

MOSAIC LAW IS ESTABLISHED

Romans 3:31

by Avram Yehoshua

[The Seed of Abraham](#)

There are a number of verses in the New Testament, *after* the resurrection,¹ that declare the Law of Moses to be the vehicle by which God wants all Christians to drive their lives by.² Romans 3:31 is one such verse. It validates Mosaic Law for Christians by saying that the Law is *established* by a Christian's faith in Yeshua (Jesus), which unfortunately is the opposite of what the Church teaches. Just what *established* means to the Church has been the subject of debate among Christian scholars because their theological position against Mosaic Law is contrary to Scripture. In other words, they cannot see the forest for the tree, or the Hand of God trying to overturn their heretical Roman Catholic theology in this simple, yet profound verse.³

Some English translations of Rom. 3:31 use the word *establish*, while others speak of the Law being *upheld*. The Greek word ἱστομεν (*histomen*) is the basis for both English words:

“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” (Romans 3:31 NKJV; *establish* for also the ASV, KJV and NASB)

“Do we then nullify the law through faith? Absolutely not! Instead we uphold the law.” (Romans 3:31 NET; *uphold* for also the ESV, HCSV, NIV and NRSV)

Coming to the verse without a preconceived idea that “Mosaic Law is not for a Christian,” the verse is fairly straight forward. The Apostle Paul point-blank asks the question about the Law's validity, specifically in relation to a Christian's faith—is the Law made void or nullified⁴ by one's faith in Christ? Paul emphatically answers it—‘God forbid!’ (KJV), ‘Absolutely not!’⁵ (NET), ‘Not at all!’ (NIV), and ‘May it

¹ I write of *after the resurrection* because the Church teaches that with the death of Jesus, Mosaic Law became invalid for Christians. This article, about Romans 3:31, is written to prove that the Church is wrong.

² There are many verses, *after the resurrection*, that declare Mosaic Law to be God's Standard for His Church to live by. The following are some articles that present them: [The Feasts of Israel and the Church](#), [The Two Triangles of the NT](#), [Grace, Holiness and the Pharisaic Church](#), [Hebrews and the Change of the Law](#), [Law 102, Take the Quiz! Five Quick Questions about the New Testament](#)) and the book, [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#).

³ See [A Snapshot of Church History and Mosaic Law](#) to realize that Pope Sixtus threw out Mosaic Law and brought in Sunday, Easter and anti-Semitism in 116 AD (cf. Daniel 7:25; Rev. 18:4). In other words, it wasn't Jesus or the Apostles who gave Christianity anti-Mosaic Law theology, Sunday, Easter and Xmas, etc.

⁴ The Greek word for ‘make void’ or ‘nullify’ (the law) is καταργούμεν (*katargumen*). It means, “to cause something to lose its power or effectiveness, invalidate, make powerless...to cause something to come to an end or to be no longer in existence, abolish, wipe out, set aside.” From Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (third edition, 2001), (Accordance Bible Software), p. 525.

καταργέω Joseph Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Accordance Bible Software), paragraph 5373: “to render idle, unemployed, inactive, inoperative.”

⁵ The Greek phrase for ‘Absolutely not!’ etc., is μὴ γένοιτο (*mae gih'noytoe*); see [Ancient Greek](#); also [Rom. 3:4](#) for why ‘God forbid!’ is an accurate translation even though ‘God’ is not in the Greek phrase. An interesting side note is that the positive word in the phrase (γένειτο) is used by Yeshua in saying that the Sabbath was *established* for the sake of man (Mk 2:27); Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 197.

never be!,' are all accurate English translations for the Greek phrase μὴ γένοιτο (*mae gih'noy'toe*). The Apostle Paul could not have made it any plainer. Our faith in Christ does not nullify Mosaic Law. The 'law' that the Apostle is writing of is Mosaic Law, as both the context and the use of the term in the New Testament speak of.⁶ In other words, it's Mosaic Law that Paul is speaking about being established by our faith in the Messiah, and not just the Ten Commandments or the 'moral law,' as some present.

The same Greek phrase is also used by Paul in Rom. 9:14 where he says, "What shall we say then?! Is there unrighteousness with God?! *Certainly not!*" It's the most powerful way that Paul could say, 'No!,' for either God being unrighteous or Mosaic Law being nullified by our faith in Jesus. 'On the contrary,' Paul says in Rom. 3:31, our faith in Christ *establishes* the Law.

