



The Sinaitic Light

Are We Under the Law?

Study Article No. VIII

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This article uses the English terms for Elohim (God), Yah (Father) Yahoshua (Christ).

Objective and Learning Outcome

Objective:

The objective of this lesson is to understand if we as true Christians of the Israelite community, which is to say Judeo-Christians are still bound by the Torah or has Christ, Yahoshua abrogated the Torah through the shedding of his blood?

Learning Outcome:

Upon completion of this study you will:

1. Understand what laws were abrogated at Christ's (Yahoshua) death;
2. Understand what God, (Yah) requires of us to receive salvation;
3. Understand what the sacrificial ordinances were a shadow of;
4. Understand how Christ fulfilled Yah's law;
5. Understand how a believer becomes wholly righteous;
6. Understand what grace is within the confines of the Torah and;
7. Understand why the Torah was given, and what it is designed to do

Introduction

The Bible is replete with texts that demonstrate to the reader that God expects everyone who encounters His word to observe the tenets within it. However, for the past 1,800 plus years, various neo-Christian denominations have asserted that God is not interested in believers practicing His code of ethics identified in the “Law.” The word for law in the Hebrew Old Testament is *torah*; in the Greek New Testament it is *nomos*. Dr. Thomas R. Schreiner Professor of New Testament Interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary writes, “*Torah* usually refers to what human beings are commanded to do. In some instances, a broader sense (that goes beyond commands and prescriptions) aptly captures the meaning of *torah* (e.g., Job 22:22; Ps. 94:12; Prov. 1:8; 4:2; 13:14; Isa. 2:3; 42:4; 51:4; Mal. 2:6–8), although even in some of these passages the instruction probably consisted of what was required by the law. In the vast majority of instances, however, the word *torah* focuses on doing what is commanded in the law, that is, the commands and requirements that were given to Moses on Mount Sinai” (Schreiner: 19).^{1 2}

Arguments abound, as to whether one is bound to observe the Torah, the laws of God, or are they exempt from them, other than observing its *principals*. Schreiner asks, “Should believers keep the laws written in the Mosaic covenant? Paul speaks of fulfilling the law of Christ, and thus it will be helpful to discern what moral norms apply to believers today” (Schreiner: 14). Schreiner deduces that morality emanates from the Torah, yet questions what aspects of morality a believer should be held accountable to because the Torah’s moral views are vast, encompassing civil commands as well. Many theologians will argue that one can pick and choose which commandments in the Torah are useful based upon certain New Testament passages. Theologians draw their theories from passages such as Romans, which reads,

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, . . . Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law . . . Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? *By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.* (Rom. 3:21-24, 27-28,31, ESV) [emphasis added].

Paul states that the law of God is not abrogated by one’s faith. On the contrary it is by faith that they uphold the law. The language is plain. However, if this passage is read out of context it would seem plausible that the author is arguing against practicing the laws of God in order to establish a right relationship with Him. Second and fourth century theologians and commentators such as Justin Martyr (100-165), Tertullian (155-220), Origen (185-254), Jerome

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1. What does Torah mean?
 2. What is the word for law in Hebrew and Greek?

(347-420) and Augustine (AD 354-430) formed this supposition. This has led modern theologians, of nearly all neo-Christian denominations to denounce the Mosaic law without properly understanding Paul's argument. The postulation that Christ has come to nullify Yah's law (Mosaic law) is far from the truth.³

The reality for Paul is that *no one* has been made right by practicing Yah's law *alone*. In the New Covenant, we need Christ's righteousness, the acceptance of this righteousness, is through faith. This is Paul's argument as this discussion will prove. Solomon states that there is not a man on the earth who has ever perfected God's righteousness by not sinning, all have sinned (Eccl. 7:20). Therefore, the context yields to the reader that faith in Yahoshua (who is perfect) as an act of faith in Yah *atones for our sins*, thereby, making us right with God. This is because He gave us *His son who perfected His laws*, meaning, "accomplishing its objective" (Rom. 10:4-5; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5), and in turn, God imputed Christ's *perfection* to us (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13), as long as we believe in him. This gift of *righteous attribution* is referred to as God's grace, because as sinners we were not deserving of this form of mercy (2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 2:11; 3:4). Therefore, Paul does not suggest that the law has been nullified by faith, he shows that faith is part of establishing the works of the law since it is an Old Testament edict that exclaims the righteousness of God (Matt. 5:19; 1 Cor. 7:19). It is by faith that we do the deeds of the law to demonstrate our love, appreciation and commitment to God without looking to the temple or men for reconciliation (Gen. 15:6; James 2:21-22).^{4 5 6 7 8}

