

Paul and the Judaizers

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Paul and the Judaizers

By David Nathan

Introduction

I do not profess to be a writer nor by writing this book, am I pretending to be one. Like the main character in this book, the apostle Paul, I am a Jew who believes without doubt that Jesus is our Messiah, the Saviour of all men both Jew and Gentile.

I came to faith in Jesus through my own Damascus Road encounter with the Lord. The apostle Paul witnessed the first covert satanic assault against the Church and the simple yet powerful message of the cross, by so called brethren who were insisting that the Gentile believers in Jesus could never be truly sanctified and saved unless they observed certain of the Mosaic Laws. Over the last fifteen years the Church has witnessed the resurrection of this heresy and hence the reason for writing this book. The purpose is not to attack individual proponents and personalities but rather to challenge this heresy by exposing it to the pure light of Scripture.

These Judaizers as, the name implies, are contending that Gentile Christians must follow specific Laws that were given by God through his servant Moses to the nation of Israel. The specific Laws that they purport are necessary for salvation and sanctification include those concerning circumcision, the observance of the Sabbaths and the dietary laws. Some go even further and emphatically teach that unless you address the Lord by

His name in Hebrew you are blaspheming Him and can never be saved.

The purpose of this book is to repudiate this error and reveal its source as being that of a very ancient enemy of the Church as well as the cross of our Lord and Saviour.

This is not an academic work but an easy to read yet informative repudiation of the Judaizers and their beliefs. Their doctrines are dangerous and have caused many to fall from grace and become alienated from the liberty that can only be found, in absolute surrender to Jesus our Messiah and Lord.

It is my desire in writing this book not to bring division within the Body of Christ but that we would all come to the knowledge of the truth and to the unity of our common faith. That we may all enter into the true rest that Jesus has purchased for all who would believe on Him.

Shalom in Jesus

David Nathan – Benoni, South Africa - 2016

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Paul and the Judaizers

Chapter One – The Journey Begins

“Now Saul still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem”

Acts 1-2

It was not unusual to see him scurrying around the Temple on his way to the Lishkat ha-Gazith, the Hall of Hewn Stones, the meeting place of the feared Sanhedrin, the Jewish religious council whose dictatorial influence was felt in every facet of daily life. He had developed quite a reputation this Benjamite, a native of Tarsus the capital city of the Roman province of Cilicia in what is known today as Cumhuriyet Alani, a city on the southern Mediterranean coast of Turkey.

He was one of master Gamaliel’s brightest students who had excelled all his peers in knowledge not only of Torah¹ and the Prophets but also of the Greek poets and philosophers. This was no small feat for a Pharisaic student. For the rabbinical school of the revered sage Hillel gave their students the finest education in all Israel and only the very sharpest studied under Gamaliel. Theirs was a sect made up of the elite, the brightest and most learned men in all of Judaism.

He had a very bright future ahead of him, this Saul of Tarsus. What with his zeal and passion for the God of Israel and His Law together with his unrivalled intellect and mastery of Greek and classical literature, perhaps one day he too might even become high priest.

Bursting into the hall, oblivious to the proceedings taking place he addresses the nasi, a title given to the high priest. The young Pharisee earnestly declares, “Rabboni, these heretics must be silenced before they infect any more of our people, no, all of Ha-Shem’s² chosen people with this blasphemous, evil heresy. See how many have already believed their wicked lies. They prey on the simple and the ignorant as they spew forth their diabolical sacrilege. How can anyone in their right mind ever believe that that false prophet from Nazareth in Galilee, that Jesus the son of Joseph, could ever have been the beloved messiah that our prophets have spoken so much of? Such foolishness! Such blind ignorant fools!

When asked, “Where is the promised deliverance from our enemies that the prophets declared that messiah would bring? The gentiles still occupy Ha-Shem’s holy city, our precious Jerusalem. Where is our deliverance from these Roman oppressors who contaminate our holy land with their pagan ways, where is Israel’s restored glory or any of the other prophecies that messiah must fulfil?”

They answer with an absurd pitiful and ridiculous response, “He will fulfil these things at His second coming.”

“Their Jesus was crucified and died on a cross, on a tree as Torah demands. A fitting end to one so accursed³ by the one and only God. A dead messiah who will return again to set up a kingdom? Outrageous! Preposterous!

Grant me an edict to the synagogues of Damascus authorizing me to purge out any from among them who dare to believe in that dead impostor and defile our holy Law. Allow me to drag their worthless carcasses back to Jerusalem where the Sanhedrin can deal with them as they deserve according to the penalties of the Law of Moses. Just like we dealt with their pathetic heretic Stephen who met his end under a barrage of our righteous purging stones”, Saul continued

It did not take much convincing on his part to obtain their unanimous consent. After all it was no secret that they all hated those miserable followers of that deceiver Jesus who were becoming problematic, turning many of their fellow Jews to their blasphemous heresy.

Leaving the chambers of the high priest with edict in hand, Saul silently vows that he will hunt down every last one of his own traitorous people, those Jews who have forsaken the pure traditions of the fathers and embraced as God’s son, this man Y’eshu⁴.

His keen mind recalls the exploits of Jehu the valiant king of Israel⁵ whom the great prophet Elisha had ordained as the man who would bring an end to the Baal-worshipping, idolatrous, wicked house of Ahab.

With zealous excitement building up inside him, Saul believes that the Lord has given him a similar mandate. Like King Jehu of old he would bring to a swift end this diabolical new sect that was turning the chosen people away from their God. Round them up, all of them, let none escape and send them to the depth of the pit to be with their Jesus, karat⁶, cut off from God for eternity, where they all belong.

“Dear Lord forgive your people.” Saul quietly prays as he hurries off to his lodgings to make ready for the long journey to Damascus. “From the days of our fathers we have sinned against you,” he continues. “Forcing Aaron, the brother of Your servant Moses, to make a golden calf so that they could worship an idol instead of You their God and deliverer. Forty years they paid the price for their rebellion and wickedness in that cruel and unforgiving desert. Until all but Joshua and Caleb had perished. Did we learn from our disobedience? Forgive us Lord, no we did not.

Throughout our history we have gone after foreign gods and turned our backs on You, our Father, our God, the lover of our souls. The zeal for You has possessed my soul I cannot stand-by passively and watch Your holy name blasphemed by these deceivers, these sons of Beelzebub. Dear Lord, grant me success on this journey I pray. Let me be as your servant Jehu and put an end to this heresy, to this canker worm amongst Your people. To this Jesus of Nazareth!”

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- ¹ The Hebrew word for the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament
- ² Ha-Shem - the Hebrew word which pious Jews use instead of God or Jehovah
- ³ Deuteronomy 21:23
- ⁴ An acronym from the phrase “Yemach Shemo Vezichro” meaning, may his name and memory be obliterated.
- ⁵ 2 Kings Chapter 9
- ⁶ Hebrew to execute. Used in Scripture as a punishment for disobeying the Mosaic Law.

Chapter Two – Encountering Jesus

“And as he journeyed he came near Damascus and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” And the Lord said, “I am Jesus, who you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads”

Acts 9:3-5

“They had made good time,” Saul thought to himself as they prepared to set off on the last day of their journey. They had averaged about fifteen millarium¹ a day over the last nine days. This was the tenth day and they were almost at Damascus. They should be within the city gates well before nightfall.

He had had nine full days to think through and then finally perfect his strategy of how to round up the Jewish dissidents in Damascus without having the authorities interfere with his divine commission. He would firstly...

That Light! That voice! Fear suddenly gripped his whole body as a blinding light exploded all around him. Instantly he was pummelled to the ground like a rag doll as all his strength and vigour was sucked from his entire body.

Dazed, bewildered and trembling, unable to move a muscle, his whole being was being assaulted by a voice coming from a cloud of glory and the words it spoke, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

His thoughts were racing as fear and awe engulfed him. "What is this, who is this? How can this... what or who can this be?" He fought to understand through his dazed and reeling mind.

"I know, although I do not know how I know but I know that this is the voice of the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob who is speaking to me," Saul reasoned to himself.

Quivering in fear and awe he is barely able to breathe out the words as in a raspy whisper he timidly asks, "Who are you Lord?"

The divine response cuts deep into his heart like an assassin's dagger driving his mind deeper into terror yet simultaneously, amazement, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting", came the response.

The light. The glory. The voice. The sudden and terrifying revelation that he had made God, this God, his God whom he had so sought to serve an enemy. Aware that he had vowed to destroy those who served this glorious being who was now speaking to him tore into the very depths of his spirit. His mind was swirling with questions, with confusion. "How can this Jesus be God? No, rather how can God be this Jesus? How can God become a man?"

How can Messiah be God?” The thoughts flashed like bolts of lightning through his dazed mind, assaulting all that he thought he knew about Ha’shem the God of Israel.

Yet in that instant, despite the turmoil of his mind, Saul of Tarsus, knew deep within himself, in a part of him that he never knew existed, in a part of him that had suddenly and gloriously come to life, in the very deepest recesses of his heart. He instinctively now knew that this Jesus who spoke with him was Jehovah, the Lord God of his people Israel. He would from this day forward forever be Saul’s Saviour, his Redeemer, his Lord and Master.

Trembling and in a state of astonishment, he asks, “Lord what do You want me to do?” And the Lord said to him, “Arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do.”²

What other words could he have spoken at that moment? His mind was desperately trying to catch up to his spirit, so long stilled through sin and pride that had separated him from God but was now miraculously alive. Oh yes, so very much alive! He had never felt more confused yet more joyous, more full of life, more terrified than he did at that moment. So many conflicting and glorious emotions were erupting from his inner being. His entire understanding of God had been turned upside down, exposed as flawed, shallow, a lie?

Saul the Pharisee of Pharisees lying in the baking dust on the Damascus road had to concede to himself that he had never truly known nor fathomed the unsearchable depths or majesty of His God, this Lord, this glorious God of Israel, this Jesus.

Without thinking, the words burst from his heart, “Lord, what would you have me do?”

The Lord’s voice was now gentler than before, although it still carried the same air of supreme authority that had reverberated through his whole being moments earlier. “Arise, go into the city and you will be told what to do.”

With his strength slowly returning, Saul struggled to his feet and fought to keep his balance on unsteady legs that were as uncooperative as those of a new-born foal. The blinding light was gone now but as Saul tried to open his eyes, instead of daylight all he could see was darkness. “My sight will return in a moment,” he thought, “Did the others hear what I just heard?”

Calling out to his travelling companions to enquire if they too heard the voice of Jesus, he is stunned by their reply. No!

“And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. Then one, Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, came to me and he stood and said to me,

‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that same hour I looked up at him. Then he said, ‘The Lord God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will and see the Just One and hear the voice of His mouth. For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.’”

Acts 22:11-14

How they could possibly not have heard the booming voice of the Lord, Saul wondered to himself as he stumbled over the threshold into the house on Straight Street in Damascus.³

The hours melted into days as Saul still in awe, prayed and pondered over and over again about his incredible encounter with the risen Lord Jesus. An encounter that he alone had experienced out of the whole company who had travelled with him. What had He meant when He said, “you will be told what to do,” Saul contemplated, as yet again he refused his dotting hosts offer of food and drink.

After three days his thoughts were gently interrupted by a nervous greeting from an unfamiliar voice and a tender hand that was laid lightly on his shoulder. “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit,” said Ananias.⁴

As he finished speaking these words, what seemed to be something like crusty scales began to fall from Saul’s eyes and the light of day pierced his darkness and the world

reappeared to him. The blindness that had disabled him was gone and he could once again see and not just with his physical eyes.

It was the sheer joy of the Holy Spirit permeating his being that Saul would remember for as long as he lived. It was a combination of joy and awe, a sense of power radiating through him coupled with a realization of his own frailty and inadequacy. It was, if he could sum it up an experience of contrasts, the glory and magnificence of God abiding in a vessel so unworthy so feeble so very undeserving. It was grace, divine unmerited grace given to one who had days before sworn to mercilessly exterminate all who dared to believe on Jesus, his enemy who had become his Lord and friend. Saul had never experienced anything like this in all his years as a zealous Law abiding Pharisee and it would change his life forever and the lives of countless millions through the eons in more ways than he ever could imagine.

