

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANITY'S LIFESTYLE

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“Heretical” is what the Roman Catholic Church, in the third century AD, called Jewish Christianity. The Nazarenes though, the main body of Jewish Christians in Jerusalem immediately after the time of the Apostles, and for many years thereafter, were actually the spiritual descendants of Peter, Paul and John. Samuele Bacchiocchi, in his Christian classic, [From Sabbath to Sunday](#), writes that the Nazarenes are spoken of by Jerome (347-420 AD) and “appear to be the direct descendants of the Christian community of Jerusalem.”¹ Eminent French scholar Marcel Simon says that the Nazarenes were,

“characterized essentially by their tenacious attachment to *Jewish observances*...They well represent...*the very direct descendants of the primitive*” (apostolic) “community.”²

Bacchiocchi writes that the Nazarenes accurately reflect *how the Apostles walked out their faith in Jesus*:

“‘If the Nazarenes, as most scholars maintain, are indeed the ‘direct descendants of the primitive community of Jerusalem,’ we would expect” (them) “to have retained the original practice of...Christianity.”³

The Jewish-Christian Nazarenes kept the Feasts of Israel hundreds of years after the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, and also, all the laws of Moses that applied to them. Eusebius (260-340 AD), whom Catholics regard as a Church Father, was a bishop and church historian. He writes of the leadership in the Church of Jerusalem, when Jerusalem was destroyed a second time by Rome, in 135 AD, saying that the leadership,

“consisted of converted Hebrews and was administered by 15 bishops from the circumcision”⁴ (that is, they were Jews, and they were all) “zealous to insist on the literal observance of the Law.”⁵ (Cf. Acts 21:20 for the Apostles, etc., being zealous for the Law)

For this “zealousness for God’s Mosaic Law,” Eusebius calls them heretics, but it was the bishop who was on the wrong side of the Apostolic religion. Those Nazarenes were living out their faith in Jesus the way the Apostles had done. Scripture and Church History confirm this. Consequently, this is the way all Christians today should walk out their faith in Jesus. Mosaic Law is the *lifestyle* of biblical Christianity.

¹ Samuele Bacchiocchi, [From Sabbath to Sunday](#) (Rome, Italy: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977), p. 95. Jerome reports to have come across the Nazarenes in “Beroes, a city of Syria” (De Viris ill. 3, NPNF 2nd, III, p. 362).

² Ibid., also note 401: M. Simon (p. 90, note 388), pp. 47-48; cf. B. Bagatti (p. 84, note 365), pp. 31-35; J. Danielou (p. 92, note 396), p. 56, also views the Nazarenes as the descendants of the Aramaic-speaking Christians [i.e. the Jews] who fled to Transjordan and who “separated from the rest of the Church because they regarded the Jewish observances of Sabbath and circumcision as still of obligation” (for Jews). Marcel Simon (1907-1986) “was a French specialist in the history of religions, particularly relations between Christianity and Judaism in antiquity. His major work, *Verus Israel*, was published in 1948. It has been described as ‘seminal.’”

For centuries many scholars wrongly thought that Aramaic was the common language of the people of Israel in the days of Jesus, but because of recent archeological finds scholars are now convinced that Hebrew was the language of Israel in those days. See my book, [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#), p. 18, note 75 to realize that James spoke Hebrew at the Council of Acts 15, not Aramaic, Greek or Latin. James is the half-brother of Jesus, known also as Jacob. He was the Nasi (Prince) over all the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, including the Apostles (Acts 12:17; 15:13f; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:9; cf. James 1:1f).

³ Ibid., p. 95

⁴ Ibid., Eusebius, HE 4, 5, 2-11; Epiphanius, *Adversus haereses* 70, 10, PG 42, 355-356.

⁵ Ibid., Eusebius, HE 3, 27, 3, trans. by Kirsopp Lake; Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History*, 1949, I, p. 263.