Paul reminds his readers that the law was given to show people how sinful they are (Rom. 5:20; 7:7). Therefore, what the law does is: (1) reveals sin, (2) reveals God's expectation for the believer, (3) reveals God's righteousness, (4) judges the sinner, and (5) remits sin. Hence, it is not only improbable to believe that God's law has been nullified, it is impossible, for by what standard will Yah have to judge the world if the law has been nullified (Rev. 20:12-15)? Thus, everyone who holds or reads the Bible is bound by its precepts, both Jew and Gentile. Dr. Jason C. Meyer, Associate Professor of Preaching at Bethlehem College & Seminary writes,

Therefore, the Mosaic covenant is unable to serve as a soteriological basis, and any attempt to treat it as such is a distortion of God's design. As one of the 'covenants of the promise' (Eph 2:12), the Mosaic covenant was meant to lead us to Christ as the end and goal of the Mosaic law (Rom 10:4). Paul's opponents were often guilty of failing to see that the law covenant had come to an end, and thus they were trying to make it do something it was never designed to do: provide inheritance, righteousness, life, or salvation (Gal 2:21; 3:18,21) (Meyer: 278).⁹

3. How does Paul state they uphold the law?

4. What passage says, "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

5. Righteous attribution is referred to as what?

6. What makes us right with God?

7. What passage says that whoever breaks God's commandments and teaches others to break them will not enter the kingdom of God?

8. What passage says that nothing matters but keeping God's commandments?

9. What are the five things the Torah is designed to do?

Meyer is correct, “in part.” The Torah was given to us to live by and illustrate how to live a righteous and holy life. This supposition is affirmed by God Himself who says, “If you obey my decrees and my regulations, you will find life through them. I am the LORD” (Lev. 18:5, NLT). An example of this is the fifth commandment. “Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you” (Ex. 20:12, NLT). Observing the laws of God engenders blessings and long life if we embrace His word. Meyer is correct in his assertion that seeking salvation from it “alone” is in futility. Yet, this is why God gave the sacrificial laws within the Torah (animal sacrifices), to make us right with Him, when or if we broke His commandments. Thus, Christ merely serves as the fulfillment of the animal sacrifices (the antitype of the types and shadows of the sacrificial laws) that makes restitution for our sins and restores us to God by faith (Heb. 10:1-27). Therefore, we holistically understand one of the purposes for Christ and the New Covenant.^{10 11 12 13 14}

The Old Testament or the so-called Mosaic covenant of *sacrifices* for remission, did indeed point to Christ and the New Covenant (Heb. 10:1-2; Gal. 3:19-25). One can agree with Meyer that Jews were attempting to perfect the commandments as a prerequisite for salvation (soteriological), yet they failed to do so, which is why they exercised a precept in the law, called expiation and propitiation (reconciliation and atonement). Thus, Meyer is correct in his supposition, no one has been found wholly righteous by walking in God’s laws except Christ. Meyer rightly says that Christ is the end (aim) and goal of the Mosaic law (Rom 10:4). Christ was the only human being able to reach the aim or goal of the law, which was to accomplish and fulfill all that was written within it. God, by His grace imputed this perfection to His worshipers so they may stand before Him in the righteousness and faith of Christ.

In Yahoshua we no longer look to the *temple*, *animals* or the *Levites* for atonement for sin; Christ has fulfilled all of these atonement rituals. Notice, Christ says, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matt. 5:17, ESV). We have already concluded that part of the Messiah’s purpose was to accomplish the goal or objective of the law, which he did perfectly. Dr. Abram Herbert Lewis (1832-1908), Late Professor of Church History at the Theological Department at Alfred University writes that “Christ fulfilled the law by perfect obedience to it” (Lewis: 167). The second purpose was to fulfill or nullify atonement rituals. This premise is supported by Peter’s statement, “But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled” (Acts 3:18, ESV). Christ fulfilled the sin offerings (John 1:29; 1 John 2:1-2), thereby, repealing any judgement that would come upon the believer for violating God’s law as long as they continued to walk in it to display Yah’s righteousness (Heb. 10:26). As long as one

