

**EPHESIANS: THE CHURCH FROM START TO FINISH**  
**"Part VI: The Christian's TRUE Relation To The Mosaic Law"**  
**(Ephesians 2:11-22)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

There is a question today on the Christian's relation to the Law:

(1) A few years ago, a book was mailed out to ministers across the nation, including myself entitled Seventh-day Adventists Believe...

Well, though **some** beliefs the book holds reflect our beliefs, the work includes other ideas on our relation to the Mosaic Law that we do **not** teach, and **some** of those are as follows:

(a) On pages 244, 245, the work states: "While Christ's death ended the authority of the *ceremonial* law, it established that of the **Ten Commandments**...Having lived a life of loving obedience Himself, Christ stressed that His followers ought to be commandment keepers." As the Sabbath (Saturday) is one of these commandments (Ex. 20:9-11), this book states that "Scripture reveals that God intended that His people should observe the Sabbath **throughout eternity**." (Ibid., p. 254) The book's author promotes observing the **weekly** Sabbaths, **not** the *ceremonial* Sabbaths in the Jewish feasts, saying that Col. 2:16-17 prohibits the keeping of **feast** Sabbaths for the Church without withdrawing the *weekly* Sabbath observance, (Ibid.).

(b) Also, on p. 285, this work states that **though** the Leviticus 20 meat restrictions are part of the ceremonial law, the **diet** they reflect dates back to Noah's day, is thus not to be withdrawn, so we today must allegedly avoid the Leviticus "unclean" meats!

(c) Accordingly, on p. 271, this work says that since God wants us to tithe one-seventh of our week to God on the Sabbath, we are also to give a tenth of our income to God's works. Thus, the Mosaic tithe laws are alleged to apply to the Church today as well!

(2) Allied with this issue is another one, that of the Gentile Christian's relationship to Messianic Jewish believers. There is a push today for us **Gentile** Christians to partake from our "Judeo-Christian heritage" and celebrate Pascal and other **Jewish feasts**! I received an invitation not long ago from a Messianic congregation asking us to join in such celebrations in keeping with our Judeo "spiritual" heritage!

**Well, are we under the Ten Commandments God gave to Israel so we are thus to observe Saturday Sabbaths? Does God want us to avoid "unclean" meats, to tithe and keep Old Testament JEWISH feasts even though we are CHRISTIANS?**

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

***Need:*** "Some say that **THOUGH** Christ released us from the Law, it was only **PARTS** of Moses' Law from which we were freed, **NOT** the **TEN COMMANDMENTS** or **PARTS** of the 'ceremonial' laws! Thus they teach we must keep the Sabbath or tithe of our income or avoid Levitical 'unclean meats' or even assemble with Messianic Jewish groups to observe Levitical feasts. Is this so? **WHY?!**"

- I. **BEFORE** Christ's death on the cross, **GENTILES** were estranged from God's blessings on Israel since they were aliens from God's **LIFESTYLE** for Israel under the Mosaic Law, Eph. 2:11-13a.
- II. However, by faith in Christ, **GENTILE** believers are "made nigh" to God through Christ's atonement on the cross, Eph. 2:13, 8.
- III. **The WAY** this **CHANGE** in **RELATION** has occurred means a **GREAT** change in the **LIFESTYLE** of **ALL** who believe in **Christ**:
  - A. God has **radically** changed the **relation** of Gentile **AND** Jew to Himself **and** to **one another** as they come to faith in Christ, Eph. 2:14:
    1. To help us understand the change, we note what God has **not** done:
      - a. God has **not** make **Jews** into **Gentiles** by the cross!
      - b. **Similarly**, God has **not** made **Gentiles** into **Jews** by the cross!
    2. Rather, God has broken down the partition between Jew and Gentile in Christ to make **of** the **TWO one NEW** man, 2:14-15!
    3. That **one NEW** man is a **Christian**, a **different** entity!
  - B. The **route** God took to achieve this change alters the **lifestyles** of those who trust in Christ from former Jewish **and** Gentile orientations:
    1. First, God "abolished the enmity, even the **law** of **commandments** contained in **ordinances**", Eph. 2:15a KJV.
    2. Now, what **parts** of Moses' Law were "abolished" as to their **authority over Christians** we can define via Scripture as follows:
      - a. We know that Paul's ideas in Ephesians are explained by similar ones in Colossians, for both works were authored at the same time as seen by their close affinities in style and vocabulary use, Donald Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p. 492-499.
      - b. Now, in Col. 2:13-14, Paul reflects the **same idea** of Eph. 2:14-15, namely, the removal of the law by Christ's death.

