

CONVERSATIONS WITH A TRUTH SEEKER

by Avram Yehoshua

<http://SeedofAbraham.net>

–These email conversations took place over late November and early December of 2004–

Hello Avram,

I found your site to be very interesting as I haven't had an opportunity to engage in much discussion with a Jew that is a follower of Christ. We seem to have been grappling with similar issues concerning Law and Grace, and discerning God's word after being born again. I've enjoyed some of your scholarly work and insight, particularly your article reading Kingdom Violence as breaking barriers. I also found your Law 102 article to be educational, noting that God did not give Law to the people of Israel until He first saved them from slavery, something I hadn't noticed before. I do have some reservations on your Scriptural understanding of sabbath meetings and the consumption of pigs, as well as animal sacrifice and vows. You also make serious charges against the Christian church concerning it's shift of the day of worship to Sunday from Saturday and dietary freedoms, accusing it of rather blasphemous arrogance at the heart of disobedience of the letter of the Law. In addition, you seem to encourage vows in the Nazirite tradition, all with the fundamental justification of Christ's saying that he came not to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it and not erase even one stroke of it.

I admire your deep reverence for the Law as the Word of God, but I am concerned that in your passion for its holiness, readers of your work may forget their freedom that sonship in Christ gives. Christ did not come to abolish the law, but in his life and words superceded it and gave freedom for we who are in Him. 'He destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.' (Eph. 2:15) My point is exactly what you were saying about the law of divorce and murder being pushed to the deepest point, to our hearts, only I believe that it's not only divorce and murder, but much more. Things that could not be understood without understanding the Law, but that legalism could hurt more than help.

I'm not writing to advocate Sunday worship or Saturday or Tuesday worship, but rather would say that 'the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.' You quote Mark 7:19 in two translations to point out that the parenthetical interpretation that all food is clean was appended, but did not address the verse just prior in either translation, where Jesus says that 'nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean.' Concerning vows, you seem to forget that we are commanded by Jesus to 'not swear at all.' (Matt 5:34-37) Paul takes the vow in Acts not as a demonstration to 'all people' but specifically on his return to Jerusalem as a more powerful witness to the Jews who lived by and knew the Law. He was not subject to the Law, but was willing to subject himself to the most extreme and demanding sacrifices of the Law in order to reach those still under it. Christ 'canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.' (Col. 2:14).

If this seems harsh or polemic, it's only because this was what caused me the most concern and I was convinced of the sincerity in your writing of some arguments and ideas that seemed to conflict with Scriptural truth. I think the heart of your piece was good and noble. I understood it to be saying that the Law reflects God's desires and His character and thus, in the light of Christ's words and his sacrifice, should continue to be studied, revered, and obeyed with prayerful discernment, and in this I could not agree with you more.

A fellow seeker of the Truth,

Daniel

Dear Daniel,

Shalom: May His Peace, Wisdom and Love surround you today and forever.

Thank you for writing and sharing your understanding of both a number of articles on my web site, and your position as a follower of Messiah Yeshua/Jesus.

One of the things of utmost importance that I have come to see, that determines one's theological understanding is the English translation that one uses. For instance, in your email to me, you quotes two passages of Scripture that seem to fortify your position on the Law and 'freedom'. Before I share with you the Greek text for both of them, and resultant English translation, I want to say that our Lord and Master, Savior and King never once told us, or even intimated, that the Law of Moses was going to fall by the wayside in favor of Grace and Freedom. Not once. And as I've brought out, many times He says that the Law will remain (in His Kingdom: Matt. 5:17-19), you're familiar with.

Matt. 22:36-40: When asked which Commandment the greatest, He says that the Law rests on the two of love (God and man), which tells us that the Law isn't opposed to Grace and Truth and Freedom, but defines God's boundaries for what true freedom is.

Luke 16:17: 'But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.' Here we see again the Master's understanding of when the Law will fall by the wayside, so to speak. And we know that no follower of His can proclaim something not in line with the Master. Again, it goes back to translation and proper interpretation of the Greek New Testament which supports the Law as the definition of God's Love. If you love God, you obey Him, in your freedom. By the way, Christ came to free us from Satan's grip, not God's holy Word (Law). Christ came to free us from sin, sickness and death. Where is the Word (Law) of God in that?

AS for the charge that I am 'accusing it (the Church) of rather blasphemous arrogance at the heart of disobedience of the letter of the Law', I can only state two things in my defence: one, Church history tells us very plainly that it was the Catholic Church that changed Sabbath to Sunday, Passover to Easter (and consequently, denigrated the Law and the Jews). And two, in the Greek New Testament, which can be easier seen and understood from an interlinear Greek-English New Testament like:

Brown, Robert and Philip W. Comfort, Translators. J. D. Douglas, Editor. *The New Greek-English Interlinear New Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990),

you'll see the authors' 'literal' English translation under the Greek words and you can read along in English and check out your English translation according to the Greek text. You'll find that in many of the so-called English texts that support the jettisoning of the Law of Moses, the Greek text doesn't say what your English Bible does. Let me begin with your quote of Eph. 2:15, and then go on to your English Bible's interpretation of Col. 2:14. As you'll see, with the understanding of the Greek New Testament (as opposed to many English Bible's, not just yours), the meaning shifts away from the Law as no more needful, to understanding just what the text/author/Lord is actually saying to us through the Word.

You wrote that Eph. 2:15 says:

'He destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.'

The proper translation I believe should be:

'by abolishing in his flesh the law of Commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself'

Note that your's puts forth all the Law as being abolished, but mine suggests that the only laws that were abolished were those Commandments that would keep the Jew separate and distinct from the

Gentile (believer).

Mine was taken not even from the Greek New Testament but from the New King James version of the Bible. It is backed up by the King James version and also the Greek of course. Here is the KJV:

Eph. 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

And here is the New American Standard Bible:

Eph. 2:15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,

Can you see the vast theological difference between your translation and what the KJV, the NKJV, the NASB and the Greek speak of? So it is not just what I think but which translation is the proper one? As you can see, it makes a great difference in pertaining to the Law. So why does yours and others in this verse speak of the Law that way? Translation rests upon not only the knowledge of Greek for the translator, but as you can well understand, also the translator's theological position on the Law. And here's where different translators give us different translations: some just shades of meaning away from a proper understanding and some just out to lunch :)

Your translation, which is what I've seen in other Bibles, takes the whole Law of Moses to task and says that it's done away with.

These other translations state that it is only those Commandments that created the hostility between the Jew and the Gentile, that are abolished in His Flesh. What Commandments could that be?

As you may know, the Jew was not to marry or deal with the Gentile because all the Gentiles worshipped pagan gods and goddess'. This is why Yahveh states in His Torah, His holy Law, His holy Instruction for Israel (as Torah means), that Israel was not to marry the Gentiles:

Deut. 7:3-6: 'Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of Yahveh will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you. But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their sacred pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. For you are a holy people to Yahveh your God. Yahveh your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.'

Scriptures such as this confined the Jews to isolate themselves from the pagans around them, as best they could. Peter's vision, has nothing to do with God abolishing the dietary laws, but as Peter himself states;

Acts 10:28: '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.'''

Seems that Peter was still following the Law and if Peter walked with Messiah and saw Matt. 15 and Mark 7 (Nothing that enters a man makes him unclean, to be interpreted as food/pig, etc., then why does Peter, ten years after the Resurrection, still insist that nothing UNCLEAN (food), has ever crossed his lips?

Acts 10:14: 'But Peter said, 'By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean.'''

And then we see that God has shown Peter that in Christ, the Commandments that kept him from the Gentiles, has now be set aside (by the death of Yeshua) so that the Jew and the Gentile could become

one new Man:

Acts 10:34-35: Opening his mouth, Peter said: 'I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

But this has nothing to do with the abolition of the Law of Moses. In Christ, those Commandments are set aside that separate Jew and Gentile believer. But believers cannot or should not marry a pagan or one who doesn't love Christ anymore than the ancient Jews could. The Commandments still remain. They are for our protection, blessing and knowledge of Who our God is. The Gentile has been included in the Remnant Family of Israel. And, in terms of the Law, where in the Old Testament is it ever intimated or stated that the Law will be done away with? You cannot find it. But on the contrary, the 'reason' for the New Covenant was to place the Law of Moses in our hearts:

Jer. 31:31-33: 'Behold, days are coming,' declares Yahveh, '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 Yahveh. 'But this is the Covenant which I will make with the House of Israel after those days,' declares Yahveh, '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.'

It was also to give us the Holy Spirit (Ezk. 36:22-27), so that we could walk in the Law of Moses, as did Messiah Yeshua. Know one could argue that the Law which God spoke of in Jeremiah would only be the Law of love, but their argument would have no biblical basis. It would only be their opinion and could not be backed up by any Scripture from the Old (and not from the New either, as my thoughts on Col. 2:14 will show when I turn to it. Hopefully, these will give you some food for thought to take before Messiah Yeshua/Jesus, so that He can sort them out for you. For if He wants you to keep His Sabbath, etc., holy, as a sign of your love and freedom for Him, don't you want to do that? It's a matter of properly understanding just what He wants from us.)

