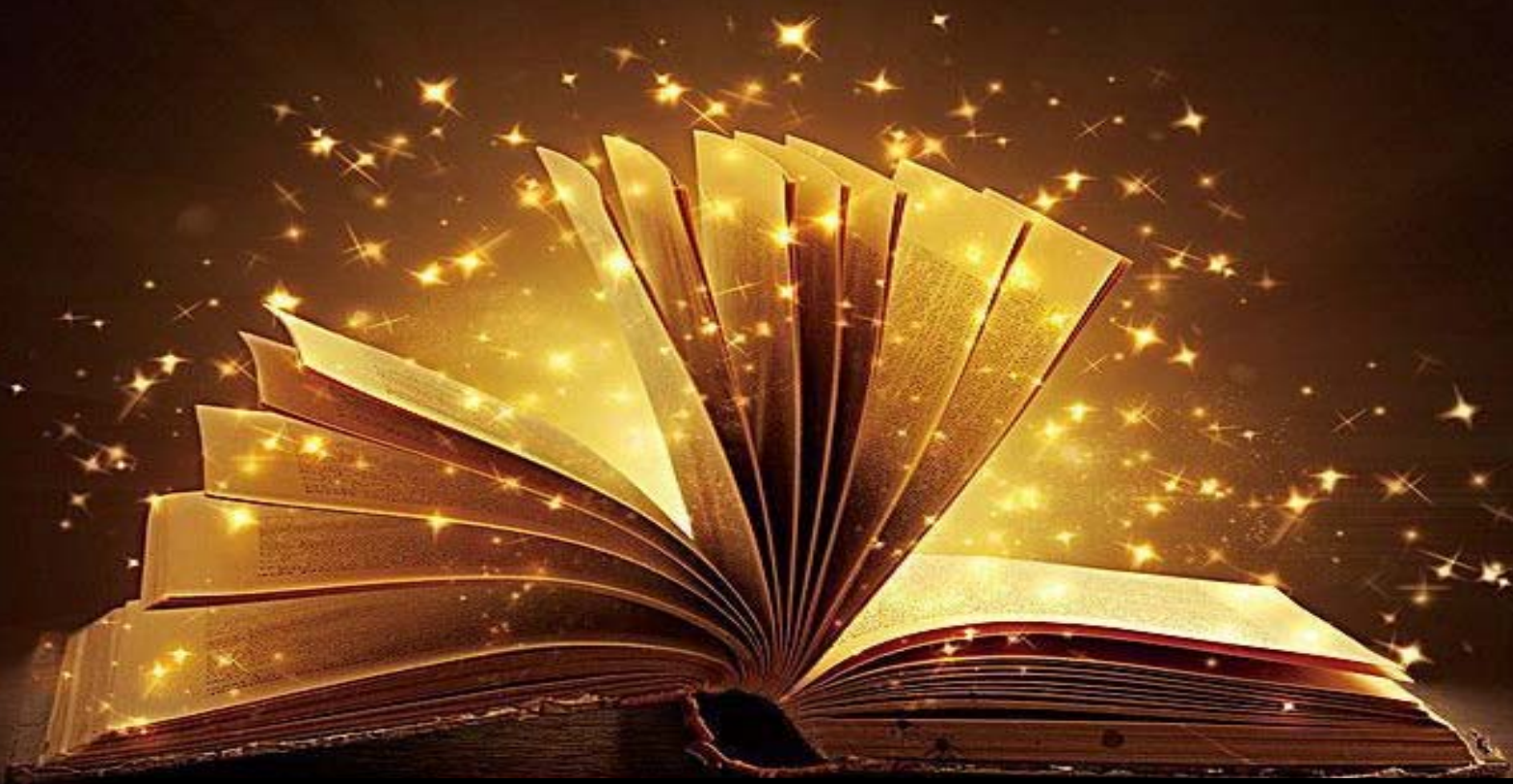


# GOD OF LAW AND ORDER



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## Abiding in God's Law and Order

Matthew 24: 11And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Truly, we are in the age of lawlessness – lawlessness implies a lack of order. In Scriptures, God has always placed great emphasis on His Law and Order. The Law has always been represented by the number 10, and Order the number 12 [Government]. Where God's laws, truths and order are disregarded, treated with contempt and even ignored, then lawlessness will set in to cause destruction.

The devil has after all tried for thousands of years for mankind to exchange God's truth for a pseudo "truth" and "reality" (Romans 1), urging and prompting the citizens of the earth to follow their own moral compass that only points to a direction of apostasy, lawlessness and disorder. This is demonstrated by 2000 years of wars, conflict, bloodbaths, moral corruption, tyranny and the relentless drive to see mankind exalt the "Self" above the will of God.

The importance of God's laws and truths and His order is even demonstrated at the momentous event of Jesus' transfiguration. Matthew 17 (Amplified Bible): 1AND SIX days after this, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. 2And His appearance underwent a change in their presence; and His face shone clear and bright like the sun, and His clothing became as white as light. 3And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, who kept talking with Him."