Saul of Tarsus had been reborn by the grace and faithfulness of his Messiah, Jesus. His journey was just beginning.

¹ Roman mile which was roughly 1524 meters.

² Acts 9:6

³ Acts 9:11

⁴ Acts 9:17

Chapter Three – A New Covenant

“Behold the days are coming,” says 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 that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,” says the Lord.

“But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” says the Lord. “I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be My people.

No more shall every man teach his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, “know the Lord,” for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more.”

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Within days of his salvation Saul was compelled to share the glorious redemption by faith of this new Covenant in Jesus with his fellow Jews in Damascus. Understandably they were confused at this dramatic turn in events as the man tasked with rounding up the believing Jews was now allying himself with them and defending the very sect that he had vowed to destroy.

Try as they might, they could not contend against him as he clearly proved through the Tenakh that Jesus was indeed the Messiah of the Jews.

He would show them Jeremiah's prophecy of the New Covenant which had become a contentious conundrum in Judaism. Saul remembered the many heated debates he had had with his peers and even his revered teacher Gamaliel, the grandson of one of the two icons of Pharisaic Judaism, namely Hillel.

Despite the countless hours spent debating this seemingly difficult passage no consensus could ever be reached. The stumbling stone, the insurmountable obstacle at the very heart of the issue was how can God dismiss one eternal covenant and replace it with another? Had not Ha'shem said to Moses in Exodus¹, "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." Were not the seven feasts also eternal observances? How could they be replaced by another covenant, a new covenant? They had spent much time debating this, albeit most unsuccessfully.

But that which had once been so difficult to understand and interpret was now so clear in his heart and mind. How Saul had laughed with delight and rejoiced in Jesus when the Holy Spirit clearly opened his understanding to what Ha'shem had spoken to Moses. The laws that He had given to Moses and thus to the Jewish nation at the time of the exodus from Egypt were not in and of themselves an eternal covenant but they were shadows and allegories that would ultimately make sense as they were fulfilled in the Messiah.

In Jesus, the Law was translated from blind obedience to the commandments written on a Torah scroll to a desired way of life that emanated from the heart.

From ritual and observance, the Law was now transformed into salvation, relationship and adoption as a child of the Most High. This was what Ezekiel alluded to when he wrote, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and you will keep my judgements and do them."²

So incredible was this to him that he had searched the Torah books of Shemot, Vayikra, Bamidbar and Devarim² to verify that this was indeed so. And though he searched diligently as was his nature in all that he put his hand to, he could find no verse or passage of Scripture anywhere that stated or even implied that all of the 613 laws were eternal. But what he did find on the other hand which caused him to marvel at the profoundly gracious redemption of Jesus was that the Sabbaths and their observance were indeed to be kept as a perpetual commandment.

By the leading of the Holy Spirit and his study of Torah he had come to understand what Jesus had meant when He told His disciples that, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."³

The New Covenant that Jeremiah spoke of by the unctioing of the Spirit was not something divorced or

separate from the heart of the Law of Moses. On the contrary it was the very fulfilment of it. After all, the Law had been given to show Israel the holy requirements of a just and righteous God. A God so holy that sin could not be tolerated in His awesome presence, yet a God so loving and intimate that He desired to be among His chosen people. Laws were given to restrain the sinful nature and actions of man and sacrifice was made to atone for his transgressions. But the Sabbaths were given so that man might find rest and that through observing them he might be sanctified by God⁴.

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual.’⁵

Among the Jews of Damascus some had believed Saul as he reasoned with them through the Scriptures but they were certainly in the minority as the rest of the Jews

began to conspire and plot how they could put a permanent end to this traitorous and now dangerous ex-Pharisee.

A plot was conceived by the unbelieving Jews to kill Saul but the believers caught wind of it and Saul fled at night and journeyed to Arabia where he would spend many years before returning briefly to Damascus and then to Jerusalem⁶ before moving back to Tarsus⁷.

¹ Exodus 31:16

² Ezekiel 36:2-27

³ Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy

⁴ Mark 2:27-28

⁵ Exodus 31:13-14

⁶ Galatians 1:17

⁷ Acts 11:25

Chapter Four - Called to be Apostle

“Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”

Acts 11:25-26

Many years had passed for Saul since his encounter with the Lord on the Damascus road. Eventful years spent sharing the gospel of salvation to his fellow Jews. Some believed and gladly embraced Jesus as Messiah, most did not, just as Isaiah the prophet foretold when he wrote, “I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, here I am, here I am, to a nation that was not called by My name. I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, according to their own thoughts.”¹

But despite the persecution he endured at the hands of his countryman, he loved them and desired² nothing more than that they too would have the veil removed from their eyes³ and come to a saving knowledge of their Messiah and God.

His year at Antioch spent together with Barnabas and the other elders⁴ was a welcome respite from all the travelling he had done over the preceding years. He had

enjoyed teaching the church and growing in his own walk with the Lord but always at the back of his mind echoed the words he had heard on the Damascus road, “But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Jewish people as well as from the Gentiles to whom I now send you.”⁵

Saul had often wondered what the Lord had meant when He had said that He would send him to the Gentiles. Peter whom he had met when he had gone to Jerusalem had told him of a Gentile Roman soldier who together with his friends and family had come to faith and were all filled with the Holy Spirit just by listening to him preaching⁶. Saul knew from the Torah that a day was coming when the Gentiles would worship the God of Israel together with the house of Israel⁷. But he had not personally even considered approaching a Gentile with the Gospel...but that was about to change.

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away⁸

The leaders of the church at Antioch had been prompted to seek the Lord’s will by the Holy Spirit and they all felt

that a new era was about to dawn not just for their church but for the Church as a whole. After a time of prayer and fasting it seemed very clear to them all that the Lord was indicating that, Barnabas and Saul were to be sent out to preach and establish churches as the Lord would direct in the province of Galatia.

Who would have ever thought that this seemingly insignificant time of prayer in the city of Antioch would become the catalyst not only for the gospel making tremendous inroads amongst the Gentiles but that almost all of the doctrine of the Christian faith would be entrusted to the one man who had so vehemently sought to destroy it.

Saul the redeemed Pharisee of the Pharisees was about to become “Paul, a bond slave of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God,”⁹ entrusted with the “stewardship of the mysteries of God.”¹⁰

Leaving the church of Antioch and being directed by the Holy Spirit, Paul and Barnabas travelled through the province of Galatia enduring much persecution and hardship for the sake of the gospel as they preached and planted churches in Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.

Their method of evangelising was always the same no matter where they went. They would first seek out the local synagogue and attempt to show the Jews from the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus was indeed the promised

Messiah whom John the Baptist had foretold would soon come, before his untimely death at the hands of King Herod.

It made sense to them to go to the Jews first. After all the promise of a New Covenant was made by God to His people Israel as Jeremiah recorded¹¹ and not firstly to the Gentiles who would also be able to become partakers of the salvation bought by Jesus.

Isaiah wrote in regard to this, “And now the Lord says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel is gathered to Him (For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord and My God shall be My strength). Indeed He says, It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.”¹²

Those Jews who believed their own Scriptures and surrendered their lives to the Lordship of Jesus were baptised and often had to leave the synagogue because of the immense persecution from their fellow Jews. Then the Gentiles would plead with Paul and Barnabas to speak to them about the things of God¹³ and as a result, a great many Gentiles were converted to Christ.

It was a glorious time despite the persecution. Many mighty signs and wonders were done by the Holy Spirit as the Lord confirmed the word of the gospel that they preached.

Churches were planted, elders raised up to shepherd them and there was peace and harmony between the believing Jews and Gentiles. The Kingdom of God was advancing and the gospel spreading rapidly. The enemy was seemingly on the back foot, seemingly caught off guard, apparently unable to hinder the Church of Jesus.

But looks are always deceiving and as the saying goes, there is always a calm before the storm. And a storm was brewing. A storm so powerful, so menacing that it was about to tear the very fabric and message of the early Church apart. A demonic storm that was about to be unleashed that has continually raged against the minds of men seeking God for nearly two millennia and has corrupted the gospel of grace and dragged many from the arms of Jesus into the very depths of an eternal hell.

¹ Isaiah 65:1-2

² Romans 9:1-4; Romans 10:1

³ 2 Corinthians 3:14-16

⁴ Acts 13:1

⁵ Acts 26:17-18

⁶ Acts Chapter 10

⁷ Deuteronomy 32:43

⁸ Acts 13:2

⁹ Romans 1:1

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 4:1

¹¹ Jeremiah 31:31-36

¹² Isaiah 49:5-6

¹³ Acts 13:42

Chapter Five – The Judaizers Arise

“And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.”

Acts 15:1-2

For Paul and the other apostles, elders and believers who were Jewish, the issue of circumcision was never an issue for them in serving Jesus. They were Jews, the people of the Book with an ancient heritage in God. Their faith and culture were completely intertwined. To be Jewish was to keep the Law and to keep the Law was to be Jewish. Of course they would circumcise their male children. To them circumcision had nothing to do with their salvation or their righteousness before God in Jesus but it had everything to do with their being Jewish. They knew that they had been made righteous through faith in Messiah Jesus alone and not through any observance of the Law. For the Jewish believers their relationship with the Law of Moses had changed dramatically not in the sense that they no longer observed it rather they no longer looked to it for righteousness.¹

Since they had believed on Jesus as their Lord, Saviour and Redeemer they knew that their right standing with the Father was based solely on their faith in Jesus who had made the way.

The Law could not save, it was never meant to. Paul would later write to the churches of Galatia, “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.”² Rather it was a tutor to bring the nation of Israel to their Messiah³ and once they were under their Messiah they would no longer look to the observances of the Law to be deemed righteous before God.

In Jesus they knew that they were free from the observance of the Law but as Jews they saw Jesus in the statutes, feasts and sacrifices. They knew that it was imperative for the Messiah to fulfil every requirement of the Law and to ultimately become the fulfilment of every sacrifice required by the Law. Messiah must die for the sins of man.⁴ He had to be executed according to the Law as accursed and hung on a tree.⁵ He had to be resurrected again from the grave as the prophets’ foretold⁶ having paid the price of redemption for the sins of Israel and all mankind and this He had gloriously done. No, righteousness could never come through the Law. It was never meant to. It was given to show Israel the holiness that God required from man, a holiness man could never obtain because of his fallen state. “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is

revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”⁷

“I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain,”⁸ Paul would later write whilst attempting to explain this truth to the Gentiles of Galatia who were seeking to be justified by observing certain of the Laws of Torah.

The Jewish believers did not view the Law as a means to justification or earning favour with God. As mentioned earlier, the Law and the Jew were intertwined but the Law and the Gentile were not. No, the Law and the Gentiles were most definitely not intertwined. The Gentiles had always been alienated from the covenants of God⁹. But now that the Gentiles were coming to Jesus in such large numbers, “having been made near by the blood of Jesus,”¹⁰ how were they to serve God?

Paul was quite adamant that there should be no requirement laid on the Gentile believers with regards to the Mosaic Law. He heatedly argued that the Gentiles had been saved by faith, had received the Holy Spirit by faith and had witnessed the miraculous power of God by faith.¹¹ “God received them without circumcision and filled them with the Holy Spirit without them observing the kashrut¹² or any of the Laws of Moses,” he continued.

“Should they now be made perfect by the Law?” He said in amazement and disbelief.

“Yes”, was the unanimous response from the Judaizers. Paul reeled in astonishment. How could they be so blind he thought to himself? Did they not understand that Jeremiah’s prophecy of a new covenant had been fulfilled in Jesus? They were living in the very dispensation of fulfilled prophecy. A dispensation apart from the Mosaic Law, a dispensation of grace in the long awaited Messiah.

It was clear that the two sides could not and would not find consensus. Paul was adamant that the Gentiles who had been saved by grace apart from the Law should continue to serve the Lord without the Mosaic Law.

The Judaizers were completely opposed to Paul’s understanding and demanded that just as a proselyte converted to Judaism under the Law and was expected to keep the entire Law so must the Gentile believers in Jesus do. They believed and reasoned that the Gentile believers in Jesus were bound by God to keep the Law.