We must be very careful when we come to translations of the New Testament that have to do with the Law as many, not all, but many, have a theological position against that Law and will shade their translations to reflect that. Your translation of the Ephesians passage is one such place where it is seen.

Here is something I wrote on the Greek New Testament's Eph. 2:14-15. The translation that follows is from the Greek Interlinear:

'For He is the Peace of us, the one having made the two, one, and the middle wall of the partition having broken down, the hostility, in the flesh of Him, (v. 15), the Law of the Commandments in ordinances having annulled, that He might create...'

It's not the whole Law that has been annulled but certain ordinances that were hostile to the combining of the Jew with the Gentile. Remember Acts 10 with Peter telling the Gentile Cornelius that it was unlawful for him, a Jew, to be with a Gentile? (Acts 10:28). But God the Holy Spirit was to show Peter not to call any Gentile 'unclean' (it has nothing to do with throwing out the dietary laws, but everything to do with the first Gentile coming to belief in the Jewish Messiah, ten years after the Resurrection. Check it out, most commentaries will tell you Cornelius was the first Gentile to be brought into Yeshua's Kingdom.)

So now, Paul, is saying that the ordinances of God, in the Law, the God Himself put there to separate and keep pure the Jewish nation from idolatry (for all the Gentiles worshipped idols and would be a snare to them), was not cast aside in Messiah Yeshua. He was breaking the hostility (which can be seen as mutual hatred of one group for the other and also, the carnal nature of both), so that they could be one new Man. The big point here is that it's not the Law per se, but only certain ordinances that

would have prohibited the creation of the body of Christ for fellowship. Unfortunately, some English translations have the Law being the thing that was annulled. Not so. And some English translation make this plain but most don't seem to catch the nuance. Here are some other cites that warn Israel to steer clear of any contact with the Gentile peoples:

Deut. 7:3 'Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of Yahveh will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you. But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their sacred pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. For you are a holy people to Yahveh your God; Yahveh your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. Yahveh did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because Yahveh loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, Yahveh brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that Yahveh your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments' (Dt. 7:3-9).

Deut. 7:11 'Therefore, you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them' (Dt. 7:11).

'So take diligent heed to yourselves to love Yahveh your God. For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, know with certainty that Yahveh your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they will be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which Yahveh your God has given you' (Josh. 23:11-13).

To associate with a Gentile meant contamination. But God showed Peter and Paul, that in Messiah, they were to reach out to the Gentile.

And now, Col. 2:14 which many translations corrupt by placing the Law as the thing that was nailed to the cross, while other translations interpret the Greek word properly. Here is the New American Standard Bible's translation, to show you that I am not making these things up:

Col. 2:13: 'When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions'

Col. 2:14: 'having canceled 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' (NASB).

The thing that was nailed to the cross, is not the Law, for the Law (*nomos* in Greek) is never once mentioned in all the epistle. That which is nailed to the cross is the *kai-ro-gra-fone*. In ancient Greece, the accuser stood in the middle of the courtroom, between the judges and the accused, and produced a written record of one's indebtedness (money owed to the accuser). That's the 'certificate of debt' that the New American Standard Bible (NASB), correctly translates from *kai-ro-grafone*.

Paul uses the Greek word/concept to illustrate that our written record of our sin indebtedness to God has been nailed to the cross. Isn't that why Yeshua died? To alleviate us from the burden of our sins? Our sins have now been wiped out, not God's holy Law. We have no more sins before God, and the

Accuser, Satan, has no legal right to accuse us for Yeshua has taken our sins and our punishment (death), upon Himself.

The Book of our sins has been nailed to the tree. Not the holy Law of God (and that is all the Commandments, not just the Ten.) As you can see from the previous verse (13), it speaks of us having been forgiven of all our sins (transgressions). The next verse (14), is still part of v. 13, as the comma shows us. It's one thought, Paul going on to tell us that our sins were nailed to the tree.

I hope that you have been able 'to hang in there' with me, Daniel, as I have presented something for you to think about. In just these two passages of Scripture from the New Testament, that seemed to support your theological position concerning the Law of Moses, I have shown that a proper translation does not denigrate the Law at all. All the Church's (and improper Bible translations), concerning the Law of Moses for the NT believer, fall into one of the two categories above. Either they don't properly translate the Greek, as in Eph. 2:15, or they don't properly interpret the Greek, as in Col. 2:14.

If Yeshua, and all the Old Testament, and many, many places in the New support the Law as God's definition and guideline of love to us, how is it that some places (in some Bibles), seem to say the opposite? We know or believe that the Word of God does not contradict itself, especially at such an important juncture as the Law of Moses. It's either done away with or not. It can't be both :) And it can't be that I as a Jewish believer must keep the Law and you as a Gentile? believer are 'free' to choose for this would truly erect a Wall or separation between the two groups, and we know that isn't of God who is One.

What do you think of the passages of Scripture that I've represented for you, Daniel?

May Yeshua open your eyes and your heart,
to follow Him where He is leading you, my friend,

Avram Yehoshua
Ramat Gan
Israel

P.S. Rom. 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.' Legalism does not equal the Law. Legalism is a perversion or super strictness that man may apply to the Law of God or to any man-made laws, such as driving. If the law states 55 M.P.H., and one does 56 and gets a ticket, that is legalism, but the law is good (keeping many from traveling at 120 M.P.H. and killing themselves or others).

The Sabbath is made for man and Yeshua is Lord of the Sabbath, still. It doesn't mean that Jesus was declaring that He could do whatever He wanted on it, or that He being Lord of it, could change it or do away with it, but on the contrary, it was a declaration by Him that He was God in the flesh, and King of Israel. It was an established fact that Yahveh is Lord of His Sabbath and Yeshua was saying that He shared that same reality. Also, there is no mention by the Lord or anyone else, that Sabbath would 'give way' to Sunday, or of 'any day' being substituted for God's Sabbath. It's the same with all the laws of God.

And as for how the overturning of the Torah (Law), could come about, how something as monumental as the Law of Moses being buried for 1,900 years, we have only to turn to your namesake to see that this didn't take God by surprise:

Dan. 7:25: 'He will speak out against the Most High God and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in Law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.'

Here we have what many believe to be one of the Popes of old, altering the Law. Have you read Alexander Hislop's classic, *The Two Babylons*, yet? It will show you how ancient Babylon is alive and well in the Vicar of Rome and his institution. Before I read the book, I would have thought that statement to be extreme. But after having read it four times now, I can only marvel at how the Coun-

terfeiter has led Christendom by the nose all these years, CONCERNING THE LAW. I do not say like some, that the Christ that Christians worship is not the real McCoy. The Jesus of Christianity is my Yeshua. He has only been given a bum rap concerning the Law.

As for my encouraging ‘vows in the Nazirite tradition,’ all I can say is that for now, without a Temple, it is a moot point, but when the Temple is erected for the thousand year reign of King Messiah on this Earth, at Jerusalem, where the Law of Moses will be observed (Ezk. 40-48; Rev. 20:1-7), I imagine that there will be many Nazirites.

Freedom is not however each Christian might define it, but true freedom is in full submission and obedience to Messiah and to walk in the Law of Moses as He did. You intimated that my theological position on the Law rests on Matt. 5:17-19 but on the contrary, I will list some, not all, of the New Testament Scriptures that even in your Bible, should be seen as supporting the Law of Moses. Here’s something I wrote a while back:

The Law of Moses and New Testament Faith in Jesus

by Avram Yehoshua

The following is a partial list of Scripture that, if left to speak for themselves, will point us to the Law being the basis for our life-style in Jesus. It’s not that the Law saves us but once saved by the Blood of Jesus, the Law acts to reveal God’s Will for our lives; what is sin and what is not; what is pleasing in His sight and what is not (2nd Tim. 3:14-17). Please hear what the Spirit of Yeshua (Jesus’ Hebrew Name), is saying today. It is the exact same thing that Jesus said when He ministered in Jerusalem. Never once does Yeshua declare, or give any intimation, that after His Resurrection, the Law or the Sabbath will be no more. Not once. In fact, He says just the opposite (Matt. 5:17-19; 24:20; Luke 16:17). These are His Words, the words of our Savior, God in the Flesh. They are confirmed by just about every New Testament writer, including Paul, as you’re see below.

And please don’t try to nullify all these Scriptures with Scripture that you think might ‘do away with the Law’. Scripture really doesn’t contradict itself. The Scriptures that you might think nullify the Law, don’t deal with life-style, but with trying to keep the Law as a means of justification or salvation. This is wrong and Paul rightly comes against it. That’s what much of Galatians is about.