Behold, Elijah represented the prophetic, while Moses represented the law. Jesus was once again enforcing His Father's order of things that the Church can only move forward in Glory when the law and the prophetic are in place. For it says in Matthew 5: 17Do not think that I have come to do away with or undo the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to do away with or undo but to complete and fulfill them. 18For truly I tell you, until the sky and earth pass away and perish, not one smallest letter nor one little hook [identifying certain Hebrew letters] will pass from the Law until all things [it foreshadows] are accomplished. 19Whoever then breaks or does away with or relaxes one of the least [important] of these commandments and teaches men so shall be called least [important] in the kingdom of heaven, but he who practices them and teaches others to do so shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus also alluded to the prophetic and the law when He was speaking about the two greatest commandments. Matthew 22: 36Teacher, which kind of commandment is great and important (the principal kind) in the Law? [Some commandments are light--which are heavy?] 37And He replied to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (intellect). 38This is the great (most important, principal) and first commandment. 39And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as [you do] yourself. 40These two commandments sum up and upon

them depend all the Law and the Prophets.

Jesus pointed to the fact that love remains the foundation stone of our faith, of the Kingdom and of His heart – and it is upon this “rock” of truth that the Law and the Prophets function and operate. Again, Jesus alludes to the utmost importance of the functionality of the Law and the Prophets, but again, we can only move in His order, truth, laws and reality if we move in love which sums up God.

For these days of lawlessness was spoken about 2000 years ago, and Paul in his writings alluded to a time that indeed there will be such a great falling away from Truth and Law and Order that we will see internal and external disorder and chaos.

2 Thessalonians 2: 1Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

Again, it should be stressed, that we are not bound to the Law of Moses under the New Covenant, yet this doesn't mean that we are under no law. This is a dangerous mindset. In 2 Thessalonians 2 it speaks of the coming of the lawless one. This speaks of the agent of the devil, and a characteristic of such a diabolical servant is the lack of law and order. Our God is not a lawless God. He is a God of order. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul even spoke about the order in the church, for God is a God of order. And there cannot be any order without some sort of law. Yet, it should also be noted, that we are called to follow the order of God and not the order of man. There is a huge difference. One is dictated by the Spirit, and the other by the agenda of man.

The work of Satan, whose aim is to introduce his man of lawlessness, had already begun when the New Testament was being written. Paul explained to the Thessalonians that "the secret power of lawlessness is already at work" (2 Thessalonians 2:7). The "secret power of lawlessness" or "mystery of lawlessness" as the King James Version renders it, is the end-time movement engineered by Satan to enthrone the lawless one in the place of God. This scheme has nearly reached its climax in our times. But amazingly, most believers in the Bible do not even recognize the subtleties of lawlessness at work in the church but have been deceived by their own ministers regarding its operation.

2 Thessalonians 2: 8And then the lawless one (the antichrist) will be revealed and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by His appearing at His coming. 9The coming [of the lawless one, the antichrist] is through the

activity and working of Satan and will be attended by great power and with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs and delusive marvels--[all of them] lying wonders--  
 10And by unlimited seduction to evil and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing (going to perdition) because they did not welcome the Truth but refused to love it that they might be saved. 11Therefore God sends upon them a misleading influence, a working of error and a strong delusion to make them believe what is false,<sup>12</sup>In order that all may be judged and condemned who did not believe in [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely on] the Truth, but [instead] took pleasure in unrighteousness.

Paul places emphasis on the fact that judgment comes to those who have not relied on, trusted and adhered to the truth – which is God’s laws and truths – for by implication this means that those who turned away from the truth walk in iniquity, rebellion, idolatry and lawlessness. According to the Scriptures, the condition of the world in the last days is characterized by the term "lawlessness." Jesus spoke of the "increase of lawlessness" (Matthew 24:12). And Paul wrote about the man of lawlessness and the secret power of lawlessness. Lawlessness may be defined as an action or way of life "not regulated by or based on law." (Webster's Dictionary, p.678). Lawlessness, or iniquity, is a reference to a way of life not in submission to God’s internal spiritual laws.

Jeremiah 9: 13 The LORD said, “It is because they have forsaken my law, which I set before them; they have not obeyed me or followed my law. 14 Instead, they have followed the stubbornness of their hearts; they have followed the Baals, as their ancestors taught them.” 15 Therefore this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “See, I will make this people eat bitter food and drink poisoned water. 16 I will scatter them among nations that neither they nor their ancestors have known, and I will pursue them with the sword until I have made an end of them.”

There are very real and true consequences of not following God’s laws and truths. The blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28 should allude us to the fact that God blesses those who walk after His ways, while those who walk in lawlessness and iniquity end up in a spiritual state of disorder.