Epiphanius (315-403), another Catholic Church Father, was also a bishop and church historian. He offers a wonderful description of the Nazarenes in his time, saying that,

“The Nazarenes do not differ in any essential thing from them” (i.e. the Jews), “since they practice the custom and doctrines prescribed by the Jewish Law, except that they believe in Christ. They believe in the resurrection of the dead and that the universe was created by God. They preach that God is one and that Jesus Christ is his Son. They are very learned in the Hebrew language...Therefore, they differ both from the Jews and from the Christians; from the former because they believe in Christ; from the true Christians because they fulfill until now Jewish rites as the circumcision, the Sabbath and others.”⁶

Epiphanius, like Eusebius before him, speaks of the Nazarenes as not being “true Christians” because they kept Mosaic Law, but it should be clear to see that Mosaic Law was the biblical norm and that Catholicism was the aberration. It was the latter that gave you, Sunday, Easter, Xmas and the eating of unclean meats, like bacon, pork chops and shrimp (see my two page handout, [Illicit SEX and the Church](#)).

Unless you think that Jesus, who came to make the Two Flocks (Jew and Gentile) one (Jn. 10:16; cf. Rom. 11:11f.; 1st John 2:6; Rev. 14:12), has two entirely different sets of Christian lifestyles for the Gentile Christian and the Jewish Christian, the theology of the Nazarenes is the Apostolic lifestyle for both Gentile and Jew. In other words, all the Gentiles were keeping all the rules and laws of Moses that applied to them. There are four major Pillars of Mosaic Law that every Christian should keep: the 7th day Sabbath, the Feasts of Israel, the Mosaic Dietary laws and tithing.

It was Pope Sixtus in 120 AD who threw out Mosaic Law as Christianity’s *lifestyle*. I am not speaking about for salvation or trying to earn one’s salvation by the Law (i.e. works righteousness, which is what the ancient Judaizers wanted the Gentile to do). I am presenting God’s New Testament Christian lifestyle, which is diametrically opposed to what Christians have received from the Roman Catholic Church. The Mother Church didn’t begin in Rome, but in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 2:1-38; 15:1-24; 21:20-24; Gal. 2:1-10).

Christianity follows Rome in its heretical lifestyle. Nowhere in the New Testament does anyone speak of Sunday replacing the Sabbath, nor of Easter replacing Passover. On the contrary, the Apostle Paul exhorts his Gentile Corinthian Christians to keep Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (1st Cor. 5:6-8).

For why Rome is seen by most Christians as the Harlot of New Testament Babylon (Rev. 17-18), read Alexander Hislop’s Christian classic, [The Two Babylons—The Full Hislop](#). For why the Feasts of Israel and Mosaic Law are God’s will for Christian lifestyle, see these two page handouts of mine:

1. [The Feasts of Israel and the Church](#),
2. [A Snapshot of Church History and Mosaic Law](#) and
3. [The Two Triangles of the NT](#).

Hopefully, this information will stir up your holy curiosity about your current Christian lifestyle and seek the Lord for His New Testament lifestyle. We’re not to bend God’s Word to our lifestyle, but to bend our lifestyle to God’s Word. If you have any questions contact me at AvramYeh@Gmail.com

⁶ Ibid., Epiphanius, *Adversus haereses* 29, 7, PG 41, 402. Circumcision of the eight day old Jewish boy is still required by God for Jewish baby boys because the Jews are literally part of the covenant that God made with Father Abraham (Gen. 17:10-14; Acts 21:20-24). On the other hand, the Gentile Christian and his son must *not* be physically, covenantally circumcised because entry into Messiah’s Kingdom isn’t through physical, covenantal circumcision, but the circumcision made without hands (Col. 2:11). Both the Jew, who is physically covenantally circumcised, and the Gentile who isn’t, come into the New Covenant the same way—through faith in Jesus. God prohibits physical, covenantal circumcision for the Gentile in the New Testament. For why this is, see my article, [Gentile Circumcision?](#)

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