly told that this covenant -- that is, the Laws of Moses -- was only made between God and the children of Israel. The covenant was not made, and the Laws were not given, to the Gentile nations:

"And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." Exodus 25:21-22, KJV

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:12-17, KJV

"These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses." Leviticus 26:46, KJV

"These are the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb." Deuteronomy 29:1, KJV

"There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt." 1 Kings 8:9, KJV

"There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt." 2 Chronicles 5:10, KJV

"The LORD therefore hath performed his word that he hath spoken: for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel. And in it have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the

LORD, that he made with the children of Israel."
2 Chronicles 6:10-11, KJV

"He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD."
Psalms 147:19-20, KJV

Despite what the previous verses clearly say, I came upon one particular Christian Judaizer -- and I wouldn't be surprised to discover that there are others just like him -- who still tries to place Gentiles under the heavy yoke of the Laws of Moses by intentionally twisting the meaning of certain verses which are found in God's Word. In particular, this legalist quoted the following verse that is found in the Old Testament Book of Exodus:

"One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."
Exodus 12:49, KJV

According to the misguided person who intentionally corrupted what this verse states, it is supposedly proof that the Laws of Moses were likewise meant for the Gentile nations as well. In other words, one law for all, according to the way that he interprets the verse. However, to interpret the verse in that way is to totally contradict what all of the previous verses state. God is not the author of confusion, so what does this verse in Exodus actually mean?

The first thing you need to know is that this person -- who also appears to be a Sabbatarian -- is intentionally being a bit sneaky and dishonest. Why? Because he purposely does not include the verse which appears right before the one which I quoted above. By adding the previous verse, the real meaning of what is actually intended becomes even more clear, as we see here:

"And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."
Exodus 12:48-49, KJV

To me personally, there is no confusion whatsoever regarding what these two verses mean. They are quite clear. It is only when one purposely tries to pervert their real meaning that confusion sets in. As you can plainly see, in those verses Moses states "when a stranger shall sojourn with thee" and "the stranger that sojourneth among you". What do these two phrases mean?

Derived from the Hebrew word "guwr", the word "sojourn" means to abide, to dwell in, to dwell with, or to inhabit according to the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon. In other words, if foreigners -- meaning Gentiles -- came to live amongst the children of Israel, then they were obligated to live by the same laws -- meaning the Mosaic Law -- as the Hebrews. This is no different from when a foreigner

arrives in the United States, becomes a naturalized citizen, and must abide by American laws, learn English, get a Social Security number, pay taxes, etc. As long as that individual remains in his own country, is he obligated to respect and obey American laws? Of course not. It would be ludicrous; yet that is basically what this Christian Judaizer is saying. He is stretching what those verses actually mean, and applying them to the entire world, which is wrong and out of context.

Not only that, but the situation which is described in those verses is completely reversed in our modern times. In other words, rather than a few foreigners living amongst the Jews, as a result of the three Diasporas which were instigated by the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the Romans due to the sins and rebellion of the Jews, the Jews were in fact dispersed amongst the Gentile nations of the world, where they became the minority populations. In other words, they are the ones who are obligated to obey the laws of the countries in which they now reside.

So those verses are definitely not saying that the Mosaic Law was meant for the entire Gentile world, contrary to what that misguided legalist is trying to force them to mean. They are very clearly saying that the Mosaic Law only applied to those foreigners who chose to dwell amongst the children of Israel.

But here is the most interesting part of this person's subtle deception. Why did he not include verse forty-eight and only quote verse forty-nine? I can tell you why. I just explained to you how when a person enters the United States of America, there is a path to US citizenship called naturalization. In these verses which we find in the Book of Exodus, we are told twice that strangers had to be circumcised if they wished to eat the Passover meal. Furthermore, these verses appear to be saying that the path to citizenship for foreigners was by way of circumcision. Strangers -- or Gentile foreigners -- had to be circumcised in order to be able to live among the children of Israel, to marry among them, etc. This is made evident by the story of Jacob, Dinah, Shechem and Hamor, as we see by the following verses:

"And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister: And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us: But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised; Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone. And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son."
Genesis 34:13-18, KJV

In other words, if that Christian legalist had quoted those two verses together -- as he should have -- then he would be forced to conclude that, based upon his understanding of the verses, all males in the world must be circumcised according to the Laws of Moses. Obviously, not only would this be very unpopular, but more importantly, it would contradict all of the New Testament verses which I shared with you earlier that plainly reveal that circumcision profits absolutely nothing.

As we have seen, what matters is spiritual circumcision of a person's heart through spiritual rebirth by faith in Jesus Christ. That is why this person did not quote both verses. He knew that he would not be able to sustain his argument if he did; because the verses clearly show that the Laws of Moses were only to be applied to those foreigners who chose to live amongst the children of Israel. They were not for the entire world. To reiterate, the "one law for all" argument is simply false.

Let me mention here, as I do in a few other articles, that I have discovered that some of these Judaizers and legalists do not like the Apostle Paul. Some of them in fact hate him, and accuse him of being a false apostle and a false prophet. In their spiritual blindness and rebellion against the freedom which we obtain through the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, they claim that Paul invented modern Christianity, and they do not hesitate to heavily and viciously criticize him, and condemn his Epistles as being heretical. They view Paul as a traitor to his own people -- the Jews -- and his scholarly letters in which he so eloquently expounds on the difference between Law and Grace as blasphemous.

Please also be warned that such legalists love to continually quote from the Books of the Old Testament -- and particularly from the Torah, or five Books of Moses, which is also known as the Pentateuch -- because they are in fact in bondage to the Mosaic Law, and to the past, so much like the legalistic Jews of First Century Jerusalem who rejected Jesus' message of spiritual freedom. If you happen to encounter any of these Judaizers and legalists online, I advise you to avoid them at all cost, because all they will do is seek to argue with you, confuse you, condemn you if you do not agree with their point of view, and waste your time. Personally, I have encountered the following ones online, but there are no doubt more:

- Hebraic Roots Movement - there are many different flavors
- Sacred Name Movement - there are many different flavors
- 119 Ministries
- John Hagee's CUFI - Citizens United For Israel
- Seventh Day Adventist Church and other Sabbatarians
- Worldwide Church of God and its many offshoots

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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Jesus Came To Fulfill The Law And The Prophets, A Legalist's Rant, Definition Of "Fulfill", Jesus Met All Requirements Of Mosaic Law Through His Death And Ushered In A New Covenant, Jesus Ratified His Marriage To His New Bride The Church, The Mosaic Law Is Replaced By The Law Of Love And Grace, It Is Finished, Whenever Jesus Discusses Mosaic Law In The Gospels He Does So In Reference To The Jews, The Mosaic Law Was Not Given To The Gentiles, Jesus Did Not Send Apostles To The Gentiles In The Gospels, Jesus' Preaching Was All Directed To The Jews Who Were Still Under Laws Of Moses, Deceiving And Being Deceived, Mosaic Law Was Not Destroyed And Still Exists, Christ Is The End Of The Law For Righteousness To Every One That Believeth, Righteousness Only Comes Through Faith In Jesus, Any Jews Who Reject Christ Are Still Under Mosaic Law And Will Be Harshly Judged By The Same, Jesus' Goal Was To Show Jews Futility Of Trying To Save Themselves Through Keeping Mosaic Law, Woman Caught In Act Of Adultery, Until We Recognize Our Hopeless Condition We Cannot See Our Need For A Savior, Jesus Did Not Come To Condemn The World But To Save It, We Condemn Ourselves When We Reject Christ, Sin Is Transgressing God's Law, Keep My Commandments, Which Commandments Was Jesus Referring To?, Jesus Demonstrated And Taught Love Mercy And Forgiveness When The Scribes And The Pharisees Demanded Harshness Of The Mosaic Law, God's Word Interprets Itself, "My Commandments" Refers To Love Mercy And Forgiveness, Love For God And Fellow Man Are Greatest Commandments, John Does Not Directly Discuss Mosaic Law In His Epistles, John Repeatedly Emphasizes Love Not Legalism, John Probably Means The Law Of Love When He Uses The Word "Law", Other Apostles Also Emphasized Preeminence Of Love

Continuing our discussion from part one, in addition to the two verses that are found in the Book of Exodus, this very same Christian Judaizer attempted to use some of Jesus' own teachings in his vain effort to justify his weak, legalistic position. Sadly, he is not the only one who I have seen try to use these verses to supposedly prove that we Gentiles are still under the mandates of the Mosaic Law. These verses are the following:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."
Matthew 5:17-20, KJV

So many people read the previous verses, and they still don't understand what they mean. In the case of certain Christian Judaizers and legalists, they scream in their self-righteous pride "See! Jesus says right there that He did not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets! He came to fulfill the Law! He says that nothing will pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled! He says that anyone who teaches others to

break the Law will be the least in the Kingdom of Heaven! He says right there that our righteousness needs to exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees! How dare you say then that we are no longer under the Mosaic Law! You are a liar, a false prophet and a blasphemer!" And on and on they go with their blind, legalistic rant, never really taking the time to understand what they are reading. So exactly what do these verses mean?

First things first. It appears to me that a lot of legalists interpret the word "fulfill" to mean "keep". Thus, they argue that because Jesus kept the Laws of Moses, it also means that we modern Christians are obligated to observe the Mosaic Law as well. However, while Jesus did keep the Mosaic Law in some regards -- but not in every case; consider the Miracles which He performed on the Sabbath, for example -- this is not what the original Greek word that is used in these verses actually means. In fact, it may interest you to know that in Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, the word "keep" is not found anywhere in the definitions for the Greek word "pleroo", from which the English word "fulfill" is derived in the previous verses.

As it turns out, "pleroo" means to accomplish, to complete, to consummate, and to carry through to the end. Now, I want you to stop and carefully think about this definition for a moment. Any half-intelligent person realizes that if someone states that they have completed something, it is understood that they mean that they have carried it through to the end, and they are done with it. Do you object to this definition? In similar fashion, in both a Biblical sense and a worldly sense, a marriage between a man and a woman is not actually consummated until they have engaged in sexual intercourse. So just as completing a project means carrying it through to the end so that we are done with it, and just as the marriage process is not completed -- or ratified we might say -- until intercourse occurs, this is exactly what Jesus means in the previous verses.