A huge concern in the church right now is that while we are not under the Law of Moses, we are still under God’s eternal laws and commandments as fulfilled in Jesus. Even before Moses, God’s Kingdom was one of law and order. The 10 commandments are the summary of such law and order. The 613 Laws of Moses simply expounds on the 10 commandments and were given unto Israel to lead and guide them in order. Even though believers under the New Covenant follow not the 613 Laws of Moses, we still follow a God of Law and Order. It is that’s simple. Otherwise, He is a God of lawlessness, which actually describes the devil! So before the 613 Laws, God’s eternal laws of right and wrong were already in place. As Gentiles, we do not follow the Law of Moses, but certainly God’s timeless laws and commandments.

When Cain killed his brother, what law did he break? He was certainly not breaking one of the 613 Laws of Moses. He broke one of the 10 Commandments. But then we will say



the commandments were only given on Mount Sinai. Yes, but it doesn't mean they have not been in existence even before the foundation of the world was laid. God's eternal laws of right and wrong have certainly not passed away. Even in Garden of Eden, God told Adam and Eve not to eat from a certain tree. It was law, yet they were disobedient. Still today, so many in society and even in the church are disobedient to God, for we follow our own laws, set of rules and ideas.

Take for example one of the commandments that say we must honour our mother and father. Has it passed away? If it does, then the entire sanctity of the order of the family falls apart. In 2 Timothy 3 Paul speaks of the end of days and how people will be 'disobedient to parents' and he mentioned it again in Romans 1 when dealing with lawlessness. He mentions this specifically because God's people under the New Covenant now follow Jesus, and in Jesus is the fulfilment of all law, including the eternal laws of right and wrong. How do we know what is right and wrong when we are governed by no law or commandment?

It says in Romans 1: 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

You are only able to determine what is unrighteous, evil, impure and unholy when you can measure it against a standard of holiness and purity. And such a standard is God's eternal laws and commandments. In Galatians 5 we read of the work of the flesh: "19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." Again, how do we measure if the work of the flesh is wicked? Simple, because it doesn't measure up to God's perfect laws of order and purity and holiness.

As Jesus stated, iniquity shall abound in the last days. Iniquity and lawlessness go hand in hand. It is actually because of the ignorance regarding iniquity that there will be lawlessness, for iniquity speaks of moral corruption and a direct intention not to turn away from what is wrong. Iniquity speaks of an order that stands against God and therefore is rebellion. Matthew 7 (King James Version): 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24 Therefore whosoever

heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

Again, how do we determine what is iniquity, and how to we determine what is right and wrong if we choose to seek a path of no law? For right now the church is directionless and heading down a path of lawlessness simply because we have decided that grace means adherence to no law. Yes, we are under grace and not under the Law of Moses (the specific 613 Laws), but grace doesn't mean we are free from any law and that we can do as we please and live as we desire. This will then nullify the need for repentance, which exacerbates iniquity.

Iniquity is a type of sin that we constantly and willfully and intentionally commit, even though we know it is wrong. Under the old laws of Moses, the guilt, blood and sin offerings dealt with sins generally committed unintentionally, accidentally and out of ignorance. Sins that are committed in the full knowledge of right and wrong are left unrepentant turn into iniquity. Iniquity implies willingly and without any excuse doing wrong in the eyes of the Lord. The blurring of right and wrong and of sin and iniquity is an outflow of the modern-day church as it moves swiftly away from the spiritual law that fully and comprehensibly and ultimately encapsulates the Law of Moses.

Jesus said in Matthew 5 that He came to fulfil the Law and not to do away with it. What the Jews failed to understand was that Paul was fighting for a spiritual law that has encapsulated the Law of Moses by which the Gentiles should be governed. The law taught by Jesus is of such a spiritual nature that it is of a far higher standard than the one given to Moses. Whereas the Law of Moses taught, in general, the physical nature of things, the law taught by Jesus was of a spiritual nature as well. Adultery is no longer confined to the physical realm, but Jesus raised the bar by saying that worshipping any other god is adultery. Spiritual abortion is of far greater concern for it involves that which kills spiritually. The civil, ceremonial and moral laws of Moses are now intertwined in the higher and eternal inner laws of God.

We need to understand: sin is not the same thing as iniquity. Under the new covenant, sealed by the Blood of Jesus, there is a very important difference. We know that sin is the transgression of the law. Iniquity also involves a transgression of the law but it is also gross injustice. Sin and iniquity are found together in some form in about 70 verses in the Bible. There are times when they are used parallel to one another, as in Psalm 38:18 - "For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin."

The differences between iniquity and sin can be seen in Hebrew meanings:

The word 'avon' as used in the Old Testament it is translated mostly as iniquity. The Hebrew meaning refers to perversity, depravity and more importantly, moral evil. Strong's Concordance # 5771. 'avon, aw-vone'; or 'avown (H2 Kings 7 : 9; Psa. 51 : 5 [H7]), aw-vone'; from H5753; perversity, i.e. (moral) evil:--fault, iniquity, mischief, punishment (of iniquity), sin. Another word for iniquity except 'avon' is 'evel'. Strong's Concordance #5766 – referring again to wickedness. Then there is aven. Strong's

Concordance # 205 – referring also back to trouble.