The church leaders at Antioch agreed that this dispute must be resolved immediately as it was becoming apparent to all that very soon the Gentiles would represent the vast majority of the Church of Jesus Christ and it was vital that they found God’s heart as to how the Gentiles were to serve Him. Must they or must they not observe the Law or parts thereof?

What was God's will in this matter? James the brother of Jesus had always encouraged the believers to ask God for wisdom if they lacked it. He was assured that the Lord would liberally give wisdom to them who asked.¹³ And God's wisdom was urgently needed as this issue was beginning to cause very deep and dangerous divisions in the fledgling Church.

¹Philippians 3:9

²Galatians 3:21

³Galatians 3:24-25

⁴Isaiah chapter 53

⁵Psalms 22:16-18; Daniel 9:26

⁶Psalms 16:10

⁷Romans 3:21-24

⁸Galatians 2:21

⁹Ephesians 2:11-12

¹⁰Ephesians 2:13

¹¹Galatians 3:2-5

¹²Kashrut, the dietary Laws of Leviticus chapter 11

¹³James 1:5

Chapter Six – The Jerusalem Council

“Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on 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 in the same manner as they.”

Acts 15:6-12

Strong opinions and arguments were being viciously launched by those Jews who insisted that the Gentiles come under Law.¹ They quoted from the Torah insisting that Moses taught that all the observances and statutes were eternal. Their argument was incorrect on his one point, not all the Laws were eternal ordinances.

After many hours of disputing and arguing, Peter who had been particularly quiet the whole time stood wearily from all the arguing to his feet. He nostalgically began to recount the events that had taken place some years ago

when the Lord had commanded him to go to the home of the Roman centurion Cornelius who had been stationed in Caesarea on the Mediterranean coast.²

The Judaizers all cringed simultaneously when he began to describe how Cornelius, his family and friends were gloriously and dramatically saved and filled with the Holy Spirit through Peter's preaching of the gospel.

Every believer among the Jews in Jerusalem had heard of this inconceivable occurrence of how the first known Gentiles had come to salvation in the Lord Jesus much to everybody's complete astonishment. None had thought it possible that a Gentile could ever be saved without first having converted to Judaism. After all, the covenant of salvation, the New Covenant that God had promised through Jeremiah would be made between Him and Israel⁴. From Judaism to becoming a believer in Jesus the Messiah was rational, logical, acceptable, they had reasoned but for a Gentile to become a believer without first converting, was preposterous to them. Unthinkable in fact.

But when Peter had eventually returned to Jerusalem, his elation and the joy of the six men³ who had gone to Cornelius with him, was quickly extinguished by the irate Jews who had lambasted them for having purposely broken the Law and dared to go into the home of and furthermore to eat with unclean Gentiles⁵. He had explained then as he was very convincingly explaining

again now how the Lord had accepted and saved them purely on the merit of the faith they had demonstrated in Jesus and the gospel message⁶.

Paul listened intently to Peter as he continued to present the case of salvation by grace apart from the Law for the Gentiles. “So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” Peter said.

“Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on 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 in the same manner as they⁷,” he concluded, much to Paul and Barnabas’ agreement.

As had happened the first time Peter was called on by the Jews to defend his visit to the house of Cornelius the Gentile. (Not a visit of Peter’s choosing rather it was an instruction from God which came through the Holy Spirit⁸)

A contemplative silence descended upon all those who were now gathered together to try resolve the Gentile problem.

Peter’s testimony could not be argued against nor refuted. Since Cornelius, multitudes of Gentiles had come to faith without circumcision or any other observance of the Laws of Moses. That God had accepted them without Law was evident. It was almost impossible

for the Jews to conceive or understand but the evidence was clear. The Gentiles were being saved, being filled with the Holy Spirit, experiencing healings and signs and wonders and all this, without being circumcised or observing the Law.

The crowded room remained silent as Barnabas and then Paul continued to declare how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles⁹.

After they had finished giving testimony of the Lord's grace among the Gentiles, James the brother of Jesus began to speak. "Men and brethren, listen to me. Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, 'After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins and I will set it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the Lord who does all these things.'

Known to God from eternity are all His works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."¹⁰

James had spoken by the unction of the Holy Spirit they had all agreed. Even those who had been so vocal earlier insisting that the Gentiles be circumcised and made to follow the Law were now nodding their heads affirming all that James had said. Finally there was consensus, finally the Lord's heart had been revealed for the Gentiles. The Holy Spirit had given instruction; they could now put this issue to bed...or so they thought.

“Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

They wrote this letter by them:

The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia, Greetings.

Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, “You must be circumcised and keep the law” - to whom we gave no such commandment - it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.

Farewell.”¹¹

It had been agreed by all at the Jerusalem council, or so it would be named in later years, that Paul, Barnabas, Judas and Silas would go to the predominantly Gentile church at Antioch and deliver the letter that had been drawn up by the elders. The letter would then be distributed among the Gentile believers all over Syria, Cilicia and Galatia and finally settle the dispute regarding the Law and the Gentiles.

The content of the letter was both encouraging as well as uncomplicated in its instruction. The Spirit had given the apostles very clear and precise instructions for the Gentile believers who were understandably anxious and unsettled by the pressure that the Judaizers had put them under in regard to obeying the Law.

Apart from the two royal laws that the Lord had given His disciples namely to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind and to love your neighbour as yourself¹², the Holy Spirit had added four more commandments specifically for the Gentiles. Specifically,

in the sense that these divine requirements although contained in the Law and observed by the Jewish believers in Jesus were quite foreign to the Gentiles.

The Jews knew through Moses that the life was in the blood¹³ and therefore it was forbidden to consume any blood. The Jews were meticulous when it came to draining out the blood of the animals they slaughtered for consumption in obedience to God's command not to ingest any blood. The Gentiles on the other hand were not, hence the need for them to be instructed.

An animal strangled would not have been bled out thereby making it unclean to eat as the blood was still present, hence the Spirit's command not to eat anything strangled. In these two New Testament commands to the Gentiles, the sanctity of blood as holy to the Lord was reinforced and maintained.

They had been added to keep the Gentile believers from desecrating the sanctity of blood by consuming it just as God had commanded the Jews.

The last two commands were self-explanatory, abstain from anything offered to an idol or foreign god and to keep oneself sexually pure. These laws were also found in Moses¹⁵ but that did not set a precedent that the whole Law had to be followed and observed by the Gentiles. The Spirit had expressly said that no other burden would be placed on them except these specific

commandments that were now contained in this precious letter to the Gentile believers.

Armed with the letter and accompanied by the two witnesses, Judas and Silas, Paul and Barnabas, relieved that this matter had finally and completely been resolved, returned to Antioch. Antioch where they had first been appointed as apostles by the Holy Spirit and from where they had taken the gospel to the Gentiles. The wonderful, glorious gospel of salvation for both Jew and Gentile. The gospel of redemption from the curse of the Law, reconciliation with the Father and peace with God. The gospel message so simple yet so profound a message that required a genuine response of repentance, faith in the sacrifice and resurrection of the Son of God and a complete submission of oneself to His Lordship. The gospel which resulted in salvation to all through nothing more than faith in the finished work of Messiah's death, burial and resurrection.

Finally, the righteousness of God apart from the Law¹⁷ had been manifested by the Father through His Son. In Jesus the prophecy of Jeremiah pertaining to the New Covenant apart from the Mosaic Law had been fulfilled. The Law was no longer required for righteousness or salvation.

It was now cast in stone as to how the Gentiles were to serve God in Yeshua, Jesus. It had been resolved and approved by all the apostles and Church leaders. There was none among them who had not wholeheartedly

endorsed and agreed with James' summation that he had received from the Holy Spirit. This unity of doctrine and consensus was in itself a wonderful work of the Lord. Everyone who was anyone, from the apostles to the elders and even among the Pharisees who had come to faith and were present at the Jerusalem council all were convinced that the Gentiles were not to observe any of the Laws of Moses except those which were penned down and were now in the hands of Paul and Barnabas. The once opposing parties were now in one accord. The Gentiles would never be required or encouraged to keep the Law or its ordinances in any way, shape or form.

“So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement.”¹⁴

¹ Acts 15:6

² Acts chapter 10

³ Acts 11:12

⁴ Jeremiah 31:31-34

⁵ Acts 11:1-3

⁶ Acts 11:17

⁷ Acts 15:8-11

⁸ Acts 10:19-20

⁹ Acts 15:12

¹⁰ Acts 15:13-21

¹¹ Acts 15:22-29

¹²Matthew 22:37-40; Romans 13:9

¹³Deuteronomy 12:23

¹⁴Acts 15:30-31

¹⁵The Mosaic Law

¹⁷Romans 3:21

Chapter Seven – The Plot to Discredit Paul

Those Jews who had insisted that the Gentiles be circumcised and keep the Law were infuriated when they listened to Paul reading the letter he had brought back with him from Jerusalem. They glared in anger as he declared their doctrine to be unbiblical and contrary to the very heart and purposes of God.

To add injury to insult Judas and Silas who had been sent by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem to confirm the message contained in the letter did just that. They communicated to the believers in Antioch how there had been heated debate and at times open hostility but in the end the Lord had spoken and as the letter outlined, the Gentiles were free from all obligations to the Mosaic Law except in regard to the four commandments contained in the letter.

The Judaizers were outraged at the outcome of the Jerusalem Council. More than that, they were outraged at their companions in Jerusalem who had betrayed what they had once believed and had now come into agreement with James, Peter, Paul and Barnabas. They had been convinced by the apostles and had now turned from their previous position and were supporting this heresy of Gentile believers not having to observe the Torah. Heresy in their eyes, certainly not in God's.

They were adamant that they were not going to accept what they now perceived was an absolute heresy, the end of the observance of the Law of Moses for all the Gentiles who believe and would believe on Jesus.

Irrespective of what the apostles thought they had heard from God or perhaps it was a demonic spirit they scoffed, they knew better and no matter what anyone else believed, they were going to continue to preach obedience to the Law.

As for this Paul of Tarsus, they would so tarnish his name and bring such incredible disrepute to his person that in the ages to come many would believe him to be a false teacher and a dangerous man who had perverted the Church with his godless heresy.¹

Their vile plan of action was conceived and then hatched. They would systematically go to every church that Paul and those with him had planted and they would show the biblically ignorant Gentiles through the Torah that the Law could never be annulled not even by Jesus as Paul was preaching. After all, did not Jesus Himself say, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets.”²

But they always very conveniently omitted to add the next two sentences that He spoke, “I did not come to destroy but to fulfil. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”³

We will revisit this later in the book but for now the Judaizers had a master plan to bring the Gentiles back under Law and in doing so they would convince them that Paul's doctrinal error was sufficient justification in branding him a false apostle to be ignored and vilified. No one would take Paul seriously ever again or so they thought.

It is of interest of course to note that none of the other apostles were targeted by the Judaizers even though they had all agreed that the Gentiles were free from the Law. But Paul was the most vocal, he was the one that was taking that confounded letter to all the Gentile believers. He was the one who would have to be discredited and he was the one who was going to bear the brunt of their wrath.

It was quite ironic actually that their intended victim had many years previously sought to destroy every Jew who believed in Jesus. And now the Judaizers were seeking to destroy the very man who was bringing the Gentiles into the glorious salvation that was found by faith alone in the Jesus whom Paul had sought to destroy.

As Solomon so wisely said, "That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, "See, this is new"? It has already been in ancient times before us."⁴

The adversary has always tried to undermine the purposes of God and he has always used people as his mouthpiece. Except of course with Eve. That he did through a serpent but now he was speaking through the Judaizers just as he had previously done through Saul, before Jesus got hold of him on the road to Damascus and transformed him into Paul the apostle.

No, there is nothing new under the sun. Satan was still hard at work blinding people from the will and Word of God but now he had a new weapon at his disposal, the zealous Judaizers.

Paul was about to give them some ammunition that they could use against him to discredit him. Not much, but enough to raise some doubt about his character.

¹ There are hundreds of ministers and ministries today that claim just this. A website search “Paul a false teacher” brings up a myriad of websites that propagate this misinformation and lie.