If you still don't understand what I am saying here, which is actually what Jesus is saying, it is simply this: Through His Death on the Cross, Jesus met all of the requirements of the harsh Mosaic Law; He ratified His Marriage to His beloved new Bride -- that is, the Church -- and He in fact brought an end to the Old Law and the Old Covenant of the Old Testament era; and He ushered in a New Covenant and a new Law of Grace and Love. Jesus fulfilled -- or completed -- everything which had been written regarding Him in the pages of the Old Testament, and thus brought it to an end, and to a close. He told the Apostles the very same thing in the following verse that is found in the Gospel of Luke:

"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."
Luke 24:44, KJV

Do you see it now? If not, Jesus is saying in so many words, "These are the things which had to be completed, and now they have been completed. It is done. It is finished. With my shed Blood on the Cross, the New Covenant between God and man is now in effect, and the Old Covenant which was based on the

Mosaic Law no longer is." This is precisely what Jesus also means in this verse:

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." John 19:30, KJV

In the previous verse, the word "finished" is derived from the Greek word "teleo". According to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, this word means the same thing as "pleroo"; that is, to bring to a close, to finish or to end. "Teleo" is in fact derived from the related Greek word "telos" which also means to end, terminate, finish or bring to a close. So what was brought to a close, a finish and an end? I have already told you. It was the Old Testament, the Old Covenant and the requirements of the Mosaic Law.

Now, no doubt, any Judaizers and Old Testament legalists who may be reading this series are going to start screaming again "Wait just one minute! If the Mosaic Law has truly come to an end as you claim, then why did Jesus clearly say that nothing will pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled? If we are no longer under the Mosaic Law, why did Jesus also state that if anyone teaches people to break the Mosaic Law, they will be the least in the Kingdom of Heaven? This is just wrong! You are teaching false doctrine! You are a heretic of the first degree!"

Am I really? Or is it possible that after everything I have written here, you still do not understand what is right in front of your very own eyes? In the verses that are found in Matthew chapter five above, who is Jesus talking about when He uses the words "whosoever", "he" and "you"? If you think that those words refer to everyone in the world -- similar to the legalist who we have been discussing -- you are mistaken, and you do not understand who Jesus' audience is. Allow me to remind you of one of the key points of part one. The Mosaic Law is a covenant which God made with the children of Israel. He did not make it with the Gentile nations. Therefore, we can only conclude that whenever Jesus discusses the Laws of Moses in the Gospels, He is discussing them in reference to the Jews themselves.

If in your legalistic stubbornness and blindness you continue to resist this Biblical truth, then consider the actual time frame of the Gospels themselves. The Gentiles were not even a part of the evangelical picture of the First Century yet. The Apostle Paul had not yet become the Apostle to the Gentiles, and the Apostle Peter had not yet had his vision in chapter ten of the Book of Acts either. Thus, we must conclude that all of Jesus' live preaching that is recorded in the Gospels is directed to Jewish audiences who were still living under the Mosaic Law at that time. That is who His words are being directed to in Matthew chapter five where we see "whosoever", "he" and "you". Now, if you still have any doubts about this, then please seriously ponder the following verses where Jesus tells you Himself:

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Matthew 10:5-6, KJV

"But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Matthew 15:24, KJV

What does Jesus say to the Apostles? "Go not into the way of the Gentiles." Go instead "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Why does Jesus say this? Because "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Does Jesus mean the same children of Israel who were given the Mosaic Law in the Old Testament, and who were still under the same Law in the Gospels? That is absolutely right. There is your answer straight from the Scriptures. Everything that Jesus taught regarding the Mosaic Law was directed to the Jews themselves and not to the Gentiles. If any person attempts to tell you otherwise, not only are they deceived themselves, but they are deceiving others as well, as we see in this verse:

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

2 Timothy 3:13, KJV

These modern Judaizers and legalists are just as misguided as the deceivers of the First Century. They aren't any different than the Jewish legalists who repeatedly argued with Jesus, who persecuted the Apostle Paul, and who attempted to ensnare the new Gentile converts in their legalistic trap.

Now, once we understand that Jesus' actual audience was the Jews themselves, as opposed to the Gentiles who were not even in the picture yet, a lot of things that He said and taught in the Gospels begin to make more sense. As we have now seen, with His Death on the Cross, Jesus brought to completion the Old Covenant and the Old Testament that was based on the Laws of Moses, and He introduced a New Covenant which is sealed with His own Blood. However, while Jesus met the mandates of the Mosaic Law so that His Sacrifice would be an acceptable ransom price to His Father, as He Himself informs us in the previous verses that are found in the Gospel of Matthew, He did not come to destroy the Law. In other words, the Mosaic Law still exists. Furthermore, as Jesus also stated, it will continue to exist until "heaven and earth pass". Not only that, but right after that, Jesus warns the Jews regarding those who break the Law, and who teach others to do the very same thing.

If you are feeling a little confused right now, please don't be, because there is an explanation for all of this. If Jesus fulfilled or completed the Mosaic Law, then why is there any need for it to continue to exist? The answer is found again in remembering who the Laws of Moses were given to, and why it was given to them in the first place. As we have seen, the Mosaic Law was God's Covenant with the children of Israel. It was given to them in order to teach them righteous living. In other words, under the Covenant of the Old Testament, the way in which the Israelites obtained forgiveness for their sins, and thus were made righteous in God's sight, was by conducting the necessary animal sacrifices, and also by striving to live by the mandates of the Laws of Moses.

However, as I will be discussing in more detail later on in

this series, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth". In other words, righteousness can now only be achieved through faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and no other way. There is an important catch to all of this though; and it is found in the words "to every one that believeth". In other words, the obligations of the Laws of Moses have only ended for those Jews who have placed their faith in the Sacrifice of Christ. Being as the Mosaic Law was only given to the children of Israel, this seems to indicate to me that any Jew who has not accepted Jesus Christ is still bound by the same Law. In other words, they will be judged by the full weight of the Law, if they insist on being under the Law, and continue to reject Jesus Christ.

That is why, in my view and understanding, the Mosaic Law was not destroyed -- as Jesus indicated -- and continues to exist. It is not for us Gentiles -- as it never has been -- it exists only for the stubborn Jews themselves, and will serve as the harsh standard by which all unbelieving Jews are going to be judged, because that is what they want. To reiterate, it is only for those Jews who have accepted Christ that the Mosaic Law has ended, and who are now under God's Grace.

As I point out in such articles as "Striving for Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?", it is my belief that when the Lord issued the warning to His Jewish listeners regarding breaking the least of the commandments, and teaching men to do so, and then likewise informed them that "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven", what He was really endeavoring to do was to clearly demonstrate to them the futility of their situation. Jesus wanted to impress upon His audience that they were utterly without hope if they tried to depend on their own righteousness.

You see, Jesus knew full well that not one single one of His listeners had kept every single mandate of the Mosaic Law. He also realized that the Scribes and the Pharisees were viewed as being the holiest people in Israel, even though they were really no such thing. As a result, because the common people viewed the religious elders of Israel in that fashion, Jesus knew beforehand that when He made that statement, the crowd of listeners would immediately think to themselves "Well, if the Scribes and the Pharisees are not even righteous enough, then what hope can there possibly be for me?"

I am convinced that this is exactly what Jesus wanted them to think. He wanted those people to realize that outside of believing in Him, and accepting Him as God's Son and their only true Savior, there was no hope for them. I believe that the Lord used the very same teaching tool with the incident regarding the woman who was caught in the act of adultery. As you may recall, when her self-righteous accusers brought the woman before Jesus and asked Him what He thought they should do, Jesus reacted in the following manner:

"And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus

stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst."
John 8:3-9, KJV

You see, in both cases, Jesus' intent was not to condemn His audience. Rather, it was to point out their hopeless, sinful condition; and in the case of the Scribes and the Pharisees, their outrageous degree of self-righteousness. As I explain in other articles, until we are able to recognize our sinful and hopeless condition, neither can we acknowledge our need for a Savior. The real tragedy is when proud people refuse to acknowledge their sins, reject the Light of Jesus Christ, and choose to walk in spiritual darkness instead. As we are told in the following verses, it is not Christ who condemns them, but rather they who condemn themselves:

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."
John 3:17-19, KJV

Another way in which some Christian Judaizers and legalists endeavor to entrap Believers in their snare is by pointing out the Biblical definition of sin, and then linking it to the Mosaic Law. As I explain in a number of other articles, the Apostle John clearly informs us what sin is in his first Epistle with following verse:

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
1 John 3:4, KJV

As you can see, the word "sin" means to transgress or violate God's Law. The question is, what Law is John referring to? Is it the Laws of Moses as some legalists and Judaizers like to claim? To add to their web of deception, these same legalists then point to verses such as the following, and then promote the belief that these commandments are likewise referring to the Laws of Moses:

"If ye love me, keep my commandments . . . He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."
John 14:15, 21, KJV

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."
John 15:10, KJV

Thus, according to the misguided and twisted interpretation of the Judaizers and the legalists, Jesus is saying that if we Gentiles truly love Him, we will keep the Mosaic Law. If you have been paying close attention, then you will already realize that there is something wrong with the way that the legalists interpret these verses. Why? Well, for two simple reasons. First, the Mosaic Law was given to the children of Israel, and not to the Gentiles. Second, Jesus was speaking to His Jewish followers, and not to Gentiles. So even if Jesus was referring to the Laws of Moses when He used the phrase "my commandments", He was certainly not applying it to the Gentiles; He was applying it to His own Jewish race.

However, being as the Lord was speaking to the founders of what was to become His new Church, and not to the legalistic religious leaders of Jerusalem, I am convinced -- and can in fact also prove -- that He was not referring to the mandates of the Mosaic Law whatsoever. I believe that He was talking about certain teachings which He had personally imparted to His own followers many times through personal example. They were teachings which He wanted to form the very foundation of His new Church. Do you know what teachings I am referring to? It is not the cold, hard, merciless legalism of the Laws of Moses that the Scribes and the Pharisees were noted for, my dear friends. It is love, mercy and forgiveness.

In the Gospels, time and time again when the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees demanded that the harsh justice of the Law be executed upon a particular person who had committed some sin, Jesus turned around and did the exact opposite by demonstrating love, mercy and forgiveness. As I said, Jesus taught by example, and these are the real teachings which He imparted to His followers. These were His commandments.