Looking at sin, the key word used is 'Chattah'. In the Old Testament in the King James Version it is translated mostly as sin. The Hebrew meaning is: miss the mark. Strong's Concordance # 2398. chata', khaw-taw'; a prim. root; prop. to miss; hence (fig. and gen.) to sin; by infer. to forfeit, lack, expiate, repent, (causat.) lead astray, condemn:--bear the blame, cleanse, commit [sin], by fault, harm he hath done, loss, miss, (make) offend (-er), offer for sin, purge, purify (self), make reconciliation, (cause, make) sin (-ful, -ness), trespass.

Where sin deals with unintentional sin and being at fault for trespassing - sometimes not deliberately - a law, iniquity deals with wickedness and a form of trouble that is of a moral origin. Moral wickedness implies doing something wrong for it is in one's nature or in one's character, therefore it is not merely something done out of ignorance but is something done out of a moral choice that defies God.

The word "sin" is the most general term for those actions which are wrong. It is missing the mark. If we think of this in the terms of an archer shooting for a bull's eye in a target, this may give us a good idea of the meaning of sin. He may overshoot the target. We do that when we go beyond God's allowed actions and commit what is commonly called sins of commission. That is, we do something we are not supposed to do. It is almost unintentional. However, the arrow may also fall short of the mark. This would be a picture of sins of omission. This refers to the things we should have done but fails to do. The arrow might even go to the right or to the left of the target, but we are to follow God's word without turning from it to the right hand or the left hand (Joshua 1:7). Therefore, anything that comes short of the perfect glory of God (the centre of the target) is sin (Romans 3:23). Sin covers all wrongdoing of any sort.

The grossest injustice is to say that the Righteous Judge of the entire Universe is wrong in any judgment. That is precisely what we do whenever we excuse or cover our sin. Excusing one's sin is iniquity. When we cover our own sin or excuse our sin, or rationalize our sin, or fail to agree with God that our sin is sin, we turn that sin into iniquity. Adam's sin of eating the forbidden fruit turned to iniquity when he said in Gen 3:12 ..., "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me..."

Iniquity is when we excuse or cover or hide our own sin. Then it turns into iniquity. Only the power of the Blood of Jesus covers the sin and empowers us, by that same power of the Blood of Jesus, to stop doing that sin. If we fail to agree with God, or not purpose to stop and turn away from the sin, then it turns into iniquity. Unlike ordinary sin, which is often committed in ignorance or on the spur of the moment, iniquity is premeditated sin which is engaged in with full knowledge, often with a measure of defiance - and even contempt. In short, iniquity is open and wilful defiance of the Almighty's law.

When we repent, we agree with God that we were wrong; and, we agree to turn away and stop that sin. When we repent, then through the power of the Blood of Jesus, God will have mercy and cover that sin, and throw it in the sea of forgetfulness. God will give you



power through the Blood of Jesus to stop that sin.

Jesus came to save sinners and workers of iniquity. Iniquity is gross injustice, which instead of saying Amen to the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit, says everybody sins every day. When enough iniquity is heaped up, iniquity becomes full, and one will no longer hear the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit. Iniquity gives any excuse or any covering of any sin other than pleading for mercy through the Blood of Jesus.

Iniquity has terrifying results. Most people are unable to trace those results back to their underlying cause - iniquity! Listen to the Almighty's invitation to the wise men of past ages to trace the real cause of His people's problems. Can you see the parallels in our day? 12: Who is the wise man that may understand this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through? 13: And the LORD saith, BECAUSE they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; 14: But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them: 15: Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. (Jeremiah 9)

10: And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God? 11: Then shalt thou say unto them, because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law. (Jeremiah 16)

In other words, the root cause of ancient Israel's ills was willful disobedience of God's law. There are a number of blatant sins in the church which can be classified as iniquity; sins which multiplied millions of church-goers engage in with impunity - every week of the year; sins which are the root cause of the church's present problems. One of them is idolatry. The dictionary defines the word 'idol' as the image of a god: and 'idolatry' as the worship of idols. In the second of the Ten Commandments, this matter of making and worshipping images is forbidden.

Isaiah 59: 2But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He will not hear. 3For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue mutters wickedness. 4None sues or calls in righteousness [but for the sake of doing injury to others--to take some undue advantage]; no one goes to law honestly and pleads [his case] in truth; they trust in emptiness, worthlessness and futility, and speaking lies! They conceive mischief and bring forth evil!