The Church has misinterpreted Paul concerning his position on the Law when he speaks of it as a righteous lifestyle (2nd Tim. 3:16-17). Romans, Paul’s theological masterpiece, was written after Galatians and we see Paul expressing the view that the Law is holy and necessary for knowing what is sin and what is not. The Church misunderstands Paul in Galatians. Paul is not coming against the Law per se, but coming against the Law, symbolized in circumcision, for those who think that they can do the Law as a means of justification (or salvation: please see Gal. 5:4 for Paul’s summary of what he’s been speaking of concerning the Law and Salvation).

1. Matt. 5:17-19: Here are the very words of Jesus concerning the Law: ‘I have not come to abolish the Law’. ‘Till Heaven and Earth pass away, not one letter or artistic flurry shall depart from the Law’. And, ‘the man who breaks the least of the Law’s Commandments, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven’. Yeshua was speaking about keeping the least of the Commandments after the Resurrection, as the Kingdom of Heaven didn’t begin till then.
2. Matt. 22:34-40: All the Commandments derive from love of God or neighbor. The Law of Moses is God’s definition of loving Him and our neighbor.
3. Matt. 24:20: Here we see Yeshua speaking of a tribulation that has not yet come upon the Earth and He is concerned for women who are pregnant and nursing in that day, that they wouldn’t have to flee from Jerusalem in the winter, because of the cold, or on a Sabbath. (As

this was written by Matthew many years after the Resurrection, it shows us also that the Sabbath was being kept then too.)

4. Luke 16:17: Although the preceding verse seems to indicate that the Law was only ‘till John the Baptist’, this verse tells us that an interpretation that the Law was done away with at ‘John’s time’, in lieu of the Kingdom of God, is false. Here again we see Yeshua telling us that the Law is more established than even the Heavens and the Earth.
5. John 15:10: Keep the Father’s Commandments, just as Yeshua did.
6. Acts 21:20-24: All Christians kept the Law and Paul took the Vow of the Nazirite to show that he kept the Law too. This Vow entails sacrifice (Num. 6:13-14, 18).
7. Acts 22:12: Ananias, the man who heals Paul, is ‘a devout keeper of the Law’ (Acts 9:10-18).
8. Acts 23:5: Paul, in his righteous anger, tells the High Priest that he is a white washed grave. On finding out that it was the High Priest, Paul, instead of saying something like, ‘I recognize no High Priest other than Jesus!’, actually backs down and quotes a Scripture from the Law of Moses for doing so (Ex. 22:28). If the Law had been done away with for Paul, we don’t see it here.
9. Acts 25:8: Paul tells us he keeps the Law.
10. Romans 3:31: The Law is established by faith in Yeshua for our life-style of holiness. Yeshua showed us the definition of loving God with all one’s heart (Dt. 6:4-5), and loving one’s neighbor as himself (Lev. 19:18), by His sacrificial death on the tree. Out of this kind of love, is the Law to be observed by us who desire to be like Him.
11. Romans 7:7, 12, 14: The Law shows us what is sin. The Law is spiritual and holy.
12. 1st Cor. 5:6-8: Paul exhorts the Corinthians to keep the Feast of Passover.
13. 1st Cor. 7:19: Keep the Commandments of God. This is what matters.
14. Heb. 4:9: ‘A Sabbath rest remains for the people of God.’ Unfortunately, both the KJV and the NKJV only have ‘rest’ and not ‘Sabbath rest’ even though the Textus Receptus (which is the basis for the KJV) has *Sabbatismos*. (Other translations though, have Sabbath rest.) Sabbatismos means a literal observance of the Sabbath. The author is symbolically speaking of the Sabbath rest of Eternity in the New Jerusalem. By the author’s use of *Sabbatismos*, without his need to defend it, we see that he took it for granted that all were keeping the Sabbath, and he used it to point to the Eternal Sabbath. He couldn’t have used it as such, if Sunday had replaced the Sabbath day. What good would speaking of the Sabbath rest do, if Sunday had replaced it?
15. Heb. 8:10: This tells us what God intended by giving us the New Covenant: to write His Law on our hearts.
16. Heb. 8:13: Tells us that the Old Covenant is still with us: not yet disappeared but is ready to disappear. This affirms the words of Jesus when He said, ‘till Heaven and Earth disappear, not one letter or artistic flurry shall depart from the Law’. The Mosaic Covenant will depart when the New Heavens come into focus. The Law is still for Israel today, both Jew and Gentile who love Yeshua.
17. James 2:9: Showing partiality is sin and the Law exposes one who does so.
18. James 4:12: Anyone slandering his brother or judging him is not keeping the Law.
19. 1st John 3:3-4: All who want to be like Him will not walk in Law-lessness.
20. 1st John 5:2-3: All who love God will keep His Commandants to show forth their love for Him.

21. Rev. 12:17: Hold to the testimony of Jesus and keep the Commandments (Law) of God.
22. Rev. 14:12: Here is the perseverance of the believers. They keep the Law, the Commandments of God, and have faith in Jesus.

Some Scripture from the Tanach (Old Testament), that shows us that God never intended for His Law 'to be done away with' before the Day of Judgment:

1. Isaiah 2:3: The Law will go forth from Zion, God's Word from Jerusalem. His Law and Word are identical as they parallel one another. This is an age yet to come; spears into pruning hooks; see also Micah 4:2. It's the Millennial Age; the thousand year reign of Yeshua as King of Israel, from Jerusalem (Ezk. 40-48).
2. Isaiah 66:22-23: Sabbath and New Moon for all believers in the Millennial Age.
3. Jeremiah 31:31-34: The idea of the N.T., concerning the Law of Moses, was that the Law would be written on our hearts. It was certainly written on the heart of Jesus, as He kept all the Law that applied to Him. If He didn't, He would have sinned and we know that He never sinned. As our Example, we should follow Him in all things, including the keeping of the Sabbath day as holy (and not just a day of worship, as all days are good to worship Him on), and Passover, the dietary laws, etc.
4. Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:25-27: We are given God's Spirit to keep His Law. God's laws define for us, what God's Love is (Mt. 22:40). If we love God, we will keep His Ways, the way He understands them, not what the Church has given to us concerning the Law.
5. Ezekiel 43:7-9, 18-20, 25-27; 44:2-5, 23-24; 45:16, 21-22; 46:2-4, 11-12: Sacrifice, Sabbath and the Prince (Messiah), are seen in the Third Temple of Ezekiel, in the Millennial Age.
6. Zechariah 14:16-19: The Feast of Tabernacles will be for all believers in the Millennial Age.

Some Scripture that shows the Law was considered God's Blessing to Israel; His Wisdom & Truth:

1. Deut. 4:5-8: Here we find God's understanding of the Law being His wisdom for His people.
2. Psalm 119: 142, 151, 160. Placing this in the context of John 4:23-24, where our Father wants us to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, we find that God's Truth is equal to His Law, which is equal to His Word.

And a Scripture to show us that the Law being thrown out by the Church didn't take God by surprise:

1. Daniel 7:25: Satan, through the Catholic Church, has indeed changed the times (Sabbath, Passover, etc.), and the Law of Moses, just as Daniel prophesied. But Yeshua is restoring them to His Bride.

Well, I feel a little like the Apostle Paul when he would write that he was closing his letter, and then write another letter on top of that :)

May the Lord of Heaven and Earth bless you today, Daniel, in your search for His Truth.

And one more thing :)

Contrary to advocating the Nazirite Vow, I teach on that to primarily bring up the fact that if the Nazirite Vow, with all its sacrifices, was still in effect in the days of Paul, Peter and James, 20 to 25 years after the Resurrection, then it is a more than reasonable position to declare that the Sabbath, Passover, etc., the whole Law, was still in effect. This, is the Word of God, simple and plain. And of course, it not only states in Acts 21:20 that all the Jewish believers in Jerusalem kept the Law and were 'on fire for it' (zealous), but the whole point of Paul taking the Vow was to show all that he still kept the Law:

Acts 21:24: '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 Law.'

When does the book of Acts show us that the Law left?

When does Paul or anyone else say anywhere, that the Nazirite Vow was no longer operable? Or when does Paul write and say that what he did, in taking the Vow(s) (Acts 18:18), was not right?

Again, if this is the true Word of God for this area, what can the rest of the New Testament say concerning the Law? Can it be done away with? Is the New Testament divided on this issue? Here is another article that I've written that I think will help you to clearly see what the Apostle Paul meant when he spoke of Law and Grace:

Two Important Phrases

by Avram Yehoshua

There are two important theological phrases that Paul uses that most theologians don't understand. They wrongly interpret them to mean that 'the Law is no more.' The first phrase is that we are no longer 'under the Law' (Rom. 2:12; 3:19; 1st Cor. 9:20; Gal. 3:23; 4:4-5, 21; 5:18). Paul is not saying that the Law is wrong, or done away with. He's coming against a false understanding of what it is to believe in Messiah Yeshua.

