

## Are We Afraid of the Law?

One hurdle many believers face when sharing the gospel is that nonbelievers are too willing to turn a deaf ear to the good news of Jesus Christ's redemptive power, the freedom from the curse of sin and death, and the promise of everlasting life in eternal paradise. It is often common to ask, "Why won't they listen to me? Don't they understand the phenomenal gift I'm trying to show them?"

These questions vex many believers. The continuous deaf ears make us wonder if we are being bad communicators, letting God down. We find ourselves asking, "Maybe if I modify my presentation more people would respond."

There is nothing wrong with the message as long as it is being represented with integrity. The challenge in getting people to respond has less to do with the person communicating the good news and everything to do with the hearers. Why are they so resistant to the great message of forgiveness? Because while few unbelievers are willing to admit it—and are readily willing to argue to the contrary—they are afraid.

Their perception is that accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior is going to mean that they have to stop being who they are or give up personal liberties—and this breeds fear. When a person is fearful, when they don't understand, their natural tendency is to either shy away or resist and fight. Even when the message has so much to offer, so much good, so much life-transforming power with eternal ramifications, if the hearer has fear, the good news may fall on deaf ears.

This fear—this lack of openness to things not understood is not limited to unbelievers. This is the same reaction many Evangelicals have to discussions about the *Torah*—commonly referred to, though somewhat inaccurately as—"the Law."

Like unbelievers, when the subject of the *Torah* emerges, so does fear—particularly among believers. Either the topic is dismissed as "fulfilled in Christ" (shied away from), or it is argued, "Don't you know we don't have to do those things anymore? Do you want to put yourself under legalism?" (resistance and fighting).

Why? Because deep down inside, because under the terms of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31), the "Law" is written on every believer's heart. They know that if they become convicted under the instruction of the *Torah* it will mean what the gospel means to unbelievers: it may mean that they have to stop being who they are or more to the point—they fear they may have to give up liberties they have been taught were theirs to enjoy—and this can be a breeding ground for fear and resistance.

It also might mean having to admit being wrong. For doctrinally based, denominationally loyal

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believers numbering in the hundreds of thousands or millions, the implications are too wide and overwhelming to entertain. Again—fear.

Perhaps it is time to reevaluate our feelings. Do we fear the Law? Many reading this will say, “of course not” more as a means of convincing themselves and others than out of a real sense of spiritual conviction. Few have even glimpsed into the pages of *Torah* in an attempt to understand its spiritual principles. They have been told “Jesus fulfilled the Law” and feel free from any obligation to even examine it, let alone grasp its eternal spiritual fundamentals.

Yet in Acts 17:10-11 we read, “And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, *to see* whether these things were so.”

What Scriptures did they examine to discover the truth? The only Scriptures in the synagogues—the *Torah*. Their faith in Jesus and their acceptance of Paul and Silas’ instruction was confirmed by the words of *Torah*.

This author believes with all conviction that it is time to overcome our ignorance. If we do not understand the *Torah*, and this unfamiliarity leads to fear, then let us come to understand. Let us be like the Berean faithful and examine the Scriptures.

One of the most common arguments about reading, let alone applying, the *Torah* is that it is putting oneself under legalism. Let us begin there.

When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you will not bring bloodguilt on your house if anyone falls from it (Deuteronomy 22:8, NAS).

This is the *Torah* of God. It says that if you have roof where people may walk about (most roofs were flat at that time) , you need to put a fence around it so that no one will fall off and die. Sounds reasonable, doesn’t it? Both logical and practical? It sounds like such good wisdom, in fact, it would be difficult to argue with it. There are government regulations around the world with building codes enforcing this divine wisdom. It is only one example of where the *Torah* is designed not to condemn, but to preserve life.

Under the doctrine of grace, if someone erects a guardrail around their roof and they are a born again Christian, are they guilty of legalistic bondage to the Law? Anyone would agree, “of course not.” Yet Jesus never told us to build a fence around our roof. This is strictly an Old Testament regulation. Therefore, one must ask, “how did Jesus fulfill this Law” thereby freeing us from its

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obligation and fundamental truth?

