

Mosaic Law, Festival & Sabbath Observances in the New Testament?

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Introduction: Mosaic Law

MOSAIC LAW. The Law (Torah) began with Moses. The Law was the written mechanism of the covenant between God and the Israelites exclusively.

Deut. 5:2-3, 4:13-14

The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. It was not with our Fathers that the Lord made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today.

John 1:17

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The Mosaic Law was still in effect and binding during the earthly ministry of Jesus the Christ.

Christ came to "clarify" and "fulfill" the Law.

Matthew 5:17-18

17 ¶ "do not think that I came to abolish the law or the prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

18 "for truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the law until all is accomplished.

The person and message -the substance- of the Law is Messiah/Christ. The Law, therefore, foreshadows Christ with the person of Christ -the substance- replacing the shadow. We no longer look to the shadow for guidance once the substance has arrived.

Hebrews 10:1

¶ for the law, since it has [only] **a shadow of the good things to come** [and] not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

Christ is the substance of the Law, the perfect will of God. The demand of the Law is absolute perfection and therefore beyond any human's ability to observe with Jesus being the sole exception. The demand of the Mosaic Law -- as difficult as may appear to some -- was merely "the shadow" of the "substance" of Messiah, Jesus the Christ. While it was possible to be *accounted* "blameless" under the Mosaic Law (Lk. 1:6, Phil. 3:6) Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, magnified the spiritual intent; the "Spirit" of the Law. Most the Rabbinical leaders of, at least to the time of Jesus and beyond, are most concerned with the "letter" of the Law, and missing completely the Spirit of Torah.

The four Gospels are full of instances on how Christ taught the perfect "spiritual" fulfillment of the Law that included love for God and man, justice, mercy and faithfulness, as the weightier matters of the Law.

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Matthew 23:23

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the Law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

It was impossible for anyone subsequent to Christ --including those sitting in the seat of Moses (Scribes, Pharisees, Sanhedrin, etc.) as well as those under the Law --those bound to its observance -- to perfectly keep the whole letter and spirit of the Law. Christ not only perfectly kept the *Whole Law* but brought substance to what was only a shadow to bring Israel to Messiah. For example, the Torah says "Thou shall not murder." However, Christ strengthened (or amplified) it to mean "Whoever is angry with his brother" was akin to a being a murderer; and anyone calling their brother "Raca" (empty-headed, a vain fellow) would be found guilty before the courts of God; or, calling your brother a fool would subject you to the lake of fire.

Matthew 5:22

"But I say to you that everyone who is **angry with** his brother shall be **guilty** before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty [enough to go] into the **fiery hell**.

Christ's teachings on the spiritual fulfillment of the Torah of God make God's Law quite demanding, for it not only included refraining from the physical acts of sin, but penetrated the very essence of humanity -- defining sin as that which exists within our hearts and minds. For example, the Law on adultery was clarified beyond the physical act to include the wanton desire or lustful longing for a woman or man.

Matthew 5:28

but I say to you that everyone who **looks at** a woman **with lust** for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Christ's teaching on divorce was also clarified. Compare Deut. 24:1-4 with Mt. 5:32.

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

1 ¶ "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some **indecentcy in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce** and puts it in her hand and sends her out from his house,
2 and **she** leaves his house and goes and **becomes another man's wife**,
3 and **if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce** and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, **or if the latter husband dies** who took her to be his wife,
4 **then her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again** to be his wife, since **she has been defiled**; for that is an abomination before

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the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.

Matthew 5:32

but I say to you that **everyone who divorces his wife, except for [the] reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery;** and **whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.**

The point is Law observance and its spiritual intent is clarified by Christ. Jesus is laying the groundwork for the New Covenant "Spirit of Torah" which is going to kill, replace, and put away the Old Covenant "Letter of Torah." Yet, while Jesus remained alive both the Letter and Spirit was binding and complete obedience to the Law was the only means to Salvation. When a young man asked Jesus what he should do to gain eternal life, Christ answered, "...keep the commandments." The man answered that he has kept the commandments from his youth. **Christ's response is indicative that obedience to the outward, physical manifestations of the Law without the clarified spiritual intent was insufficient for Salvation.** Christ told the young man that there was still more for him to do to ... sell all his goods and follow Him. That was too much for the man to bear. In fact, it is clear through Christ's teachings on the Law that perfect obedience to the Law is beyond the letter and includes the spirit to attain Salvation. Too bad that man did not understand what Jesus offered him ... New Covenant Apostleship.

Christ Perfectly Fulfills All Requirements of Torah ... The Law.