As we saw in part one, by intentionally ignoring one single verse in the Book of Exodus, that legalist purposely twisted the meaning of God's Word so that it appeared as if both Jews and Gentiles are all bound by the Mosaic Law. Sadly, in this case, he does the very same thing again. As I have so often shared with my readers, in many cases, God's Word interprets itself. All we have to do is keep reading, and God -- by His Holy Spirit -- will eventually connect the dots for us. In John 15:10 above, Jesus says "If ye keep my commandments". We can be like that legalist and look high and low in order to try to find a way to prove that the Lord is talking about the Laws of Moses. However, guess what? We don't even have to do that; because only two verses later, Jesus clearly tells us exactly what He means with this verse:

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."
John 15:12, KJV

That is Jesus' primary commandment right there. It is not the legalism of the Mosaic Law; it is simply love. Furthermore, it is because of this love, that we are motivated to exercise both mercy and forgiveness. If you still remain unconvinced that this is what the Lord actually means when He uses the phrase "my commandments", then consider these verses as well:

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

John 13:35, KJV

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Matthew 22:36-40, KJV

Can it be any clearer than that? Those are the two greatest commandments of all; and thus, in my view, "my commandments". The Lord even states that "all the law and the prophets" are encapsulated in those two commandments. As we saw earlier, Jesus was fully aware of the fact that it is impossible for anyone to keep the hundreds of statutes which constitute the Mosaic Law. Thus, as we will be discussing a bit later, not only would He not place that heavy legalistic burden on the people, but because the Old Covenant -- which was based on the Mosaic Law -- was not faultless, He knew that it had to be replaced with a New Covenant which is based on the Grace and the Love of God, which would come into effect through His own dying on the Cross for the sins of the world.

Let us return to the Apostle John's first Epistle. As we saw earlier, the legalists claim that when John writes that sin is the transgression of the Law, he is referring to the Laws of Moses. While this is a possibility, I am not convinced of it, and I will tell you why. First of all, if we examine all three of John's Epistles, we discover that in not one single place does he make a direct reference to the Laws of Moses. One would think that if this is what he really means when he uses the word "law", then surely John would more amply, and openly, discuss the Mosaic Law somewhere in his Epistles. It is nowhere to be found.

However, there is even more convincing evidence which points to what appears to be John's intended meaning for the word "law". For example, who wrote the love Gospel? John did. In addition to the verses which I have already shared with you from that Gospel, consider the following famous verse which is also contained in that same Gospel:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16, KJV

If it still isn't apparent to you yet that the Law which John is more than likely talking about is Love, and not the Laws of Moses, then perhaps the following excerpts from his three Epistles will convince you that the Apostle who Jesus loved, wrote most of all about love -- not legalism -- and viewed it as the greatest commandment of all:

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not . . . For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another . . . We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death . . . Hereby

perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth . . . And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."
1 John 3:1, 11, 14, 16-18, 23, KJV

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us . . . And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."
1 John 4:7-12, 16-21, KJV

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
1 John 5:2-3, KJV

"And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."
2 John 1:5-6, KJV

Over and over again, John repeatedly emphasizes love in his Epistles, and not adherence to the Mosaic Law. Please notice that in the fourth chapter of his first Epistle John writes "that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." Why is John saying this? Is it because we observe the mandates of the Mosaic Law? No. It is because we have walked according to the Law of Love. In light of the preponderance of evidence which we find in his Epistles, I don't see how we can arrive at any other conclusion than this. This emphasis on the Law of Love -- as opposed to the Laws of Moses -- is promoted by the Apostles Peter, James and Paul as well, as is evidenced by the following verses:

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."
Romans 13:10, KJV

"Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."
1 Corinthians 8:1, KJV

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing . . . And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."
1 Corinthians 13:2, 13, KJV

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."
Galatians 5:14, KJV

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:"
James 2:8, KJV

"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."
1 Peter 4:8, KJV

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts : Pt 3

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The Laws Of Moses Were Only Given To The Children Of Israel, Sabbath Observance Was A Sign Between God And The Israelites, Apostles Refused To Place Legalistic Burden On The Gentiles, Legalistic Christians Claim They Please God By Obeying Laws Which Were Never Imposed On Gentile Believers Such As The Sabbath, The Legalistic Burden Of The Scribes And Pharisees, Jesus Is Our Rest And The Lord Of The Sabbath, Legalists Want To Keep Carrying Their Legalistic Yoke And Take Pride In It, Obnoxious And Pushy Sabbath-Keeping Legalists, My Position Regarding Doctrinal Debates, Lord Lord Group And Trying To Establish Our Own Righteousness, Christ Is The End Of The Law For Righteousness For Believers, Paul's Battle Against Jewish Legalism, Paul's Counsel to Galatians Colossians And Romans, Aggressive Legalists And Judaizers, Abide In Your Calling,

Does Our Old Testament Legalism Possibly Even Irk The Lord?, God's Laws Are Written On Hearts Of Both Jews And Gentiles, Voice Of Conscience, God Is The Spirit Of Love, If We Are Led By The Spirit We Aren't Under The Law, We Are Under Grace And God's Honor System, Law Is Meant For Lawless And Disobedient, God's Laws Stamped On Our Hearts Convict Us All Of Wrongdoing, Contrast Between The Tables Of Stone And Tables Of Our Hearts

As we have already clearly established, God's Word confirms that the Laws of Moses were only given to the children of Israel, and not to the Gentile nations. Furthermore, the Book of Exodus indicates that the only Gentiles who became subject to the Mosaic Law, were those who decided to dwell with, and to intermarry with, the Israelites. These strangers were in fact required to be circumcised, according to the covenant that God first made with the Patriarch Abraham.

You may recall that the Book of Exodus also informs us that observing the Sabbath is a special sign between God and the Israelites. Exodus clearly states "it is a sign between me and you" and "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel". Based on these and similar verses which we find in the Old Testament, as well as the fact that neither Jesus or the Apostles preached directly to the Gentiles, it is easy to understand why we find no evidence in the Gospels where Sabbath observance is mentioned in relation to the Gentiles.

It would seem then that it is for these reasons that in Acts chapter fifteen, the Apostles did not establish a requirement for Gentile converts to observe the Sabbath. Please carefully think about this point. As the leaders of the First Century Church, with the historic meeting that was held in Jerusalem, the Apostles had ample opportunity to impose the Mosaic Law on the early Gentile Believers, including mandating that they observe the Sabbath. The meeting in Jerusalem would have been a very opportune time to do it, because that news would have quickly traveled back to the Gentile brethren, and it would have affected our Christian faith ever since then.

However, as I mentioned earlier, beginning with Peter himself, the Apostles refused to place that burden upon them, in spite of rather strong pressure from their legalistic brethren. As Peter asked, if even the Jews were unable to bear that burden, why should they place Gentile Christians under the very same heavy yoke? So my point is this. While some of my Christian brethren have convinced themselves that they are pleasing God by obeying -- or at least endeavoring to obey -- the statutes of the Mosaic Law, beginning with the Sabbath, the truth of the matter is that they don't have a leg to stand on, because God never required these things of us Gentiles in the first place, and neither did the First Century Church.

Do you understand my point? How can these Christian legalists say "Oh, we are pleasing God by keeping the Sabbath", when He never even told us that we had to keep it? If a commandment to observe the Sabbath was never even given to the Gentiles, then in effect, there is nothing to obey. If there's no commandment to obey, then saying "We are pleasing the Lord by observing the Sabbath" is ludicrous. How can God derive pleasure out of something which He never enforced upon us in the first place?

I apologize for being repetitious with this particular point, but I can tell you right now that there are going to be some hardheaded Christian legalists who read this series who are going to resist this Scriptural truth. You need to understand that this is a very big thing with some of them. In fact, on the occasions when I have addressed the Sabbath, and legalism in general, with some of them, their immediate reaction seems to always be to play their obedience card. "I am pleasing God by my obedience. What is wrong with obedience?" You see; they just don't get it. God never even told them that they had to do those things as a Gentile believer. To reiterate, that is where their error lies.

Sadly, as I mentioned in part two, because of their deception, I anticipate that there will undoubtedly be some Christians -- the real diehard legalists -- who are probably going to argue that I am wrong. The more vicious ones will accuse me of being a false prophet, a misguided teacher -- or whatever comes into their minds -- and endeavor to justify their wayward actions. However, it is my hope that a few of them will understand what I am explaining here, and will be liberated from their current legalistic bondage. Let me mention again that Jesus said that He came to set us free. In direct contrast to the Scribes and the Pharisees, Jesus did not come to place a new and heavier legalistic yoke upon any of our shoulders. Consider what He tells us in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke:

"For they [the Scribes and the Pharisees] bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."
Matthew 23:4, KJV

"And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."
Luke 11:46, KJV

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."
Matthew 11:28-30, KJV

Do you see that? Jesus is our only true rest, as well as our only true Sabbath, because He is the Lord of the Sabbath. He took the weight of sin and death, as well as the weight and the demands of the Mosaic Law, and placed them upon His very own shoulders, thus becoming the Lord of the Sabbath, as He clearly informs us in the following verses:

"For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day."
Matthew 12:8, KJV

"Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
Mark 2:28, KJV

"And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
Luke 6:5, KJV

Sadly, these Christian Judaizers and legalists don't really seem to want Jesus to be their rest and their Sabbath. They want to keep carrying that heavy legalistic yoke. They don't want to put it down. In fact, some of them take pride in how much they strive to obey the Mosaic Law and keep the Sabbath, and are very self-righteous about it. I have met quite a few of them, such as certain Seventh Day Adventists. They can be very obnoxious, and sometimes endeavor to engage me in debate via private messages, or on my Facebook timeline. I often end up blocking them if they become overly argumentative. Due to their pushiness, it has reached a point now where I am even hesitant to accept them as Facebook friends if they belong to the SDA Church, or to other legalistic groups which promote Old Testament legalism, because sooner or later, I know that I will receive a private message in which they will want to debate with me, and I just don't have time for it.

As my regular readers will know, it has long been my personal policy to not engage in doctrinal debates in any fashion. I find them to be both destructive and divisive, not to mention very time-consuming and spiritually draining. Please refer to the article "Should Christians Engage in Doctrinal Debates?" if you are interested in reading a more amplified explanation regarding my position.

As I mentioned earlier, these legalists claim to want to show the Lord how much they can please Him by obeying Him in something which He never even told them that they had to do. As we learned in part two, part of the problem seems to be that they have misunderstood what is meant by Jesus' words "my commandments". They have fallen for the double deception of believing that it refers to the Mosaic Law, and that the Laws of Moses apply to them, when they really don't. While these Christians say that they believe that they are only saved through their faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, at the same time, I can't help but wonder if they are trying to establish their own righteousness through their supposed "good works", very much like the Scribes and the Pharisees of old. I am also reminded of the proud "Lord, Lord" group who boast of their own doings. Consider the following verses:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
Matthew 7:21-23, KJV

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."
Romans 10:1-4, KJV

Please carefully notice what the Apostle Paul clearly states in the final verse above. As I explained in part two, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that

believeth." Once we come to Jesus, and accept His Sacrifice as Atonement for our sins, that is it. We are washed in the Blood of the Lamb, we are cleansed of our sins, and we are in fact made righteous in our Heavenly Father's sight. Jesus did for us what we cannot do for ourselves. As such, there is no need for us to try to establish our own righteousness in any way, because we could never even do it in the first place.