If Jesus fulfilled it, then according to contemporary Christian theology, we are free to ignore it. But that seems foolhardy, doesn't it? We would not want someone to fall off our roof and die!

As we examine the *Torah*, we may find it has more to do with righteous living, with the preservation of life, and with the peaceful coexistence of God's people, than with legalism.

The Christian church has long held that obedience to *Torah* is “bondage to the Law,” and has separated itself from the spiritual truths of God's commands without ever seriously considering the intent or purpose of these teachings (*Torah* literally means “teaching or instruction,” not “Law”).

Let us examine another example:

None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness; I am the LORD.  
(Leviticus 18:6).

This is one of seven references in the Pentateuch (a.k.a. *Torah* or Law of Moses) forbidding incest. The tenant against incestual relationships is as strong in the Christian doctrine as it is in Judaism, but this teaching is never addressed by Jesus. The idea of a sister marrying a brother never appears in the New Testament. If we proclaim a New Testament faith—and that the Law is annulled by Christ—on what grounds can we forbid brother/sister marriages?

If Jesus did away with the Law, and believers have no obligation to it or receive any condemnation from it, if we are to avoid being legalistic, shouldn't we encourage brothers and sisters to marry?

Hopefully your answer is “preposterous!” If so, then you are on your way to a brand new appreciation for the relevance of God's Word, the *Torah*!

The practice of tithing, the financial lifeblood of many churches, is only mentioned twice in the New Testament and each time Jesus condemns the Pharisees for their self-righteous misuse of the tithe. If Christians believe in tithing—another Old Testament Law—aren't they guilty of legalism like the Pharisees?

Again the answer is: “Ridiculous! Doing these things is Godly and a part of a disciplined life. There is nothing legalistic about them at all!”

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I agree—but this begs the questions, “Who chose which commandments constitute legalism in our Christian faith and which ones do not? Who were these scholars, clerics, and religious leaders? What processes did they use to determine the continued validity of some laws and to discard others?” Psalm 19:7 says, “The [*Torah*] of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul.” Who did God appoint to decide otherwise? Did the changeless God change His mind? How can something perfect be bad for us?

Maybe the problem is not with the perfect *Torah* at all, but with imperfect mankind.

While Paul may have some interesting things to say about the legalistic application of the Law to earn righteousness before God, particularly in the book of Galatians, theologians universally agree that this letter was written before the account in Acts 21, where Paul the Pharisee is instructed to accompany four men to the Temple. “. . . take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the [*Torah*]” (Acts 21:24). If Paul were *anti-Torah*, then he must also be a hypocrite! Lying for the sake of appearances and the approval of men.

This hardly seems in character for the Apostle to the Gentiles. “For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.” (Galatians 1:10, NAS)

The question truly is not which Laws are legalistic and which one are not. For we know, “The Law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7). Clearly there were Gentiles in the New Testament era coming out of pagan idolatry without an understanding of the *Torah*—this is why so many of the Epistles spend time trying to clarify its role. Perhaps this same ignorance is alive today. And as we said before, what we do not understand we often fear.

The issue is not which Laws are “good” and which ones are “bad,” but how do we appropriately understand and apply the *Torah*? Paul tells us, “But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it properly” (1 Timothy 1:8). I suggest that our understanding of the *Torah* is twisted—or ignored to the point that our understanding of it is neither Scriptural nor spiritual. We cry adamantly, “we are free from the Law,” as if it were some horrific lie of Lucifer and not the instructions of our loving and compassionate Creator. Ignoring—or worse yet—fleeing the *Torah* can never constitute “using it properly!”

If believers stand in judgment of *Torah* as if we are capable of being judge and jury, then they had best be well-versed in the intent and nuances of God’s word. Jesus said, “Is this not the reason

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you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God?” (Mark 12:24). The only Scriptures extant at this time was the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) and the power of God referenced was that demonstrated in the *Torah*, the Prophets and the Writings—nothing from the New Testament. It did not exist.

Let us take a holistic look at the entirety of the *Torah*—all 613 commandments—and deal with them as God’s revealed Word and loving instructions. 613 seems a daunting number, yet *Drake’s Annotated Encyclopedia* lists 1,050 commandments in the New Testament—nearly twice as overwhelming! The original 613 however, can be broken down into easily managed subgroups.