Jesus "is" the full and complete embodiment of the Law, the expressed and perfect will of God. The 4 Gospels expound upon how Jesus perfectly "fulfilled" all the "righteous requirements" of the Law. Christ, during His ministry, was in the process of "fulfilling" (present tense) written and spiritual Torah. Jesus was the purpose for and the fulfillment of Torah - the written Law of God delivered through Moses.

Matthew 5:17

¶ "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

Fulfillment means the full embodiment of the written and spiritual intent of the Law and that includes Jesus fulfilling the Messianic prophecies about Him. God's covenant with Israel is a contract, and when a legal contract is fulfilled, no further performance can be required by either party to the contract. There was nothing remaining for God, Christ or us to do as it relates to the requirements of Torah. Now God is able to establish His New Covenant, His new Law with His chosen people Israel and with us, those *grafted-in* to Israel.

Romans 11:19

you will say then, "branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

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Chapter 11 of Romans is devoted to explaining the old and new covenants of God with His chosen people. Take the time to re-read that chapter, though I will continue with our current study on fulfillment.

When Christ fulfilled the Law, no requirements and no performance exist. It was in essence nailed to the Cross of Christ. By attempting to continue in the observances of the Mosaic Law, we are -- in essence -- denying Christ as the full embodiment of Torah. Scripture reveals the purpose of Torah was to "tutor" Israel until her Messiah has come ... and Jesus is He!

Galatians 3:24-25

24 Therefore the Law has become our **tutor** to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.

25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a **tutor**.

In other words, to continue with written Torah, we are in essence saying that Messiah has not yet come; that Jesus is not the prophesied Redeemer, High Priest and King; and we must wait for another for Jesus is not the perfect fulfillment of the Law. The Spirit of Torah lives on for it pre-existed written Torah and remains the standard of obedience for all New Covenant believers. The written Law, (codification of spiritual/eternal law) is fulfilled in Christ and that fulfillment means **ALL WRITTEN LAW**.

Colossians 2:14

having **anceled out** the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and **He has taken it out of the way**, having **nailed it to the cross**.

To attempt to continue in written Torah observances is nothing less than asking for a death sentence. The purpose of Torah, Mosaic Law was to identify just how filthy and dirty we are in the eyes of our Holy God and the need for cleansing. Old Covenant Feasts were established to lead us to Messiah Jesus. This includes Sabbath and Festival observance, food ordinances, all tithing and all the other Torah - Mosaic Law ordinances.

Galatians 3:10

For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."

Attempting to observe written Law observances will place New Covenant observers under a curse for these were but mere "shadows" that pointed us to Christ. Cleansing takes place through blood of Christ. Now that Christ "the substance" is here, the shadow, Torah – Mosaic Law has become obsolete.

Hebrews 8:13

When He said, "A new [covenant,]" He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

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Christ was uniquely and singularly the only one capable of fulfilling all the righteous requirements and the Spirit of Torah. **The Law then pointed us toward Messiah Jesus as the only way for salvation.** The "Mosaic form" of Law (shadow) was abolished at Calvary in its entirety. The Law now takes the "form" (substance) of Jesus Christ. The person of Jesus Christ has replaced Mosaic Law. Another way of looking at Torah and Mosaic Law is as an administration of the will of God. **The old administration of Moses has been replaced with the new administration of Jesus.**

The "Ministry of the Law" was to impart to transgressors the knowledge of sin. The Law increased sin in the world

Romans 5:20-21

20 **The Law** came in so that the **transgression would increase**; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

21 so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The "Ministry of Christ" was to perfectly fulfill the Law so as to impart forgiveness and salvation (eternal life) to a sinful world. The Law was added because of transgressions until the Seed (to whom the promise referred) had come and that "Seed" is Christ.

Galatians 3:19

¶ **Why the Law then?** It was added **because of transgressions**, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, **until the seed** would come to whom the promise had been made.

Galatians 3:16

Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his **seed**. He does not say, "And to seeds," as [referring] to many, **but [rather] to one**, "And to your **seed**," **that is, Christ**.

Torah Summary

- A. The Law was a covenant of WORKS: Ex. 19:5-6
- B. The Law was never able to be kept: Jer 31:31-34, Ac 7:53
- C. The Law is obsolete and superseded by a new covenant: Heb 8:8-13; 10:9
- D. Christ came to fulfill the Law: Mt 5:17-20 Lk 24:44-49
- E. Christ fulfills Law & prophecy: All 4 Gosp., Ac. 13:29

Mt: 7:12; 11:13; 12:2-14; 19:1-10; 22:15-22,35-40; 23:23; 27:5-10

Mk: 2:23-28; 3:4; 7:5-16; 10:2-12; 12:13-17, 28-31

Lk: 2:22-28; 39-40; 6:2-10; 7:30-35; 10:25-28; 11:38-53; 14:3-4; 16:16-18; 20:21-25; 24:44

Jn: 1:17,45; 5:8-10; 7:19,22-23,45-52; 8:4-12, 17-18; 10:31-38; 12:34-41; 15:25; 16:2;

Ro: 1:1-6

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Torah: Temporary Divine Administration Until Christ Should Come.