² Matthew 5:17

³ Matthew 5:18

⁴ Ecclesiastes 1:9-10

Chapter Eight – The assault on the Gentile Churches

“Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.”

Acts 15:39-41

The bitter dispute that Paul had with his friend and fellow apostle, Barnabas¹ over John Mark would take years for the two to resolve but by the grace of God they eventually did² and John Mark turned out to be a very faithful minister of the Lord. But that is another story altogether.

Barnabas who had been so instrumental in planting the churches of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe in the Roman province of Cilicia with Paul had now departed for Cyprus with John Mark. Paul then asked Silas to go with him as he returned to these churches to deliver the letter that he had taken from Jerusalem to Antioch and to expound its contents.

“And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by

the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.”³

As with the church of Antioch in Syria (not to be confused with Antioch in Cilicia), the predominately Gentile churches of Cilicia received the contents of the letter with great joy and relief. Their hearts had rejoiced when they had first heard the gospel message spoken by Paul and Barnabas and now that the message had finally been confirmed by every single one of the apostles and other church leaders, their faith was cemented in Christ alone. They continued in the liberty of their salvation for a while after Paul and Silas had left them to journey to Philippi but then came the Judaizers and their vicious attack against Paul, but more importantly their heresy against the gospel, the cross and ultimately the person of Jesus Himself.

The Judaizers began to show from the Torah that certain of the Laws of Moses were regarded as everlasting observances to all who served the God of Israel.⁴ This was not what Paul and Barnabas had taught them but they were not there to contradict the Judaizers. They were mostly young believers and unskilled in the Hebrew Scriptures. They were defenceless lambs being preyed upon by ravenous wolves.⁵ One by one many were swayed and influenced to believe that Paul had preached a compromised gospel. That the Law was still to be observed by the Gentile believers and that the blood of

Jesus was just not sufficient to make one perfectly righteous in the sight of God.

True righteousness according to the Judaizers could only be found in obedience to the Law whilst still believing in Jesus as Saviour. They believed that salvation could only come to the Gentiles through a combination of faith in Jesus and obedience to the Mosaic Law.

One by one they substituted the liberty, joy, peace and grace they had received through faith in Jesus with the tedious burden of keeping the Law. Their exuberance for Jesus began to wane whilst serving Him through the Law became a very heavy burden indeed.

But then came the letter addressed not to a single particular church as was the custom of Paul but to every church in the province of Galatia. A scathing letter but one that also brought liberty again to those who would receive its message. A message that offered freedom from the deception and bondage that resulted from the teachings of the Judaizers into the glorious liberty that can only be found by faith in Christ alone.

Paul was now taking the Judaizers head on through the Scriptures and by the Holy Spirit who had appointed him as an apostle to the Gentiles and to whom the mysteries of God had been revealed.⁶

¹Acts 14:14

²From Paul's letters to the Corinthians and Colossians (1 Corinthians 9:6 & Colossians 4:10), indications are strong that they resolved their differences and Paul clearly gives honour to John Mark whom he initially had misgivings about which led to the initial conflict with Barnabas recorded in Acts 15:37-39.

³Acts 16:4-5

⁴ Refer to chapter 12

⁵Acts 20:29-30

⁶ 1 Corinthians 4:1 & Ephesians 3:1-7

Chapter Nine – Paul Retaliates

“And after those days we packed and went up to Jerusalem. Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge. And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. Therefore, do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law. But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols,

from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.”

Acts 21:15-25

“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favouritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me.”

Galatians 2:1-6

Enough was enough, Paul considered as he pondered in his mind the details of the disturbing reports that were coming to him from the churches of Galatia and Cilicia. The churches that he, Barnabas and Silas had so painstakingly planted and nurtured were now being

ravaged by the deceptive heretical doctrine of the cunning Judaizers.

The Holy Spirit had clearly revealed the will of God concerning the Gentile believers in Jerusalem many years before. There was not one leader or prominent person or for that matter anyone at all who had opposed the contents of the letter that was written to all the Gentile brethren in Jesus.

The letter that should have put an end to this matter for all eternity.

But men seldom read or acknowledge the written Word of God. Rather, the pride and arrogance of man compels him to fashion his own gods, gods who resemble him and act like fallen man. These are gods that man can easily identify with. But a God who freely forgives solely on the merit of the sacrifice of His Son. A God who only requires from man a genuine faith in His act of grace and mercy for his salvation. This God, is hard to serve and believe in. So man must add works, acts of self-righteousness to make this God and His salvation more palatable. And what better acts of self-righteousness if not obedience to the Mosaic Law of the Old Covenant. Throw in an aspect of faith in the Messiah into the mix and now you have a religion man can believe in, a religion that requires man to at least work a little for his salvation. Trusting in God alone for complete salvation, that would just not be human. That could never appeal to the fallen nature of man.

So where did these wolves come from? These Judaizers, these preachers of a different gospel, a different Jesus. Certainly not from amongst the apostles or the elders whom the Lord had appointed.

No, these men had been brought in secretly, by stealth¹, by the enemy of the cross, the father of lies², the god of this age³. Men who were not moved by the Holy Spirit but men moved by the spirit of antichrist. John would write about these false prophets and teachers one day and he would label them all, antichrist.⁴

All who opposed the apostle's doctrine, John labelled as antichrist. None of the apostles ever instructed the Gentiles to observe any of the Laws of Moses except those four contained in the letter to the Gentiles from the apostles and elders of the Church of Jesus Christ.

If the apostle did not teach the Gentiles to observe the Law of Moses then who did? The answer should be very clear to all, it was those who had the spirit of antichrist. Those who were being used as pawns of Satan.

So who were these antichrists? They were the Judaizers. Not Jewish believers in Jesus but Jews who refused to accept the Jesus whom the apostles preached. Jews who were teaching the Gentiles that the cross of Christ was not sufficient to save and make righteous. Their Jesus was insufficient to atone for the sins of mankind. Their Jesus required man to be made perfect through circumcision and through obedience to the Law.

¹Galatians 2:4

²John 8:44

³2Corinthians 4:4; John 12:31

⁴1 John 2:18-27; 4:1-6

Chapter Ten – The Letter to the Galatians

If they were not exposed as false brethren and heretics, then the Gentile Church would be in grave danger of forsaking Jesus altogether and becoming just another Jewish cult made up of Gentile proselytes. Satan was destroying the Gentile Church by his puppets the Judaizers and Paul's righteous indignation would not tolerate it for another moment.

And so after much prayer he wrote as the Holy Spirit inspired him...

“Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead) and all the brethren who are with me,
To the churches of Galatia:

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if

anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. But they were hearing only, “He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy.” And they glorified God in me.

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favouritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles) and when James, Cephas, and John, who

seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

Foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

Therefore, He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Therefore, know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the

law, to do them.” But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.” Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man’s covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ. And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have

given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain.

Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all. You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them. But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you, I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.

Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labour! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.”

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is

a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

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

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.

Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows

to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand! As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For not even those who are circumcised keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.

And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.¹

¹The Letter to the Galatians

Chapter Eleven – The Law and Prophets Fulfilled

“For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain”

Titus 1:10-11

One would have thought that a letter that so clearly and profoundly expounded the essence and principles of the New Covenant apart from the Law, as Jeremiah had prophesied in chapter thirty one, would have put an end to the Judaizers and their error. Nineteen hundred years later despite the epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Colossians and to the Hebrews which all clearly teach that salvation and righteousness comes through faith in Jesus alone and not by the works of the Law, the error first perpetrated and propagated by the Judaizers continues to this very day.

Over the two millennia since the New Covenant dispensation began, Biblical Christianity has been perverted first by the Judaizers and their insistence that Gentiles come under the Law of Moses. Then by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches who have substituted faith in Jesus with works for justification, purgatory for payment of sins as well as

mysticism and the worship of Semiramis, the Queen of Heaven in the guise of Mary the mother of Jesus.

There have been a multitude of cults that have emerged over this period of time such as the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists and the Oneness Movement to name just a few of many. These cults have all been successful in deceiving people by highlighting and focusing on certain particular Scriptures whilst ignoring others that contradict their doctrine. This is the way of the enemy, to focus on a truth but then separate it from its context, reinterpreting it and alienating it from other texts that deal with the same truth and by so doing turning a truth into a lie.

Allow me to illustrate this as used by the modern Judaizers. Yes, they are still around and growing in influence disguised in the Hebrew Roots Movement and the Hebrew Name of God Movement.

To justify their doctrine that all believers must come under the Law they quote the Lord, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness

exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”¹

Jesus said that He came to fulfil the Law and the Prophets. What did He imply when He said these words? That we who believe in Jesus must now also obey the Law as Jesus did?

This is what the modern Judaizers still believe and teach. But what did Jesus really imply by His statement?

It was necessary for Jesus to adhere to and obey the entire Law of Moses and to teach others to do the same prior to His crucifixion and resurrection. If Jesus had failed in any of these two areas, namely obeying the Law and teaching others to do so, He would have disqualified Himself from becoming the perfect Lamb of God, the Saviour and Redeemer of all who would believe on Him.

It was absolutely imperative that He obey all the Law on every point and to uphold all its teachings whilst on earth before His crucifixion. Failure to do so would have disqualified Him from becoming the perfect sacrifice for our sins. The Law of God had to be upheld by a man since it was by a man that all were made sinners. The perfect man Adam sinned and as a result all men were condemned as sinners. The second Adam², Jesus the Son of God came to earth as a perfect man to fulfil the righteous requirements of the Law in order to become the acceptable sacrifice for humanity's sin.

It was for this very reason that He fulfilled the Law and taught others to do the same because He came under the dispensation or the era of the Mosaic Law. What many fail to understand about the life and ministry of Jesus is that it took place under the Old Testament dispensation and not under the New Covenant dispensation. Jesus was born a Jew. He came to earth as a Jew. He lived His life as a Law abiding Jew and He died as a Jew.

As such, He was obliged and obligated to observe the Law as was every other Jew at the time. The exception was that He alone was able to perfectly and completely fulfil the Mosaic Law in terms of the commands and ordinances because He alone was perfect and sinless.

The age of grace and the New Covenant could only begin once the Messiah had lived perfectly according to the Law. This Jesus did but simultaneously He had to instruct others to also obey the Law as this too was a requirement of the Mosaic Law, that others were instructed to obey it.

What Jesus meant regarding the fulfilling of the Law was that the Law and the prophets would remain until they were completely and fully observed and obeyed in their entirety by a perfect man. That perfect man would then be qualified to become the ultimate sacrifice required by the Father. His blood alone would then be sufficient to forgive all the sins of humanity.

This Jesus did by fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies regarding His sinless life, death by crucifixion and His resurrection.

Let me illustrate this point further.

“When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And behold, a leper came and worshipped Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go your way, and show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” Matthew 8:1–4

Jesus instructed the man He healed of leprosy to go show himself to the priests and to offer the gift, referring to the sacrifice that Moses had commanded Israel to offer under the Law. In Leviticus chapter fourteen, verses one to thirty-two, Moses instructed anyone healed of leprosy to show himself to the priests and to offer a sin offering and a burnt offering to the Lord. Because Jesus was under the Law whilst on earth and He had come to fulfil the Law, He had to obey the letter of the Law.

He was thus obligated by the Law to send the man to the priests and command him to make the appropriate sacrifice. If we are to still obey the Torah Law today as the Judaizers are teaching the Church then we too must offer sacrifice every time there is a healing, at the end of

a woman's menstrual cycle, after childbirth, every morning and evening etc, just as the Law instructs. If Jesus commanded the man healed of leprosy to perform sacrifice then we are also to do the same if we choose to carry the reasoning of the Judaizers to its logical conclusion.

Let us look at another example in Scripture of Jesus enforcing the Law and teaching others to do the same. "Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore, whatever they tell you to observe that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do." Matthew 23:1-3

Jesus commanded His disciples as well as the crowds who followed Him to observe the things that the Pharisees and scribes told them to observe. What would these things have been? Jesus said, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat." They were responsible to teach Israel how to observe the Law of Moses. What Jesus was saying, is that the Jews and His disciples were to listen to the teachers of the Law and observe what they were instructed by them.