When we die to self, symbolized in water baptism (Rom. 6:1-7:7), we die to the ability of the Law to rightly condemn us to Hell. Due to our Adamic nature, the Law pointed out our sins against God and proscribed the punishment; death (Dt. 27:6). Now though, in Messiah, we are dead to self. The Law has no legal authority to condemn us any longer. This is what Paul writes in Rom. 7:1-8:2, when he speaks of a woman who is married to her husband and she marries another. She's an adulteress, condemned by the Law. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry. The Law cannot condemn her for marrying another after her husband died. Perhaps another example is in order.

If a man murders a person and is caught by the police, he is brought to trial and justly condemned to death (according to the Law of God; Lev. 24:21). But if he dies just after he is caught, the Law can do nothing to punish him. The Law is powerless to condemn the man. The Law's just condemnation stops at death. The man is not effected by the Law's condemnation. And the Law has no jurisdiction over him now, to condemn him any longer.

We now, are no longer 'under the Law'. Because we are 'in Messiah' the Law has no legal jurisdiction over us, to condemn us any longer. Yeshua has taken our just punishment and by faith in Him, we have died to self. The Law can still convict us, yes. But it can never condemn us to Hell. 'Under the Law' is a theological phrase that means one has the Law as an their condemner on the Day of Judgment and, the Law is used by the carnal nature to condemn us now. If one is a believer in Jesus they should not be in this position. This is what Rom. 8:1-2 explains. And this is what we walk out 'in the natural' as we battle our Adamic nature. We overcome it in His Name. He is our victory. As we feel condemnation from sins committed, we should look at ourselves pierced to the tree with Him, dead. Condemnation has no power over a dead person.

The second phrase, 'works of the Law' (Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10), is someone who performs the Commandments (works), to earn salvation. There are two problems with this. One, God never says that the keeping of His Commandments will earn eternal life. This was a false teaching of the Rabbis in Paul's day, as well as ours. And two, anyone thinking that they can earn salvation by looking to the Law to justify them, will be very disappointed on Judgment Day as the Law can only condemn them for their sins. And the punishment of sin is death (Dt. 27:6; Ezk. 18:4; Jn. 8:24), in this case, eternal death.

Eternal life is Messiah Yeshua and it's by faith in Him that eternal life comes to us, not by the 'works

of the Law'. Paul rightly comes against this deceitful illusion in Galatians (and Romans), when he asks who bewitched them, to rely on the Law for justification (Gal. 3:1; 5:4)?! But he is not coming against the Law as God's standard and guideline as to what is pure and holy, and what is sin (Rom. 3:31; 7:7, 12, 14; 1st Cor. 7:19, etc.). 'Works of the Law' is a phrase that means one is basing their salvation on performance of the Commandments, and therefore, not trusting in Yeshua even if they say they believe.

The two phrases overlap and a person who walks in one will be in the other also. If one is using the performance of the Commandments to try and obtain salvation ('works of the Law'), they will necessarily be placing themselves 'under the Law' for righteous condemnation. They have not relied on what God has done for them in Messiah Yeshua, but on themselves.

We keep the Law, not for justification, we are already justified by Messiah (Rom. 3:24, 28). We are not 'under the Law' and we are not doing the 'works of the Law' (for salvation). We keep the Law because this is the Will of God for all His people, both Jew and Gentile who love Messiah Yeshua.

You also brought up that Yeshua says we are not to swear, and you aligned it with the taking of a vow. But swearing to something and taking a vow are two different things. If one were in an argument with his fellow, he'd 'swear on his mother's grave' (if I can use that quaint Irish expression), that what he was saying was the truth. Yeshua tells us not to use something like that, and just say what we are to say (let your yes be yes, and your no be no). While the taking of a vow involved something that one was generally going to do for God (e.g. if there was a good harvest, one might vow to give God 40% of it, instead of just the tithe).

And finally, you brought up from the text of Mark 7, that I didn't address the phrase, 'nothing which enters a man from the outside can make him unclean'. The reason I didn't go into that verse was because Law 102 is a brief survey of many texts that the Church uses 'to prove' that the Law of Moses is done. Because of this, I didn't go into every detail of every text that I presented, wanting to use a broad brush-stroke to bring attention to many texts that have not been properly interpreted (or translated), specifically in relation to the Law.

What I would briefly say about it now is that in the context of both passages, it cannot mean that Jesus is allowing for pig, etc., as the texts only support the observance of the dietary laws (they are all Jews there and at no time is the charge brought against Yeshua that He is changing the dietary laws), and the idea behind the washing of hands, that the Pharisees insist upon, has to do with being pure and holy in order to eat what God has given. In this, Yeshua takes a swipe at their idea of holiness (having to wash the hands and say their blessing), and also goes to the 'nth degree' by saying that even if the food is tainted with dirt, it will not make a man unclean.

The texts have nothing to do with any change in the dietary law. If Yeshua so much as advocated it, He would have not only been charged as such, a breaker of the Law, which is diametrically opposed to His sayings in Matt. 5:17-19; 22:34-40; Luke 16:19, but also which would have made Him one that led others astray (from the Law of Moses), and as such, would have been sinning (rebellion), which we know is something Yeshua never did.

Contrary to what you wrote Daniel, my understanding of the Law does not rest solely on what Yeshua said in Mt. 5:17-19, but upon many Scriptures in the New Testament, written by many different authors, as my article above displays (The Law of Moses and New Testament Faith in Jesus).

In the Name of the God of Heaven, Yahveh,
and His Messiah King, Yeshua,

Avram

(In this next email, I begin by replying to Daniel's email that we focus on the Nazarite Vow. My comments, as well as what Daniel wrote, are interspersed.)

Dear Daniel,

I am disappointed though, that the content of my last email didn't persuade you more. As you have suggested, that we begin with the Nazirite Vow, I will follow your lead. I have some questions for you though, concerning your position which seems to be that you realize that all the Jews kept Torah, not as something extra, but rather as part and parcel with belief in the Messiah of Israel. I imagine that you also believe that for the Gentile, Torah at best is an option, but certainly not something that a Gentile would have to do in obedience to God. Now, with that, aren't there two divisions of believers in the Kingdom of Jesus? (And if you don't believe Torah is for the Jewish believer, we only to look at Acts 21:20 to verify it.) Can your position then, truly be the Kingdom that Yeshua came to establish on Earth? Can it be sin for a Jewish believer not to keep Sabbath holy, but just an option for a Gentile? Is this not theologically impossible? Does it not make race the criteria for Torah or lack of it?

You wrote (AND I'LL ANSWER SOME IN CAPS SO YOU CAN SEE WHERE I'VE BEGUN TO ANSWER):

Daniel wrote:

We're both looking at the same evidence, that Paul took a vow. I don't think that it supports your claim that the whole Law was in effect.

Avram said in his last email:

'Contrary to advocating the Nazirite Vow, I teach on that to primarily bring up the fact that if the Nazirite Vow, with all its sacrifices, was still in effect in the days of Paul, Peter and James, 20 to 25 years after the Resurrection, then it is a more than reasonable position to declare that the Sabbath, Passover, etc., the whole Law, was still in effect. This, is the Word of God, simple and plain.'

Daniel said:

I understood this to mean:
If a nazirite vow was in effect after the resurrection, the whole Law was still in effect.

This is the reasoning that I assumed you're making.

YES.

Evidence: Paul takes a vow.

Inference:

Paul followed the regulations of the nazirite vow because he was under the Law.

NO. PAUL TOOK THE NAZIRITE VOW TO PROVE TO EVERYONE THAT HE STILL KEPT ALL THE LAW THAT PERTAINED TO HIM. That's the Scriptural reason why he took the Vow of the Nazirite.

Grounds:

We should follow the example and authority of early church leaders.

This is what I understand to be your main argument, and it's a strong one. Please clarify it if I am twisting your words or making it unclear.

I WOULD ADDRESS YOUR USE OF THE PHRASE THAT Paul was 'under the Law'. As you may remember, the article, Two Important Phrases, relates to how Paul was no longer 'under the Law' but that it didn't mean he was indifferent to it. The Law, with all its glorious Commandments called the Wisdom of God (Deut. 4:5-8; Ps. 119, Rom. 7:12, etc.), could only in the end, condemn Paul for not keeping its glorious Commandments as James writes:

James 2:10-11: For whoever keeps the whole Law and yet stumbles in one point, he

has become guilty of all. For He who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' also said, 'Do not commit murder.' Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the Law' (NASB).

Note the use of the present tense ('you have become a transgressor of the Law'). And James continues to be another witness in Scripture for the Law when he writes:

James 4:11-12: Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the Law and judges the Law; but if you judge the Law, you are not a doer of the Law but a judge of it. There is only one Law-giver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?'

Is this just for the Jews? The obvious inference is that one is to be a doer of the Law (and not a judge of it). James takes this from Isaiah, that God is our Judge and Lawgiver:

Is. 33:22 For Yahveh is our judge. Yahveh is our Lawgiver. Yahveh is our King. He will save us' (NASB).