Jeremiah 3:16

"It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land," declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss [it,] nor will it be made again.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah**, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "**I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.**" They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Galatians 3:16-25

Now the **promises** were spoken to **Abraham and to his seed**. He does not say, "And to seeds," as [referring] to many, but [rather] to one, "And to your seed," **that is, Christ**. What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. For if the **inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise**; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made. Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one. Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! **For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law**. But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, **we were kept in custody under the law**, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore **the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ**, so that we may be justified by faith. **But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor**.

Acts 13:39

and through Him **everyone who believes is freed** from all things, from which **you could not be freed through the Law of Moses**.

Romans 7:1-6

Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another

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man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man. Therefore, my brethren, **you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ**, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. **But now we have been released from the Law**, having died to that by which we were bound, so that **we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter**.

Romans 8:1-4

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the **law of the Spirit** of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. **For what the Law could not do**, weak as it was through the flesh, **God did: sending His own Son** in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the **Law might be fulfilled in us**, who do not walk according to the flesh but **according to the Spirit**.

Romans 10:4

For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes.

2 Corinthians 3:7-17

But if the **ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones**, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading [as] it was, **how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory?** For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it. For if **that which fades away was with glory**, much more that which **remains is in glory**.

Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the **old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ**. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but **whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away**. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Galatians 2:3-5

But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. But it was because of the **false brethren secretly brought in**, who had sneaked in to **spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage**. But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.

Ephesians 2:15

By abolishing in His flesh the Law with its commandments and regulations.

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Colossians 2:16-17

Therefore, **do not let anyone judge you** by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a new moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a **shadow of things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.**

Hebrews 8:6-7

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the **mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.** For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

Hebrews 9:15

For this reason **Christ is the mediator of a new covenant**, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance -- now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 10:1

The Law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the realities themselves. For this reason **it can never...make perfect** those who draw near to worship.

Acts 21:20-21

...You see brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are **zealous for the Law.** They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to **turn away from Moses**, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs.

Mt. 5:17-45; Jn 1:17, 4:20-24, 8:35; Ac. 6:14, 10:28, 15:1-29, 21:20-25; Rom. 3:1-2; Gal. 2:3-9, 4:30-31; Col. 2:14-23; Heb 8:4-13, 9:11-24, 10:1-18, 11:40, 12:18-27.
Act: 2:42; 7:52-54; **13:37-47; 15:1-5,6,10,24,29; 16:1-3-4; 18:12-13,28; 21:19-25,28**

NOTE: Acts 16:3 Paul circumcised Timothy for his protection from the Jews and not for Law observance.

Romans 3:19-20

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it is to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. **Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the Law; rather, through the Law we become conscious of sin.**

Rom: 2:12-29; **3:1-9,19-24,27-31; 4:13-16; 5:12-21; 6:14-15; 7:1-25; 8:2-4; 9:30-33; 10:4; 13:8-10; 14:1,5-6; 16:17-18**

NOTE: Romans is referred to as the "Constitution of Christianity." The focus is on justification to all through Christ. Paul addresses three points of Salvation through the redemptive work of Christ (1) Once saved we are not to continue in sin, (2) Deliverance from the Law does not release us from "moral" obligations for we take on a new and higher obligation, (3) The Law is unable to "save." We are saved by "justifying grace"

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through Jesus Christ. Grace did not impart evil to the Law, but was necessary due to man's inability to keep the Law.

1Co: 1:22-24; 5:7-8; 6:12, **9:19-23; 15:55-57**

NOTE: 1 Cor. 5:7-8 is not telling Christians to observe the feast. Spiritual understanding and not physical observance is the key. See the section on Passover/Unleavened Bread for further explanation. Chapters 10:23-11:1 is on Christian liberty concerning foods. Take special note of verses' 28-30. We make decisions based upon "the consciences of others" and not our own conscience as it relates to food. Paul asks, "Why should our "freedom" to eat be judged by another man's conscience not to eat?" Here is a list of scripture that indicate foods are clean:

