

SEVEN WAYS YESHUA FULFILLED THE LAW

by Avram Yehoshua

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

Among the many rich and accurate teachings of the Church there lies an insidious teaching about the Law of Moses. The Church has, for 1,900 years taught that the Torah (the Law of Moses) does not apply to Christians: ‘Jesus did away with it’ is a common understanding among Christians of all denominations. This teaching has done much to drive a demonic wedge between Christians and Jews and that is the reason I call it insidious. If the Jewish people had seen all Christians keeping Mosaic Law they would have come to believe in their Messiah. The false teaching is obviously not of God, but of Satan. It didn’t take God by surprise, Him knowing that Satan, through the Roman Catholic Popes, would jettison Mosaic Law and bring in many pagan ways and pagan days, as the prophet Daniel tells us:

‘And he (the Pope) shall speak against¹ the Most High God, and shall *wear out the saints* of the Most High God, and intend to change the Feasts (of Israel) and the laws, and they shall be *given into his hand* until a time and times and the dividing of time’ (Dan. 7:25)

The Feasts or the ‘times,’ as some translations have it, relates to the observance of God’s holy and ‘set’ times like the Sabbath and Passover (Lev. 23), etc.² The ‘laws’ speaks of the Law of Moses. Obviously, the invalidation of the Law of Moses by the Catholic Church did not take God by surprise. It is the Catholic Church that has ‘worn out the saints’ with its persecutions of true believers and its false doctrines and ceremonies over the last 1,900 years. It’s unfortunate that at the time of the Reformation, and thereafter, the Reformers took some of the doctrines of the Catholic Church with them (e.g. that the Law was done away with).

One of the places that the Church points to, to validate their theological stance against the Law, is Matthew 5:17-18. In it we find the Lord Yeshua (Jesus) saying that He came to *fulfill* the Law and that it won’t depart ‘until all is accomplished:’

‘Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until Heaven and Earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.’ (Matthew 5:17-18)

¹ C. F. Keil and Delitzsch F., *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Accordance electronic ed. 10 vols.; Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), n.p. “The word for ‘against’ denotes that he would use language by which he would set God aside, regard and give himself out as God; cf. 2 Thess. 2:4. Making himself like God, he will destroy the saints of God...consume, afflict...he thinks ‘to change times and laws’...‘To change times’ belongs to the all-perfect power of God (cf. Dan. 2:21), the creator and ordainer of times (Gen. 1:14).” For how the Pope fits this character download Alexander Hislop’s classic, [The Two Babylons—The Full Hislop](#).

² R. L. Harris, editor; Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke, associate editors, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Accordance Bible Software), n.p. מִצֵּדָה (‘*zman*) be fixed, appointed (of time).’ This word is conceptually the same as the Hebrew word for the Feasts or set times when Yahveh would meet with His people Israel. The Hebrew word is מוֹעֵד *mo’ed*, and this is the term that the Feasts are known by; God’s ‘set or appointed time’ for meeting with Him (Ex. 13:10; Lev. 23:2, 4, 15, 37, 44; 34:18; Num. 9:2, 7, 13; 10:10; 15:3; 29:39; Dt. 16:6; Is. 1:14; 33:20; Ezk. 36:38; 44:24; 46:9, 11; Hos. 2:11; Ezra 3:5; Neh. 10:34, etc.

Dr. Francis Brown, Dr. S. R. Driver and Dr. Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Professor Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, editor, *Hebrew and English Lexicon (Abridged)*; Accordance Bible Software), n.p. מוֹעֵד *mo’ed*, ‘appointed time, place, meeting...of appointed season (i.e. festivals)...of the feast of booths...מִוֶּעֵד אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד *ohel mo’ed*; *The Tabernacle of Moses, i.e. the ‘Tent of Meeting* (of God with his people...the sacred Tent of Exodus.’