Do we therefore obey the Law because Jesus instructed His disciples to do so? Certainly not! We know that He was talking to those under the Law and under the Old Covenant dispensation. Remember the prophecy of Jeremiah regarding the New Covenant.

“Behold, the days are coming, says 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 that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”
Jeremiah 31:31-34

The very essence of Jeremiah’s prophecy is that God would make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and Judah. The Hebrew word for ‘new’ is *châdâsh* which can be translated as either fresh or as a new thing. Therefore, according to the only two possible meanings of the word, ‘new’ in Hebrew, the Lord was going to either refresh and revitalise the Mosaic Covenant or replace it with something brand new.

To be certain of which meaning is implied the prophecy itself gives us the answer, “not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.”

The Spirit leads Jeremiah to write that the New Covenant would not be like the Old Covenant which God made with Israel when He took them out of Egypt. This could only be referring to the Mosaic that the Lord gave Israel at Mount Sinai over the period of a year that they were camped there.³ No other covenant was made with the nation of Israel except the Mosaic Covenant. Therefore the Old Covenant that was going to be replaced by the New Covenant could only refer to the Mosaic Covenant which is the Law.

The writers of the New Testament all concur with this truth that Jeremiah was referring to the Mosaic Law becoming redundant and being replaced by the Covenant of Grace, the New Covenant.

Here are just a few examples that clearly demonstrate that the writers of the New Testament were inspired by the Holy Spirit to teach that the Mosaic Law has been replaced by the New Covenant of grace and faith in Christ alone;

“Therefore my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead that we should bear fruit to God...But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.” Romans 7:4-6

“In that He says, “A New Covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.” Hebrews 8:13

Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” Galatians 3:24-25

“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” John 1:17

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” Romans 10:4

“...Our sufficiency is from God who also made us sufficient as ministers of the New Covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills but the Spirit gives life.” 2 Corinthians 3: 5-6

“For if what was passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.” 2 Corinthians 3: 11

“...He takes away the first that He may establish the second.” Hebrews 10:9

It is clear from the Scriptures above that the Mosaic Covenant has been replaced with a new and different covenant namely the covenant of salvation which is by faith in Jesus alone and not according to the works of the

Law. It for this reason that the Holy Spirit instructed the apostles and elders in Jerusalem not to place on the Gentile believers the burden of observing the Law. In Jesus we are free from the burden of the Law whose sole purpose was to bring us to the knowledge of our sin and transgression. As Paul writes, “I would not have known sin except through the law.”⁴ And, “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”⁵

The Judaizers have no New Testament Biblical grounds to support their doctrine that requires Gentile believers to observe any of the Mosaic Laws except the four that are contained in the letter that was sent to the Gentile believers by the apostolic council of Jerusalem.⁶

¹ Matthew 5:17-20

² 1 Corinthians 15:22 & 45

³ Scripture reveals in Exodus 19:1 that Israel arrived at Sinai in the 3rd month of the first year that they had left Egypt. Numbers 10:11 records that they left Sinai on the 20th day of the 2nd month of the 2nd year making their stay at Sinai just short of one full year

⁴ Romans 7:7

⁵ Romans 3:20

⁶ Acts 15:23-29

Chapter Twelve – The Eternal Mosaic Laws Explained

It is impossible to argue from the New Testament Scriptures that believers in Jesus are to continue to observe and keep the Law or parts thereof. So the modern Judaizers then use the Old Testament Scriptures to attempt to validate and affirm their beliefs even though their doctrine contradicts the New Testament.

They very cleverly assert that the Lord declared that the Laws He gave were to be observed perpetually and that His covenant that He made with Israel through Moses was to be an eternal Covenant that could never be annulled. However this is not entirely true or accurate. There were indeed certain Laws that were eternal and had to be observed forever. On this count they are correct. But let us first view these Laws and commandments and then examine them in light of the New Covenant.

Below is a list of every eternal Law, ordinance and commandment that God gave to Israel with their location in Scripture. It is important to note that the Lord did indeed instruct Israel that each of these are to be observed as perpetual observances. I have grouped these particular Laws under five topic headings in order to demonstrate later that these specific laws have all been fulfilled through Jesus and have now become

ingrained in the regenerated spirit of the true believer beginning at salvation and continuing as he matures in Christ. These Laws are the very essence of the New Covenant.

Circumcision

- Circumcision, Genesis 17:12-13

The Priesthood, Temple and Sacrifice

- Aaronic Priesthood, Exodus 40:15
- The priestly garments, Exodus 28:1-43
- The portion of the wave offering for the Aaronic Priests, Exodus 29:1-28
- Ceremonial washing before entering the Tabernacle or approaching the altar of sacrifice, Exodus 30:17-21
- The fire on the altar must burn perpetually, Leviticus 6:13
- The Grain Offering to be eaten by the male descendants of Aaron, Leviticus 6:14-18
- The High Priest to offer the Grain Offering daily, Leviticus 6:22
- Priests may not drink alcohol when going into the tabernacle, Leviticus 10:9
- Only the Levites shall do the work of the Tabernacle, Numbers 18:22-23
- The man who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes after he has buried the ashes - Numbers 19:10

- Offerings to demons or other gods forbidden, Leviticus 17:7
- Menorah to burn continually with pressed olive oil, Exodus 27:20-21

The Sabbaths and Feasts

- The keeping of the Sabbaths (plural, includes the Feasts), Exodus 31:12-17
- Feast of Passover, Exodus 12:1-14
- Feast of Unleavened Bread, Exodus 12:17-24
- Feast of First Fruits, Leviticus 23:9-14
- Feast of Weeks, Leviticus 23:15-21
- Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur, Leviticus 16:34
- Feast of Tabernacles, Leviticus 23:33-41

The Land and the Congregation of Israel

- No portion of the land of Israel may be permanently sold, Leviticus 25:23
- The blowing of the Two Silver Trumpets, Numbers 10:1-10
- The proselyte and the native born will be equal before God, Numbers 15:15-16
- No Ammonite or Moabite may not become part of the nation of Israel, Deuteronomy 23:3

Just before I expound how these Laws are now fulfilled in Jesus I want to draw your attention to the two portions of Scripture below that both foretell that the Lord would in the future place His Law in the hearts and minds of His

people. These verses point to a future event in which the Lord through His Spirit would give His people a new heart and cause them to obey His Law.

That event will forever be remembered, revered and celebrated, for by it, all who choose to repent and believe are saved and made righteous through Jesus the One who died, was buried and rose again. I am of course referring to the New Covenant which Jesus entered into with all who would believe on Him.

“But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” Jeremiah 31:33

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep my judgements and do them.” Ezekiel 36:26-27

As we will learn in this chapter, all of these eternal Laws and ordinances of Moses were prophetic typologies of specific elements of God’s salvation and redemption that were fulfilled through Jesus. What is meant by this is that these laws had a twofold purpose. The one purpose was simply and plainly an instruction that the Lord demanded Israel to obey without them necessarily understanding the fullness of what that particular law signified or

represented. These Laws were righteous and holy in themselves and required full compliance from the Israelites.

The second purpose of these laws was to conceal prophetic types or shadows of what either Jesus would accomplish and fulfil at His first and second coming or things that would pertain specifically to believers in Jesus or the Church in general. These typologies that were once concealed to those under the Law are then revealed to those who come to faith in Jesus.¹

As we continue this will become much clearer.

Let us now examine how these eternal Laws are now either observed or fulfilled in light of us being under the New Covenant. Remembering the words of Jesus that He came to fulfil the Law and the Prophets in order for a New Covenant to be made between God and all men who would believe.

Circumcision

- Circumcision, Genesis 17:12-13

The Judaizers of Paul's day insisted that the Gentiles be circumcised in their flesh as God had commanded Abraham and his descendants. This was a common practise for gentiles who wanted to convert to Judaism. Although circumcision required the removal of the foreskin from the Jewish and proselyte males, its significance pointed to something far greater which can be clearly seen in the following verses;

“Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.” Deuteronomy 10:16

“Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and take away the foreskins of your hearts.” Jeremiah 4:4

The purpose and the intention of the Law of circumcision was clearly revealed through both the Law and the Prophets namely the putting off of one’s sinful deeds and desires. Circumcision was always intended to entail more than just a physical ritual in obedience to God. Although outward, it signified far more than the simple removal of the skin around the male genitalia. It was an analogy of removing sin, rebellion and uncleanness from ones heart. Just like the male genitalia contain sperm, the seeds of life, in like manner the life of an individual is sustained by the heart. For an individual to be saved, they must have the sin nature cut from their heart which is what circumcision points to and typologically represents.

Paul expresses this when he writes, “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 2:29

And again, “In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” Colossians 2:11

Gentile believers are not required to be circumcised in the flesh but are most certainly required to be circumcised in their hearts. Hence the Jerusalem Council

did not instruct, command or suggest that Gentiles observe the Jewish practise of circumcision for religious purposes. The law of circumcision is now fulfilled through the grace that God gives the believer so that we are no longer slaves to our sin nature.²

The Priesthood and Sacrifice

- Aaronic Priesthood, Exodus 40:15
- Only the Levites shall do the work of the Tabernacle, Numbers 18:22-23

In order to fully understand and appreciate how the eternal laws that pertain to the Aaronic priesthood are fulfilled through Jesus, we need be reminded of the words of the apostles Peter and John.

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation...” 1 Peter 2:9

“And He has made us kings and priests to His God and Father...” Revelation 1:6

Through Jesus there has been a change in the priesthood. Under the Mosaic Covenant only the Levites could minister as priests before God. Furthermore, within the Levitical priesthood itself, only the direct descendants of the lineage of Aaron could minister before the altar of sacrifice.³

Now, under the New Covenant the sacrificial system for the atonement for sins which was an essential part of the old Covenant has now been replaced by complete forgiveness through the blood of Jesus which is appropriated by faith in Him. Believers are no longer

under the sacrificial system of the Law and therefore have no need for a priestly class to offer sacrifices to atone for their sins. The very destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in AD 70 testifies that the sacrificial system of the Old Testament has ceased and that forgiveness can only be attained through repentance and faith in the blood of Jesus. Without a Temple and an altar to atone for sin the Levitical priesthood has now become obsolete and redundant.

Those who are now saved through faith and grace have become the priests of God through Jesus as both Peter and John write in the preceding verses. The blood-washed believers in Jesus have now become the eternal priests to God in place of the Levitical priests of the Old Covenant.

The writer of Hebrews explains this as follows; “Therefore if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.” Hebrews 7:11-12

Under the New Covenant, every single blood-washed, born again believer is now a priest irrespective of whether they are fulltime ministers or a part of the laity.

The Law concerning the perpetual priesthood has been transferred from the Levites to the believers in Jesus. Thus the requirement of the Law is now fulfilled and satisfied in the believers who according to the New Testament are the priests of God eternally.

As one continues to examine each of these eternal laws pertaining to the priesthood and sacrifice in light of the New Testament which calls believers a royal priesthood, we see that the Scriptures clearly reveals how each of these have been wholly fulfilled in the believer. For sake of brevity I will deal with each law and fulfilment in a few words.

- The priestly garments, Exodus 28:1-43

Just as the Levitical priests wore specific garments that comprised of the breastplate, the ephod, a robe, a tunic, a turban, and a sash, so we too are instructed to put on specific garments in a spiritual sense. Here are some examples;

- "...be clothed with humility." 1 Peter 5:5.
 - "Stand therefore having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness." Ephesians 6:14
 - "Therefore as the elect of God...put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind....but above all...put on love..." Colossians 3:12-14
- The portion of the wave offering for the Aaronic Priests, Exodus 29:1-28

- The Grain Offering to be eaten by the male descendants of Aaron, Leviticus 6:14-18

Just as the Levites were commanded to eat the grain offering and certain portions of the animals sacrificed to the Lord on the altar so we too are commanded to eat of Jesus the sacrificed Lamb of God. The writer of Hebrews illustrates this comparison between us and the Levites eating from the altar by writing, “We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.” Hebrews 13:10. The altar that the writer of Hebrews is referring to is of course the communion table. Only those who have put their faith in Jesus are entitled to partake of the Lord’s table and to eat of the bread and drink the wine.