Ac. 10:9-16; Rom. 14:2-3,14-15,17,20; 1Co: 6:13, 10:25-29-32; Heb. 13:9

2Co: 3:3-6-8-11-14-17

Gal: 1:6-9,13-14; 2:4-8,11-14-16-18-19-21-3:1-2-5-10-11-12-13,17-18; 19-22-24-25; 4:4-5,9-10-11,21-22-23-24-25-26-30-31-5:1-2-3-4-5-8-9-14-18; 6:12-16

NOTE: Galatians is often referred to as "The Magna Charta of Christian Liberty" and "The Christian's Declaration of Independence." There was the presence of a great number of Jews in Galatia. The Galatians had little religion of their own and often adopted myths of the Greeks and various superstitions. Paul, in person, introduced the Gospel to them (Acts 16:6, 18:23, Gal. 1:6). Soon after Paul left, those preaching the Mosaic Law came to the Galatians (Gal. 1:6, 3:1, 5:12, 6:12-13) telling them Christians are to be circumcised and must keep the Law, and that even Paul preached circumcision (Gal 5:11). This cast doubt upon the sincerity and credibility of Paul, which caused many defections. Paul had to defend himself and his teachings in this epistle to the Galatians (Gal. 1:1-2:10). In fact, the entire epistle to the Galatians is a defense of the Gospel of "grace" against legalistic teachings of Jewish believers who perverted and contaminated the gospel by proclaiming a mixture of Judaism and Christianity. Paul proclaimed the free grace of God for all through the death of Christ. The legalists contended that Christianity could only work within the sphere of the Mosaic Law and that faith in Christ, involving the free gifts of the Holy Spirit, was not sufficient in and of itself. Obedience to the Mosaic Law (cited above) required observance of the Festivals and the Sabbath (4:9-11). Had this prevailed, Christianity would have become a sect of Judaism (which it is not). Paul vindicated Christianity on the sole basis of our acceptance of Jesus Christ. We are justified by the "finished work" (fulfilled) of Christ our Redeemer and by no means and in any manner by forms and ceremonies. This justification was extensively covered by Paul in the epistle of Romans. For Christians, the Mosaic Law is a "description" of what once was, not a "prescription" of what now is.

Eph: 2:5,7-8,9,11-14,15; 3:1-11

Col: 2:11-14-16-17-23

NOTE: Colossians is a strong response to the controversy of the Judaic-Gnostic heresy. This sought to reduce Christianity to a system of ceremonialism (Jews: circumcision, food

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Laws, fast days, new moons, Sabbaths etc.) and the Gnostics doctrine of emanations that sought to reduce Christ to a lesser god. Paul warns the Colossian church against the errors that set aside the provisions of "full deliverance" from sin and "freedom from legalism."

2Ths: 2:15

1Tm: **1:3-11**; **4:1-3-5**; 2Tim. 1:13

Tit: **1:10-11,14,16**; **3:4-5-9-11**

Heb: 1:1-2; 6:1; 7:11-12,15-16,18-19,22,28; 8:6-10-13-9:9-12-14-15-28; 10:1-4,9-14-16-18-25; 13:9

NOTE: Hebrews is of unparalleled importance in expounding the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. It establishes Judaism as the foundation for Christianity and why we need to make a "complete break" from its obsolescence (12:18-13:17). It establishes Christ supreme over all Old Covenant Laws, Moses, Joshua, the priesthood, rituals and angels (1:5-3:6; 4:14-5:14; 6:13-8:6; 10:1-18)

The New Covenant was established at the "Calvary Event."

Christ's ministry was in fact "**the conclusion or capstone the Mosaic Law**" (see study on propitiation) and not the beginning of a new set of Christian Laws. Let me repeat, the ministry of Christ was the ending of the Mosaic system and not the beginning of the Christian system. Christ did not establish (or introduce) the New Covenant until the eve of His crucifixion (The Passover symbols of the bread and wine). Christ had to first die before there could be any ratification of the New Covenant. The "Calvary Event" begins with the Lord's Supper and includes all events culminating with the Resurrection.

Animal sacrifices were still required during the ministry of Christ (Mt. 5:23-24; 8:4); as were temple tributes (Mt. 17:24-25; food Laws (Ac. 10:9-16) and circumcision (Ac. 10 & 15); and the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees as those who sit in Moses seat (Mt. 23:1-3)

The ministry of Christ was "legally" presented in accordance with, and in association with, and as part of the Mosaic system. In no way is the ministry of Christ to be associated with the start of the New Covenant. However, Christ laid down the foundation of the Spiritual New Covenant Torah that always remained in effect, before and after His death. Even this was fulfillment of prophecy that showed Christ to be the "second Moses."
Deut. 18:15-19

Christ's ministry may be properly considered as the "transition" between the Old and New Covenants. Deut. 18:15-19; Isa. 42:21; Heb. 9:15-17

Christ's teaching to the house of Israel was within the jurisdiction of the Old Covenant. The gospel of salvation was not yet offered to the Gentiles for it was to the Jews first. In fact, Christ's message was exclusive to the tribes of Israel which were not lost during the times of Christ and the Apostles. The gospel of salvation was opened to the Gentiles after

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the Resurrection of Jesus and re-affirmed to Peter through his *vision* as recorded in Acts 10:1 – 11:18.