Clearly, we cannot possibly establish our own righteousness by observing the mandates of the Laws of Moses, such as by keeping the Sabbath and observing other Jewish feasts, or by eating kosher foods, or by using certain Hebrew names for God the Father and Jesus, or by any other means. As I mention in the article entitled "Are Christians Obligated to Keep the Sabbath?", the Apostle Paul didn't hesitate to take the issue of Old Testament Jewish legalism by the horns. Paul was quite determined to prevent the new Gentile converts from becoming ensnared by all of the legalistic nonsense which kept the Jerusalem Church in bondage. We saw a clear example of Paul's endeavors in part one with our discussion regarding the Galatian brethren.

You may recall that after explaining to the brethren in the city of Colosse how Jesus Christ had set them free from the curse of the Law, by nailing the ordinances of that Law to His own Cross, the Apostle Paul then advises them to not let anyone judge them because of what they eat and drink, or do not eat and drink, or because they don't observe Jewish holy days and feast days, such as the Sabbath. Consider what Paul wrote to them, and take heed if you are feeling the pressure of the Christian Judaizers and legalists in your life:

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:"

Colossians 2:14, 16, KJV

Just as he had rebuked and questioned the Galatians regarding why they had backslidden from the spiritual freedom they had recently gained through their faith in Jesus Christ, and had allowed the Jewish legalists from Jerusalem to ensnare them in their web of deception, and place them under the bondage of the Mosaic Law, Paul likewise pointedly questioned the young Church at Colosse in a similar manner, when just a few verses later he wrote the following to them:

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"

Colossians 2:20-22, KJV

In other words, Paul is saying, "If you truly believe that you have become dead to the Law through the Body of Christ, then why are you still observing and obeying the doctrines and commandments of men, according to the Mosaic Law?". In summarizing his position regarding Jewish legalism, in his Epistle to the Roman brethren, Paul wrote the following:

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind . . . I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean . . . Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."
Romans 14:5, 14, 22-23, KJV

What Paul is basically saying is that we must each live our faith according to our personal convictions, and do what we believe is pleasing to the Lord, no matter what others may say or think about it. This includes what day we choose to worship, what foods we eat, etc. However, at the same time, if we read the entire chapter, we recognize that Paul also advocates living in peace with our Christian brethren. Thus he states that we should not purposely go out of our way to stumble and offend anyone through the liberty which we have in Jesus Christ. In short, Paul appears to offer a kind of compromise solution. He seems to suggest that we should live our faith as we feel led of the Lord, while at the same time refraining from doing certain things when we find ourselves in the presence of weaker brethren, if it offends them. This is in fact acting charitably.

Sadly, the problem today -- which I have experienced -- is that some of these legalists and Judaizers do not know how to live peaceably with their Christian brethren. In their self-righteous pride -- because they believe that they are oh so right -- they in fact go out of their way to challenge people, and strive to argue and debate doctrine with their fellow brethren. As I explained earlier, some of them have tried to do this on my Facebook timeline, or else they have messaged me privately in order to aggressively push their legalistic beliefs on me. As I have mentioned before, I do not tolerate this kind of behavior, and I will not hesitate to block such people. I am simply not interested in their legalism. As the Apostle Paul also writes in his Epistle to the Romans:

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
Romans 12:18, KJV

Should this not begin with our own Christian brethren? Why then do some of you Christian Judaizers and legalists try so hard to push your views on others who are not interested in them? Enjoy your bondage all you want, but please demonstrate some decency by respecting our right to believe as we feel led by the Lord as well. You have your own timelines; so feel free to promote your doctrines on them, and not on ours.

As some of you will know, during the course of a week, I tend to visit a lot of Facebook timelines due to friend requests that I receive. As a result, I see a lot of things which I do not particularly agree with. I could behave similar to some of these legalists and post a challenging comment which will stir up the pot. However, I don't do this, because it is not my timeline, and each person has the right to operate their own timeline as they see fit, and to promote whatever they

want on it. Furthermore, I am not the least bit interested in starting a fire which I do not have the time to put out. In a word, I believe strongly in each individual abiding in his own calling and ministry, as we see by the following verses:

"Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand."

Romans 15:20-21, KJV

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called . . . Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."

1 Corinthians 7:20, 24, KJV

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ: Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."

2 Corinthians 10:12-18, KJV

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

Galatians 2:7-9, KJV

At any rate, contrary to what these misguided Christians may think, I have wondered if it is possible that without even realizing it, they may even be irking the Lord by their very legalism. What makes what they are doing any different from the legalism that the Apostle Paul was so often forced to fight against in his Epistles, as well as during his travels throughout the Mediterranean region during the First Century? I can only wonder how Paul would react if he were to see what is happening in the Christian Church today; a Church which he was in large part responsible for helping to found.

At this point you may be wondering, "Well, if the Mosaic Law was only given to the children of Israel, and was a covenant between them and the Lord, then by what are we Christians to be governed? This is where it gets very interesting, and the

Scriptures provide us with a very clear answer regarding this issue. While the Mosaic Law was only given to the Israelites, but not to the Gentile -- or non-Israelite -- nations, as it turns out, in both cases, the Scriptures inform us that God has still written His Laws upon the hearts of both Jews and Gentiles alike. This is made evident by verses such as the following. In Romans, the Apostle Paul speaks of we Gentiles, and in Hebrews he speaks of the Israelites:

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"
Romans 2:14-15, KJV

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"
Hebrews 8:10, KJV

As you can see from the previous verses, with or without Moses in the picture, the conclusion is still the same. In other words, regardless of whether or not we Gentiles ever received the written Law -- as the Israelites did through Moses -- nevertheless, the Apostle Paul informs us that the fact that we Gentiles naturally do those things -- or "do by nature" as Paul writes -- which are contained in the Law -- such as thou shalt not kill, steal, commit adultery, etc. -- it demonstrates that God's Laws are written in our hearts. It is in fact what a lot of people today refer to as the "voice of conscience", or as Paul tells us "their conscience also bearing witness". Personally, I prefer to refer to it as the conviction of the Spirit, or the Voice of the Spirit. Exactly what Spirit are we talking about here? The following verses provide us with a very clear answer:

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
John 4:24, KJV

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."
1 John 4:8, KJV

Clearly then, it is the Spirit of Love, which is what God is. Furthermore, as Paul wrote to the Galatian brethren, if we are motivated by this Spirit of Love in everything that we do, we are not under the Law; we are under God's Grace. However, being under Grace is most definitely not a license for any of us to sin. In some regards, God's Royal Law of Love -- which is also the Great Commandment and the Perfect Way -- may even be more strict, because God will expect more of us as His adopted children. We might say that Grace is a kind of honor system. In other words, God expects us to do what is right, as we are motivated by His Love. Consider the following verses which verify some of these points:

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are

contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

Galatians 5:16-18, KJV

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

Romans 6:14, 15, KJV

In contrast to the above, the Apostle Paul informs us that there are likewise many people in the world who have not accepted Jesus Christ, and whose lives are not governed by God's Spirit of Love. While God's Laws are still written on their hearts as well -- as they are with all men -- they do not abide by them; rather, they resist them. Thus, without God's Grace through Christ, it appears that such people will be judged according to the severity of the Law. In fact, the Apostle Paul writes that it is precisely for these kinds of people that the Law exists in the first place, as we can determine by the following verses:

"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."

1 Timothy 1:8-11, KJV

To reiterate my previous point, as the Apostle Paul writes, we have God's Laws written in our own hearts, even without having ever received it through Moses. Even if a person has never heard of Moses, or read the Bible, and even if he is not familiar with the laws of his own land, he knows that it is wrong to murder a person. He knows that it is wrong to steal something from someone else. He knows that it is wrong to engage in an affair with another's husband or wife. How does he know these things? As I said, it is because God has written His Laws on the table of that person's heart. Stated another way, we all know the difference between right and wrong, even if we don't believe in God, because His Laws are stamped on our hearts, and they convict us of wrongdoing.

In the case of the Israelites, as I noted a minute ago, Paul says the same thing regarding them in Hebrews chapter eight when he writes "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts". In short, in both cases, we are told that God has written His Laws in all of our hearts, so there is no valid excuse for any of us to claim ignorance, and say that we didn't know on the Day of Judgment. Furthermore, it is these same basic moral laws which form the basis of many human legal systems even to this day, whether a society is Christian or not. Sadly, as I mention in other articles, His great Moral Code is slowly being altered by sinful men who fear not God. Please refer to "When Sin is No Longer a Sin".

This contrast between God's Laws being written on tables of stone and tables of flesh -- that is, our hearts -- is made evident in the following verses. In the first seven sets of verses, the two stone tables on which the Ten Commandments were written are mentioned; while in the last four sets of verses tables of flesh -- or our hearts -- are mentioned:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them."

Exodus 24:12, KJV

"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

Exodus 31:18, KJV

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount. And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone."

Exodus 34:1-4, KJV

"And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone."

Deuteronomy 4:13, KJV

"These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me."

Deuteronomy 5:22, KJV

"When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water: And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant."

Deuteronomy 9:9-11, KJV

"At that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. And I made an

ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand."

Deuteronomy 10:1-3, KJV

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:"

Proverbs 3:3, KJV

"My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart."