AND Paul himself says in Rom. 7 & 8, now that he has died to self in Baptism (Rom. 6), (so the just requirements of the Law cannot condemn him to Hell; Rom. 8:4; KJV, for the just/righteous requirements of the Law), he has come alive in Messiah and been married to Messiah who gives him forgiveness for not fully obeying the Law. Paul now can walk in Torah by the power of the Spirit, claiming his righteousness not from the Law, but from faith in Messiah Yeshua who is the Righteous One, and who fully obeyed Torah. This does not give ground to be indifferent to the Law, anymore than one can say that because Yeshua is their righteousness, they don't have to love their neighbor as themselves, or, as Yeshua loves them.

Evidence:

Paul took a vow.

The Nazirite Vow, which is a specific vow for holiness, to show that He loves the Law (see Numb. 6:1-21 and Keil & Delitzsch)¹ to know that it was not compulsory but revealed the desire on the part of the one taking it, to be as holy as the High Priest, nay, even holier. Also, we see in the Vow, the need for at least three animal sacrifices for Paul and the four Jewish believers that were also taking the Vow. If sacrifice had been done away with by the one time sacrifice of Jesus, as the Church generally and obviously, wrongly teaches (obvious from Acts 21:20f), what are all these Jewish believers doing condoning sacrifice and walking in it? And isn't Paul one of them? This is an important point Daniel, for both sacrifice and Law as, if Paul though either not appropriate, wouldn't he have at least said something? Would he have gone along with James' recommendation if he thought it theologically wrong?

What does Paul need to take the Vow for in the first place? Why didn't he just say that his holiness came from Messiah? What was there to prove by him taking the Nazirite Vow? His witness to the Jews? And if so, what did it mean? That he was only being a Jew 'for them'? They already believed.

Dan says:

'Paul takes the vow in Acts not as a demonstration to 'all people' but specifically on his return to Jerusalem as a more powerful witness to the Jews who lived by and knew the Law. He was not subject to the Law, but was willing to subject himself to the most extreme and demanding sacrifices of the Law in order to reach those still under it.'

¹ C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1: *The Pentateuch* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), pp. 672-675.

Avram replies:

This understanding, that even though Paul wasn't subject to the Law, 'he subjected himself to the most extreme and demanding sacrifices of the Law in order to reach those still under it', is wanting. Just what was Paul wanting to reach them with? They already believed in Jesus.

Motives are hard to determine, if they are not expressly stated. Your analysis of why Paul took the Vow seems to lack biblical authority. In other words, there is nothing in Acts 21 to suggest that Paul's witness was only to or for the Jews, as we also know that Gentile believers traveled with Paul:

Acts 21:28-29: crying out, 'Men of Israel, come to our aid! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people and the Law and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the Temple and has defiled this holy place. For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the Temple.'

Also, your interpretation of why Paul took the Vow, as a witness more powerful to the Jews, lacks biblical authority, even though you bring in a Scripture (1st Cor. 9:19-22), because not only were Gentiles with Paul, which of course you could continue to say that Paul would say to them that he was only doing the Vow for the Jews, but in the very fact that the Scripture you use expressly relates that Paul is speaking of unsaved Jews, AND Scripture in Acts 21 itself tells us why Paul took the Vow in the first place. Not as a witness to the Jews, to win them to Christ, for they already believed in Christ, but as a witness to the Jews that Paul STILL walked in, obeyed, observed the Law. Scripture says nothing about him only keeping the Law among the Jews. It has nothing to do with evangelism of the Jews but with where Paul himself stood theologically, specifically in relation to the Law. Paul was 'on trial' so to speak, the whole believing Jewish community wanted to know just where he stood with the Law. He wasn't being 'a Jew to the Jews', but rather, he was declaring his theological position on the Law. And he did it in the greatest way possible, by the taking of the Nazirite Vow with all its sacrifices.

Now if Paul only took this Vow as you present, to show the Jews that he could still be an observant Jew when he was among them, but that in his heart he knew that he didn't have to keep the Sabbath or the Law, he would have been a deceiver. For the very reason why the Vow was brought up by Yakov (James/Jacob, the half-brother of Jesus), was to prove to the Jews that believed that he still followed the Law; not just when he was in Jerusalem, but as his life-style. If not, the whole event is a charade, and Paul becomes a charlatan, not one of the greatest men ethical who ever lived.

And, nowhere does Paul say that he took the Vow to show the Jews that he was 'still a Jew' but on the contrary, he took the intense Vow of the Nazir (Hebrew for Nazirite), to show that his love for Torah was still very much intact. As He himself says in his most profound theological letter:

Rom. 3:31: 'Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law' (NASB).

How is the Law 'established' through faith in Messiah Yeshua? Was Paul only writing to Jews in Rome when he wrote this? Listen to what the Apostle to the Gentiles is saying about the Law, both here and in chapter seven, and I imagine, if you have brought up 1st Cor. 9, that you most likely have read 1st Cor. 7:19:

1 Cor. 7:19 'Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the Commandments of God' (NASB).

There are other places that Paul elevates the Law but these should suffice for now to show us that Paul, even though he may speak of the Law in a disparaging way, when he speaks of salvation or justification, when he speaks of the Law for lifestyle, he can only commend it.

Daniel, your bringing 1st Cor. 9 into the picture is an admirable attempt to 'interpret' Paul's motive

but the motive seems implicit in the passage of Acts, quite contrary to your interpretation of the passage. To bring in 1st Cor. 9:19-22, overturns what is plainly written in the Scriptures of Acts 21. Additionally, the desire to place 1st Cor. 9:19-22 'over' the passage in question has no direct support from Scripture. Paul never addresses 1st Cor. toward Acts 21:20ff, nor does Luke, Paul's intimate Gentile believing traveling companion, ever write in Acts that Paul took the Vow for reasons other than what are stated in Acts 21.

Do you understand what I am presenting, Daniel? Paul took the Vow to show all of us that he loved and walked in Torah, all the time. And if he is to be an example for you, as Yeshua Himself should be, Torah should be a part of your lifestyle.

Dan wrote:

Inference:

Paul's taking of a vow was not meant for everyone, but was a specific communication to the Jews who lived by and knew the Law with the underlying motive of being a more powerful witness.

Avram replied:

As refuted above, SCRIPTURE DOES NOT SAY that Paul's actions in Acts 21, 'were *not* meant for everyone.' How can Paul taking the Vow be a more powerful witness when Paul was only taking it to satisfy the Jews who already believed? I don't think the Jewish believers would be satisfied with the interpretation that you present. Can you see this? Their whole reason for him taking the Vow was to have Paul say, one way or the other, what Paul's position on Torah was, outside the Land of Israel for they had heard rumors that Paul taught against the Law. Rumors. Lies. And Paul settled the issue once and for all by accepting the Vow of the Nazirite. It was the holiest thing that he could do to tell everyone, both Jew and Gentile, that he still followed Torah.

He didn't just keep the Law for the Jewish believers in Jerusalem when he was there. That would be deceitful. And I don't think that Paul would sin in order to win a convert, Jew or Gentile.

And if one would say that Paul did walk in Torah, but for his Gentile believers, they didn't have to, we come to another section of Scripture and theology. One cannot find indifference or negation of Torah for the Gentile in the Vow of the Nazirite of Acts 21:20ff that Paul took.

And if Paul thought that Torah was not for him any longer as he had found 'freedom' in Christ, don't you think that somewhere in Acts, Paul, via Luke, would have said so? But nothing anywhere close to that exists. Yes, I realize that some things that Paul speaks of in his letters SEEM to imply that Torah is no longer necessary, but as the Apostle Peter himself declares, understanding Paul's letters is no easy matter:

2 Pet. 3:15-16: 'and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction' (NASB).

Just as Peter's vision in Acts 10, which the Church has traditionally interpreted to mean that believers are free to eat any (unclean) meat that they desire, THAT interpretation does not rest on the Scripture of Acts 10 (or anywhere else). Nowhere in Acts Ten does Peter or any Gentile eat any unclean animal, or say that unclean animals are able to be eaten. On the contrary, the Scripture is very plain. It has Peter, the one whom the vision came to, saying that he didn't understand the meaning of the vision at first:

Acts 10:17: 'Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision

which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon's house, appeared at the gate' (NASB).

But when he finally did realize the import of the vision:

Acts 10:34: 'Opening his mouth, Peter said: 'I most certainly understand NOW that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the MAN who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him'' (NASB).

THIS was big news for Peter as he was being used to speak the Message of Life to Cornelius, the very first (unclean) Gentile to come into the Kingdom. It has nothing whatsoever to do with eating unclean animals as the Church wrongly teaches to this day.

Acts 11 is an account of Peter telling the Elders in Jerusalem just WHY he, as a Jew, went into the home of a Gentile in Acts 10, and again, no mention is made of any change to the dietary laws, but see what or how the Jewish believers understood what God was doing:

Acts 11:18: 'When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, 'Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life' (NASB).