We have to realise something of great importance – God shall never be mocked and His grace and mercy is never a license to sin, to be workers of iniquity, to be lawless and rebellious. For those who call upon His name yet continue in their iniquity and

rebellion, then the Lord will away His ear and heed not the call! This was also in the case of Ezekiel 8, when the Lord showed Ezekiel all the iniquity –with idolatry being the highest form of iniquity – and as a result the Lord said that He would not listen to the priests and the elders. Ezekiel 8: 17Then [the Spirit] said to me, Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it too slight a thing to the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here, that they must fill the land with violence and turn back afresh to provoke Me to anger? And behold, they put the branch to their nose [actually, before their mouths, in superstitious worship]! 18Therefore I will deal in wrath; My eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

It, however, remains shocking how many “believers” – those of the Holy Priesthood – still bow down to idols. Our idols have become our money, our careers, fame, and success while across the globe celebrities are worshipped. Sin and iniquity call us to humbly come before the Lord and be willing to submit to His discipline and instruction. When we allow ourselves to be opened to His fire and Spirit, then the Lord explores our very being. He will expose all things in us that are iniquity and that is sin. If we are doing something that we know is wrong then we need to repent and do it no more.

The problem is that we would rather bow to the pressures of the world and listen to the justification of the world when it comes to what is right and wrong. We need to follow God and not man. Bowing before God and agreeing to His covenant implies that we agree to His rights and wrongs.

In the days of old, the Israelites had to obey 613 laws. The only way to truly know if we are walking in His will is to sit at His feet, constantly waiting and yearning and seeking until we truly are absorbed and baptized in His teachings. And where there is sin and iniquity, we need to repent and turn from our ways. Sin has now become a misgiving, a character flaw, a childhood shortcoming or/and a cultural imperfection – Jesus did not die because of a misunderstanding or a simple flaw! He died because mankind had transgressed blatantly and intentionally and deliberately against the Great I AM. He didn't die a painful death only for mankind to deem what He has died for to be incorrect or inaccurate. He died for us to be free from sin and iniquity – that which divided us from the Father.

As soon as we begin to justify rights and wrongs, then we might as well look at the cross and deem the sacrifice null and void. We might as well betray our faith for then we are saying Jesus didn't have to die a horrible death because His interpretation of redeeming us from the law of sin and death is mistakenly out of context! No – Jesus died for us because our actions, be it wrong, do separate us from the Lord. He died for us to be redeemed. Any deed or action or word that causes unrest in the spirit has to be tested with the Lord – yet if we know it to be wrong, then it is iniquity and for that, we need to repent quickly and get done with it! Iniquity leads to a corruption of character and spirit and is eventually deemed an evil condition.

Isaiah 1 (King James Version): 1The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw

concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. 2Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. 3The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. 4Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backwards.

Sadly, the Church of today does not believe that the Law of God is relevant for the "New Testament" believer. And again, we are not talking about the 613 laws. They have rejected the Law completely – even on a spiritual level. They are unsuspecting participants in the fulfilment of Jesus' word that lawlessness would be epidemic in the last days. The apostle John says that "everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). Thus, breaking the Law (yes, the higher spiritual laws as propagated by Jesus) is sin, and habitual and sustained disregard for the Law is iniquity and lawlessness.

Daniel the prophet says that the lawless one "will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws" (7:25). The laws which will be "changed" in the last days are, of course, God's laws as set forth in the Scriptures. Speaking of the false teachers who are to arise in the last days, Peter tells us that "many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute" (2 Peter 2:2).

Such shameful ways and men of rebellion and lawlessness were also highlighted in the days of Jeremiah. Jeremiah 8: 6 I have listened attentively, but they do not say what is right. No one repents of his wickedness, saying, "What have I done?" Each pursues his own course like a horse charging into battle. 7 Even the stork in the sky knows her appointed seasons, and the dove, the swift and the thrush observe the time of their migration. But my people do not know the requirements of the LORD. 8 " 'How can you say, "We are wise, for we have the law of the LORD," when actually the lying pen of the scribes has handled it falsely? 9 The wise will be put to shame; they will be dismayed and trapped. Since they have rejected the word of the LORD, what kind of wisdom do they have? 10 Therefore I will give their wives to other men and their fields to new owners. From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit. 11 They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. "Peace, peace," they say, when there is no peace. 12 Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush. So they will fall among the fallen; they will be brought down when they are punished, says the LORD. 13 " 'I will take away their harvest, declares the LORD. There will be no grapes on the vine. There will be no figs on the tree, and their leaves will wither. What I have given them will be taken from them. '... 22 Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?

We often forget that Jesus had high regard for the Law. He said after all that the Law

would remain valid in every detail until heaven and earth disappeared (Matthew 5). Paul, James and John, likewise, had such a high view of God's Laws. How many in the Church today has high regard for His truths, primarily the Ten Commandments. And this, in spite of Jesus himself saying that "whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:19).

We often see the Laws of God being legalistic, traditionalistic or even religious, but we forget that God's laws, even those given to Moses, were not done as a mere trivial matter but it was done as to guide the people in His truth, in holiness and purity. The 613 Laws of Moses in its entirety led the people to a state of holiness and purity, even though it was ceremonial and ritualistic. Today that same God, who is holy and pure, wants us to be holy and pure – why then would He dismiss His laws? Instead, the laws of inner guidance unto a state of purity and holiness were fulfilled in Jesus, so that when we follow Jesus in Spirit and Truth and Love we adhere to His truths and laws.