This is further illustrated when Jesus commanded those who would believe on Him and follow Him to eat of His flesh and blood. “I am the living bread which comes down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh which I shall give for the life of the world.”

“Then Jesus said to them, most assuredly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.” John 6:51 & 53

The Hebrew prayer for blessing bread is, “Blessed art thou O Lord our God, King of the universe who brings forth bread from the ground.” This prayer was already centuries old at the time of Jesus.

He would have prayed this prayer at the Passover on the night before He was crucified in which He instituted the

Lord's Supper. The prayer is prophetic in that it points to the Bread of Life who would be resurrected from the ground. The grain offering of the Law prophetically points to Jesus the resurrected Bread of Life.

He is the fulfilment of the grain offering and He commanded Israel to observe this sacrifice under the Old Covenant and then reinforces this instruction with the Church, made up of both Jew and Gentile under the New Covenant.

As the Levites were instructed to offer the grain offering perpetually so Jesus instructs us to do the same through the breaking of bread, communion.

- Ceremonial washing before entering the Tabernacle or approaching the altar of sacrifice, Exodus 30:17-21

The Levites had to observe ritual washings just prior to ministering before the Lord at the altar or before coming into His presence behind the veil in the Temple.

Referring to these washings as a prophetic shadow of the New Covenant, the writer of Hebrews says, "It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience concerned only with...various washings and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation." Hebrews 9:9-10

It is quite fascinating to discover that the Greek word that the writer uses for washings is the word baptismos which comes from the Greek word baptizō which means to baptize. Hence the ceremonial washings of the Levitical priests were prophetic types and shadows of New Testament baptism which every believer must observe before they can truly become disciples and priests of God. Just as the Levites went through washings, “baptisms” so too must the believer and priest of God be baptised. Thus this Law is continually fulfilled in the lives of believers as they go through the waters of baptism and then continue to be washed with the “washing of the water by the word.” Ephesians 5:26

- The fire on the altar must burn perpetually, Leviticus 6:13
- Menorah to burn continually with pressed olive oil, Exodus 27:20-21

How the fire on the altar is fulfilled under the New Covenant is relatively easy to understand. Without the fire under the altar the animals could not be burned as a sacrifice to God. It was the fire and the altar that made the sacrificial system possible. Without them there could be no sacrifice.

In the New Covenant we are called to be zealous for our Lord. Our zeal and passion for Him can be likened or compared to the fire of the altar and our hearts in turn, typologically, become the altar of the Mosaic Law. Just as the fire on the altar was not permitted to go out so to must our love and zeal for the Lord not be allowed to die

down or be diminished. It is for this reason that Jesus rebukes the lack of fire in the hearts of the church of Laodicea with these words, "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth." Revelation 3:15-16

The lampstand or Menorah in the Temple was to burn continually day and night. The lampstand was symbolic of the Holy Spirit who now burns in the hearts of the believers in Jesus who are now the eternal priests of God. As Paul writes to the Ephesians, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." Ephesians 5:8

- The High Priest to offer the Grain Offering daily, Leviticus 6:22

Just as the High Priest offered the grain offering which was holy to the Lord, daily so we to are commanded to, "...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1

- Priests may not drink alcohol when going into the tabernacle, Leviticus 10:9

In like manner, we as New Testament priests are commanded, "...not to be drunk with wine in which is

dissipation (excess) but to be filled with the Holy Spirit.”
Ephesians 5:18

- The man who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes after he has buried the ashes - Numbers 19:10

The heifer was sacrificed in order to purify and sanctify the tabernacle for service to the Lord. Likewise we who are the Lord’s temple⁵ and have been purified by Him must also wash our garments “with the washing of water by the word.” Ephesians 5:26

- Offerings to demons or other gods forbidden, Leviticus 17:7

Finally, just as Israel were eternally forbidden to worship demons so too are the new testament priests of God forbidden to worship any other being except God alone through Jesus our Saviour.

¹ 2 Corinthians 3:14-16

² Romans 6:6-14

³ Exodus 29:9

⁴ 1 Peter 2:5

⁵ 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Chapter Thirteen – Observing the Sabbath?

The Sabbaths and Feasts

- The keeping of the Sabbaths (plural, includes the Feasts), Exodus 31:12-17
- Feast of Passover, Exodus 12:1-14
- Feast of Unleavened Bread, Exodus 12:17-24
- Feast of First Fruits, Leviticus 23:9-14
- Feast of Weeks, Leviticus 23:15-21
- Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur, Leviticus 16:34
- Feast of Tabernacles, Leviticus 23:33-41

Of all the Laws that the modern Judaizers try to convince biblically ignorant believers to obey and observe, none rank higher in their opinion and estimation than the necessary observance of the Sabbaths of God as prescribed by the Mosaic Law.

As a pastor having served various congregations, I have personally witnessed folk who were caught up in this deception and error turn from the grace of Christ and bring themselves under the bondage of the Law by seeking to observe these Sabbath Laws given to the nation of Israel.

As a Jew who believes in and serves my Messiah I have lived under the observance and celebration of these specific Sabbath Laws. Whilst they do bring back very fond memories of wonderful food, boisterous family gatherings and a very strong sense of being a member of God's chosen people, they also remind me of how both the Jews and the Judaizers alike are blinded to their

prophetic typology and reflection of the work of redemption that would come through Messiah Jesus. Let me explain and expound why I have made the statement that the Jews and the modern Judaizers are blind and ignorant to the prophetic purpose and fulfillments of the Sabbath Laws.

When Jesus was confronted by the Pharisees because they deemed that the disciples had broken the Sabbath Law by plucking heads of grain to eat whilst they were walking through the fields¹, He responded with a very profound reply. He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.”² What was He implying and suggesting by His response to them?

The Old Testament Scriptures very clearly give us the answer to this. In Exodus 31:13 the Lord says, “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you.’”

Then again in Ezekiel 20:12 the Lord says, “Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them.”

In both these verses, God says that the Sabbaths were given as a sign to Israel. The Hebrew word for sign, *ôth*, refers to either a beacon, banner, witness or sign. Therefore the Sabbaths were signposts or memorials to something that God Himself was going to do or had done and that ‘something’ is that, “I am the Lord who sanctifies

you.” Therefore we can conclude from Scripture that the Sabbaths are signs or memorials of certain events that God either instituted or would institute that would sanctify His people Israel.

Going back to Jesus statement in Mark’s gospel, “The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath,”² we come to understand that Jesus was expounding on the purpose of why the Sabbath Laws were initially given to Israel. He is indicating by His response to the Pharisees that man was not created by God for the express purpose of simply obeying the Sabbath Laws in blind obedience as a required act of worship and obedience to God; but rather that the Sabbaths were created by God to serve man by sanctifying him and restoring him to God.

If then the Sabbaths were given as signs or prophetic foreshadows of events that would sanctify man then within the Sabbath Laws contained in the Law of Moses there would be significant indications and insights as to how God would sanctify mankind through future events. As we examine these Sabbath Laws, it will become clearly obvious that they do indeed point toward Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath³ and our God who alone sanctifies us.⁴

Just before we examine these Sabbath Laws, I want to draw the reader’s attention to the Book of Hebrews in order to reinforce the biblical fact and reality that the observance of the Mosaic Sabbath’s are not in and of themselves a memorial or a sign to God’s sanctification

of His people but rather that they point to a future event or events in which God would fulfil these prophetic Laws through Jesus who would become our Saviour and the One who sanctifies the believer. In other words, it is not the observance of the Old Testament Sabbaths that sanctifies you but rather what they prophetically represent in relation to the redemption that comes through the Lord Jesus who is the Lord of the Sabbath. That is, He is the Master of all that the Sabbaths represent.

The writer of Hebrews illustrates the point I have made when he writes, “Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them (*Israel* added); but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

“So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest,’” although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”; and again in this place: “They shall not enter My rest.”

Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, again He designates a certain day, saying in David, “Today,” after such a long time, as it has been said:

“Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.”

For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.” Hebrews 4:1-10

The writer of Hebrews, as has already been alluded to in this book, was writing to Jewish believers who had come under the deceptive influences of the Judaizers and were forsaking their trust and faith in Jesus for their salvation and were returning to the observances of the Mosaic Law for their justification and sanctification. In a bid to show them their error he explains to them that God’s ultimate rest that he promised His people was not found either in the observance of the Sabbath day or in the entering of the Promised Land but in an event that would take place after Joshua brought them into the land. The rest he is clearly referring to is the rest that one finds in Jesus who is by His own confession the Lord of the Sabbath³.

Just like the modern Judaizers, the Judaizers of the first century were trying to turn believers away from the grace of God and bring them under the bondage of the Law which could neither save nor clear the guilt of sin from a man’s conscience.

The writer of Hebrews reminds these first century believers that the true rest of God can only be found in the One who came to fulfil the Sabbaths, namely Jesus.

He continues with this exhortation to them, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
Hebrews 4:11-16

In order to further understand the purpose of the Sabbaths, one must first know what the word Sabbath means and what it alludes to.

The English word Sabbath in Scripture is translated from the Hebrew word, shâbath and it means to desist from exertion or to cease from labour. Hence the Jews were forbidden to do any physical labour on the Sabbath as the very meaning of the day signifies, a cessation of all labour or work.

Anyone found working on the Sabbath was to be cut off or in the Hebrew kârath, executed⁵. Therefore the

Sabbath was an observance of rest which if not observed would lead to the perpetrator being executed as punishment for their disobedience.

Bearing this in mind we can better understand why the writer of Hebrews says, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.”⁶

He is encouraging the Jewish believers not to turn away from the grace of Jesus and go back under the Law which required the adherent to work for their right standing with God by obeying the Law and seeking to observe all the ordinances. By going back under the Law whilst being in the dispensation of grace for the believer is akin to forsaking Christ’s free gift of salvation by faith and trying to work to earn your own righteousness. This is what Satan is trying to achieve through the deception of the Judaizers. He wants the believers to forsake the grace of the cross and come back under the bondage of the Law which can never save or redeem us back to God⁷.

Let us now examine the Law of the Sabbath to better understand what I am expounding.

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it

shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.' ” Exodus 31:12-17

The purpose of God’s Sabbaths as contained in the Law were to sanctify man as the Scriptures have unambiguously declared and as we have now already concluded. What is extremely fascinating is how these Sabbaths point to Jesus who came to sanctify man by fulfilling every requirement of their observance.

Let us begin with the Sabbath day rest which concluded the six day work week. In Scripture the number six refers to man and his fallen state. Seven of course is the number that refers or relates to God. Both Peter⁸ and the Psalms⁹ teach that to the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as one day.

We know that there were approximately 2000 years from Adam to Abraham or in God’s economy 2 days. There were an additional 2000 years or in God’s eyes 2 days between Abraham and Jesus. And then there have been

almost two thousand years or 2 days from Jesus until now. In total there have been approximately 6000 years from the fall of man until now or approximately 6 days according to the Lord.

The next significant event that will take place after the Rapture of the Bride is the Millennial Kingdom when Jesus will come to earth with His Church and rule and reign for a thousand years¹⁰ or in God's sight, one day. The Bible speaks of this time when Jesus will reign for a thousand years or one day as a time of peace, joy, rest and obedience to God¹¹. In other words the earth and the remnant of those who come through the wrath of God will all enjoy a Sabbath's rest for a thousand years or to God one day. Ultimately all the Sabbaths revolve around God giving men rest from their labours.

This is what the Law of the weekly Sabbath is pointing to when it says that the man who works on the Sabbath must be executed. Because the Sabbath is given to man to sanctify him and it is Jesus the Messiah who saves and sanctifies us by His blood, Word and Spirit, that any man who tries to work for his sanctification when the Sabbath has already come must be executed or in a New Testament sense be disqualified from inheriting eternal life. No man can work for his salvation as it is a free gift, not as a result of works of righteousness or Law. Whoever tries to earn his salvation by obeying the Law to earn righteousness is separated from God and the grace of Christ and will go to hell. By contrast the man who

rests fully, by faith, in the salvation of Jesus will have eternal life i.e. he will enter into God's rest.

