

Many Christians have been taught that the writings of the Apostle Paul prove that the law (Torah) was done away with, and therefore we can worship on Sunday, dedicate any holidays of our choosing to God, and generally disregard the majority of the Old Testament.

Let's compare that common idea with Paul's own words.

Paul himself speaks about the laws of the Old Testament in many passages, including:

Romans 7:12 "Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good."

Acts 24:14–16 "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way [this term applies to Messianic believers] which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets."

Acts 25:8 "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all."

Acts 28:17-21 "...I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers ... because for the hope of Israel [Thayers: the author of hope, or He who is its foundation] I am bound with this chain."

With statements such as that, where do we get the idea that Paul has done away with the law? Originally, it began among some of the brightest teachers of God's law (who no doubt knew Torah far better than we do). They had jailed Paul, seeking his death, because they said he was teaching against the law. These men included the high priest Ananias (Acts 23:2, Acts 24:1), along with Sadducees and Pharisees (Acts 23:6), Terullus (called an orator – Acts 24:1-2), Jews from Asia (Acts 24:18), and Jews from Jerusalem, including the high priest (Acts 25:2, 7). They all came before tribunals to accuse Paul of teaching against the law.

What was their result?

Acts 24:13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me

Acts 25:7 "...the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove..."

Paul's case was put before four impartial authorities who conducted the various trials and hearings brought by these Jewish scholars. All four made statements such as:

Claudius Lysias (Acts 23:29): "I found that he had done nothing deserving of death or imprisonment."

Festus (Acts 25:25): "He has committed nothing deserving of death."

King Agrippa (Acts 26:31–32): “This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

Felix (Acts 24:22-27) commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him.

This is evidence that those who are teaching that Paul taught against the law are not standing on solid Biblical ground. The position that Paul taught against the law goes against the plain words of Paul himself, and against kings and rulers who found him innocent of unprovable accusations that he had spoken against the law of God. Instead, unbeknownst to them, these Christians are siding with Paul's accusers - highly educated Torah scholars whose accusations are plainly identified as unprovable.

The danger people make is that they are taking a misunderstanding of Paul's words, and then making that wrong understanding their final authority in all things – higher than God's words in the Old Testament and of Yeshua's words in the New Testament, as well as all the New Testament writers other than Paul. And in fact, higher than Paul's own words.

Peter warned against this very thing. He was concerned that members of the early Christian (Messianic) church were twisting Paul's words to their own destruction.

2 Peter 3:14-18 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

15 and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things **hard to understand**, which untaught and unstable **people twist** [the Greek word translated “twist” is defined by Thayer's Dictionary as “metaphorically to pervert, of one who wrests or tortures language in a false sense”] **to their own destruction**, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the **error of the wicked** [G113, Thayer Definition: one who breaks through the restraint of law and gratifies his lusts.]

18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

So, what is truth? Rather than debating what Paul did or did not mean, we must first take a step back and look at a much bigger picture. Consider some relevant concepts that must be employed when studying Scripture:

God does not change

- Malachi 3:6 "I change not"
- Psalm 89:34 "Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips"
- Isaiah 40:8 "The word of our God shall stand forever"
- Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, forever"
- James 1:17 "No variableness, neither shadow of turning"
- Matthew 5:18 "Not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law"
- John 17:17 "Thy word is truth"

Attributes of God's Law

- Romans 7:12 - Holy, Just, Good
- Psalm 19:7-10 - Perfect, Sure, Right, Pure, True, Righteous, Desirable, Sweet
- Psalm 111:7-8 - Sure, Eternal
- Psalm 119:86 - Faithful
- Psalm 119:92 - Delightful
- Psalm 119:129 - Wonderful
- Psalm 119:142 - Truth
- Psalm 119:160 - Everlasting
- Psalm 119:172 - Righteous
- James 1:25 - Perfect law of liberty, doers of the law are blessed

Would an unchangeable God do away with that which is everlasting, holy, true, and perfect? If indeed God's law was changeable, and as many believe did in fact change after the resurrection, then why was the crucifixion even necessary? Why didn't God just change His law three days sooner so that Yeshua didn't need to die? The very fact that Yeshua had to die to pay the penalty of the law establishes the law's eternal nature. To say otherwise is in effect making the death and resurrection of Yeshua unnecessary theater.

God's laws are eternal.