Where is justification here to eat pig or shrimp? There's nothing here about the vision meaning anything more than that Gentiles, who normally would be considered unclean by Jews because most worshipped pagan gods, were now able to come into the Kingdom through submission to the Jewish Messiah and His Ways. Has the Law changed in Acts 10 or 11? No. And as I wrote yesterday, Peter, ten years after the Resurrection, in Acts ten, tells the Lord that he has never EATEN ANYTHING unclean (Acts 10:14: 'But Peter said, 'By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean'' (NASB).

Isn't it possible that the Church's interpretation of those cites that deal with the Law isn't correct?

Paul is either conforming to Jewish believing norms, for the sake of revealing his heart to the Jewish believers, or he is deceiving them, for their purpose is specifically mentioned in Acts 21:

Acts 21:24: '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 Law' (NASB).

Can one interpret this Scripture to mean that Paul was only being a Jew to the Jews? I don't see anything in Acts 21 that can provide a basis for that, do you, Daniel?

Reasoning:

It doesn't matter as much what Paul did as why he did it. If we learn from a church leader we should look not simply at what he does but at why he does it.

SHOULD NOT THE MOTIVE BE ONE WITH THE PHYSICAL EXPRESSION? IF NOT, THE DECEPTION EXISTS, NO?

Dan wrote:

Evidence:

Paul explains why he does what he does in 1 Corinthians 9: 19-22 - '19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; 20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; 21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; 22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I

might by all means save some.' (NKJV)

Avram replied:

TO USE THIS SCRIPTURE, TO 'OVERLAY IT' OVER ACTS 21:20FF, HAS NO BIBLICAL JUSTIFICATION, DANIEL. As a general rule, one could present this but to specifically tie it into Acts 21:20ff has no basis from the Word. I hope that you are able to see this. One cannot indiscriminately take something out of context and use it 'to prove' something as nebulous as one's motives when there isn't a direct (or even indirect) reference to it in Acts 21. And the motive is implicit from the text itself while the Scripture you present speaks specifically of winning souls to Christ, not declaring one's theological position on the Law of Moses in front of all the Jewish Church of Jerusalem which already believed in Messiah Yeshua.

Dan wrote:

We both agree here that the early church leaders are to be respected and followed. You take Paul's action and then say that the reason it was done was to show everyone that the Law was still in effect.

Avram replied:

EXACTLY. Because not only do we see his action, we understand it to be a response to a specific charge that he didn't walk in Torah.

IF you desire to follow the leaders and Apostles of the early Church, especially Paul, where does Scripture ever reveal that Paul did something 'against' the Law. I mean, where do we see Paul saying that one can eat pig? Or where do we see Paul saying that we don't have to keep the Law? Christ came to free us from Satan's grip; from sin, sickness and death. Where is the Law in that? Is the Law a code of regulations from Satan or Yahveh? The Lord has truly set us free...not to sin...not, to sin. God gave the Law to Israel after he saved us from Egypt. The Law is the vehicle by which we show God that we are grateful for Him saving us through Messiah Yeshua. It is God's definition of Love (the first two Commandments). He defines Love for us; love of Him and love of neighbor in the Law.

You began Daniel, by stating:

We're both looking at the same evidence, that Paul took a vow. I don't think that it supports your claim that the whole Law was in effect.

Avram wrote:

I think that I've shown, contrary to what you've written, that your position about Paul taking the Nazarite Vow, is not a correct interpretation of his motives. The Scriptures expressly state that he took the Vow to calm fears that the lies the Jewish believers heard, that he taught against the Law, were just that, slanderous lies. He took the Vow of the Nazirite, the special vow of holiness to Yahveh, to prove that he still observed the Torah. He was not doing it 'as window dressing', to 'be a Jew to the Jews', for Paul would never sin in order to bring another to Christ, and it would be sin for him to present a false impression, when they were specifically wanting to know his theological position on the Law. It was the taking of the Vow that silenced any thoughts that Paul taught against the Law.

All the Jewish believers were zealous for the Law and for Messiah Yeshua (Acts 21:20). This is Scripture. You wrote that my understanding didn't support 'the whole Law' being 'in effect.' Can you show me anywhere in Acts 21, or the book of Acts, where it states that the whole Law is not in effect? We see that it most certainly is in effect for all the ones that believed in Jerusalem.

I am looking forward Daniel, to your response. You will determine where we go from here, if

anywhere.

In seeking His Truth, may we both come closer to the One who is True. May He open our eyes to see how He understands His Word, and may He give us the strength to walk in it.

Avram

Dear Avram,

You said:

'I imagine that you also believe that for the Gentile, Torah at best is an option, but certainly not something that a Gentile would have to do in obedience to God. Now, with that, aren't there two divisions of believers in the Kingdom of Jesus? (And if you don't believe Torah is for the Jewish believer, we only to look at Acts 21:20 to verify it.) Can your position then, truly be the Kingdom that Yeshua came to establish on Earth? Can it be sin for a Jewish believer not to keep Sabbath holy, but just an option for a Gentile? Is this not theologically impossible? Does it not make race the criteria for Torah or lack of it?'

You deem it unjust for a Jew to be held to one set of rules that do not apply to others, when it is One God who rules them all. This is a human egalitarian argument without biblical justification. Man's justice is not the same as God's Justice. The parable of the talents and the parable of the workers in the field are just a couple examples of how a humanistic egalitarian complaint of injustice does not hold weight in God's kingdom.

To those who have been given much, much will be demanded. For the Gentile, while there is the danger of empty relativism and man trying to use Freedom as self-justification to do as he pleases, the two greatest and fundamental laws remain the most challenging, constant, and universally applicable: you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

It's possible that you, like Paul, have been called by God to be a witness to those who also follow all the commands and regulations of the Torah by doing the same. I know missionaries who have for the sake of preaching the sacrificial love of Christ have eaten things far less appetizing than pig (one testimony I've come across was a missionary who was presented with a feast of a long buried pig, freshly unearthed and sliced through the belly, who was expected to, and performed his service by, eating the live maggots that poured from the newly cut opening. All with the intent and purpose of being an effective witness to indigenous peoples in part of southeast asia.) These are men and women who have dedicated and sacrificed their lives to fulfill the calling of Christ's great commission, and I have no doubt as to their calling and the power of their ministry. Is the fact that the missionary was called to eat maggots relevant to my own dietary decisions in serving God with what I eat? Hardly, except to perhaps be a little more grateful for the food placed in front of me each day. But do I still admire and respect him as my brother in Christ? Certainly. In Christ, the barrier is broken, because in him, our hearts are united, though appearances may differ.

-Daniel

Dear Daniel,

Shalom: May His Peace surround you today.

As you have suggested, let's limit the discussion to one point per email in the hopes that we can have a 'calm and focused study.'

The point you brought up stemmed from my presentation that the Kingdom of Yeshua should not be, or could not be, divided over Torah. I say it's either for both Jew and Gentile, or it's for neither.

You have written that it can very well be divided, bringing to the forefront the illustration Jesus used concerning rewards for working in the fields, where all who work reap eternal life (the 'payment' for Kingdom living). You also used the illustration of the talents that one received, with the thought that different ones received greater or lesser talents, again relating to the Kingdom and the harvest or work thereof and eternal reward, although here obviously, the rewards seemed based on what was done during one's life.

With that, you present that there can be a Kingdom where the Jew keeps Torah and the Gentile doesn't have to.

As salt and sugar are both white in color, yet their substance totally different, so too your aligning the illustrations, to justify different lifestyle criteria for the Jewish and Gentile believer.

Both your illustrations pivoted around the eternal rewards of the Kingdom, not one's obligation to walk in the lifestyle that I believe the New and the Old Covenants present to us. Your illustrations have nothing to do with how God wants us to specifically walk in the Kingdom, just that in the Kingdom, God desires that we work and be faithful. It speaks nothing about Torah, for or against it. They are general illustrations that are 'off point' for our discussion of the Nazarite Vow and its obvious place within a Torah lifestyle because they don't address the issue of lifestyle, as does the Torah. They address a general call to be faithful without speaking lifestyle, one way or the other.

Also, the illustration you use of a missionary is also 'off point' as we can only live according to our understanding and knowledge. If that same missionary were a Messianic Jew or Messianic Gentile, they wouldn't eat anything that they deemed unclean, telling the folks that they came to give them God's Truth, and not eating unclean things would be one of them. The man who ate the maggots did so in the Name of Jesus, but did so in ignorance, to his own detriment.

I'm not saying that God couldn't redeem the situation. He is constantly doing that with all of us when we sin in ignorance. That is part of the greatness of Who He is and what His Blood and Spirit can do. But obedience is much better than sacrifice. In other words, we shouldn't sin and then ask God to forgive us. It's better to obey and not have to use the Sacrifice option. But when we don't know what sin is, as is evident from the man who ate the maggots, we sin 'in His Name.' Now this is not unusual as the dark side of the history of the Church records the murder of many millions of people, some true believers, and others Jews, 'in the Name of Christ.' Anything can be done 'in His Name.' The question is, is He motivating the person to do it, or does it come from a lack of biblical understanding, or does it come from a dark heart? The illustration of the missionary does not persuade me to your position, Daniel.