We as believers now celebrate the Law of the weekly Sabbath by putting our faith, hope and trust in the Lord Jesus who saves and sanctifies us without us having to work or earn our salvation through observing the Law and the Sabbaths.

It is for this reason that the Apostles instructed the Gentile believers not to observe the Sabbaths¹² as they had already been fulfilled in Jesus. What the Gentiles and indeed all believers are to do is to celebrate the rest that comes through faith in Jesus.

¹ Mark 2:23-28

² Mark 2:27

³ Mark 2:28

⁴ Hebrews 13:12

⁵ Exodus 13:14

⁶ Hebrews 4:11

⁷ Galatians 2:4

⁸ 2 Peter 3:8

⁹ Psalm 90:4

¹⁰ Revelation 20:4

¹¹ Isaiah 2:4; Isaiah 11:9; Isaiah 29:22-24; Isaiah 33:17-22;
Isaiah chapter 35

¹² Colossians 2:16; Galatians 4:9-11

¹³ John 1:29 and 1 Peter 1:18-19

¹⁴ Matthew 21:1-10

¹⁵ Matthew 22:15-46

Chapter Fourteen – The Seven Feasts of Israel

The seven feasts of Israel which were all eternal Sabbath observances have also now been fulfilled in Jesus and all point to a specific work that He either accomplished at His first coming to save us or will accomplish at His second coming in order to bring us into the presence of the Father for all eternity. I have covered this extensively in a series entitled the Feasts of Israel which can viewed on YouTube through our website at www.bolm.co.za. I will however very briefly touch on it in this chapter in point form.

The Feast of Passover

Exodus 12:1-46

- The Feast of Passover was celebrated in the first month of the Jewish year.
- Preparation for the Feast of Passover began on the 10th day of the first month (Abib or Nissan). The Jews were to select a perfect male lamb which would be sacrificed on the 14th day.
- The lamb was kept for 4 days and observed and tested to make certain that it was perfect and without blemish (sickness or defect).
- At twilight on the 14th day the lamb was to be slaughtered and some of its blood placed on the

door posts and the lintel of the houses where the Passover was to be eaten.

- The whole lamb was to be roasted in fire and none of its bones were to be broken.
- The Passover was to be eaten with bitter herbs (a reminder of the bitterness of slavery and bondage) and with unleavened bread.
- The Jews had to remain inside the house in which they had eaten the lamb and not go outside or else they would be struck down by the angel of death.
- God's judgement on the gods of Egypt was going to climax in the 10th plague, the death of the firstborn. Each of the 10 plagues was a judgement against one or more Egyptian deities,

What does the Feast of Passover Symbolize?

- The lamb was a substitute for the children of Israel's sins and transgressions against God.
- As long as the Jews were under the blood of the Passover lamb they were safe from God's judgement which came upon the Egyptians.
- The bitter herbs were a reminder of the bitterness of slavery and bondage in Egypt.

- The Feast of Passover was an everlasting reminder to the Jews of God's deliverance from Egyptian slavery.

How Did Jesus Fulfil the Feast of Passover?

- John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world¹³.
- Jesus came to pay the ransom for our redemption. Those who accept His Lordship are washed and kept by His blood just as the Jews were kept from death because of the blood of the Passover lamb painted on their doorposts and lintels.
- The blood on the doorposts and lintels formed a cross pointing to the cross of Christ the instrument of His death and of our salvation.
- Jesus triumphantly entered Jerusalem on the 10th day of Abib¹⁴
- He was tested by the religious leaders who tried to find sin and fault with Him but found none¹⁵.
- On the 14th day of Abib after He had eaten the Passover He was crucified for the sins of humanity.

- At twilight (Matthew 27:45-50) before the 15th, He died and His bones were not broken (John 19:31-33)

Jesus Judges and Defeats the god of this World

1 Corinthians 2:2-7; Colossians 2:14-16 and Hebrew 2:14-15

- Just as God made a mockery of the god's of Egypt so the god of this world was judged and defeated
- Not only did Jesus pay the price for our redemption, the Scriptures reveal that he defeated Satan and won back authority over death and the grave.
- Satan was defeated by Jesus and Christ has given us authority over him (Luke 10:17-20 and Mark 16:17)

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

Exodus 12:8; 15 – 20 and Leviticus 23:4-8

- The Feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated on the 15th day of the 1st month (15th of Abib).
- Although the Lord commanded the Israelites to eat unleavened bread at the Feast of Passover on the 14th day of Abib, the Feast of Unleavened only began the following day. The Jews celebrate Passover and Unleavened Bread together as an

eight day feast but they are in fact two separate feasts.

- On the first day of the Feast, all leaven was to be removed from their houses and for 7 days the Jews were not allowed to eat any food with leaven in it.
- The penalty for eating leaven during the 7 days of the Feast was death by execution.

What does the Feast of Unleavened Bread Symbolize and How did Jesus Fulfil it?

1. What Does Leaven Symbolize?

- The nature and characteristic of leaven is that a very small amount can permeate a mixture and influence the entire mixture's properties and cause it to become enlarged or fermented.
- Jesus taught His disciples that leaven was symbolic of three things.

a. Firstly, Leaven Represents - False Doctrine

Matthew 16:5-12

Jesus taught His disciples that leaven symbolizes false or incorrect doctrine. The apostle Paul uses the same analogy in Galatians 5:9 where he likens

the false doctrines of the Judaizers to leaven which had corrupted the hearts of the Christians in Galatia.

b. Secondly, Leaven Represents – Hypocrisy

Luke 12:1

The Pharisees taught the people how to serve God but most of them disobeyed the Law themselves. Simply put they were hypocrites. The Lord called the Pharisees hypocrites often (Luke 11:44 and Luke 13:15).

c. Thirdly, Leaven Represents - Sin and Wickedness

1 Corinthians 5:1-8

The apostle Paul refers to the sin and wickedness in the church of Corinth as leaven. He goes on to write in 1 Corinthians 6:17-20 that sin must not be found in our bodies which are God's temple. As the Jews kept leaven out of their houses during the feast so we must keep sin out of our lives.

2. How Did Jesus Fulfil the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Jesus the Bread of Life

John 6:4 and 30 – 59

- Just before the Passover (not the year of His crucifixion), Jesus taught His followers that He was the Bread of Life. In the above portion of Scripture, He encourages the people to eat of His Body, the true bread from heaven, so that they can have eternal life.

Jesus is the fulfilment of the unleavened bread the Jews had to eat at the Feast. The “leavenless” bread is symbolic of Him being the perfect sacrifice, without sin, hypocrisy or false teaching.

- Jesus died at the Feast of Passover on the 14th of Abib which was also the preparation day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (John 19:31-42) which began at sunset.
- As the Jews had to remove leaven from their houses so Jesus, who became the sacrifice of sin for us was executed and buried outside Jerusalem.
- The Feast was to last for 7 days. In 2 Peter 3:8, Peter teaches that to the Lord a day is as a 1000 years and a 1000 years is as one day with the Lord. Through His redemption Jesus has delivered us from

the power of sin and now expects His children to serve him,

1. In Truth
2. Without hypocrisy
3. In Holiness

Until His return at the end of the age.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- We celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread every time we take communion and remember that Jesus is the Bread of Life which came down from Heaven to present us, “ ...holy and blameless and irreproachable in His sight.” Colossians 1:21-22
- He is in us by the Holy Spirit (John 14:23) conforming us into His Holy image (2 Corinthians 3:18)
- We are to consume ourselves with Jesus and so fulfil the Feast

The Feast of Firstfruits

Leviticus 23:9-14

- The Feast of Firstfruits was celebrated the day after the Sabbath. The Sabbath does not refer to the seventh day of the week but rather the day

after the holy convocation (the Sabbath) of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

- Thus it was celebrated on the 16th day of the Abib or Nissan (the first month)
- Abib means “tender ear” referring to the barley harvest that was celebrated.
- The Israelites would bring a small portion of their crop to the priest who would offer it up as a wave offering. In doing so, they were thanking God for His grace on their crops.
- The offering was symbolic of the whole harvest. It was exactly the same as the rest of the harvest that was to be reaped.
- A one year old, perfect, male lamb was to be sacrificed with the offering.

What Does The Feast Of Firstfruits Symbolize And How Did Jesus Fulfil It?

1 Corinthians 15: 1-4

- Jesus was crucified and buried on the 14th of Abib or Nissan
- He was resurrected on the 16th of Abib, 3 days later

John 20:1 & 11-17

- On the day after the Sabbath of the feast of Unleavened Bread Jesus was resurrected.
- Mary Magdalene could not touch Him or He would have been defiled because He had not yet presented Himself to the Father with His blood (Hebrews 9:11-12)

Matthew 28:50-53

- At His resurrection, Jesus took the saints who were in Paradise to Heaven because His blood had paid for their redemption so they could now come into the presence of the Father (Hebrews 11:37-40).

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

- When Jesus stood before the Father at His resurrection, He presented Himself as the Firstfruits of all those who were to be resurrected in Him. i.e. those who would be born again.
- **What does it mean to us that Jesus is the Firstfruits?**
- It means, that just as the offering of the Israelites was an exact representation of their crops, so the Man Christ Jesus is an exact representation of those who through His death and resurrection will come after Him.

- Simply, we shall be like Jesus.

1 John 3:1-3 (verses 4-9) & Romans 8:29-30

- It is the Father's plan and purpose that all His sons and daughters become like Jesus.
- We shall bear His image (1 Corinthians 15:49; Psalm 17:15) and His nature.
- We are being transformed into His image by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18)

The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)

Leviticus 23:15-22

- The Feast of Weeks is so named because the Jews had to count 7 weeks after the Feast of Firstfruits from Sabbath to Sabbath. On the next day, the 50th day, they would celebrate the Feast of Weeks.
- They were to offer sacrifices of grain (bread), wine and 7 lambs.

Exodus 19:1-19

- 15th Day of 1st Month (Abib = 30 days) Israel leaves Egypt (Exodus 12:17)
- 2nd Month Iyar = 29 days
- 15 + 29 = 44 days

- 1st Day of the 2nd Month (Sivan) Israel arrives at Mt Sinai (Exodus 19:1)
- 2nd Day Moses goes up to God (Exodus 19:3)
- 3rd Day Moses speaks to the people (Exodus 19:7)
- 4th & 5th Day are preparation Days (Exodus 19:10)
- 6th Day God comes down on Mt Sinai (Exodus 19:1)
- 44 days + 6 days = 50 days

What does the Feast of Weeks Symbolize and How did Jesus Fulfil it?

What does the Feast of Weeks Symbolize?

- The Feast of Weeks was a commemoration of the Law being given to Israel.
- Through the Law God made a covenant with the House of Israel that as long as they obeyed His Law they would be His people and He would be their God and Father.

How Did Jesus Fulfil the Feast of Weeks?

- a. The Promise of a New Covenant – Deuteronomy 18:15-19 and Jeremiah 31:31-34
 - Through Moses and Jeremiah, God promised Israel that He would make a New Covenant with them.

- This New Covenant would be very different from the Law of Moses.
- b. The Promise of the Holy Spirit – Ezekiel 36:26-28
 - The New Covenant would be sealed, confirmed and upheld by the Holy Spirit.
 - The Holy Spirit would indwell God’s people and cause them to obey His Laws.

7 Lambs – Revelation 1:4 and Isaiah 11:1-2

- The seven lambs represent the seven Spirits of God. The seven Spirits represent the Holy Spirit and His six characteristics as seen in Isaiah 11:1-2.
Luke 3:16, John 14:26, John 16:7-15 and Acts 1:4-8
- Jesus would baptize those who come to salvation so that the New Covenant could be fulfilled.
- Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, believers would be empowered to obey God’s law, a fulfilment of Ezekiel 36:26-28
Acts 2:1-47
- When the Law was given at Sinai 3000 souls were killed because of disobedience (Exodus 32:28). When the Feast of Weeks was fulfilled in Jerusalem, 3000 souls were added to the Kingdom.