Psalm 111:7-8 "The works of His hands are verity and judgment; all His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness."

Psalm 119:160 "The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever."

Isaiah 46:8 "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

Their eternal nature is shown by the fact that it is the enemy who persecutes God's faithful law keepers in the final days before the Second Coming:

Revelation 12:17 "And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

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

Lawlessness: The position of many so-called "New Testament Christians" is that Yeshua's death on the cross did away with the law. Do they realize that they are, in effect, preaching and teaching that Yeshua died to establish lawlessness?

Consider these texts regarding true lawlessness:

- 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 8–9: The "man of lawlessness" works according to Satan
- Matthew 7:23: Yeshua rejects those who "practice lawlessness" despite miracles
- Matthew 13:41–42: Angels remove those who "practice lawlessness"
- 1 John 3:4: **Sin is lawlessness (This is in fact the foundational definition of sin.)**
- Titus 2:14: Yeshua redeems us from lawlessness
- 2 Thessalonians 2:7: Mystery of lawlessness is already working
- Daniel 7:25: It is not God, but rather the "Little horn" who *thinks* to change times and law. (No being on earth has the authority to actually change God's holy times and laws, even if they *think* they can).
- Matthew 24:12: Lawlessness will abound in the last days
- Romans 6:19: The Gentile converts of Paul were said to be "*formerly* slaves to lawlessness" but are now "*servants* to righteousness unto holiness".

Consider more fully Yeshua's words in Matthew 5:17-20:

Matthew 5:17-20 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. **I did not come to destroy** but to fulfill.

18 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.**

19 **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.**

20 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.

Have heaven and earth passed away? It seems as though many interpret Yeshua saying that He didn't come to *destroy* the law, means that He came to *do away with* the law. What is the exact distinction here? The word "fulfill" [G1096] does not mean "to do away with", but rather means to fill full, or, as defined by Thayer's dictionary, "to become, i.e. to come into existence, begin to be, receive being".

As we continue through Matthew 5, Yeshua spoke of murder, lust, false oaths, and more. With each, He begins with "You have heard it has been said ... but I say unto you..." What did He say? If you are even angry, you are guilty of murder. If you even look with lust, you are guilty of adultery. Was He "doing away with" the 6th and 7th commandments, or was He "filling them fuller"?

Truth: God's law and His ways are truth. The enemy of souls is the liar, with no truth in him.

- John 4:23-24 - True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.
- John 8:32 - It is the truth that makes us free.
- John 8:44 - The devil abides not in the truth, there is no truth in him, he is a liar, and the father of it.
- John 14:6 - Yeshua is the way, the truth, and the life.
- John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13 - The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth.
- John 17:17 - Yeshua affirmed that His Father's word is truth.
- 1 John 2:4 - Those who do not keep the commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in them.

Consequence of disregarding God's truth

God gives us free will. He allows those who choose to stand with the lies of the enemy to reject His truth and laws. He forewarns of the consequences – to perish in their lies:

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,
10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:
12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Our choices: God does not change, His law is perfect, holy, and true, and Yeshua said (with clear examples like murder and adultery) that He was not coming to destroy it, but to

fill it to its fullness. Lawlessness comes from satan. His agent, the little horn/harlot, is a blasphemer, the persecutor of God's people, who only *thinks* to change God's law.

Christians should not be divided by debating the words of Paul, but rather recognizing that the choice is between God's truth, or satan's lies. ***With which of these two will you stand?***

Sabbath: Many in this position have no trouble with nine of the ten Commandments, or even statutes such as fornication, witchcraft, etc. But for some reason, the Sabbath commandment seems to be the law they want to have done away with, a stumbling block too big for many to accept. Was the 7th day Sabbath specifically done away with in the following examples?

- Luke 23:54–56 Disciples rested on the Sabbath after the crucifixion
- Matthew 24:20 Yeshua expected Sabbath to still be relevant post-cross
- Acts 13:42–44; Acts 15:21; Acts 17:2; Acts 18:4 Paul preached to Gentiles on the Sabbath, including preaching Torah
- Hebrews 4:9 A Sabbath observance (Greek: sabbatismos) **remains** for believers
- Isaiah 66:22–23 Sabbath worship continues even in the new earth (eternity)

Consider the words from Yeshua's own mouth in Matthew 12:8, Mark 2:28, and Luke 6:5: "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."