Proverbs 7:1-3, KJV

"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars;"

Jeremiah 17:1, KJV

"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

2 Corinthians 3:2-3, KJV

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

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Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts : Pt 4

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God Removes Stony Hearts Of Israelites And Gives Them Hearts Of Flesh, A Heart Of Stone Symbolizes Stubbornness Rebellion Spiritual Blindness And Unbelief, Religious Jews Fell Under The Deception That They Could Save Themselves By Keeping The Mosaic Law, Anyone Who Believes They Can Be Justified By The Laws Of Moses Has Fallen From Grace, Jews Will Die In Their Sins Without Christ, Jesus Died In Vain If Salvation Can Be Obtained By Mosaic Law, No One Can Keep Entire Mosaic Law, Real Truth, Christ Came To Save Us And Not To Condemn Us, Jesus' Difficult "But I Say Unto You" Teachings, A Hopeless Situation, We Are All Born In Sin And No One Is Righteous, Biblical Definition Of Being Perfect, We Must Be Complete, God Is The Abounding Spirit Of Love, Filled With God's Love, Harsh Mosaic Law Versus Indwelling Of God's Spirit Of Love, Love Forgives And Covers All Sins, Led By The Spirit In Our Understanding Of God's Word, Islam's Cruel Legalism, Stoning

Continuing our discussion regarding the tables of stone and tables of flesh, it is interesting to note, however, that we are also informed that before God can write His Laws upon the hearts -- or the tables of flesh -- of the Israelites, He has to remove their hearts of stone and actually give them hearts of flesh; as we see by these verses which were written by the Prophet Ezekiel:

"Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."
Ezekiel 36:22-27, KJV

Why does the Lord say through the Prophet Ezekiel that He will take away their heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh? As you may already understand, a heart of stone symbolizes a stubborn, rebellious heart. It represents a heart that is hardened against the Lord, against His Will, and full of unbelief. This affliction has in fact been the core problem with the Jews for literally millennia, as is evidenced by the following sample verses:

"Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."
Isaiah 1:4-6, KJV

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."
Isaiah 6:8-10, KJV

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near

me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."
Isaiah 29:13-14, KJV

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
Matthew 13:15, KJV

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."
Matthew 15:7-9, KJV

"For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened."
Mark 6:52, KJV

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."
Mark 7:6, KJV

"And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?"
Mark 8:17, KJV

"And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept."
Mark 10:4-5, KJV

"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen."
Mark 16:14, KJV

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"
Luke 24:25-26, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and

I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."

John 12:37-41, KJV

"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."

Acts 7:51, KJV

"And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Acts 28:25-27, KJV

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;"

Romans 2:5-9, KJV

"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."

2 Corinthians 3:14-15, KJV

"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years . . . Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God . . . While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."

Hebrews 3:7-9, 12, 15, KJV

As I mentioned in part two, it was precisely because of the hardness of their own hearts, that even during Jesus' time, the proud, self-righteous religious leaders fell under the deception that they could save themselves through their own works, and supposed adherence to the Laws of Moses. That is why they rejected Christ. They knew full well that a Messiah had been promised to Israel, but when He finally arrived, in their pride they chose to reject the Prince of Life, because they were convinced that they could be justified by the Law. However, as the Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, by so doing, those foolish religionists fell from God's Grace, as we see by this verse:

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
Galatians 5:4, KJV

Stated another way, having fallen from Grace, this meant that in order to achieve justification and righteousness, any Jew who rejected Christ would be required to observe every single mandate of the Laws of Moses to absolute perfection. In fact, this same truth applies to unbelieving Jews today as well. If Jews honestly believe that they can achieve justification and righteousness by the works of the Law; if they believe that observing the Sabbath and other Jewish feast days, following Jewish dietary laws, and doing everything else that the six hundred and thirteen "mitzvot" -- or commandments -- of Torah and Halakha demand of them will make them acceptable in God's sight, they are not only dead wrong, but they are fallen from Grace. Furthermore, as I noted in part two, if they continue to reject Christ, they will not only die in their sins, but they will be judged by the full weight of the Law, if they insist on being under the Law. Jesus told His Jewish enemies of the First Century the very same thing, as we see by the following verses:

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come . . . I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."
John 8:21, 24, KJV

As I mention in other articles, in reality, the Mosaic Law cannot save one single person. After all, if it could, then there would have been no need for Jesus to forfeit His life on the Cross for our sins, and He died in vain. This is in fact what the Apostle Paul told the Galatian brethren in his Epistle to them, as we see by the following verse:

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."
Galatians 2:21, KJV

Furthermore, even endeavoring to save oneself by observing the Mosaic Law -- if it were acceptable to God, which it is not -- is a total exercise in futility, because as we have already seen, it consists of literally hundreds of statutes which are listed in the Torah of the Old Testament. Contrary to some popular Bible-oriented movies, the Ten Commandments are not the only Laws which were given to the Israelites by way of Moses on the summit of Mount Horeb, or Sinai. At any rate, concerning vain endeavors to achieve one's Salvation by observing the strict mandates of the Mosaic Law, the Apostle James laid all the cards on the table when he included the following resounding statement in his Epistle:

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
James 2:10, KJV

Wow! What more needs to be said than that? I am reminded of a short comment that I sometimes see on Facebook timelines. I don't know who invented it or popularized it, but it says "Real truth". People often type it in all uppercase letters.

Well, my friends, that verse is in fact real truth, whether some legalists want to hear it or not, and whether they can accept it or not. This verse particularly applies to modern Jews who still adamantly reject Jesus Christ, and who place their hope in Halakha observance.

In other words, what the Apostle James is basically saying to his readers is "Forget it. You can't do it. You will never be able to keep them all. Resign yourself to the fact that you are a sinner, that you were born in sin, that you are simply not perfect in the flesh, and that you never will be. As a result, you need to abandon any self-righteous intentions you may have and accept Jesus Christ; because He is the only one who can truly save you from your sins."

As we saw in part two of this series, this is the very same direct approach that Jesus would sometimes employ in His sermons and teachings. He would purposely say certain things which would force His audience to realize that no matter how hard they tried, they could not in any way achieve personal righteousness and save themselves. As I shared with you in that same section, Jesus' goal in coming to this planet was not to condemn the world; rather, it was to save the world. However, before anyone can truly be saved, they first need to acknowledge their sinful condition, and recognize their need for a Savior. Thus, Jesus made certain statements which would demonstrate the futility of the situation, and reveal exactly how utterly hopeless the Jews were without Him. He was forced to operate in this fashion, because His listeners were a very proud, stubborn, rebellious, self-righteous people.

That Jesus used this tactic is particularly evident in some of His difficult "But I say unto you" teachings. While Jesus' Jewish listeners no doubt thought that the moral bar was high enough already, Jesus placed it even higher -- in fact, in a few cases even beyond their reach -- for the reasons which I have already explained to you. The Jews simply had to see how lost they were without Him. Consider the following "But I say unto you" verses, and ask yourself where you personally stand in each case, and I think that you will get the point. I have purposely divided these sayings into separate verse sets in order to emphasize each one, even though they all follow each other in the same chapter. As you read each set, please pause and apply each one to your own life:

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."
Matthew 5:21-22, KJV

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."
Matthew 5:27-28, KJV

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy

members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."
Matthew 5:29-30, KJV

"It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."
Matthew 5:31-32, KJV

"Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."
Matthew 5:33-37, KJV

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."
Matthew 5:38-42, KJV

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
Matthew 5:43-48, KJV

So did you just pass that grueling test with flying colors? I know that you didn't, and neither did I, and neither did the Jews who were listening to Jesus that day. To reiterate, that was Jesus' point. It was not to condemn, it was to reveal the futility of endeavoring to establish our own righteousness, as the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees endeavored to do.

So have you ever become angry with someone and called them a fool? If so, you clearly deserve hell fire. During the course of your life, have you ever looked at a man or a woman who is not your spouse and lusted after that person? Uh-oh! You are fried! Are you really prepared to pluck out your eye or cut off your hand if it causes you to sin? I didn't think so. If

you are of marrying age, have you ever divorced a spouse for any other reason than marital infidelity, and then married someone else? Oops . . . you are an adulterer or adulteress. Have you ever swore or said more than what really needed to be said? This is not looking too good for you, is it? How often have you been willing to turn the other cheek instead of striking back in revenge? How many times have you given more than is required to give and expected nothing in return? It is very easy to love people who return your love, but how many times have you truly loved difficult, unlovable people? Instead of hating your enemies, how many times have you loved them, forgiven them, and even prayed for them?

The way that you are feeling right now is no doubt the same way that Jesus' listeners felt as He shared these lessons with them. But Jesus still was not done yet. He still hadn't pulled out the last card in the deck. That is when the Lord said "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect". Oh how their hearts must have sunk as they realized the true depth of their imperfection and sin. What an utterly hopeless situation they found themselves in. Through important lessons such as these, we learn that we are all born in sin, and that we will die in our sins, if we refuse to accept Jesus' Atonement for our sins. This truth is made rather evident by verses such as the following:

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."
Psalms 51:5, KJV

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one . . . For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"
Romans 3:10, 23, KJV

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"
Romans 5:12, KJV

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
Romans 6:23, KJV

"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"
Ephesians 2:5, KJV

While Jesus clearly admonished His listeners to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect, as I explain in a number of other articles, many modern Christians do not understand what He means by that, because the Biblical definition of the word "perfect" has been altered -- and to some degree corrupted -- in our modern day. You may recall that in part two we discussed the three Greek words "pleroo", "teleo" and "telos". These words have a common meaning of making a thing full or complete, or terminating something and bringing it to an end, finish or close. The overall meaning of the words then is a sense of completeness and fullness as in "fulfill".

It will interest you to know that in the previous verse, the word "perfect" is derived from the Greek word "teleios". As you may surmise, it too is a derivative of "telos", and thus

means to bring something to an end, to finish it, and bring it to a condition of completeness. Thus, in reality, what the Lord is saying in that verse is that we must be complete, as our Heavenly Father is complete. We need to be perfected, we need to be completed, but how? If you are shaking your head in confusion, please read on, because the answer is so very clear in the Scriptures of the New Testament.

Let me ask you two simple questions which will assist you in solving this Word riddle. What is God, and what are the Great Commandments? As we learned in parts two and three, God is the great Spirit of Love, and the two Great Commandments are to love Him, and to love others as we love ourselves. Are you starting to understand yet? God is the perfect, complete and full Spirit of Love. He is the never-ending, overflowing and abounding Spirit of Love. Thus, what Jesus is really telling His listeners in the previous verse, is that the only way in which they will ever be able to achieve God's high standard, is by being completely full of the Father's love. This is what it means to be perfect, or complete.