The Greek word for *establish* or *uphold* is ἵστομεν (*histomen*). It means, 'to cause or make to stand'⁷ and 'to establish...to validate something that is in force or a practice.'⁸

Christian Interpretations of Romans 3:31

Everett Harrison

Christian theologian Everett Harrison (1902-1999) states that Romans 3:31 "has elicited many interpretations, attesting its difficulty."⁹ Really? It's certainly not a difficult Greek verse to understand (nor in English). There's nothing in the Greek grammar that baffles theologians. It's alleged difficulty lies in the fact that Christianity doesn't recognize Mosaic Law as valid for Christians. Because of that scholars have to perform theological gymnastics in order to strip the verse of its clear Mosaic Law meaning. Harrison's understanding is one such teaching. He states that,

"Paul has twice mentioned law observance (vv. 27, 28) as not entering at all into justification, which is by faith apart from works of the law. May we draw the conclusion, then, that the law is useless? By no means, the apostle would answer, for the operation of faith really upholds or establishes the law. The gospel establishes the law in that the latter is vindicated. The law has fulfilled a vital role by bringing an awareness of sin (v. 20). A broken law made the redeeming work of Christ at the cross necessary (vv. 24, 25). One who sees that the cross was a divine necessity will never feel that he can make himself approved by God by fulfilling the law's demands. If that were possible, Christ would have died in vain. Since the death of Christ was in terms of God's righteousness (v. 26), this means that the demands of the law have not been set aside in God's plan of salvation. It is not damaging to this position that "law" lacks the article here, for the same is true in 5:20."¹⁰

⁶ For why the use of the term *law* in the New Testament continually refers to Mosaic Law see [Mosaic Law and the Ten](#). In terms of context for Rom. 3:31, Paul has just spoken of Mosaic Law when he uses the term law a few verses earlier in Rom. 3:20, when he states that it's only by the Law that the knowledge of sin is realized. In other words, it's a sin not to keep Passover, which is not spoken of in the Ten Commandments (which is rarely referred to as the Law), but in Mosaic Law (Num. 9:1-13, esp. v. 13).

⁷ ἵστημι Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, paragraph 4996.

⁸ Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 482; "to validate something that is in force or in practice; reinforce validity of, uphold, maintain...validate or maintain your own tradition Mk. 7:9; uphold (the) law Rom. 3:31."

⁹ Everett F. Harrison, Author; Frank E. Gaebelin, general Editor; J. D. Douglas, associate ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 10, *Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI, USA: Zondervan, 1990), (Accordance Bible Software) paragraph 52876.

Harrison is correct that we cannot be justified (saved) by keeping the Law, but completely misses what Paul means by saying a Christian's faith establishes the Law. Harrison speaks of the Law being vindicated in its revealing our sins and the need for a Savior ('v. 20), which it certainly does, but he doesn't realize that v. 20 speaks of Mosaic Law revealing just what sin is. In other words, we still need to know what sin is in God's eyes so that we don't sin against our Savior in ignorance.

Harrison writes that if we could keep the Law without sinning we wouldn't need a Savior, but this has nothing to do with v. 31 and the Law being *established* by our faith in Yeshua. He also says that when one realizes that the Savior was who we needed we won't try to keep the Law for salvation, but as right as that is it has nothing to do with v. 31.

The Law for Harrison was valid as a way for one to realize their need for the Savior, but not any longer once saved, yet how illogical is that? Once saved does it matter if a Christian sins? Of course, Paul says (Rom. 6:1f), and so how does a Christian determine what is sin *after* the resurrection? The Apostle answered that 11 verses earlier, when he again presents the need for Mosaic Law as valid for every Christian, with his second phrase:

“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, *for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*” (Romans 3:20 NKJV)

“For by the Law is the knowledge of sin.” In other words, without the Law a Christian lacks God's understanding of what is sin. In other words, Mosaic Law reveals the full extent of what is sin in God's eyes (e.g. the breaking of the 7th day Sabbath and the not keeping of Passover), and subsequently, what is righteousness (e.g. the keeping of the 7th day Sabbath and Passover). Without Mosaic Law a Christian is severely handicapped, not knowing God's definition of sin *after* the resurrection. The Letter to the Romans was written about 23 years *after* Messiah was crucified and rose from the dead, which means that what Paul writes is for the Christian today.

Instead of explaining what v. 31 means, Harrison preaches to us by saying that no one can keep the Law for eternal life or that one would 'never feel that he can make himself approved by God (for eternal life) by fulfilling the law's demands.' As true as that is it has absolutely nothing to do with properly interpreting v. 31.