The Church teaches that the meaning of ‘fulfill’ is that Jesus did away with the Law by His sacrifice and the establishing of ‘love’ as the criteria for His Kingdom. They juxtapose ‘love’ and ‘Law.’ There is even some Scripture that would seem, at first glance, to support their interpretation:

‘Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the Law.’ (Rom. 13:10)

‘Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby *fulfill* the law of Christ.’ (Gal. 6:2)

Was Paul showing us ‘a new way’ when he spoke of ‘fulfill’? Hardly. To summarize the commandments into a single concept was not new among the Jewish people. In the Talmud, *Makkot* 23b-24a, we read of a number of such summaries from the Bible:

“Rabbi Simlai said, ‘Six hundred and thirteen commandments were given to Moses’ (a traditional count of the number of times the rules of the Law are mentioned). ‘David came and reduced them to eleven (Psalm 15)...Isaiah reduced them to six (Is. 33:15-16), Micah to three (Micah 6:8), and Isaiah again to two, as it is said, ‘Keep judgment and do righteousness’ (Is. 66:1). Then Amos reduced them to one, ‘Seek Me and live’ (Amos 5:4)” and so did “Habakkuk: ‘the righteous shall live by his faith’ (Hab. 2:4).”³

These reductions or summaries of the Law in no way did away with any of the commandments and statutes of the Law of Moses. They presented a summary or ‘a rallying point’ around which people could focus themselves. Paul was doing the same thing in Romans 13:10 and Galatians 6:2. In a well known rabbinic story it’s said that,

“A pagan came before Shammai (a famous Jewish sage who lived a generation before Yeshua) and said to him, ‘Make me a proselyte, but on condition that you teach me the entire Torah while I am standing on one foot!’ Shammai drove him off with the builder’s measuring rod, which he had in his hand. When he appeared before Hillel (another famous Jewish sage) he told him, ‘What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. *That is the whole Torah.* The rest is commentary.’ Now, go and ‘learn the commentary!’”⁴

Obviously, neither Rabbi Simlai or Hillel would have thought that they were ‘doing away with the Law’ by summarizing it. Can *fulfill*, then, in Matthew 5:17, be honestly interpreted to do away with the Law of Moses, especially when Yeshua had just stated, in the very same breath, that He hadn’t come to destroy the Law? Of course not, but this is the way many Christians interpret Yeshua’s words.

In verse 18 Yeshua again speaks of *fulfill*, this time in relation to the Law remaining until ‘all is accomplished.’ Here, too, the Church says that ‘all was accomplished’ at the crucifixion. That the Work that Yeshua came to do, the giving of His life in sacrifice for all mankind (i.e. atonement) was accomplished at the crucifixion, is above argument. In His death we find life. In His death we are able to die to self and attain a new nature—His. In His death we have access to the Spirit of God dwelling within us. ‘All was accomplished’ concerning *the redemption of Israel*, but did that redemption mean that Mosaic Law was no longer valid for followers of Jesus?

Interestingly enough, in the very same verse, Yeshua speaks of the Heavens and the Earth departing *first*, before *any letter of the Law is nullified*. Some say the Law is still for the Jews, but Yeshua’s words speak to all of us, Jew and Gentile, who believe in Him. He wasn’t speaking for non-believing Jews about the

³ David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), p. 96.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33. Talmud, *Shabbat* 31a.

Law remaining until there were no Heavens as we know them. As the Heavens and the Earth are still with us, and won't be gone until the Day of Judgment, it's reasonable to say that not one letter of the Law is invalid. There won't be a need for the Law of Moses *after* Judgment Day, when we are 'like Him' because the Law *will be written on our heart and soul!* (Jer. 31:31-34)

The Law of Moses, for every believer in Messiah Yeshua, is further affirmed and established by the Lord Yeshua in the very next verse:

'Whoever, then, breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.' (Mt. 5:19)

The Kingdom of Heaven didn't officially begin until *after* His sacrifice and resurrection. His reference to His Kingdom, in Mt. 5:19, can only, therefore, mean that in His Kingdom the Law of Moses is still valid. Those who break the least of the commandments will be called least in His Kingdom. Conversely, those who keep the least of the commandments of Mosaic Law will be called great in the Kingdom of Yeshua. The choice is yours to make, if you can hear your Savior speaking this to you. This understanding of Mosaic Law is from the very mouth of our Lord and Savior. Don't let others deceive you. Ask Yeshua to show you His Truth in this matter.

Jesus *fulfilled* (accomplished) what He was set out to do, and the Law of Moses directly pointed to Him, the Messiah of Israel, coming and doing what He did! Hence, how He accomplished what the Law spoke of—*fulfilled* it, when it spoke of One to come that would heal everyone (Is. 35), and who would give His life as an *atonement* for all of us (Is. 53), and in that He would be *the* Passover Lamb, etc., etc. It's all there in Torah (Mosaic Law) for those who have eyes to see, and also, in the New Testament. There is no place in the Old that speaks of the Law being invalidated by the coming of the Savior, nor anywhere else!