You also bring up God's Justice, that He can do whatever He wants and so Torah for one and not for the other is alright. But we are not speaking about God's Justice for His people, both Jewish and Gentile believer, but God's Righteousness: How does He desire for us to walk in His Kingdom? And for this, philosophical arguments about 'justice' can abound on both sides. That's why we need to have an exposition or explaining of the Scriptures that deal with the Law and Salvation. Only here can we find His understanding as this is His Word on the subject. The Vow of the Nazarite that Paul obviously accepts, tells us, along with Scripture itself, that the Law was revered and observed by all the Jewish believers. Understanding Paul's writings on the subject, expressly for the Gentile, and also understanding the Council's decision of Acts 15, have led me to believe that the Law is for all. Why wouldn't God want the Gentiles to have His wisdom and righteous understanding of the way to live?

Deut. 4:6: 'So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'

Deut. 4:8: ‘Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole Law which I am setting before you today?’ (NASB)

And finally, you write about the Two Great Commandments:

‘the two greatest and fundamental laws remain the most challenging, constant, and universally applicable’.

These Two Commandments are the very heart of the Law. But every heart needs a body, and so these Two Commandments are expressed in specific rules and regulations. Please listen to what your Lord says about the linkage between the Two and the rest of the laws:

‘But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets’’ (NASB: Matt. 22:34-40).

The King James has:

‘On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets’ (Matt. 22:40).

All the Commandments have their essence or reason for being from the Two Great Ones. This is what our Lord is saying.

Please note that nowhere in our Lord’s discourses, does He ever intimate or say that the Law will be distilled to only the Two. On the contrary, in both Matt. 5:17-19, and Luke 16:17, He states that it’s virtually impossible for any of the Commandments to be removed:

‘it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail’ (NASB: Luke 16:17).

This is the Word of God concerning the Law for all His followers. Do we take the words of our Lord lightly? Isn’t He God? Shouldn’t His words have ‘more weight’ than what we might think Paul is saying somewhere in his letters?

How can one take only the Two, and not the rest? Don’t the rest truly define God’s desire for us? How can we know about the 7th Day Sabbath unless God told us He wanted us to keep it? And if God wants us to keep it, and we don’t, don’t we fall into the maggot eating missionary category? Thinking that we are doing the Will of God, we are walking in many, many pagan practices that have absolutely no biblical authority from the New Testament. Practices such as Sunday, Easter and Christmas, as well as the eating of meats that God considers unclean. But something ‘had to come in’ to fill the void left by the jettisoning of God’s Law.

The four examples that you presented, of the talents, denari, missionary and God’s justice are inappropriate for our discussion. None of them speaks directly to the lifestyle of a Christian. All four are general points that cannot be specifically applied to helping us determine the will of God for our lifestyle.

The bringing up of the Two great Commandments, as a rule of life, is good in a general way also. The question still remains, does God desire for His people, specifically His Gentile people, to walk in the rest of His laws. As I presented, the rest of His laws are God’s definition of what He considers ‘love’. If we love Him, we will obey Him and do as He directs us. The Law shows us His will in the areas that it covers (holy days, clean and unclean, etc.).

Avram

Dear Avram,

‘If that same missionary were a Messianic Jew or Messianic Gentile, they wouldn’t eat anything that they deemed unclean, telling the folks that they came to give them God’s Truth, and not eating unclean things would be one of them. The man who ate the maggots, did so in the Name of Jesus, but did so in ignorance, to his own detriment...when we don’t know what sin is, as is evident from the man who ate the maggots, we sin ‘in His Name.’”

I don’t know by divine revelation whether that missionary was told by God in that moment to eat the maggots, but neither do you. I haven’t met him, but I believe that the testimony given me was worth hearing. If I met him, I’d have a much better indicator by getting to know him personally and connecting with him, discerning if he lives by the Word and if he bears spiritual fruit. It saddens me that you do not give priority to matters of the heart and seem to focus on outward appearances. By declaring out of hand the missionary to be an ignorant sinner and a non-Messianic Gentile (in other words, not a true follower of Christ) for breaking an ordinance of rabbinic law, you ignore his spiritual fruit, his reason for doing what he did, and also the fruit of his labour in sharing the Word of God.

Consider Genesis 38, where Tamar violates the law against prostitution and yet is called righteous, and was blessed by God to be an ancestor to Christ. Or consider David and his companions eating bread prohibited by law when they were hungry. Jesus did not abolish the Law; he revealed the heart of the law, which is listening to the voice of God and obeying His commands. As I wrote in my first letter, I understand (and this received from reading your article, although I now understand that you may not have intended such in the first place) and believe that the Law reflects God’s desires and His character and thus, in the light of Christ’s words and his sacrifice, should continue to be studied, revered, and obeyed with prayerful discernment.

I have tried to refrain from simply attacking your reasoning out of hand in hopes that each case could be measured by its own merits. I have come to a point where I think I understand your reasoning and rationale well enough to argue your case for you, which I would if I believed it. Could you honestly say the same? I would rather save my breath than speak to one who doesn’t bother to really listen.

-Daniel

Dear Daniel,

Shalom: May the Peace and Wisdom of Messiah Yeshua be with you today.

You wondered whether God would tell the missionary to eat the maggots. God is not a liar or the author of confusion, nor does He lead anyone to sin. ‘Divine revelation’ does not go against the written Word. The Word and the Spirit are one. There can be no divine revelation for one to murder, to lie, to steal, to commit adultery, etc., and there can be no divine revelation for one to eat pig or maggots either. It’s His Word.

As for the missionary’s testimony, that his eating the maggots might have allowed him to spread the Gospel, I’ve said before that Yeshua redeems our sins, for His Purposes. It doesn’t sanctify or negate our sins. He is able to Work in the midst of our sins, and lack of knowledge and understanding of His Word (His Will).

You also mentioned that if you met the missionary, you’d see if he lives by the Word of God. But this is very subjective, Daniel. According to you, if he doesn’t keep the 7th day Sabbath holy, and if he doesn’t keep Passover, and if he eats pig whenever he can or wants to, he is living by the Word and not sinning. But my position is that if he doesn’t keep the holy Feasts of Israel and he breaks the dietary laws, he is sinning and not living by the entire Word of God, no matter how much his life reflects his love for Jesus. He is sinning in ignorance of the Jesus he loves.

I am sorry that you are saddened by what you perceive to be my not giving ‘priority’ to matters of the heart, but as you wrote, ‘seem to focus on outward appearances.’ This is a judgment call from your

perspective which I don't agree with.

It's not that I focus primarily on outward appearance or actions, but that I esteem the Words of my God in His written Word, to be a whole unit. If our God wants us to keep His Sabbath day holy, and we don't, is this not disobedience to the One we say we love? And contrary to popular opinion, ignorance of the law, as well as disobedience of it in ignorance, is still sin (Lev. 5:1-5, etc.).

If Yeshua didn't keep those outward details of Passover, Sabbath and pig according to the Law of Moses, from His heart, He would have sinned and not been able to have been the Sacrifice that frees us from Satan. How can you say then, that these things don't matter to a Gentile believer? Is the Gentile believer greater than his Master? Isn't the Gentile fully part of the family of God? Doesn't he belong to what Scripture calls the elect?

The Church declares that they are the elect, but there is no word for 'church' in the New Testament. The word that is used should be translated as 'called out ones' (called out of darkness), or 'assembly' and is conceptually the same as the Hebrew word for 'chosen' as in the Chosen people (Israel). It is only Israel that is saved and Gentiles are part of the Commonwealth of Israel (Eph. 2), as they come to believe in the Jewish Messiah. Gentiles have been grafted into Israel (Rom. 11; Isaiah 49:6, etc.). It is the Israel of God, both Jewish and Gentile believer so how can you say that it doesn't matter if the Gentile believer shuns the Feasts of his family that God has ordained, that give honor to the God and Savior that he says he loves?

Daniel, you also wrote:

By declaring out of hand the missionary to be an ignorant sinner and a non-Messianic Gentile (in other words, not a true follower of Christ) for breaking an ordinance of rabbinic law, you ignore his spiritual fruit, his reason for doing what he did, and also the fruit of his labour in sharing the Word of God.

Not so Daniel! Your judgment is faulty here too. I have never written that I didn't think the maggot eating missionary was not a true believer. On the contrary, someone that exhibits that outward action would have to love the Lord with all his heart. Can you see how the outward action can reflect the heart and actually be one with it? I have said that in his ignorance of the will of God in that area, he sinned. I have never questioned his heart of love to the Lord. I hope now you can see the difference. Here you judge me Daniel, and not righteously.