Old Covenant Feasts and Sabbaths

The 10 Commandments are part of written Torah and therefore done away with in letter. The Spirit of Torah is the same thing as the fruit of the Spirit for that is the eternal law of God which was the foundation of written Torah, and therefore binding upon New Covenant believers.

Galatians 5:22-23

but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

The Spirit of Torah, the fruit of the Spirit is seen in ALL WRITTEN TORAH, not just the 10 Commandments. That which is Spirit is Spirit and that which is of the letter is of the letter. There are more than 200 scriptures in the New Covenant that prove the Old Covenant Laws are not the pattern for worship and observance upon the New Covenant Christians. The Spirit of Torah is eternal truth and lives on for it is the eternal law of God.

The Feasts and holy days were still binding during the ministry of Christ and we see Jesus and His disciples observing all the Old Covenant Feast Days and Sabbaths of God in all Gospel accounts. Christ which is the English translation for Messiah, came to fulfill the Law and prophecy and His ministry ABSOLUTELY fulfilled its intended purpose. It should be noted that where festival observances are mentioned in the New Covenant Epistles, it is usually done to reference time frames, and not observances. Paul often attended Old Covenant Feasts, Festivals and Sabbaths to proclaim Jesus to the Jews and not as means of worship.

There is not one scripture that can be used to indicate early New Covenant observances of the Sabbath, Festivals or any ordinances of the Mosaic Law. A review of the Old Covenant Festivals is an important aspect of our Christian studies to fully appreciate what Christ has accomplished in fulfilling them. First a list of the cyclical or Sabbatical observances:

1. Weekly Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11; 31:12; Lev. 23:1-3)
2. Sabbatic Year: Every 7th year (Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:2-7)
3. Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8-16; 27:16-25)
4. New Moon (Num. 10:10; 28:11)

Annual Festivals:

1. Passover and Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12:1-28; 23:5; Lev. 23:4-8; Num. 28:16-25; Deut. 18:1-8)
2. Pentecost or Feast of Weeks (Ex. 34:22; Lev. 23:15; Num. 28:26; Deut. 16:10)
3. Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:1-34; 23:26-32; Ex. 30:10-30; Num. 29:7-11)
5. Feast of Trumpets or Seventh New Moon (Lev 23:23-25; Num. 28:11-15; 29:1-6)

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4. Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day (Lev. 23:34-42; Num. 29:12; Neh. 8:18; Jn. 7:2,37)

Post Exilic Feasts:

These were not prescribed by Mosaic Law but were kept just as regularly as those prescribed by Torah. These are mentioned here only because there is evidence that Christ kept these feasts and He made no indication that there was any problem in doing so.

1. **Feast of Purim:** Instituted by Mordecai at the suggestion of Esther (Esth.9:17-26,31) to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews of Persia from the murderous plot of Haman. It was to be a two day festival held on the 14th and 15th of Adar with much feasting and joy, exchanging of presents, sending gifts to the poor. The day preceding the festival (13th) is kept as a fast day "The Fast of Esther" in accordance to the command of the Queen (Esth. 4:15-16).
2. **Feast of Dedication:** Instituted by Judas Maccabeus in 164 BC to commemorate the purifying of the temple, the removal of the old polluted altar and the restoration of the worship of Jehovah, called Hanukkah in Hebrew. Also referred to as the "the dedication of the altar" by Maccabeus, and "the feast of lights" by Josephus. The feast begins on Chisleu (December) 25th and lasts 8 days. There is great similarity between this festival and the Feast of Tabernacles. Christ observed this feast as recorded in John 10:22.

Let's examine all references in the New Covenant concerning the Sabbath, Holy Days and Festivals and see how they are dealt with under the New Covenant. The New Covenant reveals how the Festivals and Sabbaths point to the fulfilling work of Christ.

SABBATH

The Sabbath was still in effect and binding during the ministry of Christ. There is no evidence that the Church kept the Sabbath after the death of Christ. There are about 85 instances in the New Covenant where Sabbath or Sabbath-like rest is stated or implied. We will examine those instances. The instruction Christ gave concerning the Sabbath was proof of His "fulfilling" the ordinances in the way they were meant to be observed under the Law as rest for His people.