Harrison then goes on to list other scholarly interpretations, saying that some think v. 31 is intended,

“to provide a transition to chapter 4, where Abraham's justification is explained. On this view 'law' simply means Scripture, or more specifically, the Pentateuch.¹¹ This view gets support from v. 21 with its mention of 'the Law and the Prophets'...Further, it is doubtful that the material of the following chapter can be said to uphold the law.”¹²

'Law' does mean the Pentateuch (i.e. Mosaic Law), but Paul isn't using it as a bridge into chapter four. It's meant to be a definitive declaration. Torah is established by faith in Christ. Paul was dealing with those, like Christians today, who thought that 'all you need is faith in Christ and Mosaic Law isn't needed,' since that's all it takes to enter into the Kingdom. As King Solomon said, 'There's nothing new under the sun' (Eccl. 1:9c).

It's also nice to know that some think the Apostle Paul was declaring that God's Word ('Scripture') has been established by our faith in Christ. Wasn't that already established at Mt. Sinai 14 centuries earlier? Did Paul need to write that? As for the Prophets they didn't say anything outside or contrary to the Law, but rebuked Israel for not keeping Mosaic Law. Harrison continues with other scholarly interpretations:

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ See p. 2, note 6, for why 'Law' in v. 31 means Mosaic Law.

¹² Harrison, *Romans*, paragraph 52876.

“Another possibility is that Paul is striking out against antinomianism.¹³ If his statement had occurred in the course of his argument in chapters 6 to 8, this would be quite apparent, but it is less likely here. Still another view is that Paul means to say that the moral standards of the law are maintained under the gospel, thus anticipating the truth stated in 8:4. In line with this is Luther’s interpretation that to establish the law means to fulfill it through faith. But again, this anticipates what is developed only later on. The view that Paul means to say that we establish the law because under the gospel Christ keeps it for us is unsupported by anything in the passage. Doubtful also is the contention of H. J. Schoeps that Paul “implies that faith is the true content of the law” (*Paul* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961], p. 210). This runs counter to the argument in the preceding context.”¹⁴

Verse 31 certainly doesn’t speak of there being no laws, but just the opposite (the Law, with all its rules established), and so anti-nomianism is not what Paul is teaching. Harrison lists another scholarly interpretation that speaks of v. 31 teaching that the Law in v. 31 speaks only of the moral laws of Mosaic Law being established. This, though, creates quite a problem. Every Christian knows that it’s immoral to steal or murder, but they don’t realize that God’s 7th day Sabbath, as well as the Feasts of Israel and the Mosaic dietary laws, to name three Pillars of Mosaic Law, are also moral laws or rules.

The question is, who determines what is moral? The Church or God Almighty? The Church easily sweeps under the rug God’s 7th day Sabbath, all His Feasts (Lev. 23) and the Mosaic dietary laws as ‘ceremonial’ and so they teach that it’s not for a Christian to keep because ‘only the moral laws come through into the New Testament.’ This is odd, though, when the punishment against stealing, an uncontested moral law, is to repay it back and then some (cf. Ex. 22:1), but the punishment for desecrating the 7th day Sabbath (Ex. 31:12-17) or not keeping the Passover is death (Num. 9:1-13, esp. v. 13 where ‘cut off’ is generally seen as death or possibly ostracism from Israel, which is an emotional and spiritual death). As the Mosaic moral laws of murder and adultery both have death as their punishment, it seems that God looks upon what the Church calls His so-called ceremonial laws as just as important and moral as not murdering or committing adultery. Also, to classify the Sabbath, etc., as a ceremonial law is an artificial distinction that God never makes in Torah. All its rules come from the mouth of God and to disobey God is certainly immoral and unrighteous.

When a theologian or a Christian pastor is committed to a preconceived false assumption, that Mosaic Law is not for a Christian, it’s easy to see how their reasoning goes through theological acrobatics to present their heretical understanding to their Flocks that directly go against what Scripture is plainly stating. Every law, statute, and rule ‘of Moses’ that applies to us we need to walk in, just as Yeshua did. We are not to keep them as the Rabbis teach, but as The Rabbi teaches us (Mt. 23:8).