Interestingly, one reason for such contempt for the Old Testament law by modern-day Bible believers is that the findings of the apostolic Jerusalem Council have been grossly misinterpreted. Theologians have been teaching for a long time that the apostles at the Jerusalem Council came to an agreement that the Gentile church does not have to obey the Law of Moses. But as some recent studies have shown, a careful examination of that council's conclusions will reveal that the apostles did not dismiss the applicability of the Laws for the New Testament church.

The Jerusalem Council is that assembly of apostles and elders to consider whether or not the new Gentile converts to Christianity were required to follow the Torah of Moses and to be circumcised. It was decided that the Gentiles "must abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood" (Acts 15:20). The point of debate is whether these four commands to the Gentiles constitute a decision to force the Gentiles to keep the whole Torah of Moses or that these are merely a concession to keep the Gentiles from offending the Jews.

It is true that the Gentiles do not have to "become Jews" to be a part of God's people. And it is true to say that there are no "entrance conditions" except to have faith in the Lord. But this does not mean that the "old rules" have no relevance at all for the believer. The Scriptures are very explicit regarding how one may receive salvation. Salvation cannot be earned by any human merit, achievement or good works. However, when a person becomes a believer, the Scriptures say he will manifest the good works of God in his life. If the good works are absent, there is reason to question the authenticity of his salvation experience. So, although there are no conditions to be met for salvation, there are rules governing the behaviour of the members of the church, and this is precisely what the Jerusalem Council was all about.

Gentiles do not have to undergo the ritual of circumcision, but when they become members of God's household, they must obey the rules which govern his household - the commandments of God. Paul makes this clear distinction between circumcision and the commandments when he instructed the Corinthians that "circumcision is nothing and

uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts" (7:19). Obedience to the commandments of God is an essential part of man's relationship with God.

The fact of the matter is that those "old rules" do indeed need to be followed within a spiritual context. This is precisely the point the elders intended to make when they cited four specific rules the Gentiles must obey. Whereas some would argue that the Gentiles were not to be burdened with the requirement that they obey the Torah of Moses, these four precepts imply just the opposite. No one would seriously contend, for example, that the Gentiles no longer needed to be concerned with such commandments as 'do not steal,' 'do not covet,' 'honour your father and your mother,' etc. And yet, these basic moral principles were not mentioned in the apostles' decision. Obviously, the need for the Gentiles to adhere to the moral aspects of the Old Testament ethical code was taken for granted.

The point in dispute, then, is not whether the Gentiles must live by the moral standard of the Scriptures, but whether they needed to also adhere to the so-called "ceremonial" requirements of the Law. The fact that the apostles cited three specific ceremonial statutes which the Gentiles were required to keep strongly implies that the Levitical Law(s) of Holiness needed to be followed – but under the Covenant of Grace this is done by following Jesus and obeying and adhering to His teachings.

Could it be that the apostasy of the end times is a change of the believer's attitude toward the laws of God? After all, the prophet Daniel did say that the latter day king would "attempt to change the set times and the laws" (7:25). Just as apostasy from Moses meant to abandon his Torah, so apostasy in the last days is the abandoning of God's laws. Lawlessness is the catchword for the end times, and the rejection of God's laws will turn out to be the identifying characteristic of the lawless one when he is revealed. Believers need to avoid the attitude which Satan has toward God's righteous truths. The attitude of the one who loves Jesus ought to be the same as the Psalmist who said, "Away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commands of my God!" (Psalm 119:115).

As soon as we as a Bride become so undisciplined not to see the validity and the importance of God's truths and laws, then we will surely fall into iniquity, and then iniquity leads to greater apostasy and rebellion. The argument remains that by studying the 613 Laws of Moses that encapsulates the 10 Commandments that encapsulates the two greatest commandments, we can indeed on a spiritual level, under the guidance of the Spirit, remain true to the Laws of God.

How we need the wisdom of the Lord once again in our churches and for the wisdom of the Lord to rest upon the lips of His servants. It says in Job 28:28: 28 But to man He said, Behold, the reverential and worshipful fear of the Lord—that is Wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Somewhat two years ago, the Lord spoke about the lack of wisdom in His Church and this is so true. We have many teachers and preachers speaking on many subjects, but



somehow it seems we are still falling short of speaking God's wisdom. False prophecies abound, so does erroneous doctrines and deceptive teachings.

Why? Because man seeks after his own wisdom and relies upon his own intellectual faculty to determine the Truth of God. And such Godly wisdom comes by fearing the Lord, obeying Him, seeking Him and walking in His Spirit. Such wisdom speaks not of foolishness, ignorance or deception as we seen so often in Churches, but it speaks of God's will, His plan, His Kingdom, His Truth and His Way.

It says of God's wisdom the following:

Job 12 v 13: To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

Isaiah 40 v 28: Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.

