

Why Did Paul Cancel the Law?

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As with many of these kinds of teachings, this is not designed to create a crisis of faith. This is not an attempt to have anyone change their faith but only to re-consider the way we practice our faith in God and apply His sacred Word to our lives so that we live the way He designed us to live.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer* under a schoolmaster.

Gal. 3:23-25 KJV

These three verses from Galatians 3:23-25 are well known to be antinomian (against the law) New Testament theology. The usual approach to unravel the meaning behind these verses is to pit faith and the law against each other. Faith or better yet grace knocks out the law and by default wins. Now anything anyone has to do is believe in Yeshua for salvation and nothing more. However, is this the Biblical truth?

Hebrew Definitions

Torah - the law of God as revealed to Moses and recorded in the first five books of the Hebrew scriptures (the Pentateuch).

Mitzvah/ot. - is a general term used to refer to any commandment given by God.

God's Law

7 The law of the LORD is perfect,
converting the soul: the testimony of the
LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8
The statutes of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart: the commandment of
the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Psalm 19:7-8 KJV

God's Law

1. **The law of the Lord is perfect to ready the soul for salvation;**
2. **The law of the Lord is perfect to make the simple wise;**
3. **The law of the Lord is perfect to rejoice the heart;**
4. **And the of the Lord law is perfect to enlighten the eyes.**

English Definitions

Law – Can mean rules and regulations, system of laws, body of laws, constitution, legislation, code, legal code, charter, or jurisprudence.

Does the word Law in the New Testament always mean the Torah? No, it requires careful study to determine the right application due to translation issues.

Pharisaic Definitions

Halacha/ot (Rabbinic). A law or laws derived directly from a manipulated interpretation of Scripture (*midrash*) or Rabbinic logic that often times uses a proprietary series of filters from one or more of the many interpretation rules built on the seven rules of Hillel.

Pharisaic Definitions

Minhagim. Customs are traditions enacted as law. This is built on the axiom, “*minhag Yisrael torah hi*” (a custom in Israel is Torah). The line is blurred between Rabbinic halacha and minhag.

Pharisaic Definitions

Ma'asim. The deeds or actions of Rabbis or sages, justifying how a tradition should be observed—the practicality of observance. The *ma'asim (works)* were derived from stories, incidents, and actions of Rabbis, not Scripture, making the *ma'asim* a source for new laws.

Pharisaic Definitions

Takanot and Gezerot. Enactments and decrees of the Rabbis, invented out of thin air, with no Scriptural justification. Simply, new religious laws framed with the authority of the oral law; an unabashed violation of Deu. 4:2 and 12:32.

God's Law

2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Deu. 4:2 KJV

32 What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

Deu. 12:32 KJV

Greek Definitions

Nomos – is the Greek word for Law and can refer to the Torah and can also mean the law of sin and death, the law of works, the oral law, the law of faith, the law of life, or the Mosaic law. Just like our English word this Greek word has multiple meanings and unless the communication is clear, we are left to our own interpretation (eisegesis).

Some Examples Proving Multiple Meanings

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Rom. 8:2 KJV

Why? Because the Torah of the Spirit, which produces this life in union with Messiah Yeshua, has set me free from the "Torah" of sin and death.

Rom. 8:2 CJB

Some Examples Proving Multiple Meanings

Where is boasting then? Is it excluded? By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

Rom 3:27 KJV

So what room is left for boasting? None at all! What kind of Torah excludes it? One that has to do with legalistic observance of rules? No, rather, a Torah that has to do with trusting.

Rom 3:27 CJB

Aramaic Definitions

Namusa – Law. Peshitta translator Andrew Gabriel Roth tells us that in Aramaic, there are grammatical considerations that show absolutely which meaning of namusa is intended, man-made or Mosaic Law.



Then, What Law Paul?

Greek Definitions

The Tutor - Now, enters the image of the school master (paidagogos “pahee-dag-o-gos”) in Greek—a tutor or “child-conductor.” This was a guardian and guide for boys of a better class of people. The job of the tutor was not to be a formal teacher.

The Tutor Continued

Rather, he was to supervise the daily life of the boy under his control, with the boy not allowed so much as to step out of the house without the guard watching his every move until he arrived at the age of manhood. This was a fitting picture to describe the forever-loved nation of Israel in captivity until the arrival of the Messiah, who came to bring them out of exile and restore them to their rightful position as leader of the nations.

The Tutor Continued

At that time, they could take up their appointment as a head and not a tail, thus it is written in Deu. 28:13:

13 And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:

God's Promise

God promised to make Abraham a great nation and give him many descendants. God promised to bless the earth through Abraham and give him the land of Canaan.

God's Promise

1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: **2** And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: **3** And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Gen. 12:1-3 KJV

A Promise Fulfilled

This nation of heirs (sons and daughters was to be the fulfillment of promises divinely spoken to Abraham,) pledges that were later fulfilled at the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. In speaking about these people, the Torah (which was transmitted by the mouth of God, through the hand of Moses, to the people), called Israel a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, but specified one condition:

A Promise Fulfilled

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel:

Exo 19:5-6 KJV

A Promise Fulfilled

What condition? The covenant - The Mosaic Covenant given at Mt. Sinai. Who was this covenant presented to? The children of Israel? Yes, and all believers everywhere. The Exodus passage is a past representation and Yehovah said, “you shall be (future tense) a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Has this been fulfilled???

A Promise Fulfilled

You may question all believers everywhere – Let's look at 1 Pet. 2:9

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar* people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

A Promise Fulfilled

This passage in Peter was given after Yeshua's resurrection and ascension to the exiles of the Dispersion (the Gentiles). This applies to all believers today.

Notice the same promises are made to them of becoming a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

The Problem

The children of Israel and the Gentiles disobey Yehovah and forsake the Lord resulting in removal from the land of promise.

Our Father knew this would happen and told us His plan from the beginning.

1 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, 2 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; 3 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. 4 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: 5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. Deu. 30:1-5

The implication here is the heirs (sons and daughters of the promises made to Abraham) are unwise and need to be directed (by Torah) just as a slave is directed by their master. Until the heir matures in righteousness and can be trusted to act righteously in maturity. That is why Galatians 4:1-2 KJV said the following:

1 What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a minor he is no different from a slave, even though he is the legal owner of the estate; 2 rather, he is subject to guardians and caretakers until the time previously set by his father.

God's Plan

From the passage we read in Deu. 30 we can see God's plan of redemption and restoration for His people. The confirmation of this plan can be seen in a future yet unfulfilled prophecy in the book of Revelation 5:9-10:

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." We will finally be priests in the land.

Summary

Hopefully, you can see from this study that the Torah is our tutor provided by our creator to teach us how to live righteously before Him. And, Paul (Rabbi Sha'ul) was arguing against the Rabbis requirements that the laws (Oral) of Judaism needed to be fulfilled first in order to become a Jew (acceptable to God) and they (the Oral Laws) created a system of bondage that even the Rabbinite didn't follow and why Yeshua said the following:

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. 14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. 15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

Mat. 23:13-15 KJV