The Lord Yeshua Himself tells us that all the rules of Moses are an organic whole that display God’s very definition of love (and consequently, sin). When challenged by a Scribe concerning which of the Mosaic laws was the greatest Yeshua says to love God and neighbor. Then Yeshua goes on to say that *all the other commandments have their reason for existing to explain how to love God and neighbor*: “On these two commandments **hang** all the Law and the Prophets.” (Mt. 22:40 NKJV)

The Church says to ‘hang the Law!,’ but that’s not what Jesus said. According to Messiah Yeshua, God (the Father) has given us *His understanding of how to love Him and our neighbor in all the other rules of Mosaic Law*. In other words, every commandment, statute, ordinance and judgment, etc., is God’s very definition of how to love Him and our neighbor, and consequently, what is righteous and holy and what is

¹³ Anti-nomianism speaks of the “view that Christians are released by grace from the obligation of observing the moral law,” and if ‘no moral law’ then certainly no ceremonial laws like the Passover.

¹⁴ Harrison, *Romans*, paragraph 52876.

sinful and disobedient.

Obedience to God is the highest form of morality and freedom. Not obeying Him is immoral and so not keeping any of His rules that apply to us is immoral and sinful. In other words, eating bacon and shrimp is immoral, as God forbids this for His people (cf. Lev. 11:1f.), of which Gentile Christians are a part of (Rom. 11:11f.; Eph. 2:11f.; John 10:16).

When Yeshua stood before His 12 Apostles and said, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life...’ (Jn. 14:6), He was aligning Himself with Torah and saying that He was the Living Torah. Those three nouns (Way, Truth and Life) are all synonyms for Mosaic Law.¹⁵ We are called to follow and imitate Yeshua, and one of those ways is to realize that He kept Torah all His life. Truly, it is the Way to walk out our faith in Him.

Harrison writes that Luther’s interpretation of what it means for the Law to be established was that it is fulfilled by our faith in Christ (i.e. the Gospel). Luther used a clever slight-of-hand magic trick in that his teaching means absolutely nothing. Because Jesus kept the Law a Christian doesn’t have to? How is the Law then established? As unbiblical and illogical that is, Luther has quite a following among millions of Christians, other than Lutherans who, not knowing where it originated from, use it to wave off having to observe Passover, etc. Harrison rightly knocks Luther’s position down when he says there’s nothing in Rom. 3:31 to support it.

Finally, Harrison brings up H. J. Schoeps who said that faith was ‘the true content of the law.’ Harrison pointed out that this thought ran ‘counter to the argument in the preceding context.’ It also side-steps that Paul distinctly speaks of the Law being established. Paul should have left ‘law’ out of the verse entirely and instead substituted ‘faith,’ but this would have made for a very queer sentence:

“Do we then make void faith through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish faith.” (Romans 3:31 NKJV)

“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish faith.” (Romans 3:31 NKJV)

Hmm...no wonder Schoeps didn’t substitute faith for law. He died in July 1980...I hope he had a day job.

¹⁵ The terms, *way*, *truth* and *life* (John 14:6) are synonyms for Mosaic Law—God’s Word (Isaiah 1:10; 2:3; 5:24). Yeshua, speaking of them together, is emphatically declaring that He is the living Word of God; the living Torah, the living embodiment of all the words or instructions of God (i.e. Mosaic Law), which emanate from God’s very nature. What was first spoken by God to Israel, and then written down by Moses (Mosaic Law; Torah), is a written reflection of God the Son (and the Father and the Holy Spirit), for They are one. The Hebrew word translated as ‘Law’ actually means instruction or teaching, so Mosaic Law is the Instruction or Teaching of God concerning Himself, His Ways and His Nature, and how He wants Israel to live out their lives before Him.

1. *The Way* is a synonym for Mosaic Law in Ex. 13:21; 18:20; 23:20; 32:8; Dt. 9:12, 16; 11:28; 13:5; 31:29; Ps. 25:8; 32:8; 119:1, 14, 27, 30, 32-33, 35 (path i.e. ‘way’), 104-105; 139:24; Prov. 2:20; 15:10; 23:19; 29:27; Jer. 6:16; Mal. 2:8-9.
2. *The Truth* is a synonym for Torah in Ps. 119:43, 142, 151, 160; Mal. 2:6, and,
3. *The Life* is a synonym for Mosaic Law in Dt. 30:15, 19-20; 32:47; Ps. 16:11; Prov. 3:1-3, 13-18; 6:23; 10:17; 12:28, etc.