On what authority does anyone teaching against the 7th-day Sabbath remove His Lordship of the Sabbath, something He certainly never did? After His resurrection, He taught the disciples for forty days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3) If, as many allege, Yeshua did away with the fourth commandment (but not the other nine, which these Christians observe), why didn't any of the gospel writers record such a change?

The Old Covenant and Sacrifices: A stumbling block for many is the idea that Torah required a blood sacrifice prior to the cross, and Yeshua's blood is their evidence that the law was done away with. Coupled with this is a misunderstanding of the old vs. new covenants. What exactly is the "new covenant"?

Hebrews 8:10-12 For this is the covenant that I will [*future tense*] make with the house of Israel [*there is no Gentile covenant anywhere in Scripture*] after those days [*future tense*], saith the Lord; I will [*future tense*] put my laws [*there is no lawless covenant anywhere in Scripture*] into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. 11 And they shall not [*future tense*] teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall [*future tense*]

know me, from the least to the greatest. [*Do all know Him now?*] 12 For I will [*future tense*] be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. [*Does God still remember unrepented sins today?*]

Indeed, a new future covenant is coming. When the earth is made new, and the redeemed are given glorified, eternal bodies, sin will not rise again (Nahum 1:9). The glorious promise of the new covenant will then be fulfilled, when all have God's laws in their minds and written in their hearts, will no longer need to teach his neighbor, and will all know Him. If this is already in effect, why, then, do we still have missionaries? Why are there still sinners who deny Christ today? The fact is that none of these conditions have happened yet, and it won't happen until after the end of the millennium when the earth is made new.

Until then, a sacrifice remains. Without the blood sacrifice of Yeshua, our sins are not forgiven – Yeshua is our blood sacrifice, our Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. All who deny His blood as their necessary sacrifice will be lost. Other sacrifices remain as well:

- Sacrifice of Praise: Hebrews 13:15
- Sacrifice of Thanksgiving: Psalm 107:22
- Living Sacrifice (Our Bodies): Romans 12:1
- Doing Good & Sharing: Hebrews 13:16
- Financial Support for Ministry: Philippians 4:18
- Broken and Contrite Heart: Psalm 51:17
- Spiritual Sacrifices: 1 Peter 2:5

The bottom line:

1 John 4:6 We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

The problem is not with Paul, or teachers who wrongly understand Paul. The problem is that we have an enemy – satan, a lying spirit, a deceiver, who wants nothing more than for you to turn away from true worship.

Paul himself predicted this very outcome:

2 Timothy 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Addressing direct statements

Here are some accusations that our ministry recently received in reference to Paul's writings:

"You teach that Torah-keeping shields men from judgment."

We teach the opposite, straight from Scripture: Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17), the wicked are judged according to their works (Revelation 20:12), and the saved are rewarded according to their works (Matthew 16:27). Judgments and works go hand-in-hand. Works are the basis of, not a shield from, judgment.

"You invoke Jesus as the "finger of God" who inscribed stone tablets, yet Paul the Apostle declares the Spirit's superior work."

Like Paul, we also declare the work of the Spirit, straight from Scripture:

Ezekiel 36:26-27 "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

The true role of the Holy Spirit is to cause us to walk in Yah's statutes and judgments, to do and keep them – not to do away with them. It is a *lawless spirit* that many are following, who is leading people to walk away from Yah's statutes and judgments, to not do, but rather break, them. If you are listening to a spirit that tells you that God's laws are no longer valid, you are listening to a lying spirit, not God's Holy Spirit of Truth.

You wrote, purporting to quote Tom: Yet you teach, "Obey Torah, or Christ's blood won't cover you."

Those words have never come from our ministry. Instead, we teach what Yeshua plainly stated: "If you love me, keep my commandments". His blood *leads* us to obedience; obedience to Torah is not a *substitute* for His blood.

In closing:

What nation among mankind is lawless? Doesn't every jurisdiction have laws? Don't you have rules in your household?

For those who don't want to live under God's laws for eternity, God will not force them to obey the laws of His Kingdom. However, it will not be the outcome that they apparently anticipate.

Revelation 21:8 “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars [mixture of statutes and commandments], shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

We urge you to choose truth and life. For more teachings on rightly dividing the law and the prophets, visit www.EndTimesProphecy.com