There are some instructions which, at present, are not applicable because they deal specifically with the Temple, the Priesthood, or the sacrificial system. Let us remove those that are currently non observable: 122 laws on the sacrifice, 14 laws on the priests, 41 on the Temple, 8 for the Nazarite, 9 on the Sabbatical Year and 20 on the Temple tithes. We have now stayed 214, or 35% of the *Torah*. (Stayed because in the Millennial reign under King Messiah, we find all of this is reinstated—see Ezekiel 45, 46, & 47).

Now let us take away those commandments which are fully compatible with Christianity, which are either specifically referenced, are generally referred to by either Jesus or his disciples, or are in some other way incorporated into most doctrines and theologies. There are 50 regarding idolatry, 15 on slavery, 7 about blasphemy, 9 affirming God’s existence, 32 forbidding incest and 32 instructing us how to conduct business and loan money. I shall save the question of Christian legalism by observance of these commandments for another apologetic. For the time being however, we have confirmed 145 more Laws, or another 24%.

In two paragraphs we have already dealt with 59% of the *Torah* of the Lord by reason of compatibility or inability due to the destruction of the Temple. We are still left with 251. What does the remaining 41% have to say, and does the willful submission to these Laws constitute legalistic bondage?

There are 4 Laws regarding the taking of vows, two of which regard the Nazarite. Let us set aside the Nazarite, leaving us with 2. These say that unless your vow is contrary to God’s law, you must honor your word. Seems reasonable. Even Jesus says, “But let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’; anything beyond these is of evil” (Matthew 5:37, also James 5:12). We see that Jesus intended for the body of believers to obey this commandment, without debate on the issue of legalism. What about the other *Torot* (Hebrew plural of *Torah*)?

There are 17 regarding community: Judging without partiality (James 2:9), the appointing of leaders, (Titus 1:5), bearing false and true testimony (Matthew 15:9). Therefore, again we see

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that Jesus intended for the body of believers to observe these instructions.

There are 3 Laws regarding the establishment of the cities of refuge. Since we don't live in Israel, we can dispense with those three as currently non-applicable.

We are now down to 230 and the number is dwindling quickly.

4 Laws deal with war, the supplying of troops and care for their families. All in all, sound and reasonable logic intended to preserve both life and the community.

65 Laws address the judicial system defining how punishments must fit the crime, including what sins were to result in capital punishment. (Christians run the gambit on this issue from all in favor to despising it—a topic for another apologetic).

1 Law commands the humane treatment of a dead body and its proper burial. I suppose you could argue that this is legalistic, since Jesus did say, “Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:60, also Matthew 8:22). I have yet however, to meet a born-again believer willing to debate his spiritual opposition to funerals.

15 commandments in the *Torah* instruct the faithful community in proper social behavior: paying the worker his wage (Romans 4:4), charity to the poor (Matthew 6:2), restoring lost property to its owner and loving your neighbor (Matthew 5:43). These hardly constitute bondage but rather, are expressions of common courtesy and healthy community. Therefore, we see that Jesus (and his apostles) intended for the body of believers to obey these commandments.

15 Laws instruct us in our family affairs; respecting the wise, honoring our parents, marriage, divorce, adultery allegations, and so forth. Again, we see that Jesus did not abolish these laws for the body of believers. In truth, only one law in this subgroup “might” be considered legalistic, and this is in regard to physical circumcision of an infant boy (see Acts 21:21-24, Acts 16:3, Romans 3:1-2). In Luke 2:21 we see Jesus fulfilling this law; “And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.” Therefore, we see that Jesus, by His own example—Paul's as well—does allow for the body of believers to keep this commandment—though it has nothing to do with the power of salvation (See also Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6, Jeremiah 4:4, Romans 2:29). If we in Christ Jesus are free—truly righteous (which we are)—circumcision is not even an issue unless one is doing it to become more righteous or more holy, in which case, it is absolutely wrong.

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There are 4 Laws regarding the monarchy. In the US only a naturalized citizen may be president. Likewise, only an Israelite could be considered for the throne. Are we therefore, a legalistic nation? It also states that the king must not accumulate an excessive number of horses, wives, or wealth (Mark 4:19). Anyone chose to argue the point, considering that these burdensome excesses would be born by the common folk through taxation?