Yeshua didn’t do away with the Law of Moses—He amplified it (Mt. 5:17f.). See also Acts 9:2; 18:25-26; 19:9, 23; 24:12, 14 concerning *The Way* as the name of the movement for the Jewish (and Gentile) people who believed in Yeshua and walked out their faith in Him through God’s Torah.

Douglas Moo

Douglas Moo (born 1950) is another well known Christian theologian. In his understanding of v. 31 he states that it,

“reveals again Paul’s desire to prevent his readers from drawing too extreme a conclusion from his argument against the law. Paul’s blunt rejection of the law from any role in justification in favour of faith. (20-21, 27-28) does not mean that he thereby seeks to nullify the law. On the contrary, Paul insists, we uphold the law. Unfortunately, Paul does not here explain how it is that his preaching upholds (or ‘establishes’, Gk. *histeāmi*) the law. He may mean that his doctrine of justification by faith is fully in accord with the teaching of the Pentateuch (‘the law’), as he makes clear in ch. 4. More likely, however, since his focus in vs. 27-28 has been on the demands of the law, he is teaching that faith itself provides for the complete fulfilment of its demands. As Paul will put it in 8:4, ‘the righteous requirements of the law’ are ‘fully met’ in the Spirit-filled believer.”¹⁶

Moo rightly understands that Mosaic Law (the Pentateuch) cannot be used for justification, but he fails to tell us how it’s ‘fully in accord’ with the Law. How can this concept be reconciled with the reality that God demands obedience to His divine rules and ways in Torah? Be that as it may, Moo too fails to realize that Paul is saying that the Law is God’s Standard or Guideline for how a Christian is to walk out his faith in Yeshua once he is Born Again—just as Yeshua did before His Father. It was the Law that judged Him sinless and it’s the Law that continues to reveal sins to us. We partake of Messiah’s righteousness by faith in Him, but that doesn’t mean the Law is not valid for us. This is exactly what the Apostle Paul is coming against, which is the spiritualizing away the Law:

“Jesus kept it and He’s in me, so that’s how I keep it. He’s my Passover Lamb so I don’t have to keep Passover.”

If Jesus were leading them they would be keeping the Passover and the Sabbath, etc., so they could learn more about who their Savior is because all the Feasts and Ways of the Law reflect Him and reveal to us who He is. Being the Passover Lamb is not just a name or designation given to Him. It’s the tip of the divine Iceberg that reveals Him as the sacrificial Redeemer of Israel.¹⁷ Even if someone knows academically all there is to know about the Passover, but doesn’t observe it, their knowledge is superficial and two dimensional. It’s likened unto someone knowing all about watermelons, but who has never tasted one. They have knowledge, but not an experiential knowledge.

Returning to Moo’s second and last possibility, he seems to be a follower of Luther in that one’s faith in Christ has fulfilled the Law (‘faith itself provides for the complete fulfillment of its demands). Again we have the superficial point that since Christ kept the Law the Christian doesn’t have to. Does this really explain how our faith establishes (not fulfills) the Law?

With this kind of understanding that Moo presents, how is it that we’re preached at in church to love our neighbor, not steal and lie? Didn’t Jesus fulfill that, too? Where does the emulation of God the Son stop? The Church says, ‘At the moral laws, but Paul insists that our faith establishes the Law—all the Law. Paul never speaks of a truncated Mosaic Law.

One’s faith in Yeshua doesn’t mean that he can skip the rules of Mosaic Law anymore than one can murder or lie at will. Jesus fulfilling the Law doesn’t mean a Christian can live whatever way his heart directs him.¹⁸ We are called *to follow Christ*, not trek off on our own ways. We are called to emulate Christ, not

¹⁶ Douglas J. Moo, *Romans*, New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition; ed. D. A. Carson. et al. Accordance electronic ed. (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1994), p. 1129.

¹⁷ See [Passover and Jesus](#) and [Passover](#).

present different ways in front of others that would have been sin for Jesus. The Apostle John, more than 60 years *after* the resurrection, wrote that we're to walk just like Jesus did:

“He who says he abides in Him *ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*” (1st John 2:6 NKJV; cf. 1st Cor. 11:1; 4:16-17)

R. C. H. Lenski

R. C. H. Lenski (1864-1936) was a highly revered Lutheran theologian whose commentary on the Letter to the Romans is read today by many outside his denomination. Speaking of Rom. 3:31 he wrote:

“But if faith is the only source and the only medium of God’s act of justifying does it not, by ruling out all ‘works of law,’ then abolish ‘law,’ anything and everything in the nature of law? Is that what” Paul is doing? “The very question suggests that” he “could not and would not do such a thing. Καταργέω” (nullify/render void/invalid) “means to render ineffective and thus to abolish. After its effect has been removed, law, whether of the Mosaic or of any other type, might as well be thrown aside altogether (antinomianism). ‘Perish the thought!’” Paul exclaims...The very idea is intolerable. ‘Abolish law?’ ‘On the contrary...we are establishing law,’ upholding, supporting law. The verb used is not ‘giving’ or ‘setting up’ law (δίδωμι, τίθημι) but *maintaining whatever law has already been properly given and set up* (ἱστώμεν a verb). ‘Law’ is again generic and includes Jewish as well as pagan law and also the fact that pagans are ‘law’ for themselves (2:14). Our teaching that faith is the only source and means of justification, Paul says, upholds all law.”¹⁹

Lenski realizes that Paul is not abolishing ‘law,’ but doesn’t see that Paul is speaking in the context of the laws that God gave to Israel, not ‘all laws,’ but specifically Torah. There was no need for a Jewish man by the name of Paul to validate pagan laws as everyone already knew that Rome’s laws were intact and established, but Torah? With an overemphasis on Grace, it seems that some Christians were abolishing Torah, and hence, the Apostle’s need to present it as valid. Lenski goes on to deal with the heretical teaching of Luther by saying,

“Both of the misgivings stated in these last two verses are not of a serious nature; the brief answers suffice. In other connections Paul treats these matters more at length. Yet some ask further regarding this matter of law: ‘Just how does our Christian teaching regarding faith support law?’ They usually answer: ‘Faith itself requires law, for it brings forth the new life that delights to run the way of God’s commandments’ (Ps. 119:32). Then Luther is quoted: ‘Faith fulfills all laws; works fulfill not a tittle of the law.’ But when this is said to be the whole of faith’s support of law, when the law’s function of producing the realization of sin (3:20) is ruled out, we cannot agree. It, too, receives the support of ‘this faith’ teaching. *Without law and the realization of sin faith itself would be impossible in the first place;* and after we come to have faith, it remains only when by means of the law we daily see our sins, daily repent, daily cry for pardon. Rom. 7:7-25 is Paul’s own full exposition of this subject.”²⁰

Lenski rightly knocks Luther’s interpretation to the ground that ‘faith’ fulfills the Law. Conceptually,

¹⁸ See [Ten Ways Yeshua Fulfilled The Law](#) to realize that ‘fulfill’ does not mean ‘do away with’ (the Law).

¹⁹ R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 1–7*, Lenski’s Commentary on the New Testament (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), (Accordance Bible Software), pp. 276-277.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 277.

Lenski is right about the Law's place in the believer's everyday life, but it seems he's only speaking of the typical Christian understanding of the moral laws vs the carnal law against them within. The climax of Romans 7:7-25 has Paul struggling with his carnality and the Spirit within who wants to do right. It's Paul's faith that allows him to rise above the sins and its condemnation, as he allows the Holy Spirit to neutralize and overcome them. Yeshua took his sins, their condemnation and their punishment upon Himself, setting Paul (and us) free from them even as they daily tormented him. He learned to walk and to live in the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4), but this doesn't express Paul's primary meaning for Rom. 3:31.

Lenski, too, as sharp as he was in not being dragged into the 'faith fulfills the Law and so I don't have to keep Mosaic Law' heresy, didn't realize that Paul spoke of *all* God's laws and rules—every single one of them. As Yeshua said to Satan:

“It is written! ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, *but by every word* that proceeds from the mouth of God!’” (Matthew 4:4) and,

“...assuredly I say to you! Until the Heavens and the Earth *pass away*, not one jot or tittle will by any means *pass from the Law* until all is *fulfilled!*” (Matthew 5:18)

‘Fulfilled’?! The Church teaches that ‘all was fulfilled at the Cross!’, but they have no idea what they’re saying. Yeshua is speaking of what God the Father says through Jeremiah when He speaks of the New Covenant for Israel:

³¹“Behold! The days are coming,’ says Yahveh, ‘when I will make a *New Covenant* with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah—³²not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My Covenant which they broke, though I was a Husband to them,’ says Yahveh. ³³But *this* is the 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. ³⁴No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, “Know Yahveh!,” for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ says Yahveh. ‘For I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more.’” (Jeremiah 31:31-34;