Romans 11 v 33: Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

God is all-wise, infinitely wise. It says for example in Psalm 147 vs 5: Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

God's wisdom is also vastly superior to human wisdom. Isaiah 55: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. 9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us remember God remains the source of wisdom. It says in Proverbs 2 v 6: "For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth [come] knowledge and understanding", and also Daniel 2 v 20: Daniel answered and said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to Him."

It speaks of the mind of God, His intentions, His plans and purposes. There is indeed much deception and deceptive teaching in churches these days (2 Timothy 3, 2 Peter 2, Book of Jude), as well as idolatry, New Age practices, enlightenment, humanism and rationalism. What we need is the wisdom of God!

Wisdom is not just knowledge, but "know how." God's wisdom enables Him to "know how" to do anything (see 2 Peter 2:9). It enables us how the follow God's will and to know how to move in His Spirit at all times. Bezalel was a craftsman, a man with incredible "wisdom" in the art of making the furnishings for the Tabernacle (see Exodus 31:1-5). Joshua had been given wisdom to know how to lead the nation Israel (Deuteronomy 34:9). Solomon asked for and received the wisdom and knowledge needed to rule Israel (2 Chronicles 1:7-12). We don't just need knowledge, but we need God's wisdom to conduct our lives to His honour all day.

What we need is God's Word spoken once again. Not a word to please man, not a word

out of which man can benefit, not a word that will entertain, not a word to exploit God's Kingdom, not a word without power, but indeed, we need a word that shakes the gates of hell, sets people free from spiritual bondages, shatters demonic strongholds, that breaks every false teaching and prophecy and that manifest the power of God!

Wisdom is not merely about "knowing good and evil." Wisdom is also about knowing good from evil. Eating the fruit of the forbidden tree did cause Adam and Eve to know evil. They knew evil by experience. The worst of it is that Adam and Eve did come to a new awareness of "good and evil," but notice what happened in the process. What was evil became "good" in their eyes. Eating of the fruit of that tree was forbidden by God. To eat that fruit was to do what was evil. And yet, with a little prompting and deception by Satan, Eve came to see this "evil" (by God's definition) as "good" (in her perception, as suggested by Satan).

This is something that has been happening a lot in our world these days, where what is natural to God becomes unnatural to man, thus what is now natural to man is natural to God. It is because what is natural to man has been deemed no longer good but it has somehow been twisted to become evil. It says in Isaiah 5:20: Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

We live a time where man's wisdom prevails, to such an extent that the world has now determined what is good, what is real and what truth is. Moral-relativism has been promoted, where each man determined his own truth at the expense of absolute truth. Where the truth and wisdom of man prevail at the expense of God's wisdom, then corruption of mind and spirit follows (Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 1). We live in a time where often people have turned what was once evil into good, and where good has become unpopular.

This is why it says in the Scriptures to seek wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, for wisdom is to know what is good and what is evil and to know good from evil. And once we know what is right and wrong, we need to follow such a path. That is wisdom.

Indeed, it is time to speak God's wisdom, but such a word spoken must be spoken in wisdom, but not the wisdom that the Church deems to be important, wise or clever, but the true wisdom of heaven causes demons to flee and the sinner to repent and the backslider to leave his iniquity and for the immorality of this world to shudder in the presence of the Almighty! How we need speakers of wisdom, and doers of wisdom, indeed, how we need disciples we seek Wisdom and who seek the wisdom of God above all!

What we need is not more teachers or preachers speaking empty words and clever sermons of shallowness and emptiness, but men and women of courage who speaks as the Lord commands! It says in Matthew 4 (Jesus teaching): 4 But He replied, It has been written, Man shall not live and be upheld and sustained by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God. It is the words of God, thus His wisdom

that sustains us, not our own words or our intellect.

We all know the story of the wise man that visited Jesus at His birth. Matthew 2: 7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." 9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The wise men bowed before Jesus because the wisdom of God is far greater than any other human wisdom. They bowed before the Lord because they realised their wisdom paled in comparison to the greatness of God's wisdom! We also need to be like the wise men by bowing before the Lord and laying down our wisdom to obtain the wisdom of the Lord. We need to realise we are indeed not as clever as what we think – our wisdom will never exceed the wisdom of God, and our wisdom will never be more superior.

Paul realised this truth as well, which is evident in his writing in Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 1 and Colossians. He was after all often preaching to Greeks, who for a long time believed they were the guardians of the wisdom following the Hellenic Age and the philosophical teachings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Let us indeed be like the wise men and come before the Lord to admit we need His counsel, His Truth and guidance, for that is indeed wise!

## Law before the Law

Without a doubt, Gentile Christians under the New Covenant are not bound by the 613 Laws of Moses. We can all agree upon this truth. Yet, at the same time, we must also be careful that because we are not under such laws that we are under no law whatsoever. For then, we become a wall under ourselves.