MT: 12:1-12; 24:20; 28:1; **MK:** 1:21; 2:23-28; 3:2-6; 6:2; 15:42; 16:1

LK: 4:14-31; 6:1-11; 13:10-17; 14:1-6; 23:54,56; **JN:** 5:9-18; 7:22-29; 9:14-16; 19:31

There is **no evidence** that Christians are to observe a 7th Day Sabbath as a day of worship and rest. There is evidence that Christians should no longer continue in Sabbath observance because our "eternal rest (life)" is fulfilled in Christ. The Sabbath since creation always pointed to our eternal rest and union with the Lord. Without Christ there is no rest or eternal life. The Spirit of the Law is to worship God 24/7 as a sacrifice unto the Lord. We enter God's Sabbath when God's Holy Spirit enters us.

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NOTE: The Sabbath was part of the written Mosaic Law and no longer to be observed as part of New Covenant worship.

AC: 1:12; 7:46-49-53; 13:14-52; 15:19-29; 16:13; 17:1-2-5; 18:4-6

CO: 2:16-17

HE: 3-4

SABBATIC YEAR

This was the rest for the land every 7th year (Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:2-7). Its purpose was to afford true spiritual rest and quickening, with their attendant life and blessing. The lessons for the Israelites was to learn that the earth (though created for man) was not merely so man could turn its powers to his own profit, but that it might be holy to the Lord; That the goal of life for God's people did not lie in incessant laboring of the earth (Gen. 3:17-19) but in the enjoyments of the fruits of the earth that God gave and would always give if they strove to keep His covenant. This was a practical ordinance for Israel because in no year was the land owner allowed to "glean" the entire harvest (Lev. 19:9). This Sabbatic feast began on the first day of Tishri (the seventh month) and associated with the "Seventh New Moon" or the "Feast of Trumpets." The Sabbatic Year was also referred to as "the year of rest" (Lev. 25:5), the "Seventh Year" (Deut. 15:9) because it occurred every seventh year, "Rest of Entire Rest" (Lev. 25:4) and the "Year of Release" (Deut. 15:9) because in it all debts were remitted. This did not mean that all debts were completely forgiven, but that the collection of those debts was not to be undertaken.

Anything that grew spontaneously on the land in this seventh year was for the free use by the poor, servants, strangers, cattle etc. (Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:2-5). God promised a bountiful 6th year for obedience to this ordinance.

YEAR OF JUBILEE

The blast of the trumpet is connected with this feast. It is also called the "Year of Liberty." It is closely connected with the Sabbatical year. Its observances are found in (Lev. 25:8-16, 23-25; 27:16-25; Num. 36:4) where the land is dedicated to Jehovah. The fiftieth year was to be hallowed as the Jubilee Year, after the lapse of seven Sabbatical years (49 years). This feast was to become obligatory after Israel had taken possession of the Promised Land and had cultivated the soil 49 years. It was to be announced by the blowing of trumpets and proclaimed the gracious presence of God on the Day of Atonement. The time of its observance was to be calculated as follows: The first Sabbatic year was the 21st year after Israel came into Canaan, Jubilee being the 64th. The Laws concerning Jubilee was (1) Rest for soil, (2) Reversion of Property which the owner had to sell due to poverty (but not yet redeemed) was to revert without payment to the original owners or Lawful heirs, (3) Reversion of Israelites who sold themselves because of poverty was to go out free with his family and children. This changed ownership of a

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person into a type of hire. Thus Jubilee became one of freedom and grace for all suffering, bringing not only redemption to the captive and deliverance from want to the poor, but also release to the whole congregation of the Lord from the sore labor of the earth, and representing the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord (Ac. 3:19). The fulfillment through "Christ our Redeemer" is apparent so the Spirit of Torah for this Feast is seen with the deliverance through Jesus our Messiah.

PASSOVER/UNLEAVENED BREAD

The Passover was still in effect and binding during the ministry of Christ. The Spirit of Torah is in Christ our Passover who was slaughtered in our stead. Read the study on [Crucifixion](#).

MT: 26:2-20 Christ crucified same time as the Passover lamb.

MK: 14:1-16 Observance w/Apostles as fulfillment.

LK: 2:41-50; 22:1-15

JN: 2:13-23; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:28-39-19:14-42

HE: 11:28

1 Cor. 5:7-8 Christ is our Passover.

NOTE: Verse 8 has often been quoted as evidence that the feast is to be observed by New Covenant Christians. In fact, it proves the feast (as observed under Mosaic Law) is not to be kept by Christians. The phrase "let us keep the feast..." has been used to indicate observance. Examination of the phrase indicates that this is not the intent, for it states "Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness (referring to sexual immorality), but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. We do keep the spirit of the Law, not the physical observances of the Law, nor the days themselves (Galatians). This is the same as Paul telling us that circumcision is of the heart. He is highlighting the spiritual reality. If circumcision is of the heart, then unleavening is of the mind and attitude. If we conclude that circumcision is not to be done, we must also conclude that the physical observance of Unleavened Bread is not to be done.