The Feast of Trumpets

Leviticus 23:23-25 and Numbers 29:1-5

- The Feast of Trumpets gets its name from the Hebrew word “teru-ah” which is translated in most Bibles as trumpets. The word in fact means; to make a clanger, to sound an alarm, to clanger with the blast of a trumpet, a battle cry or a shout of joy.
- The Jews were commanded to herald in the 1st day of the 7th month by observing a Sabbath and to spend the whole day blowing trumpets (shofar -rams horn).
- Specific sacrifices and offerings were to be made including the sacrificing of 7 lambs.

What does the Feast of Trumpets Symbolize and how will Jesus Fulfil it?

- The Jews cannot agree as to why they celebrate this feast as it does not point specifically to any of God’s dealings with them. This is because the feast is symbolic of a future event that is fulfilled in Christ.
- The Feast of Trumpets symbolises two events that happen almost simultaneously. Firstly it symbolises the return of Christ to fetch His Bride,

commonly referred to in the church as the rapture. Secondly it symbolises the outpouring of God's judgement on the world. This second event is called The Day of the Lord in the Scriptures.

How Will Jesus Fulfil the Feast of Trumpets?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 24:29-31; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; Revelation 14:14-16 and Mark 13:27

- The above Scriptures all speak of Jesus' second coming to "rapture" (snatch away) His church.
- Note that His return is heralded by the loud victorious blast of the trumpet.

Revelation 8:1-6 and Revelation Chapters 8, 9 and 11:15-19

- At His second coming, God will judge the nations.
- This judgement, known in Scripture as The Day of the Lord, commences with the blowing of trumpets. 1 trumpet for each of the 7 judgements of God.

The Day of the Lord

Luke 17:26-36 and 2 Peter 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-4; Malachi 4:5

- Jesus taught that God's wrath is poured out immediately after the church has been taken in the rapture.

The Day of Atonement

Leviticus 23:26-32 and Leviticus 16:1-22

- On the 10th day of the seventh month the Jews were commanded to keep the Day of Atonement.
- Only one this specific day could the high priest enter the Holy of Holies behind the veil in the tabernacle and later the temple.
- He would have to go through a series of ritual washings and sacrifices for himself and his family before he could minister the sacrifice on behalf of the nation.
- Two goats were chosen, one as a sin offering and the second as the scapegoat.
- The blood of the goat of the sin offering was sprinkled on the mercy seat which was on top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies.
- The High Priest would lay his hands on the scapegoat which in turn would be led into the wilderness and left to die.

What Does the Day of Atonement Symbolize and how will Jesus Fulfil it?

What does the Day of Atonement Symbolize?

- It was the day when a special annual atonement was made on behalf of the nation of Israel.
- The high priest would choose one goat to be offered as sin offering. Its blood would be taken into the Holy of Holies behind the veil and offered on the mercy seat to atone for Israel's sin.
- He would lay his hands on the head of the second goat, the scape goat and this would symbolize the transferring of Israel's sin onto the goat. The goat would be led away from the camp into the wilderness and be left to die. Symbolizing the removing of Israel's sin from their presence.

How Did Jesus Fulfill the Day of Atonement?

Hebrews 9:11-15

- Jesus is our High Priest who once and for all entered into the throne room of God the Father with His own Blood to make atonement for mankind.

Matthew 27:50-51 and Hebrews 10:19-22

- At Jesus' death, the veil in the Temple was torn in two signifying the end of the Old Covenant and the beginning of the New.
- Under the Old Covenant only the High Priest could come into God's presence behind the veil

and that, only once a year. But through faith and salvation in Jesus, we can come anytime into the Father's presence and fellowship with Him.

- Jesus has made the way into the Father's presence because of His blood which was shed, the blood of the Lamb of God.

How will Jesus Fulfil the Day of Atonement?

Revelation 7:9-17

- After the rapture the saints will be ushered into the presence of the Father and behold Him in all His glory.
- Before His throne we will worship with the angels and serve Him as sons and daughters for eternity.

The Feast of Tabernacles

Leviticus 23:33-44 and Numbers 29:12-38

- The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated on the 15th day of the 7th month after the summer harvest had been brought in from the field (Exodus 23:16).
- The feast lasted for seven days and on the eighth there was a sacred Sabbath assembly.
- Israel was commanded to take fruit and palm branches and celebrate before the Lord for seven days. During this time they were to live in shelters

or booths made out of palm branches to remind them of the temporary shelters they dwelt in during their exodus from Egypt.

- The priests had to offer a large sacrifice daily of the feast which included 14 lambs, 2 rams, 1 kid of the goats, flour, oil and then 13 bulls on the first day besides the regular daily offerings.
- Each day of the feast required that one less bull be sacrificed until on the last day 7 bulls were sacrificed. The total number of bulls sacrificed was 70.

What does the Feast of Tabernacles Symbolize?

- It symbolized two main events in God's dealing with Israel.
- Firstly, it was a reminder of God's provision and protection as He led them from Egypt into Canaan.
- Secondly, it served as a thanksgiving feast for God's blessing on their harvest.

How Will Jesus Fulfil the Feast of Tabernacles?

- The feast was celebrated for seven days. The number seven speaks of spiritual perfection and completeness. The seven feasts culminating in Tabernacles speak of our redemption in Jesus.

- The Sabbath on the eighth day speaks of a new era or new beginning after God recreates all things (Revelation 21:1)
- The 13 bulls that were sacrificed on the first day of the feast represent the twelve tribes of Israel and the thirteenth tribe is the tribe of the Gentiles (Romans 11:17; Ephesians 2:11-13) which is united with Israel through Christ. Revelation 14:14-19
- Just as the Jews celebrated the feast after the harvest was brought in, in like manner the fulfilment of the feast will take place after Jesus has reaped the harvest of believers into His Kingdom.
John 13:36 – 14:6
- The Jews were to live in shelters as a reminder of their temporary dwellings but Jesus promised those who believe on Him that they will dwell in residences made by God forever.
Revelation 7:9
- Just as Israel worshipped God by waving palm branches, so too will the church celebrate the Feast standing before the throne of God, waving palm branches as they worship their God who has redeemed and adopted them through Jesus the Christ (Messiah).

Chapter Fifteen – Refuting Paul as a Heretic

“For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers especially those of the circumcision whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households teaching things which they ought not for the sake of dishonest gain.” Titus 1:10-11

This book started as a biblically accurate narrative of the dramatic conversion of the Pharisee Saul of Tarsus who later became known as the apostle Paul.

It will now conclude with this very same man who most believe was a sovereignly chosen vessel of God who was used to give the Church almost all of our New Testament doctrine and half of the New Testament books.

I did say that most believe he was a vessel of God but there is a large enough fringe in the “Church” who believe that Paul was in fact a false teacher who taught error and contradicted the very teachings of Jesus Himself. A man whose writings must be ignored in favour of the other New Testament writers and their teachings.

It is to this group that I dedicate the last chapter of this book, not in malice or unkindness but in a sincere hope that at the end of our journey together I can make one last appeal to you regarding your doctrine and beliefs that have been sorely challenged throughout this book and found wanting. For there is not one verse of New Testament Scripture that teaches, instructs or even

suggests that Gentile believers are obligated to observe any of the Mosaic Laws with the exception of those found in the letter to the Gentiles that was drafted by the council of Jerusalem.

Among the modern Judaizers there is a common consensus that Paul was a heretical and false apostle and teacher. Judaizers are forced to take this stance because of the immutable fact that many of his epistles speak out strongly against the Judaizers and their insistence that Gentiles observe parts of the Law.

If I were to humour the Judaizers and agree with them that Paul was a false teacher then we must remove all his writings from the New Testament Canon. We would then go from 27 New Testament books to 14. But we cannot stop there because Peter calls Paul, “our beloved brother” and acknowledges that his epistles or letters are sometimes hard to understand.¹

Peter acknowledges Paul as a brother and does not fault his writings, so then Peter must be under a very strong deception if he finds no fault with Paul and maintains that he is a brother in Christ, so his writings must also be eliminated because he clearly cannot be trusted because of his questionable association with Paul.

We are now down to 12 New Testament books.

The apostle John was a ministry partner of Peter in the early years of the Church and he never once calls either Paul or Peter’s doctrine into question even though he

does speak quite openly about other problematic ministers such as Diotrephes². Therefore John cannot be fully trusted either as he gives the Church no warning about the false apostle Paul. That now leave us with 7 potentially accurate, untainted books of the New Testament.

Luke the physician was a travelling companion of Pauls and held him in very high esteem. In his account to Theophilus, commonly known as the Book of Acts, he makes no derogatory remarks regarding Paul. On the contrary, it is clear that he has nothing but admiration for the man thus he too cannot be trusted and so we are now down to 5.

Mark is automatically disqualified because he was closely associated with both Paul and Peter which brings us down to 4 potentially sound books of the New Testament. The writer of the Book to the Hebrews remains anonymous to this day but scholars argue that it could have been written by either Paul, Barnabas or perhaps Apollos. Either way, none of these three can be trusted, Paul obviously and neither Barnabas nor Apollos because the content of the book so closely follows Paul's own doctrine that his influence seems to permeate every verse. And then there were 3.

James had sided with Paul at the Jerusalem Council and agreed with him that the Gentiles should not come under the Mosaic Law. He never retracted his stance therefore

he must go and so we are down to 2. Eliminate Jude who was James' brother because he never took his brothers error to task and we are now left with 1 book, namely Matthew.

If Matthew was the only sound writer of New Testament doctrine then why did he not warn the Church regarding Pauls' gross error and powerful influence over the rest of the apostles and writers? So Matthew himself must be viewed with suspicion. Which leaves us with not one credible book or writer of the entire New Testament canon.

The conclusion of this matter if in fact Paul was a false teacher who wrote error and doctrine that contradicted Jesus as some purport, is why was there no one in the early Church who exposed him?

The only logical conclusion is that Paul was correct and his writings are valid doctrine given by God to His Church.

As we end our journey together I want to leave you with a final quote from the apostle Paul. I do this as a reminder to those who refuse to accept the contents of this book and choose to remain observant to the Law despite the testimony of the New Testament writers and the Holy Spirit Himself.

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the

law, to do them.” But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.” Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.” – Galatians 3:10-12

For those Gentile believers who insist on observing certain of the Mosaic Laws, I remind you that you are under obligation to observe the entire Law or else come under the curse of Deuteronomy twenty eight. Paul writes in Galatians 5:3, concerning this truth, “And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.”

Observing the Law fully in this dispensation is absolutely impossible to do for two simple reasons. Firstly, your sin nature will not allow you to. Secondly, you have no temple or altar to make atonement for your sin.

It is impossible to live under two covenants. Observing the Sabbath feasts and dietary laws of the Mosaic Covenant on the one hand and then relying on the cross of Jesus which ushered in the New Covenant, on the other.

Remembering, “For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law.” Romans 2:12

Do you really want to be judged by the righteous requirements of the Law? Do you not understand that not one human being, born of a human father, has ever come close to completely observing the Law?

My final admonition to you comes from Paul, “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” - Galatians 5:4

To those who have embraced the teachings of the New Covenant, I encourage you to continue to walk faithfully and uprightly in the liberty and grace of our Lord Jesus who has redeemed us from the curse of the Law.

You are free from the Mosaic Law but are bound by these New Testament laws.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind and your neighbour as yourself.”³

And

“...that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.

Farewell.”⁴

¹ 2 Peter 3:15-16

² 3 John 9

³ Luke 10:27

⁴ Acts 15:29

Appendix 1 –

Scriptures Confirming That Believers Are Free From Observing The Law

“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” – John 1:17

“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” – Romans 3:20-23

“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.” – Romans 3:27-28

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” – Romans 6:14

“Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.” – Romans 7:4 & 6

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” – Romans 8:2-4

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” – Romans 10:4

“For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.” – Galatians 2:19-21

“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”

– Galatians 3:24-25

“You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain.”

- Galatians 4:10-11

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” – Galatians 5:1-4

“Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.” – Ephesians 2:14-15

“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”

– Colossians 2:16-17

“Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the

priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.” – Hebrews 7:11-12

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

“For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says 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 did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the

house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away." – Hebrews 8:3-13