Jeremiah 31:31-34 is the only passage in all the Old Testament where the term, ‘New Covenant’ is found. There are a number of places that speak of the New Covenant, referring to it as an everlasting covenant (e.g. 2nd Sam. 23:5), etc., but none that literally have ‘New Covenant’ except this one. This is significant because of what God says concerning Mosaic Law—He wants to put it in every New Testament Christian’s mind and write it upon their hearts! Some might try to finagle their way out of this by saying it’s only the (so-called) moral laws that God is speaking of, or it’s the Ten Commandments. From the English translation the term ‘law’ can theoretically be either of those two, but the Hebrew word is very specific. The Hebrew word is Torah (תּוֹרָה)²¹ and it means Mosaic Law. One of the primary things that God desires

²¹ תּוֹרָה Adele Berlin, Marc Zvi Brettler, and Michael A. Fishbane, eds., *The Jewish Study Bible*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), (Accordance Bible Software), paragraph 6368: “God places the *Teaching*, i.e., the Torah, in the *inmost being* or heart of the people.”

John E. Hartley, author; R. L. Harris, Editor; Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke, associate Editors, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. I (Accordance Bible Software), p. 403. “*Law teaching*. ASV always ‘law,’ RSV sometimes ‘teaching,’ ‘instruction’ and ‘decisions.’ The word is used 221 times...The priests are to teach the law given by Moses (Lev. 10:11; Dt. 33:10)...Ezra the priest faithfully taught the Law of Moses in the fall Feast of Tabernacles in accordance with the Deuteronomic injunction (Dt. 31:9-11; Ezra 8:1ff.)”

Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, Authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 4 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers; 2002), (Accordance Bible Software), p. 1710; “in the sense of stretching out the finger, or the hand, to point out a route...direction, instruction.” Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Wilhelm Gesenius; Ed-

to do for those who enter into His New Covenant through the Blood of Christ it to give them a new nature; a nature like their Savior's.²² The Christian's new nature is seen in Messiah Yeshua, who kept all Torah that applied to Him. Yeshua is one with Mosaic Law because He is God's living Word. Mosaic Law was originally God's word to Moses for Israel, and Moses wrote those words down. We know them as Mosaic Law.

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews quotes Jer. 31:33 twice (Heb. 8:10; 10:16), using the plural, 'laws' for Torah instead of just 'law,' confirming and validating God's desire to place the laws and rules of Torah upon Christian hearts and minds so that Christians would walk out their faith in Jesus through *all the laws and rules* of Moses that apply to them. Hebrews was written 37 years *after* the resurrection, and so the Church's teaching that Jesus and/or Paul 'made it unnecessary for Christians to keep Passover and the 7th day Sabbath, etc., because Jesus fulfilled it for them' (cf. also 2nd Cor. 3:3), is obviously wrong. The understanding from Jeremiah, literally confirmed twice in Hebrews, is that God desires to place His Torah in our minds and on our hearts.

Every word of God, as Yeshua told Satan, is divine, and Mosaic Law, as interpreted by Yeshua, not necessarily by the Rabbis or the Pastors, is what we are to order our lives by. After all, as the Apostle Paul wrote, Mosaic Law is *established by our faith* in Messiah Yeshua.

The Law is Established?

Before Paul met Yeshua on the Road to Damascus (Acts 9:1f.) and before Peter walked on water (Mt. 14:28-29), the Pharisees had taught the Jewish people to believe that keeping Mosaic Law earned or merited them eternal life.²³ Nowhere in the Tanach (Old Testament) does God say that, but this is what most Jews,²⁴ including Peter and Paul, believed in the days before the Lord Yeshua was crucified. This is the reason why Paul is so adamant about justification by faith and not works. The Jewish people weren't the only people that believed that. All pagan religions, ancient and modern, justify by works (e.g. Mormonism, Catholicism, Islam, and Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.).

With the death and resurrection of the Messiah the heretical concept, of keeping Mosaic Law for eternal life, gave way to faith in Yeshua alone, exemplified by the decision of James at the Council of Acts 15. This was nothing new for the biblical religion of the Hebrews as God had saved Israel out of Egyptian slavery by faith in the blood of the lamb (Ex. 12:1-50f.).

James also determined how the new Gentile Christian was to walk out his faith in the Jewish Savior once he had been justified (Acts 15:20-21), and this is where 'works' or Mosaic Law comes in—not for salvation, but for the divine lifestyle of a Christian. In other words, the Law took its rightful place behind justification as God's Standard for how Christians were to walk out their faith in Jesus.