It is evident from the Gospels that this kind of love can't be achieved by adhering to the cold, harsh Mosaic Law. The self-righteous, judgmental, holier-than-thou Scribes and Pharisees were clear proof of that. It is when we are truly and completely full of this kind of love -- that is, Divine Love -- that we are capable of unselfishly loving others, and forgiving others regardless of what they may do to us. It is only when we are full of this kind of love -- through the indwelling of God's Spirit -- that we are capable of fulfilling the Royal Law; because as Peter, Paul and King Solomon all wrote:

"Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins."
Proverbs 10:12, KJV

"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."
1 Peter 4:8, KJV

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."
Romans 13:10, KJV

If you still have any doubts regarding this word "perfect" meaning to be full of and complete in God's Love, please carefully consider the following Scriptures where the words "perfect" and "love" are used together, and where "perfect" likewise refers to a condition of fullness or completeness:

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."
2 Corinthians 13:11, KJV

"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."
Ephesians 3:19, KJV

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."
1 John 2:5, KJV

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. . . . Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

1 John 4:12, 17-18, KJV

Returning to the previous verses that are found in the Book of Matthew, sadly, when legalists read such sayings by the Lord, because they are in bondage to and blinded by the Laws of Moses, and are not truly led by the Spirit of God in their understanding, they have a propensity for taking such teachings in a very literal sense. In other words, they only see the letter of the Law and not the real Spirit and intent behind the words, exactly as we see in the following verses:

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:26, KJV

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

John 16:13, KJV

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Romans 2:28-29, KJV

"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

Romans 7:6, KJV

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Romans 8:14, KJV

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

"And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

2 Corinthians 3:4-6, KJV

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be

given him."
James 1:5, KJV

While we are discussing our Law-bound legalistic brethren, at the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that if we want to see an example of extreme legalism when it comes to the Laws of Moses, all we have to do is look at the false religion of Islam. There are plenty of sad people in the world today who lack hands, feet, eyes and who have scarred faces due to the extremely cruel legalism of the Islamic faith. The Scribes and the Pharisees of old were not that much different. Let us not forget their propensity for stoning people due to their infractions of the Mosaic Law, not to mention the sentence of death which they pronounced on Jesus as well, because they accused Him of being a blasphemer and a child of the Devil.

Please go to part five for the continuation of this series.

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Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts : Pt 5

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Blessed Are The Merciful, Judged By Our Own Lack Of Mercy, Mosaic Law Reveals Sinful Nature And Points Jews To Christ, Only Justified And Made Righteous Through Faith In Christ, We Are Either Saved By Grace Or Saved By Works But Not Both, Review Of Key Points Discussed, Jesus And Apostles Exposed Religious Jew's Abuse Of Mosaic Law To Keep Common People In Subjection, Jesus And Apostles Fully Supported Moral Aspects Of Mosaic Law, Sample Verses, We Know The Difference Between Right And Wrong Because God's Laws Are Written On Our Hearts, Governed By The Law Of Love, Exact Nature Of The Law Of Love And The Laws God Has Written On Our Hearts, Example Of U.S. Constitution And Bill Of Rights, Law Of Love Appears To Be Comprised Of The Core Moral Laws Of The Mosaic Law, Hookers For Jesus, Doctrines Of Devils And Damnable Heresies, We Must Rightly Divide And Balance God's Word To Arrive At The Truth, Legalists Choose To Ignore Verses Which Expose Their Harsh Legalism And Bondage To The Law, Failing To Keep The Sabbath Is Not Mentioned As A Sin In Moral Laws Of The New Testament

Continuing our discussion from part four, as we have seen, because the Scribes and the Pharisees did not possess the true Spirit of God, not only did they not understand many of the things which Jesus said and taught, but because God is the Supreme Spirit of Love, and they did not possess this Love, everything they said and did was governed by the harsh

legalism of the Mosaic Law. As we learned in part two, while they demanded that the harsh justice of the Law be executed upon any person who had transgressed the Laws of Moses, Jesus did the exact opposite by demonstrating genuine Love, Mercy and Forgiveness. So once again we see the letter of the law pitted against being led by the Spirit, which is the Spirit of Love. In studying the New Testament, we discover that not only was Mercy one of Jesus' central teachings, but we also are given a clear warning that those people who treat and judge others without Mercy, will ultimately be judged in the very same fashion by their Heavenly Father, as we see by the following verses.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."
Matthew 5:7, KJV

"And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
Matthew 9:10-13, KJV

"At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."
Matthew 12:1-7, KJV

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."
Matthew 23:23, KJV

"And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took

care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."
Luke 10:30-37, KJV

"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:"
Luke 6:35-37, KJV

"For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."
James 2:13, KJV

Treating others without Mercy is just one more manifestation of the inherited human condition which we refer to as sin. As we have seen, sin is transgressing, or violating, God's Laws, and His most important Law of all is the Royal Law of Love. Acting in a merciless fashion is clearly not a genuine demonstration of Love. While there must be a remedy for sin, it should be evident to you by now that endeavoring to keep the Mosaic Law is clearly not the solution, and will never be acceptable to our Heavenly Father. As the Apostle Paul points out in the verses below, while the Mosaic Law could show the Israelites that they were sinners, they could not be justified by that same Law, because absolutely no one can keep the hundreds of harsh, strict statutes of which it is comprised:

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."
Romans 3:20, KJV

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."
Romans 7:7, KJV

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."
Galatians 3:24-25, KJV

As Paul reveals in the previous verses, the purpose of the Laws of Moses was not only to reveal righteousness living to the Israelites, and teach them that they were all sinners because they could not possibly achieve God's high standard on their own, but it was also to serve as a schoolmaster to point the way to the righteousness which can only be found through faith in Jesus Christ. As I have stated a few times now, it is only through our faith in His Atoning Sacrifice, that we can be justified and made righteous in God's sight. There simply is no other acceptable remedy for the penalty

of sin. Paul -- who was in fact a self-righteous, Law-bound Pharisee prior to his own conversion -- stresses this very same point in the following verses as well:

"And by him [Jesus] all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
Acts 13:39, KJV

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;"
Romans 3:20-21, KJV

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God . . . But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."
Romans 7:4, 6, KJV

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."
Romans 10:4, KJV

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."
Romans 11:6, KJV

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith . . . Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"
Galatians 3:11, 13, KJV

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"
Titus 3:5, KJV

So as we see once again by the previous verses, our own works are just not good enough, and will never be good enough. Not only that, but observing the Law just won't do it either. It is only by God's Grace that we can be saved, because as we have previously discussed in this series, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth". As Paul writes, we either trust in God's Grace through faith in Jesus Christ to obtain our righteousness, or else we trust in our own works. We cannot place our faith in both of them.

Please notice that Paul writes that "ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." While Paul obviously means

the Mosaic Law, what exactly does he mean when he says "dead to the law"? Before answering this question, let's review a few of the key points which we have discussed in this series thus far.

First, we have seen through Scriptural evidence that the Laws of Moses were not given to the Gentile nations, and were only applied to Gentiles who chose to dwell amongst the Israelites. Second, we learned that neither Jesus or the Apostles directly preached to the Gentiles in the Gospels, and that any mention of the Laws of Moses must therefore have been directed to the Jews themselves. Third, when a strong conflict arose between the legalists in the Jerusalem Church and the Apostle Paul and his Gentile converts, the Jerusalem Church decided to not impose any of the mandates of the Mosaic Law on the Gentiles, other than four restrictions. For example, the Apostles did not enforce circumcision, or observance of the Sabbath and other Jewish feast days, because these things were a part of their special Covenant with God and had nothing to do with the Gentiles.

We have also seen that when Jesus said "my commandments", it is more than likely that He was referring to His teachings of Love, Mercy and Forgiveness, and not to the harsh mandates of the Mosaic Law, which He knew that no one could keep anyway. In fact, as we discovered in part three, for Him to have done so would have been contrary to His purpose for coming to our world in the first place. You may recall that I said that the Lord did not come to place a new and heavier legalistic yoke upon any of our shoulders. He came to give us an easier and lighter burden, as per Matthew 11:28-30. Given the contents of John's Gospel and his Epistles, I also pointed out that it seems obvious that when he said "sin is the transgression of the law", he was not referring to the Mosaic Law, but rather to the Law of Love, because Love is God's highest standard of excellence. Anything we do which is contrary to God's Royal Law of Love is a sin.

The final key point is that while the children of Israel may have received God's Laws through Moses, nevertheless, in the end, the Scriptures inform us that God has written His Laws on the hearts of both Jews and Gentiles alike. Furthermore, these Laws act as our "voice of conscience", and guide us in our everyday living. They are like the proverbial Angel on one's shoulder.

Having stated the above, if we carefully study the Gospels and the Epistles, one very interesting discovery we make is that while Jesus, the original Apostles and the Apostle Paul had some major criticisms of the Scribes and the Pharisees -- or the concision, as Paul also referred to them, because they engaged in the cutting of the flesh, or circumcision -- and how they used different aspects of the Mosaic Law as a type of bludgeon to keep the common people in subjection to their authority, one thing which none of them did was to in any way speak against the moral aspects of the Mosaic Law. In fact, quite to the contrary, both Jesus and the Apostles strongly supported God's Divine Moral Code, as it was first expressed through the Laws of Moses.

In other words, if we study the aforementioned Books, we see that Jesus spoke against the commercialization of the

Temple Compound; He criticized the unfair tithing system which was a heavy burden on the poor, but which enriched the religious hierarchy; He exposed the system of bribes -- or "gifts" -- which allowed certain people to get around their obligations; and He verbally castigated the religious elders for their preoccupation with human traditions which nullified God's Laws. When it came to his Gentile converts, as we saw earlier, the Apostle Paul also resisted some Jewish customs, and traditions such as circumcision, keeping the Sabbath and other feast days, refraining from eating certain foods, etc. This is evidenced by verses such as the following, some of which I shared with you earlier:

"Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."
Matthew 15:1-6, KJV

"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."
Matthew 21:12-13, KJV

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."
Matthew 23:14, KJV

"And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be

profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."

Mark 7:2-13, KJV

"And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Mark 11:15-17, KJV

"And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation."

Mark 12:38-40, KJV

"And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Luke 19:45-46, KJV

"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation. And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."

Luke 20:46-21:4, KJV

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days . . . Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"

Colossians 2:16, 20-22, KJV

As you can see, it was the abuse of some of the ceremonial, ministerial and traditional aspects of the Mosaic Law, and the fact that some of them were no longer necessary and/or inapplicable to the Gentile converts, which resulted in some degree of disapproval or outright resistance by Jesus and the Apostles. However, to reiterate, it does not appear that the core Moral Code was the object of disapproval in any way. By the core Moral Code, I'm referring to thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, etc.

We have clearly seen that God has written His Laws on each of our hearts, regardless of whether we happen to be Jews, or Gentiles, or Christians or even atheists for that matter. Because of this, we all know the difference between right and wrong; and our conscience is pricked when we knowingly do something wrong. As we saw earlier, Paul refers to this as "their conscience also bearing witness". We have also seen that as God's born-again children, He expects us to be motivated by the Law of Love in everything that we do.

So the question we need to address concerns the exact nature of God's Law of Love, and the Laws which God has seen fit to write on the tables of our hearts. In other words, God's Law of Love is not a nebulous or ambiguous thing. This Law must consist of specific parameters which clearly define our mode of behavior in this world. It would be similar to telling a foreigner that the United States of America is governed by the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Unless he knows what is actually contained in those historic documents, he will remain clueless. However, if he actually examines those documents for himself, then he will better understand exactly what you mean.