10. What commandment in the law promises long life if you obey it?

11. True or False. No one has ever kept God’s law perfectly, thus no one can be declared righteous by the law alone.

12. What did God give in the Old Testament to make us right with Him if we broke His commandments?

13. Christ serves as the replacement of the animal sacrifices that allows us to be _____ to God by faith.

14. What was Christ the antitype of?

focuses upon practicing righteousness, the righteousness of Christ prevents condemnation from coming upon the believer. This is why Paul says,

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So, God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4, NLT).

The only laws that have been nullified by faith in Christ are the *Temple sacrificial laws* that were given to atone for past sins, and the *condemnation or judgement laws* for failing to observe God's code of ethics (commandments) perfectly. Observing the law alone did not make anyone perfect because no one could perfect it. Therefore, God sent His son (divinely conceived) to perfect His law and within that perfection, as long as they followed the spirit of the law, which is righteousness (Rom. 8:5-8; Rom. 2:11-15,25-29), God passed its merits on to the believer who were saved from condemnation through this grace (Rom. 5:9). Finally, Christ's ministry and death exempted believers from following Jewish traditions that did not emanate from the Sinaitic covenant such as, circumcision for the Gentiles (Gal. 5:1-6). In fact, the apostles were adamant that the disciples in Yahoshua learn no other doctrine, that is any other form of Judeo-Christianity (1 Tim. 1:3) and to stand firm upon the doctrine that was taught to them by the evangel of the apostles alone (2 Thess. 2:15). The doctrine that was passed on to the apostles and disciples was from Yahoshua who received it from Yah (Matt. 11:29-30; John 7:16; 12:49; 14:24), therefore any alteration to this doctrine would pervert the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Cor. 11:1-4).^{15 16 17 18}

The doctrine of Christ demonstrates that those who come to God are bound by His laws and must not only practice them, but must also teach them and live in it through the faith of Christ's redeeming power. This redeeming power is the blood that was offered to atone for all manner of sins through God's grace, that is to say His compassion for all human beings (Matt. 5:19-20; 19:16-17; Rev. 12:17; 14:12-13; 22:14). It is in this grace, through faith, by obedience of the Torah that we are able to worship Yah, serve Him and improve our candidacy to immortality.¹⁹

15. What laws did the Messiah's death nullify and repeal?

16. What passage says, "Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God."

17. True or False. Disciples of Christ are forbidden from learning any other faith other than Judeo-Christianity or Messianic Sinaiticism.

18. True or False. Altering the doctrine that Yahoshua left the apostles and disciples perverts Yah's teachings and the gospel.

19. What is Yah's redeeming power?

Closing

In closing, the laws of God are not difficult to follow. They are holy, righteous, pure and divine. They are the only set of absolute ethics given to men from a transcendent power that goes back thousands of years that people are still trying to live by (10 Commandments). These laws, once learned, helps one to appreciate who God is, His holiness and His righteousness. No man shall enter the kingdom of heaven by violating them and teaching others to violate them as we see within so many neo-Christian denominations who argues that the Torah is not applicable to Christians. Yet, the apostles were Christians and they observed the Torah, and so did their disciples. Sadly, a misunderstanding of the Hebrew gospel (New Testament) has become the impetus for nearly three billion neo-Christians within 9000 neo-Christian denominations to abrogate God's law and to present salvation under the auspice of *principlism* to circumvent acknowledging the fact that the Torah must be observed in conjunction with the faith of Christ.²⁰

There is much more to discuss on this subject. If you have questions about this study or others, feel free to join us in fellowship, prayer, praise, and study every Saturday at 11:30 am. You may also call us for a consultation pertaining to this subject, or any other you might find intriguing. We are a Messianic Sinaitic assembly teaching the doctrine of Sinaiticism, which means keeping God's Word in the faith of Christ (Rev. 12:17; 14:12-13) and proclaiming God's gospel to the world and to those who are seeking His truth without interpretation or church tradition. May the blessings of the Most High be with you and thank you for reading our article.

20. What do neo-Christians argue is the replacement of the Torah for one to be saved?

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