20 Laws discuss agricultural practices like; leaving rows and corners of grain for the poor (Matthew 12:1), discard any deformed grain, do not pick up fruit from the ground but only on the tree or vine, do not crossbreed animals, do not yoke unequally (2 Corinthians 6:14). The remaining have to do with Jubilee years and inheritance rights which are not applicable outside Israel (but promises all believers look forward to as their inheritance through the Messiah). Again, little to argue with as being legalistic. Most are sound, logical, tried and true agricultural practices.

14 Laws are considered “Prohibitions Resulting from Historical Events.” They include pure and impure thoughts and sights (1 Thessalonians 4:7), making pacts with the enemies of God (Matthew 12:30, Luke 11:23), not tolerating idolaters in your midst (1 Corinthians 10:14, Galatians 5:20) marrying within the faith (2 Corinthians 6:14), and not fearing enemies (Luke 1:74). Many of these are referenced by Paul, and suggest that the believing community had knowledge of these teachings and was expected to adhere to them.

In fact, time and again, we have found the *Torah* actually being taught by Jesus and the authors of the Epistles. But at some point we **must** find some Laws that no longer have modern relevance—don’t we?

We have whittled this down to 93 remaining laws. We have either set aside or reconciled 520 as—if not reasonable—at least bearable (where applicable). While we could have in-depth debate on each of the commandments and probably find contention on some, for the sake of this argument, I think we can still agree that the overwhelming majority cannot be considered “legalistic bondage” amounting to sin against the cross of Jesus. In fact, many of these edicts are on our own books, in most of our cities and states. We expect them to be there and rely on them for our protection—though few may acknowledge their biblical origin.

The 93 remaining are the supposedly contentious laws that “might” be considered legalistic. But again, we must consider the definition of “legalistic.” If they are used to supersede the work of Jesus’ atonement, then yes, any law can be legalistic. However, so far we have seen that 85% of the *Torah* (where applicable) is reasonable, logical and for the good of the community of the redeemed. Therefore, is it appropriate to conclude that our all-knowing God would purposely establish 15% of them to lead us into bondage?



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The remaining 93 include a few miscellaneous torts, the ritual purity laws, the biblical festivals, the dietary rules, and several symbolic gestures to remind us of our faith.

There are 11 *Torahs* on the consumption of animals. Since 3 regard the priesthood and the Temple sacrifice, we may exclude them, leaving us with 8. One disallows the eating of blood (Acts 15:20, 29). Several instruct us to treat the animals we eat humanely, never strangling them or tearing their flesh (Acts 15:20), and to inspect them for tumors and skin lesions which would indicate an illness that might be transferred to humans. Horrible and legalistic, or do they have our well being at heart? Perhaps—if we honestly want to avoid legalism—we should do away with the government’s inspection efforts.

The 30 dietary Laws are among the most contentious. We want to eat what we want to eat, and further, we want the Bible to justify our taste buds. Rarely is the life of a disciple the easy or convenient path. “For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:14). We also ignore the prophetic aspects, such as Isaiah 66:17 “Those . . . who eat swine’s flesh, detestable things . . . will come to an end altogether,” declares the LORD.” If God is changeless, why would He be different today? Or have we made Him different? Have we made Him into our image?

Acts 10:10-16 speaks of Peter’s vision and the biblically unkosher foods presented to him. Never does Peter actually eat of these creatures, and in fact, in verse 17, he is quite perplexed by the vision. Peter’s comprehension came the next day at Cornelius’ house: “And he said to them, ‘You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean’” (Acts 10:28). His vision was about Gentile believers, not food! Further, the biblical *Torah* does not forbid any such association between Hebrews and Gentiles. Peter’s revelation and new attitude challenged the oral law, which did forbid associating with Gentiles. Any other application of this verse as an excuse to eat “anything” is a misuse of Scripture, particularly since Peter gives us the interpretation!