- c. Next, Col. 2:16-17 **details** explicit *commands* of **that** Law that Paul teaches is **removed** for *Christians* by Christ's cross.
  - d. Explicit commands of that **removed** Law that Paul pinpoints are dietary laws (Col. 2:16a), festival & new moon day laws (Col. 2:16b) and the "Sabbath days" law(s), Col. 2:16c in the KJV.
  - e. Well, this "Sabbath days" term is better translated as the "**weekly Sabbath day**" for these reasons: (1) Where the Col. 2:16c phrase "holy-day, new moon and Sabbath" occurs elsewhere, it **always** means **all** the Jewish sacred times: thus, Paul meant annual feasts by "holy-day", monthly festivals by "new moon" and the **weekly** holy-day by "Sabbaths", Lightfoot, Col., p. 193. (2) Though the word "Sabbaths" is plural unlike the other days in the phrase, it is derived from the Aramaic, not Hebrew form, preserving the termination, "**a**". Thus, it was "declined as a plural noun" when "a **single** Sabbath-day was *meant*", Ibid., Lightfoot, p. 194.
  - f. In summary, Col. 2 **explains** that Eph. 2 teaches **every part** of the Mosaic Law, be it the **Ten Commandments** (as seen by the *weekly Sabbath day* reference), the **ceremonial** law (referred to by "holy-days") or the diet laws *within* that **ceremonial** law (seen by Paul's "meat or drink" reference), and **thereby** to **any other portion** of the Mosaic Law, including **tithes** was all thus done away by way of **authority** over the **Christian's lifestyle!**
3. Then, Jew and Gentile were combined in Christ in a new spiritual union with **no spiritual** distinction **between** them, Eph. 2:17-19.
  4. Hence, in **place** of the **Mosaic Law**, God set up the base of the Apostles, New Testament prophets and Christ, whose **words** then form the **authority base** for *Christians*, 2:20, B.K.C., N.T., p. 627.
  5. In this union, all believers in Christ grow as the Temple of God in Christ, the Temple in which the Holy Spirit resides, Eph. 2:21-22.

***Application:*** (1) As a **CHRISTIAN** who has trusted in Christ for salvation from sin (Jn. 1:11-13), one is free from the Mosaic Law's tithing admonitions, free from its dietary restrictions, free from its holy-day or weekly Sabbath day restrictions and free from its Jewish feast ordinances to obey Christ's teachings and those of His apostolic-authorized teachers! (3) As such, the believer still heeds the Old Testament (Rom. 15:4), but **ONLY** under the applicable **GUIDANCE** of New Testament Church era directives so he knows what of the Old Testament he is to heed or **NOT** obey for **TODAY!**

***Lesson:*** In Christ, both the Jew and the Gentile **LEAVE** the authority of **EVERY** aspect of the Mosaic Law, are **BOTH** recreated as a totally **NEW**, spiritually non-Gentile, non-Jewish man, a **CHRISTIAN**, and they are both no longer under the authority of **ANY** part of the **LAW**, but the authority of Christ and His apostolic-authorized teachers under Him!

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . . )

(1) We quote Deuteronomy 27:26 in summary to this message. It says: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not **all** the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen."

one command even **once** brings a person under the curse . . ." (Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament, p. 598)

Moses **taught** that the ceremonial part of the Law was to be seen as united in authority with the Ten Commandments. Both segments **hung together so that violating any one of them in either section meant failure of the WHOLE law! Thus, ANY GROUP THAT SEEKS TO PUT US UNDER ANY ASPECT OF THE MOSAIC LAW'S JURISDICTION IS TO BE RESISTED!**

(2) By way of application, at Nepaug Church today:

intentionally do **not** observe Saturday as a day of rest, but treat **every** day as holy unto the Lord! We **happen** to gather on **Sundays** due to centuries of Christian **tradition** only!

intentionally do **not** teach abstaining from meats that were treated as ceremonially unclean in the Old Testament, but follow the teaching of **Christ** who appeared to Peter in a vision in Acts 10:9-16. There **Jesus three times** commanded Peter to "rise, Peter; kill, and eat" of a sheet full of clean and unclean wild animals, creeping things and fowls of the air! When Peter at resisted Jesus' order, **Christ three times** replied to Peter, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." (Acts 10:15 NIV)

intentionally do **not** promote giving a tenth of one's income to the offering, but let God direct every believer to give as he purposes in his **own heart**, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7.

intentionally do **not** teach the keeping of Jewish Old Testament feasts, but promote liberty in such things!

As Paul writes in Galatians 5:1, we teach: "**Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.**"