The Church's interpretation of Matthew 5:17-19 is heretical, as well as its theology that the Law of Moses has been done away with. The following are seven ways in which the word fulfill can, and should, be interpreted without destroying the English language or the Law of Moses:

1. Yeshua came to fulfill the promise of God to Adam and Eve, that He would send a Redeemer:
Our need for a Redeemer is first mentioned in Gen. 3:15, where God speaks of the hatred between the Seed of the woman and the Snake. The Seed of the woman is Messiah Yeshua. Yeshua's sacrifice 'accomplished' and 'fulfilled' our need for redemption.
2. Yahveh promised that He would be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob *and* their descendants. In other words, Israel would be Yahveh's people. Yeshua came to fulfill this part of the Law by bringing Israel closer to her God. Yeshua's sacrifice 'accomplished' and 'fulfilled' this. It made the way possible for Israel to truly be God's people forever (Rom. 11:25-29).

With the giving of the holy Torah (Law) to Israel at Mt. Sinai, Israel was not able to keep God's Way. Israel went more the way of the Snake than the Way of God. It wasn't the fault of the Torah, but of the heart of the Israeli (Rom. 8:3-4; Heb. 8:8). God speaks of circumcising the Israeli *heart* to follow Him (Dt. 30:6). In Ezekiel 36:24-27 He speaks of cleansing Israel, taking out their heart of stone and replacing it with one of flesh, and giving Israel His Spirit so that Israel *can walk in God's Torah*.

God specifically speaks of giving Israel a New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34) so that He could put His laws (Mosaic) in the minds and hearts of Israel. This is God's Word speaking of the Law and its place in God's eyes, specifically for the New Covenant. It was the giving of the Spirit and the divine blood to transform the nature of the Israeli that allows, and

causes him to walk in God's holy Torah. This is another way Yeshua *fulfills* the Torah and the Prophets. God promised Man and Israel a Savior and Yeshua came in direct response to that need.

As part of that fulfillment the Messiah would suffer and die for the sins of Israel (Is. 52:13-53:12). He would take their place and suffer the just requirements or punishment of all who broke God's Law (Gen. 2:17; Dt. 27:26; Ezk. 18:4; Acts 3:18; Rom. 8:3-4).

Yeshua was pierced through and crushed in our place (Is. 53:5). He died for all the times we wanted to be holy and weren't and all the times in our lives where we have rebelled against God and told Him, either verbally or unconsciously, that we would not follow and submit to Him, and that we would do what we wanted. Yeshua was crushed for our perverse hearts. He fulfilled the *righteous* requirements of the Law. Only the High Priest, once a year, could come into the very Presence of Yahveh. Yeshua has made a way for us to be with Yahveh eternally, by giving to us the righteousness of Yahveh (Jer. 23:5-6). This is His very nature. This, too, is part of the promise. God promised Israel a new heart (Ezk. 36:26) and a Savior (Gen. 3:15; Dt. 18:15-19; Acts 13:30-33f.).

The Anointed One would be crucified (Psalm 22). Yeshua has *fulfilled* all those prophecies and this has nothing to do with God nullifying His holy Law, but Yeshua upheld the Law all His life and shows us, by example, what He expects of us.

3. The Redeemer would be a prophet like Moses (Dt. 18:15-19). He would be anointed above his brothers, and so, would be called 'the Messiah' or 'the Anointed One.'

The Torah speaks of God sending 'one *like* Moses' to Israel. Moses not only saw God face to face, but God 'put His words' into Moses' mouth and Moses gave them Israel. In John, Yeshua speaks of 'being sent by the Father'⁵ and the words that He spoke were not His, but the Father's (John 14:24). This is a direct reference back to Dt. 18:18 and His coming to *fulfill* the Law.

4. The Mosaic sacrifices, with their substitutionary animals that died in place of the Israeli, were a *picture of Messiah* taking our just punishment of death. Yeshua's sacrifice epitomized the essence of all the Mosaic sacrifices. Yeshua's sacrifice *fulfilled* this. As for sacrifice still being valid among believers, Acts 21:20-24 reveals the whole believing community kept the Law and offered sacrifices. The 'shaving of the head' that James refers to in v. 24 speaks of the Nazarite Vow (Num. 6:1-15) that Paul was entering into to show everyone that he still kept the Law of Moses 25 years *after* the resurrection, and that, by the Church's 'No Law!' champion.
5. Yeshua also shows us another meaning of *fulfill* as He fulfills the Torah by showing us what it means to love God with all our heart, our soul and our strength, and our neighbor as ourself. He lays His life down for us because of His love for us. He is the Example *par excellence* of God's love found in the Law of Moses.
6. Yeshua is the ideal Israeli who is fully devoted to God His Father and fully identifies with us. We needed a High Priest, a heavenly intercessor for us, like Aaron, and in this sense, Yeshua fulfills that position as is stated in Psalm 110:4, where God calls Messiah a (High) Priest forever, after the type or order of Melchizedek. Yeshua fulfills the concept of the King and High Priest being 'one' in Zechariah 6:12-13, where the High Priest-King builds the Temple or dwelling place for Yahveh