Likewise, Mark 7:19 is used to justify that anything is okay to eat; “Thus He declared all foods clean” (NASB—words that do not appear in the original Greek text but were added by the translators). This is Gentile thinking, not Jewish thinking. To the Hebrews to whom Jesus was speaking, pork, shellfish, catfish, etc. . . ., are NOT FOOD. God had defined “food” in the *Tanakh*. These elements never had been food and as far as they were concerned, they never would be. They were not a consideration. A closer look at the entire context of the passage is about dirty hands making grain unclean, not what is or is not acceptable to eat. Jesus was not giving license to a new high fat, high cholesterol, potentially toxic diet. God had protected His



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people from these things for centuries. Would He really change his mind? Is this the character of a changeless and compassionate God?

If you examine the lists of acceptable and unacceptable animals for consumption, you will find the *Torah* teaches us that the “unclean” were scavengers and hunters. If they were not the vacuum cleaners of the earth and seas, then they were the hunters who tear flesh and eat blood. In short, they survive off the kingdom of death, decay, and darkness.

By contrast, the animals declared “clean” by God are all herbivores—vegetarians. They did not feed off of life, but off of what every living creature’s diet was in the Garden of Eden—plants. Because they ate clean, they were clean to eat.

Perhaps the more important thought is not, “Under the doctrine of grace I eat what I want to eat,” but rather to ask yourself, “Is it within God’s character for me to take into my body that which feeds on death and decay?” What is at the heart of the instruction is the desire and behavior of God’s redeemed community: “For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Colossians 1:13).

Back to our list.

18 Laws give instruction of ritual purity and are the root of Christian ritual baptism. They forbid the touching of carcasses or eating from utensils that have come in contact with a carcass. They instruct how to cleanse oneself of any infection on one’s person or one’s pots, pans and cutlery. They disallow the touching of a leprous person, blood, a seeping abscess, and the like. These laws identified and prevented the possible spread of infectious disease in the community (Revelation 21:27, James 4:8).

The most “contentious” of these purity laws is that which forbids sexual relations while a woman is menstruating. While there is some medical evidence showing why abstinence during this period is sound hygiene, it shows how spiritually removed many Christians are of the threads of continuity between the *Torah* and the New Testament commandments. When a woman is on her period, she is flowing with blood. Acts 15:20 tells Gentile believers to “abstain . . . from blood.” From a biblical viewpoint, this is blood in any form. The flowing blood represents death, since the egg did not conceive life. Again, we find the *Torah* and the New Testament helping us to gain a healthy respect for the kingdom of darkness and death.

The purification from these “defilements” comes through the immersion, the ritual death, burial and resurrection to a renewed life. This is the Jewish definition from which the Christian practice of baptism grew. If we obey the apostles in Acts 15:20 and the ritual of baptism, are we putting

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works ahead of faith? Any person of sound theology would have a difficult time believing so.

17 Laws command the observance of special “holidays.” These include the Sabbath, Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, *Yom HaBikkurim* (literally the Day of Firstfruits, commonly referred to as “Easter”), *Shavuot* (commonly called “Pentecost”), *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, and *Sukkot*. Most of these are encompassed in Leviticus 23. Another observance is the New Moon Sabbath (Numbers 10:10, 28:14, 29:6). Again and again, the Word refers to these feasts as “a perpetual statute throughout your generations.” The Church observes a Sabbath, Easter, Pentecost, and Passover (in a watered down form referred to as the Lord’s Supper). All of these started as biblical holidays, though the average Christian cannot tell you what is “Jewish” about them. Jesus celebrated each and every one of these along with his disciples, so we can assume that he expected his disciples to do likewise. Incidentally, we find Jesus celebrating the non-biblical holiday of *Hanukkah* in John 10:22 (translated in most English Bibles as the “Feast of Dedication”). In light of His example, of observing even a non-biblical holiday that gives glory and honor to the Most High God, was He condoning or condemning biblical feast observances for us today?

*Sukkot*, the Feast of Booths, is spoken of in the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah as a celebration that all nations will observe under Messiah, with dire consequences for those who do not. Ezekiel 45 and 46 show that the other feasts will likewise be observed, as if “throughout your generations” is literal in both the Old Testament and in the Millennial Kingdom. In the future they are not deemed legalistic; in the past they are not considered legalistic. They are a part of the cyclical life of the holy community. Only today do the observances of biblical feasts seem to be the exception in Christian theology. Why?