Many of the traditional ordinances of the OT are of utmost importance in understanding the New Covenant. How Christ fulfilled all these ordinances is extensively covered in the New Covenant:

The Great Sabbath: Nisan 10, the Sabbath immediately preceding the Passover when the sacrificial lamb was to be *selected*, used to instruct the people in the duties associated with the festival, special prayers bearing on the redemption from Egypt, the love of God toward Israel, and Israel's obligation to keep the Passover.

The Preparation: The evening of Nisan 14, the Feast of Passover is also the day of preparation for the 1st Day of Unleavened Bread (a Sabbath) and when the head of every family searched and removed by candlelight all the leaven from his house. No leaven

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(symbol for sin) was allowed to be eaten and every Israelite was to appear before the Lord with an offering.

The Passover Lamb: Must be free from blemish and usually killed on the Nisan 14 at twilight.

The Passover Supper: Guests arrayed in their "best" festive garments, joyous and at rest, as became the "children of a king." Rabbinical customs insisted that part of this feast be taken in a recumbent position (Jn. 13:23,25; Lk. 22:14). There were also special prayers associated with wine, the dipping of unleavened bread with bitter herbs by the presiding officer of the feast that was passed to the guests (Mt. 26:23, Jn. 13:26), the history, need and explanation for the observance, with special washing of hands ceremony.

Unleavened Bread: Nisan 15. A seven day feast in which the first and seventh days are Sabbaths and a holy convocation and special offering is made unto the Lord. The feast indicates sinlessness (absence of yeast which does not puff up) immediately following the vicarious sacrifice of Messiah Jesus.

Cutting Barley Sheaf: Nisan 16. Referred to as the "morrow after the Sabbath" where the omer of the first produce of the harvest was waved before the Lord. On the 14th the Sanhedrin tied in bundles the sheaf to be cut. On the evening of the 15th the sheaf was cut and threshed out in the temple, parched and exposed to the wind, ground and sifted to the required fineness then offered in the temple on the 16th.

PENTECOST

The feast is also referred to as "Feast of Weeks," "Feast of Harvest," and "The Day of Firstfruits." The OT observances included (a) morning and evening sacrifices, (b) burnt offerings, and (c) the presenting of two wave loafs. There is much symbolism associated with the wave loafs that will not be discussed here but has to do with the Old and New Covenants and Gentiles being grafted into Israel as the one body of Christ.

The Jews, at least as early as the days of Christ, connected Pentecost with the Passover, and commemorated on the 6th of Sivan, the giving of the 10 Commandments (Ex. 19), i.e. the Law was delivered on the 50th day after the Exodus. The OT Law has been replaced with the NT Holy Spirit. AC: 1:1-4, 5-14; 2:1; 20:16; 1CO: 16:8-9

NOTE: Acts 1: 4-5 reveals Christ commanding the Apostles to remain in Jerusalem after His Ascension. He told them not to depart but to stay in Jerusalem for the promise of the Holy Spirit. Verses 12-14 indicate that the Apostles were all staying in the same rented room "with one accord" in prayer and supplication with the women, Mary and the brothers of Jesus. The Holy Spirit came to them in this very same room. The great noise that accompanied the coming of the Holy Spirit (2:2) got the attention of many of the devout Jews that were in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. These Jews were from

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many foreign countries and each heard the Apostles speak in their native tongue. There is no evidence that any of the Apostles were observing the feast of Pentecost, for they were all gathered "with one accord" every day while waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit (1:14, 2:1). It does not appear that on this day they were doing anything different than what they were doing for the last week since Christ ascended to heaven. Christ remained with them for 40 days after His resurrection (1:3) and Pentecost was several days later.

There is evidence that the Apostle Paul attended Pentecost and other feasts outlined in the Mosaic Law not as a matter of "observance" of Torah but as a means to "preach Christ to the Jews." The Apostles preached Jesus as the Messiah to the Jews in their Synagogue's, Temple's, Sabbaths and Festivals and not as a means of Law observance but to reason with the Jews, Greeks and Gentiles who were observing the Law.