⁵ John 3:34; 4:34; 5:23, 24, 30, 36, 37, 38; 6:29, 38, 39, 44, 57; 7:16, 28, 29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 10:36; 11:42; 12:44-45, 49; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21; see also Heb. 3:1.

(the Body of Messiah). Yeshua fulfills our need for an eternal High Priest and King, something that is seen in the Law and the Prophets.

7. Yeshua explains the deeper essential meanings of the Torah, as the rest of chapter five in Matthew tells us. He states, ‘You have heard that you must not murder, but I say to you that you must not hate your brother.’ The ancient Jewish sages said, ‘When Messiah comes, He will tell us the deeper meanings of Torah.’ Yeshua reveals the essence of the commandments, but this hardly does away with the actual commandment itself! For instance, with the illustration of murder being linked to hatred, Yeshua in no way invalidates the commandment ‘not to murder,’ but brings us all under conviction. For who among us has not hated at least once in our lifetime?

Yeshua Himself tells us that *fulfill* means the things listed above when He, after His resurrection, came to His Apostles, and,

“He said to them, ‘These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be *fulfilled* which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms *concerning Me*.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.” (Luke 24:44-45 NKJV; cf. vv. 25-27, 45-49; Jn. 1:45; 5:39; Acts 3:18, 22-26; 4:2, 33; 13:29, 32, 38-39)

Nowhere does Yeshua speak of the Law’s demise, but of He being what the Law pointed to. Therefore, *fulfill cannot* mean that the Law of Moses is invalid for Christians, as the Church has taught for 1,900 years. The Church could only begin to propagate this false teaching around 120 AD, when all the Apostles were dead. Before that, if any Apostle had heard it, he would have soundly condemned such heresy.

In places where love is said to fulfill the Law, like Rom. 13:10, love is seen as the ultimate or central motivation for relationship, either with God or man, but this cannot mean that the Law of Moses is annulled because the core of the Law is the love of God (Dt. 6:4-5) and love of man (Lev. 19:18). The other commandments of the Law are *God’s way of defining what love of God and love of man is*. This understanding of the two great commandments of the Law is taught by the Lord Yeshua Himself in Matthew 22:35-40, when the scribe comes to Him and asks Him what is the great commandment of the Law. Yeshua says to love God with all one’s heart, etc., and then adds that the second is like it—love your neighbor as yourself. He goes on further to say that the definition of what that love is seen in all the other rules and statutes of Mosaic Law, saying, ‘On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets (Mt. 22:40).

In other words, every commandment, statute, judgment and ordinance, etc., has its foundation or reason for existence in love of God or Man. An illustration: if God were a Tree with two branches with much fruit on the two branches, the two branches would be love of God and love of Man. The fruit would be all the other commandments and statutes, etc., that tell us *how* to love God and Man.

For the Church to juxtapose love against God’s Law is an artificial theological perversion. The Law of Moses is a reflection of Yahveh and His holy character. The Law of Moses is God’s holy Word to Israel as to what is sin and what is pleasing to Him. The only way that we know another’s will is by his word. If a mother tells her son to take the garbage out, the son knows the will of his mother by her words. Israel, both Gentile and Jew, knows the will of God by His Words, called Mosaic Law. Yeshua’s ‘adding’ of ‘love one another as I have loved you,’ magnifies the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18). Man was never loved by ‘God in the flesh.’ Now the Apostles were, and they were to love one another as they had been loved by Yeshua.