As for the eating of maggots being 'rabbinic law', as you state, you are wrong here too, Daniel. It is not the Rabbis that have ordered it, it was God Himself. God tells us what is acceptable food and what is not in both Lev. 11 and Deut. 14, and this is verified in a number of places in the New Testament (Acts 10:14; 1st Tim. 4:4-5, etc.). And maggots are certainly not for eating.

According to *Collins Dictionary*, a maggot is:

'the soft limbless larva of dipterous insects, esp. the housefly and blowfly, occurring in decaying organic matter.'² By the way, a dipterous insect is one that has a 'single pair of wings' and includes 'flies' and 'mosquitoes.'³

As such, maggots would be considered unclean by Jesus, and therefore, not acceptable as food in any situation. Can you imagine Jesus eating maggots to convince someone to believe in Him? How totally absurd and foolish. And the carcass of the pig, as well as the eating of the pig, is unacceptable also:

Deut. 14:3: 'You shall not eat any detestable thing.'

Deut. 14:8: 'The pig, because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud, it is un-

² Sinclair, J. M., General Consultant. Diana Treffry, Editorial Director. *Collins English Dictionary*, Glasgow, Scotland: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998), p. 934.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

clean for you. You shall not eat any of their flesh nor touch their carcasses.’

Lev. 11:1-2: ‘Yahveh spoke again to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them, ‘Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘These are the creatures which you may eat from all the animals that are on the earth.’”

Lev. 11:7: ‘and the pig, for though it divides the hoof, thus making a split hoof, it does not chew cud, it is unclean to you.’

Lev. 11:8: ‘You shall not eat of their flesh nor touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.’

Lev. 11:20: ‘All the winged insects that walk on all fours are detestable to you.’

Lev. 11:43: ‘Do not render yourselves detestable through any of the swarming things that swarm; and you shall not make yourselves unclean with them so that you become unclean. For I am Yahveh your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth.’ (NASB, except where I have substituted the Name of the God of Israel, Yahveh, for the designation in English, the LORD, which always tells us that in Hebrew, the Name Yahveh is written.)

Not only is the pig unclean, it’s carcass is also unclean, and the maggots which were thriving within the unclean carcass are unclean both in and of themselves, as any sane person might tell us. So, in this situation, the pig’s carcass and the maggots could be called ‘doubly-unclean’ if I can use that phrase, because the unclean maggots were also within the unclean carcass. And you tell me that God may have wanted the missionary to eat of such filth? For the Glory of Jesus? If I say I have trouble believing that, Daniel, can you understand me?

In trying to fortify your position Daniel, that the laws of God can be broken ‘for a good cause’, you bring up Tamar and her deceit. You state:

‘Consider Genesis 38, where Tamar violates the law against prostitution and yet is called righteous, and was blessed by God to be an ancestor to Christ.’

First of all, she didn’t violate the laws against prostitution. She had sexual intercourse with her dead husband’s father. According to the law of the Levirate (Deut. 25:5; Lev. 18:16), which calls for a brother to raise up seed (a child), for his dead brother, she acted. Her sin was deceit, not prostitution.

Gen. 38:8: ‘And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother’s wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.’

Second, Tamar was not called righteous by God. Judah says that she was more righteous than him:

Gen. 38:26: ‘Judah recognized them, and said, ‘She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah.’ And he did not have relations with her again’ (NASB update).

Judah recognized that his sin was greater than hers as he was the one who denied Tamar concerning Shelah. But her deception can hardly be seen as ‘righteous’ in God’s eyes, anymore than Abraham telling Sarah to say that she was (only) his sister to avoid what Abraham thought was certain death (Gen. 12:13 & 20:2), even though she was also his wife.

Now, Abraham wasn’t exactly lying when he said that Sarah was his sister (Gen. 20:12), for she was, but he certainly wasn’t telling the whole truth and by not doing so, he placed Sarah in extremely precarious situations. Abraham was redeemed by God when God acted on his behalf to save Sarah from being defiled by men who didn’t know she was married to Abraham. But Abraham can hardly be said to have trusted God in this matter or to have been righteous in his actions and words. What we see is that Abraham’s faith was lacking but God rescued him anyway (or Sarah, as the case may be). God redeems us from our sins, He doesn’t condone them. We also see that faith and trust in God is some-

thing that grows as the relationship lives.

As for Judah saying that Tamar was righteous, in Judah's eyes, compared to him, she was. And as for God using her sin to be part of Messiah's lineage, we see not the righteousness of Tamar, but the greatness of our God in redeeming sinful situation. For Judah, the ancestral 'father' of Messiah, sinned too. There isn't one person in all the lineage of Messiah, including King David, who never sinned. If God could not work in the midst of sin, Messiah couldn't have come from Adam or the rest of humanity.

As for David eating the showbread, the Bread of His Presence, which obviously seems to have gone against the law prohibiting all who weren't Aaronic priests (Lev. 24:8-9), we have here two laws of God demanding attention. Just as when two Constitutional laws, say freedom of speech and the right to privacy collide, it is up to the judge to determine which law outweighs the other, in that instance. (Note also, Yeshua doesn't comment on David's lie to the High Priest. That was sin. He addresses the eating of the Bread.)

It was not because David was hungry that he was allowed to eat of the holy Bread by the High Priest, but because the High Priest thought that David been sent on a (holy) mission by the King of Israel (Saul) (1st Sam. 21:2-3). As such, David would be considered 'holy' and the bread would be accessible to him and his men.

Yeshua uses this analogy, to argue from a lesser to a greater principle that if David could have the Bread that was only for the priests, because he was supposed to have been sent by the King of Israel, Yeshua, truly sent by the King of Israel, His Father, could allow His students (disciples), to pick and eat the grain of the field (which was of much lesser holiness than the Bread of the Presence), on the Sabbath. For a detailed understanding of what is going on at both these events, please read my article, *Yeshua Shocks the Pharisees* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-Shocks-the-Pharisees.pdf>.

Daniel, you also wrote:

'Jesus did not abolish the Law; he revealed the heart of the law, which is listening to the voice of God and obeying His commands.'

I find it very hard to understand what you have written Daniel. If you believe that 'Jesus did not abolish the Law', then how can you argue against it's rules and regulations for the Gentile? That truly makes no sense to me. Either the Law is nullified by Jesus (or Paul), as the Church erroneously teaches, or the Law is for all believers.

Listening to the Voice of God and obeying His Commands or Commandments is part and parcel of the Law:

Ex. 19:5: 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine'.

Deut. 26:14b: 'I have listened to the voice of Yahveh my God; I have done according to all that You have commanded me' (NASB update with Name change for Yahveh).

Daniel, I find your ability to draw the proper conclusions from your own stated belief very faulty.

And finally, you wrote:

I have tried to refrain from simply attacking your reasoning out of hand in hopes that each case could be measured by its own merits. I have come to a point where I think I understand your reasoning and rationale well enough to argue your case for you, which I would if I believed it. Could you honestly say the same? I would rather save my breath than speak to one who doesn't bother to really listen.

Daniel, I fully understand your frustration.

If you mean by refraining from 'attacking my reasoning out of hand', that you have not gotten down

into the gutter and slung mud at me, I praise you for that, Daniel, as it shows me more of who you are. If you are holding back from showing me my error, I can only say, Why? But I don't think it the former. I think you have given it 'your best shot' and come up short. You have defended your position as best you can but I have seen that you, despite what you say about being able to argue my position, do not truly understand it, as I have repeatedly shown you in this email and the others.

As for me being able to argue your position, I lived it for eight years of my Christian walk. I know most of, if not all of, the arguments against a Torah lifestyle (for someone who says it's alright for the Jew but not the Gentile, as you seem to be saying; or for someone who says Torah is for no one now that 'Christ has done away with it.')

I have the advantage of experientially knowing both sides of this concept. You on the other hand, not having walked in Torah and having learned against it, even though you say you now reverence it from having read an article of mine, have not walked in it and only 'know it' from an intellectual position, something that has been seen to be rather faulty because of your previous learning against Torah. If this is not so, why do you resist it for yourself? You have certainly not shown anything from Scripture to support the position that Torah is not for the Gentile (or the Jew).

As you initially presented yourself as a 'truth seeker' I am very disappointed in you, Daniel. I had very high hopes that you would come around to truly understanding the place of the Law for every believer. Unfortunately, this has not been the case.

I can agree with you though, Daniel, when you say,

'I would rather save my breath than speak to one who doesn't bother to really listen'.

As you have judged me, so the judgment is just and righteous for you. For one who condemns another, and your statement is very condemning, condemns himself. As Scripture says:

'Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things' (Romans 2:1; NASB update).

I understand that you are not able to see what I have seen and that it seems useless to continue.⁴

Goodbye for now, Daniel, and may the Lord Yeshua bless you with the riches of Heaven,

Avram Yehoshua
Ramat Gan
Israel

⁴ Revised on 29 March 2016.