Acts 5:12,20-25,42; 9:20-22; 11:19; 13:5,14-16,38-39,42-47; 14:1-7; 15:21; 17:1-4,10-13,17; 18:1-5,8,12-13,19-22; 19:8-10; 20:16,21-23,28-31; 21:20-21; 24:5-9,24-25; 28:28-31; **1 Cor. 9:20.**

There is also circumstantial evidence which implies that the early New Covenant Church did not observe Mosaic Festivals. During the ministry of Christ, there were many plots, schemes and attempts to kill Christ and the Apostles, during the feast of Unleavened Bread. Christ was not taken during the feast of Passover/Unleavened Bread for fear of an uproar among the people (Mt. 26:5, Mk. 14:1-2). This should be contrasted with Acts 12:1-3 when it pleased the Jews for the followers of Christ to be persecuted during the feast. Why the difference of attitude? Maybe because the followers of Christ no longer observed the Mosaic Law, which further strained and ruptured relations between Jews and Jewish Christians.

TRUMPETS

The New Covenant is very silent as it relates to any observances concerning the Feast of Trumpets. The only references to Trumpets is as an instrument, the sound of a voice and as the return of Christ. In OT observance (Lev. 23:23-25) the festival is also called the "Seventh New Moon" and the "Feast of the New Moon" (Num. 29:1) It was the seventh, or Sabbatical month (Tishri) and was significant because of the number of sacred ordinances are connected with it. The first day of the month marked the beginning of the civil year and was a day of sacred rest, the 10th being the Day of Atonement and the 15th beginning the Feast of Tabernacles. The observance of this day was as a memorial of the blowing of trumpets and a holy convocation. It was to be observed every seventh month (new moon) and speaks of the regathering of Israel to its home land after the out-gathering of the Church. Trumpets was regarded as the anniversary of the beginning of the world by Rabbinical custom because this was the great month for sowing and may have suggested commemorating this day the finished work of creation. They believe that on this day God judges all men and that they pass before him as a flock of sheep pass before the shepherd. The trumpet (shopar) was used for giving signals of war, to

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announce the Year of Jubilee, approaching danger, to herald the appearance of new moons, full moons, and blown during observances of most feasts and holy days. This Feast strongly indicates the Second Coming of Jesus.

MT 24:31; 1Cor 15:52 Return of Christ
RE: 1:10; 4:1; 8:13 Sound of a voice
RE: 8:2,6; 9:14; 18:22 Instrument

ATONEMENT

The Levitical ritual was a constant reminder that "the Law...can never with those sacrifices they make continually year after year make those who approach perfect" (Heb. 10:1). It was on this day that Israel was reconciled with Jehovah. It was also on this day that the year of Jubilee was proclaimed (Lev. 25:9). The High Priest was the central figure of these observances. Christ has now become our High Priest and Redeemer. We have now become reconciled to God through Christ. Christ, therefore, has fulfilled the ordinance of Atonement.

Heb 4:14-16; Rom. 5:11; Acts 27:9

TABERNACLES

Listed below are all instances where Tabernacle(s) are referenced in the New Covenant. Tabernacles/Tent/Temple are used in the New Covenant to reference our bodies (temporary dwellings) to bring us to God's gift of eternal life, our eternal and heavenly Tabernacle that is pitched by God. Because the Apostles referenced Feasts to establish time frames in their journeys does not imply observance. Acts 27:9 is a good example of referring to the "fast" of Atonement. For example, if I were to say that I drove from Denver on Christmas day and arrived in New York on New Year's eve, does that mean I observe those days? I think not. It only establishes a time reference for my travel, for in this society everybody knows when Christmas and New Years is celebrated. The same holds true for the Apostles. It should be noted that in no instance is observance of the Feast by Christians indicated after the death of Christ. One scripture has been used by many as proof that the Apostle Paul observed the Feast: **Acts 18:21**. The question is this, "Did Paul attend the feast as a means of observance, or for some other reason?" Paul made it clear that he and other Apostles did not attend Feasts, Sabbaths and Holy Days as a means of observance but rather as a means to "proclaim Jesus as the Christ," and "to reason with the Jews." **verse 19**. There is no evidence that the Ephesian Church or any of the other New Covenant Churches were instructed or encouraged to observe any of the Feasts or Sabbaths at any time. Any mention of the Feast had little or nothing to do with observance.

MT 17: 4; MK 9:5; LK 9:33; Transfiguration
JN 7:2 Feast of Tabernacles

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AC. 7:43-44, 46; 15:16 Christ built again the Tabernacle of David which is open to the Gentiles

1 COR. 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 COR. 5:1-8; 6:19; Heb. 8:1-10:2,9-14,25; 11:9; 13:9-13; 2 Pet. 1:13-14; Rev. 13:6; 15:5; 21:3