If Jesus fulfilled them, did He then abolish them? We see the Messianic significance and spiritual themes of Passover, Firstfruits, and Pentecost, and rightly so. No less is true of the other feast days—though time and space to not allow me to expound here (see <http://www.rbc.net/ds/q0408>) . Why then, have we decided that recognition of “some” biblical and God ordained festivals are legalistic? With all that we have learned so far, does it sound reasonable that God would ordain others to be merely legalistic and void of spiritual truths? Yet many of the faith will take originally pagan feasts—with no biblical origin or divine ordination—and proclaim them “the Christian thing to do.”

Do you begin to see why a non-believing Jews and non believing Gentiles are confused by the apparent inconsistencies in Christian practices?

We are now left with 23 Laws on our 613 journey. They constitute a line of miscellaneous statutes and commandments, most of which deal with identifying markers in the life of the

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redeemed; studying the Word, remembering one's prayers, affixing mezuzahs (a scroll case with prayer written on parchment) on your door posts to remind you of your role in the world, that the king should write two copies of the *Torah* and study them, and that everyone should praise God for his food. Thieves should be punished, cattle kept in their pen and not on everyone else's property, and rescuing the persecuted. With what you now know about the *Torah*, are these 23 legalistic or might they potentially contain some seeds of spiritual truth?

The only Laws left that could possibly be considered legalistic in our miscellaneous list have to do with dress, specifically, the prayer shawl (*tzit-tzit*) and the phylacteries (*tefillin*). There are several New Testament passages I could use to address this, but let us use only one, Matthew 23:5.

But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments.

Jesus knew that the rabbis had already prescribed a specific length, width, and overall size of the phylacteries and fringes. It was believed that all men are equal before God and no one had the right to present himself otherwise. Jesus does not condemn wearing these articles—nowhere does he contradict the *Torah* of God—but rather, he agrees with the rabbis! Anyone who makes them grander for show, sins! Wearing them does not constitute sin, making a show of them does.

So, we have visited many of the 613 laws of the *Torah*, from Exodus to Deuteronomy. Still I must ask the question, “why be afraid of what God has ordained?” Which laws of the *Torah* can we use to acquire atonement? None of them. They never were intended for salvation, and the legalistic observance of the Law in an effort to obtain righteousness is a fool's errand. The *Torah* was intended to outline Godly living by the redeemed community. Only the *Yom Kippur* sacrifice was intended for salvation, and that yearly—hence the need for the everlasting sacrifice—the Messiah. God knew that very soon the Temple would be destroyed and the priesthood dispersed. What would His people do? They were going to need a spiritual vehicle they could take with them anywhere, in every season and every century. The translation of the temple sacrifices and priesthood laws were fulfilled eternally by the death and resurrection of Jesus. When we ask Jesus to be our personal Savior, we are in fact, adhering to this commandment in perfection.

Again, I affirm that the general negative attitude toward the *Torah* is because believers do not understand the *Torah*. The confusion and rejection of the *Torah* by most churchgoers stems from a misuse and misunderstanding of much of Jesus' and the apostles' teachings, leading us to pursue our own pleasures in diet, sex, and dress. As Jesus said, “You do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God.” We have run from the *Torah* for so many years that we have no

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understanding of the true letter of the law, and even less of its spirit. Like the Pharisees who twisted the law to fit their theology the church may be culpable of creating its own set of “laws” by which one may be assured of living a Godly lifestyle. How sad that many of them do not include God’s word—the *Torah*!

In the *Torah* we read that when God created everything, his first miracle was, “Let there be light.” His first act was to separate the kingdom of darkness from the kingdom of light. Everything else throughout biblical history, from that moment on, has been laid down to explain the difference and to help us identify where our citizenship resides.

Romans 11:17, 18 reads, “. . . you, being a wild olive (Gentile), were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant . . . remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.” We have lost touch with the root. It is time to correct the problem and put the supports back in place, that the foundation might be shored up and the building made sound again. Our God is consistent; it is we who have strayed to follow our own eyes. “. . . remember all the commandments of the LORD, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot” (Numbers 15:39).

**For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments;  
and His commandments are not burdensome (1John 5:3).**