Upon giving this issue some thought, and after studying the New Testament, I have concluded that the Love of Law, and the Laws which God has stamped on each of our hearts, is probably nothing less than the core statutes of the Mosaic Law itself; that is, the Moral Laws, as we find reflected in some of the Ten Commandments. As I mentioned earlier, while Jesus and the Apostles clearly had some issues with how the Mosaic Law was executed by the Scribes and the Pharisees, nevertheless, they did support the moral parameters of the Laws of Moses. This is evident by verses such as the following:

"Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother."
Mark 10:19, KJV

"Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother."
Luke 18:20, KJV

"And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me . . . Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood."
Acts 15:13, 19-20, KJV

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,"
1 Corinthians 6:9, KJV

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right."
Ephesians 6:1, KJV

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well

pleasing unto the Lord."
Colossians 3:20, KJV

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death . . . And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Revelation 21:8, 27, KJV

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Revelation 22:15, KJV

As you can see, just about everything that is stated in the previous verses is clearly reflected somewhere in the Mosaic Law. Furthermore, most of the sins which are mentioned are moral or ethical in nature. If one refuses to repent of such sins as fornication, idolatry, adultery, being effeminate, being homosexual -- which is slightly disguised as "abusers of themselves with mankind" -- murder, whoremongering, lying sorcery, stealing and bearing false witness, these verses state that he will not have any part in the Kingdom of God.

Tragically, despite what is clearly stated in the previous verses, as I point out in such articles as "Women Shepherds: The Family Sex Cult Exposed Again!", there are some deceived Christians in the world today who have convinced themselves that it is okay to engage in fornication, adultery and even prostitution, in order to win a soul to Jesus Christ. These deceived people claim that they are "hookers for Jesus", and that the Law of Love gives them the license and the liberty to engage in such things, and not be guilty of sin. However, the fact that Jesus emphasizes the serious nature of these sins, the Apostles emphasize the seriousness of these carnal transgressions, and the fact that they are also mentioned in the last Book of the Bible -- which suggests to me that it is God's final word regarding these issues -- informs me that such Christians who commit these sins are misguided. In fact, what such people believe can clearly be described as being doctrines of devils and damnable heresies, as we see by the following verses:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"

1 Timothy 4:1-2, KJV

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

2 Peter 2:1, KJV

As I have shared with my readers so many times before, it is foolish for any of us to take one verse out of the Bible, and turn it into a doctrine. As I strive to do in all of my many

articles, led by God's Spirit, we must carefully compare one Scripture with another, and rightly divide God's Word, if we wish to arrive at a balanced understanding of the Truth. We must be willing to take everything into consideration, weigh it prayerfully, and not ignore certain verses simply because they contradict what we want to believe. Consider the wisdom of the following verses:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15, KJV

"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Acts 17:10-11, KJV

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

1 John 4:1, KJV

As we have seen in this series, this is precisely what some legalists do not do. They do not rightly divide God's Word. They omit or ignore certain verses which clearly expose the errors in their harsh legalism and bondage to the Law, and they purposely look for verses which seemingly support their wayward manner of thinking and believing. They search God's Word with doctrinal blinders on their eyes, and willfully reject the freedom from the Law which we obtain through our faith in Jesus Christ.

Regarding the previous verses that I shared with you from the Gospels, the Epistles and the Book of Revelation, let me call something else to your attention. As we have already seen, the various Jewish feast days -- which I discuss more at length in the series entitled "The Lamb of God Was a Goat!" -- formed a part of the Old Covenant which God made with the children of Israel. Those feast days -- including Sabbath observance -- have little to do with Gentile Believers, despite what some Christian legalists and Judaizers erroneously claim. God made no commandment for us Gentiles to observe such days, and the Apostles of the First Century Church refused to enforce them on the Gentiles converts. The reason why I am mentioning this point again, is because while the previous verse set mentions the various moral and ethical transgressions, not one single one of those verses mentions failing to observe the Sabbath as being a sin. Case closed.

Please go to part six for the continuation of this series.

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Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts : Pt 6

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Love Is The Great Commandment Royal Law And Golden Rule, Law Of Love Is Inscribed On All Our Hearts, God's Universal Code Of Conduct, Love Is The Fulfilling Of The Law, What Is Meant By "Dead To The Law", Jesus Christ Introduced New Covenant To Replace Old Covenant, Covenant Grew Old But Moral Laws Were Not Just Thrown Out, What Had To Be Changed, Israelites Were Not Able To Keep Mosaic Law, The Law Was Their Schoolmaster, Dependence For Being Made Righteous Changed From Keeping The Mosaic Law To Depending On Jesus' Sacrifice, Christ Is The End Of The Law For Righteousness To Every One That Believeth, Married To Christ And Not To The Law, Washed In The Blood Of The Lamb, Jesus Did Not Destroy The Law, If We Are In Christ We Are Under Grace But If We Reject Christ We Are Under Law, Being Dead To The Law Isn't A License To Sin, Proof That Paul Still Upheld God's Moral Laws, Marriage To Christ Results In Spiritual Fruit, Letter Of The Law And Legalism Bring Bondage And Death While Jesus Offers Us Love Life Liberty And Fruit, Necessity For Old Testament Animal Sacrifices Became Null And Void With Jesus' Death, Jesus Became Our Sacrificial Lamb And High Priest, Office Of Jewish High Priest And Temple Services No Longer Necessary, Jesus Warned Of Destruction Of Herod's Temple, General Titus And Romans Destroy Jerusalem And Temple

As I have emphasized throughout this series, and as I also point out in the article entitled "The Royal Law: Thou Shalt Love", Jesus and His inner core of Apostles -- Peter, James and John -- along with the Apostle Paul, all emphasize the preeminence of Love. Love is the Great Commandment, the Royal Law and the Golden Rule; because as Jesus Himself informs us, it encapsulates all of the most important Moral Laws of the Old Testament period. In other words, if we are motivated by Love in all that we say and do, we will not murder, or steal, or bear false witness, or commit adultery or contradict any of the other moral aspects of the Laws of Moses. This is why I explained in part five that the Law of Love appears to be comprised of the core Moral Laws of the Mosaic Law, and that these are the Laws which God has inscribed upon the tables of our hearts; even if we are not Jewish, even if we didn't live during the time of Moses, and even if we have never even read the Bible.

In a sense, the Law of Love represents the primary Moral Laws of the Mosaic Law in a simplified form. It is God's Universal Code of Conduct. We don't need to remember all of the dos and don'ts of that complicated Old Testament legal system. If we just remember to be motivated by Love in everything that we do and say, we will naturally fulfill God's expectations, and His Divine Laws which are written on our hearts; because as the Apostle Paul wrote, "love is the fulfilling of the law".

Having now explained to you what I personally believe the Law of Love is, and which Laws are written on our hearts, let us return to the issue regarding the phrase "dead to the law", as it is found in Romans 7:4 below:

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."
Romans 7:4, KJV

As I asked earlier, exactly what does "dead to the law" mean? Tragically, as I briefly mentioned in part five, beginning as far back as the 1970's, there have been misguided Christians who have erroneously misinterpreted the phrase, and who claim that it means that we are no longer bound by the Moral Laws of the Bible which -- as we have clearly seen -- are found in both the Old and the New Testaments. Because both Jesus and the authors of the New Testament speak about the introduction of a New Covenant or a New Testament, and explain that it has replaced the Old Covenant or Old Testament, these Christians mistakenly conclude that everything that was associated with the Old Covenant -- including God's Moral Laws -- was simply thrown out. However, is this what Paul really means by "dead to the law"? This New Covenant is mentioned in verses such as the following:

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
Matthew 26:28, KJV

"And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."
Mark 14:24, KJV

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."
Luke 22:20, KJV

"After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."
1 Corinthians 11:25, KJV

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."
2 Corinthians 3:6, KJV

"But now hath he [Jesus] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put

my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."
Hebrews 8:6-13, KJV

"And for this cause he [Jesus] is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."
Hebrews 9:15, KJV

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."
Hebrews 12:24, KJV

There is something very important that you need to realize from the previous verses. As I said, the erroneous assumption that has been made by certain Christians is that everything that is associated with the Old Covenant that was made with Moses and the Israelites was just thrown out. In other words, they claim that even the Moral Laws are no longer applicable. However, if you carefully read the verses, you will see that there is nothing in them which states that God's Moral Laws grew old, or that they were thrown out. What they say is that the Covenant itself grew old. There is something about that Divine Agreement which became invalid. That Covenant was not faultless, and thus had to be updated and changed. But what was it? What had to be changed?

In fact, rather than throw out the Laws, what those verses really say regarding the Israelites is "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts"; which is exactly what we learned earlier. It does not take a rocket scientist to understand this. If God says that He is going to write His Laws in their hearts, then obviously, this can only mean that they have not been annulled, and that they -- meaning God's Moral Laws -- still exist, even after Jesus died on the Cross. We have already seen that this is so by the verses which I shared with you in part five. Whether the Jews look to the Mosaic Law, or we Gentiles look to the Laws which God has written on the tables of our hearts, the fact remains that God's Universal Moral Code -- which as we have seen is encapsulated in the Law of Love -- has definitely not been annulled or destroyed.

So as I asked a minute ago, if the Moral Laws were not just thrown out, then what is it that really changed between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant? What changes occurred in the Divine Agreement? The answer can easily be found in all of the verses which I shared with you previously. In a word, God already realized that the Israelites were not capable of keeping every single statute of the Laws of Moses. He knew that they could not possibly achieve righteousness on their own. While He had given them a Moral Model to follow, He knew

that the Divine Model was so strict, harsh and rigorous, that very few Israelites -- if any -- would be able to satisfy its requirements for righteousness. As we learned earlier in this series, the Apostle Paul informs us that in His Wisdom, God used the Mosaic Law as a type of harsh schoolmaster to point the Israelites to the Love, Mercy and Forgiveness which can be found in Jesus Christ, and the Righteousness which is also found in Christ alone.

Thus, the major change that God made -- which obviously had been foreordained from the foundation of the world -- is that achieving righteousness would now only depend on faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, instead of on one's own ability to observe all of the demanding statutes of the Laws of Moses. In other words, as Paul explains in Romans 7:4, rather than being married to and depending on one's obedience to the Laws of Moses in order to achieve one's righteousness, one had to now be married to and depend upon Jesus Christ alone for his righteousness. Thus, as Paul writes in the previous verses, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth".