The Law remains God’s way of specifically teaching us what is sin and what is pleasing to God—what is right and what is wrong—in God’s eyes. The Law has not been ‘done away with.’ It remains the Standard

of Holiness that it was for Yeshua and the Apostles and will remain with us until there are no more Heavens and Earth as we know them. Scripture, *after* the resurrection, says this about Mosaic Law:

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

“What shall we say then? *Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary,* I would not have come to know sin *except through the Law.* For I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, ‘You must not covet’...So then, ***the Law is holy***, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good...For we know that ***the Law is spiritual***, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.” (Rom. 7:7, 12, 14)

‘When He said, ‘A New Covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete, but whatever *is becoming obsolete* and *growing old* is *ready to disappear.*’ (Heb. 8:13)

Note well the wording in Hebrews 8:13—it doesn’t say the Old *IS* obsolete, but ‘*is becoming* obsolete.’ Nor does it say that it *has* disappeared, but rather that it’s ‘*ready to disappear.*’ Hebrews was written about 35 years *after* the resurrection.⁶ Surely if the Old Covenant, with its Law had been done away with at the death of Christ, *as the Church teaches*, it would have been enough time for the writer to assimilate this concept, but the writer doesn’t see the Law (embodied in the Old Covenant) as having ended, yet. He didn’t use words in the past tense, saying, ‘the Old Covenant *IS* obsolete’ and ‘*IS* old’, ‘and *has* disappeared.’ He didn’t use the past tense because He knew that the Law was still valid. When will Mosaic Law disappear? When the New Covenant is fully manifest—when Mosaic Law is written on our souls, as God says in Jeremiah 31:33:

“But this is the (New) Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, says Yahveh—***I will put My Law in their minds and write it on their hearts***, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” (Jeremiah 31:33; cf. Heb. 8:10; 10:16)

When Judgement Day comes and we are all transformed into His Image, the written Mosaic Law will no longer be needed because all of us will have it written on our hearts (i.e. His nature) and we will be *one* with Yeshua. Mosaic Law is a written reflection of our Father and Yeshua’s character. In other words, the Torah (literally meaning teaching or instruction) of God, will never pass away as we will have it within us eternally, and the written words of the Law will no longer be needed because we will intimately know our Father forever. We will be ‘one’ with His Word or Law, He having created us in the Image of His Son, who is the Living Word (Law) of God (Rev. 19:13).

Now, with His Spirit and blood of forgiveness, cleansing and transformation, we can walk the way Yeshua walked when He was in Israel. He followed all the commandments and rules of Moses that applied to Him and we should strive in Him to do the same, by the power of the Holy Spirit of Grace within, loving God and man and doing it God’s Way, not the Church’s false way. God’s Law is our wisdom and blessing in the world that He created:

“Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as Yahveh my God commanded me, that *you should act according to them* in the land which you go to possess. Therefore, be careful to observe them because this 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

⁶ Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), p. 233: 63-64 A.D.

Geoffrey W. Bromiley, General Editor, Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, Associate Editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 692: before 70 A.D. In vol. two, p. 668 it has ‘the early 60s.’

wise and understanding people!’ For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as Yahveh our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has *such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this Law* which I set before you this day?’ (Deuteronomy 4:5-8)

Yeshua said:

‘*Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets!* I did not come to abolish, but to *fulfill*. For truly I say to you, until Heaven and Earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until *all* is accomplished. Whoever then breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.’ (Mt. 5:17-19)

What was accomplished or finished at His crucifixion wasn’t the doing away with of God’s holy and righteous Standard, but the Atonement of His people Israel, and all the Gentiles who cling to her and her Savior (Rom. 11:11f.; Eph. 2:11f.)

Yeshua certainly fulfilled the Law by living a holy and sinless life, by expounding on, and amplifying the meaning of the Law of Moses, but none of those nullify the Law of Moses for us now, here on this Earth. Yeshua *fulfilling* Torah only magnifies Mosaic Law and makes it possible for us to walk as He did.

Christianity is the only religion in the world that does not emulate its Founder! Yeshua kept all the commandments and statutes, etc., of Moses that applied to Him. Shouldn’t we live our lives as He lived His?

‘But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, *deceiving* and being deceived. You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that *from childhood* you have known the holy Scriptures (i.e. the Old Testament), which are able to give you the *wisdom* that leads to *salvation through faith which is in Messiah Yeshua*. *All Scripture* is inspired by God and profitable for *teaching*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, and for *training in righteousness*, so that the man of God may be *fully* equipped for every good work.’ (2nd Timothy 3:13-17)

‘By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments is a liar and the Truth is not in him, but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By *this* we know that we are in Him—the one who says he abides in Him *ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked*.’ (1st John 2:3-6)⁷

⁷ Revised on July 21, 2018.