When Paul speaks of the Law being established, the Apostle is putting the cart (Mosaic Law) behind faith in Yeshua's saving act, not in front of Him nor alongside of Him. It's two sides of the same coin. The Law has no part in saving anyone—neither the ancient Hebrew slave in Egypt nor Paul on the Road to Damascus, but once saved Mosaic Law takes its divinely ordained place in Messiah Yeshua's Kingdom as the Teaching of God that shows every Christian the Way to go; the Way to live their life. The Hebrew word

ward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, Editor, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon*, Abridged (Accordance Bible Software), paragraph 9707; "direction, instruction, law."

²² See [Salvation—The Promise!](#)

²³ See [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#), p. 100f.

²⁴ The Sadducees, who were the aristocratic priestly class, didn't believe in an afterlife (Acts 23:8), and so they didn't believe that keeping Torah merited eternal life.

for Mosaic Law, Torah, means ‘teaching’ and ‘instruction’ and so Mosaic Law is *God’s teaching and instruction* to Israel as to how to live out their faith in Him.

Mosaic Law was never meant to be a vehicle that led to eternal life, but in Paul’s day it had come to be that. In Romans 3:31 Paul is putting it back in its place as the Instruction for life that God intended it to be once He had set Israel free—from Pharaoh and from Satan. The Apostle was establishing it in its proper place or scheme of things (Rom. 9:30-32 esp. v. 32). Torah is God’s Way to live out our life after we’re Born Again, just as it was His Way for Israel to live out their lives once they were saved from Egyptian slavery, and that’s why Yeshua kept all the rules of Moses that applied to Him. It’s God’s very definition of how to love Him and our fellow man.

Christian theologians and pastors, not realizing this, turn Paul’s simple question and direct answer on its head because they think that Mosaic Law has been ‘superseded by grace and faith,’ and so they cannot fathom that Paul is actually upholding the rules of Mosaic Law and establishing it in its rightful place. It’s easy to see unless one is predisposed to Mosaic Law having been done away with at the Cross.²⁵

Conclusion

Romans 3:31 clearly presents Mosaic Law being validated by a Christian’s faith in Yeshua. This means that Christians are to order their lives around the all the rules of Moses that apply to them—just as Jesus, Peter and Paul did.

What if one sins in trying trying to keep, say, the Passover? We’ve all heard that no one can keep the Law perfectly, but who has kept either of the two great commandments perfectly? (Mt. 22:35-40) Does that mean we shouldn’t try? Of course not.

The Blood of Forgiveness allows us to try and try again and the Holy Spirit empowers us to be like Yeshua with the two great commandments and every other rule of Moses. Isn’t that actually what a Christian calls upon whenever he sins against God in his failure to keep ‘the moral laws’ and asks Jesus to forgive him? The concept is the same. There is no reason not to try to keep Mosaic Law just because we can’t keep it perfectly, just as there is no reason not to try to love one’s enemy because we can’t do that perfectly, either. We will fail in these things, but we can always call upon the Lord to forgive us and to empower us to walk like He walked.²⁶

Just as those who crucified Yeshua rejected Him as the Messiah because He didn’t meet their expectations of a conquering King who would overthrow Rome, so too Christians who refuse to follow the biblical Jesus because they think He ‘set them free from Mosaic Law.’ They follow a Savior who has been given to them by the Roman Church. Jesus is the *same* yesterday, *today* and forever (Heb. 13:8). Jesus has not changed. He’s still a 7th day Sabbath keeping, Passover celebrating and pig abstaining Christ. The Apostle Paul has just confirmed that for us. How could Christian theologians, scholars, commentators and pastors not understand that our faith in the Savior has not nullified Mosaic Law for Christians? The power of a lie rests in its ability to deceive.²⁷

²⁵ The Scripture the Church uses for the Law being nailed to the Cross is Col. 2:14. Interesting to note, however, is that nowhere in the second chapter of Colossians nor anywhere else in Paul’s Letter to the Colossians is the Greek (or English) word for Law used. Paul wasn’t speaking about the Law being nailed to the Cross, but our sin indebtedness to God (see [Nailed to the Cross—Col. 2:14](#)).

²⁶ See Romans 6:1-3; 1st John 1:7; 2:1-4; 3:4.

²⁷ This article was finished on Jan. 15, 2020 and revised on Tuesday, March 10, 2020.