Personally, I am absolutely convinced that this is what Paul means when he says that we are "dead to the law". Keeping the Laws of Moses never could save anyone, and never will save a single soul. Only believing in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ and being washed in the Blood of the Lamb of God can do that. This truth is made so clear in the following verses:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."
Isaiah 1:18, KJV

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
Matthew 26:26-28, KJV

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."
Mark 14:22-24, KJV

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper,

saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Luke 22:14-20, KJV

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"

Romans 3:25, KJV

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Ephesians 2:13, KJV

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"

Hebrews 10:19-20, KJV

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate . . . Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Hebrews 13:12, 20-21, KJV

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

1 Peter 1:2, KJV

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

1 John 1:7, KJV

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 John 2:2, KJV

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:10, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"

Revelation 1:5, KJV

"And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Revelation 7:14, KJV

Please notice carefully that Paul does not write "Christ is the end of the law". Rather, he writes "Christ is the end of

the law for righteousness". It is that prepositional phrase "for righteousness" which helps us to understand what Paul is actually saying. To reiterate, his intended meaning there is obviously "Christ is the end of the law for [obtaining] righteousness". In other words, if you still think that you can obtain your own righteousness by keeping the Law, forget it. It is done. It is over. It is finished. With His loving Sacrifice, Jesus has put an end to it. You need to depend on Him now -- not on the Law -- to acquire righteousness in God the Father's sight. As we saw in part two, even Jesus said that He had not come to destroy the Law, as we see here:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Matthew 5:17-18, KJV

Furthermore, as I mentioned earlier in this series, this condition is only true for people who actually believe in Christ; or as Paul writes, "to every one that believeth". To repeat that important point, if a person is not in Christ, then they are not righteous, they are not under the Law of Grace, and they will be judged by the harsh mandates of the Law.

I truly hope that you understand now what being dead to the Law means. Please do not be deceived by those Christians who promote the erroneous belief that our Heavenly Father will not hold us accountable if we break His Moral Laws and don't repent. Don't fall for the subtle deception which claims that we can do whatever we desire, and live however we choose, as long as it is done in love. Being dead to the law, and being under the Law of Love, does not mean, for example, that we can live the gay and lesbian lifestyle, live a life of sexual promiscuity, or anything similar. Being dead to the law isn't a license to sin. Furthermore, contrary to the claims of such misguided Christians, God's Moral Laws didn't suddenly become obsolete or nullified by the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. They simply became encapsulated in the Greater Commandment of the Law of Love.

For those stubborn people who continue to resist this truth regarding what being dead to the law means, let me share two verses which we examined earlier in this series. It is my hope that by placing these two verses -- both of which were written by Paul -- next to each other, it will shock some of those people and wake them up to Scriptural truth:

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Romans 7:4, KJV

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,"

1 Corinthians 6:9, KJV

If we accept their mistaken understanding regarding what it means to be dead to the law, we run into a serious problem with these two verses. In the second verse, Paul is clearly referencing moral statutes which we find in the Mosaic Law. If Paul is truly saying that God's Moral Laws are dead and became invalid due to the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, then it makes absolutely no sense that he would turn around and quote from those very Laws, and warn those people who are guilty of such sins. This obviously demonstrates that God's Moral Laws are still very much valid, intact, and in effect, and that their understanding of what it means to be dead to the law is seriously flawed. There is simply no other way to interpret those two verses without making Paul contradict himself.

There is another very sharp contrast which Paul is making in Romans 7:4. In addition to informing his readers that they are married to -- or spiritually dependent upon -- Jesus now, Paul states that the goal of this symbolic marriage is that Christ's spiritual Bride will "bring forth fruit unto God." In other words, being in a spiritual relationship with Jesus is marked by life, love, liberty and fruit. In contrast, as we learned earlier in this series, Paul wrote the following in several of his Epistles:

"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter . . . for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life . . . Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty . . . if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

Romans 7:6, 2 Corinthians 3:6, 17, Galatians 5:18, KJV

My point is this. The letter of the Law -- a.k.a. legalism -- only results in bondage, spiritual sterility and death, while being married to Jesus and depending upon -- or being cloaked under -- His Righteousness -- as a woman is "cloaked under" the man during sexual intercourse -- results in new life; that is, spiritual fruit. So if you are a legalist who is peddling the harsh mandates of the Law, you are peddling bondage and death. However, if you are married to Jesus and the freedom which He offers us, you are sharing true life and liberty. As we saw earlier, the Apostle Paul wrote:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage"

Galatians 5:1, KJV

While we have now examined the major change which occurred between the Old Covenant -- or Old Testament -- and the New Covenant -- or New Testament -- as a result of Jesus' Death on the Cross, before concluding this series, I would like to share with you some other changes which likewise resulted from that very same Act of Divine Love.

As I explain in articles such as "Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?", we know that once Jesus had offered up Himself as the final Sacrificial Lamb for the sins of the world, all of the Old Testament animal sacrifices for sin became null and void, because there was simply no longer a need for them.

However, even this is still not everything that was changed once Jesus introduced the New Covenant which was signed with His own Blood. As I point out in the aforementioned series, not only did Jesus willingly become our Sacrificial Lamb, but He simultaneously acquired the position of being our own High Priest as well, as is evidenced by the following verses:

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings . . . Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil . . . For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."
Hebrews 2:9-10, 14, 16-17, KJV

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;"
Hebrews 3:1, KJV

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."
Hebrews 4:14-15, KJV

"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
Hebrews 6:20, KJV

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;"
Hebrews 8:1, KJV

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;"
Hebrews 9:11, KJV

If Jesus became the new High Priest, what does this tell us regarding the office of the Jewish high priest and all of the services and ceremonies that were related to it? It should be obvious to you that they too became null and void and totally unnecessary. In fact, as I have mentioned a number of times before, Jesus shared this coming reality with the Apostles and others during the course of His earthly Ministry, when He informed them that the physical temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed in the coming years, as we can easily determine by the following verses:

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that

in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
John 4:20-24, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
Matthew 23:37-24:2, KJV

"And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
Mark 13:1-2, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."
Luke 13:34-35, KJV

"And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down . . . And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."
Luke 21:5-6, 20, KJV

As many of my readers will already know, this is exactly what happened during the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War of the mid First Century. After conquering the rest of Israel, the legions and allies of Roman general Titus laid siege to the city of Jerusalem and built a siege wall around it. Finally, according to historical records, in 70 AD they destroyed the city of Jerusalem and burned the Temple to the ground. Many thousands of Jews died from the edge of the sword, from being crucified, from starvation, and from disease, while yet many others were imprisoned as slaves, and carried off to foreign countries, exactly as Jesus had warned them would occur, and exactly as had also occurred during both the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions hundreds of years earlier. Consider the

following verses where Jesus describes this coming time of trouble:

"But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
Luke 21:23-24, KJV

Please go to part seven for the conclusion of this series.

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Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts : Pt 7

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Jesus Is The Symbolic Cornerstone Or Foundation Stone Of God's True Temple, We Are Living Stones In God's Spiritual Temple, Review Of Changes Which Occurred Between The Old Covenant And New Covenant, Through His Death Jesus Became The Testator Of The New Covenant, Jesus Intercedes For Us Before The Father, We Will Someday Be Where He Is And As He Is As Well, Closing Remarks, Recommended Reading Resources

If Jesus simultaneously became our Sacrificial Lamb as well as our High Priest, and if the Temple and religious system in Jerusalem were destroyed due to their corrupt nature and the sins of the ancient Jews, then it stands to reason that following this same parallel between the physical and the spiritual, Jesus must have some other Temple -- or House of God -- in which He serves as High Priest. As I have pointed out before, the Scriptures make it very plain that we are in fact symbolic living stones in God's Spiritual Temple, and Jesus is the symbolic Cornerstone -- or Foundation Stone -- upon which this entire spiritual building rests. This truth is again evident in the New Testament by verses such as the following:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."
John 2:19-22, KJV

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ . . . Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

1 Corinthians 3:11, 16-17, KJV

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

1 Corinthians 10:4, KJV

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

2 Corinthians 5:1, KJV

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

2 Corinthians 6:16-18, KJV

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Ephesians 2:19-22, KJV

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Hebrews 3:5-6, KJV

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar

people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"
1 Peter 2:5-9, KJV

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."
Revelation 3:12, KJV

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."
Revelation 21:22, KJV

From this preponderance of Scriptural evidence, it is plain to see that with the introduction of the New Covenant which went into effect with the Death of the Testator -- that is, Jesus -- quite a bit changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament. We see that God's Holy Laws went from being written on tables of stone to being written on the tables of our hearts. We see that Salvation went from being dependent on adherence to the Mosaic Law to depending solely on Jesus Christ. We see that the necessity of animal sacrifices was replaced by Jesus' final Sacrifice on the Cross. We see that the office of the Jewish high priest, the Temple services, and even the Temple itself, were all replaced with spiritual counterparts. In every regard, we see that what had formerly been represented in a physical sense, was transferred to a more permanent and spiritual reality.

All of these amazing truths, and God's wonderful foresight and plan to save His own lost children, and how He gave the world these physical examples in order to explain to us the realities of the Spirit Realm, and how Jesus offered up His own life as the Testator of the New Covenant so that He now represents us before the Father, are clearly explained in the following inspiring verses. Read them and rejoice:

"And for this cause he [Jesus] is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:"

Hebrews 9:15-24, KJV

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."
Romans 8:34, KJV

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."
Hebrews 7:25, KJV

Thank you Jesus for all that you did for us! Thank you Jesus that when we were so unworthy and dead in our own sins, you willingly came and died, so that someday we may not only be where you are, but so that we will be as you are as well!

Let me share a few final verses with you to inspire your hearts. Please take special note of the words which I have placed in uppercase letters:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."
John 14:1-3, KJV

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, WE SHALL BE ALSO IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION:"
Romans 6:4-5, KJV

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate TO BE CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."
Romans 8:29, KJV

"Who shall change our vile body, THAT IT MAY BE FASHIONED LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
Philippians 3:21, KJV

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM; for we shall see him as he is."
1 John 3:2, KJV

With these inspiring verses I will bring this long series to a close. I trust that you have found it informative, and I pray that it has been an inspiration and a blessing in your life. If you happen to have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which are related to this series and which

are likewise located on the Endtime Prophecy Net web server:

Are Christians Obligated to Keep the Sabbath?

Death: Final Battle, Final Victory

Free From the Fear of Death: Law and Works vs Grace

Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?

Jesus Christ or Yeshua Messiah?: More Christian Zionist Legalism

Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement

Should Christians Engage in Doctrinal Debates?

Striving for Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?

The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words

The Lamb of God Was a Goat!

The Royal Law: Thou Shalt Love

Welcome to the Greater Israel, USA!

When Sin is No Longer a Sin

Women Shepherds: The Family Sex Cult Exposed Again!

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