Paul warned of an attitude of thinking we can do anything that we please. He wrote in “1 Corinthians 10: 23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. 24 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other’s well-being” and also “1 Corinthians 6: 12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”

Before Moses, there was God. Before Israel, there was God’s Kingdom. Does Israel define God’s Kingdom? Is God’s Kingdom without any laws or commandments? Of course not. The 613 Laws pertain only to Israel. But before Israel and beyond Israel, God’s laws from the beginning of time stands eternal and for all mankind. And such laws are encapsulated by the Ten Commandments. In God’s Kingdom, there is still the truth of what is right and wrong. There is still eternal commandments of Kingdom values and morality that will never fade, be abolished or be supplanted by any other truth.

Oh yes, we are no longer under the 613 Laws of Moses, but we are still under the Law of God that have all been fulfilled (note, not abolished) in Jesus. If we follow Jesus, we then follow the eternal laws of God, and such eternal laws determine right and wrong and our moral conduct.

So while we are not under the Laws of Moses that only pertain to Israel, we are still under God’s eternal laws as settled in the Kingdom, for God is still a God of Law and Order.

Take note of Genesis 26: 4 And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; 5 because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

Remember, Abraham was not a Jew! The people of Israel (also called the Jewish people) may trace their origin to Abraham, but he was not a Jew. The name Israel derives from the name given to Jacob (Genesis 32:29). His 12 sons were the kernels of 12 tribes that later developed into the Jewish nation. The name Jew derives from Yehuda (Judah), one of the 12 sons of Jacob. As we know, the descendants of Abraham crystallized into a nation at about 1300 BCE after their Exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses. Soon after the Exodus, Moses transmitted to the people of this newly emerging nation, the Torah (which includes the 613 Laws) and the Ten Commandments (Exodus Chapter 20).

Unto Israel as a nation, thus unto the Jewish people, was given the Laws of Moses. This

was long after Abraham lived. Yet Abraham kept God's charge, His commandments, statutes, and laws. And what are these laws and commandments? Certainly not the 613 Laws. This proves that before our planet even existed there were laws and commandments settled in heaven. Thus, we are not people who can simply say because we are free from the Law of Moses we are free from all law. In Christ, we are bound to the eternal law, and by following and obeying Christ, we adhere to such commandments and laws. Through sanctification, we can become more aware and sensitive to God's laws and commandments.

In Exodus 15 we read: There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, 26 and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you."

Exodus 15 happened even before Moses actually received the Ten Commandments and shared the 613 laws with the people. Yet we are told that they were urged to "give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes". This before the Law as given on Mount Sinai! Oh yes, God's laws and statutes that existed before the advent of Israel is still in place. We are still called to obey them by obeying and following Jesus, who is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world was even put in place.

So God is not a God of lawlessness. The two greatest commandments of loving God and loving others sums up the eternal laws of the Kingdom and are encapsulated by the 10 Commandments. Unto the people of Israel alone was given the 613 laws to understand the 10 commandments. Still today, we can study the 613 laws to understand the two greatest and 10 commandments, but under the Law of Moses we do not sit or are bound to such duty. Indeed, the Law of God exists beyond any culture, nation or ethnic group. Kingdom culture and values are timeless, eternal and standing forever.



## Laws of internal guidance

When we hear about the Law of Moses we say they are obsolete. Words that come to mind when speaking about the 613 laws is that they are legalistic and ritualistic, having absolutely no relevance on the Christian under the New Covenant.

We keep in mind the following Scripture: “Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 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 that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

We are indeed no longer under the physical law, but does this mean we are under no law, for this it seems is what the modern day Church wants us to believe? For the Gentile who lives under the New Covenant, following the strict 613 Laws physically and to the letter has indeed no bearing and will only lead to our spiritual captivity.

Paul after all writes in Galatian 5: 21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, 24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— 26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren,

You who do not bear!

Break forth and shout,

You who are not in labor!

For the desolate has many more children

Than she who has a husband.”

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Indeed, as children of God under the New Covenant, we are never ever UNDER the law, for then we are of the bondwoman and no longer free. Yes, there is danger in returning to the physical laws of Moses and trying to uphold them. After all, if we are guilty to one law you are guilty to the entire law. It also says in “Colossians 2: 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Yes, Jesus is the fulfillment of the “things to come”, and in His Presence we seek the Kingdom, and according to Romans 14:17 the kingdom of God “is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

It says in Romans 2: 12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law 13 (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; 14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, 15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) 16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Yes, there is judgement at the end of the day for all, and it is so important to remain in the liberty of God and to allow God’s morals and eternal commandments to guide one’s path. One cannot boast in the Laws of Moses, as argued by Paul in Romans 2, or by being obedient to the Law exalt oneself, for all that matters is that one is found in Christ who has fulfilled the Law. And as we die in Christ, we shall also be raised in Christ (Romans 6:4).

We also read in “Hebrews 10:1: For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Indeed it says in John 1: 17 that “the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” Only Jesus can make us righteous, not any law, for such a law as in the days of Moses were external. Yet the inner working of the Spirit of the Living God truly refines and brings us into alignment with the perfect will of God.

So if we try to follow the laws to the letter then we will fail because it takes a lot of discipline to achieve obedience because of simple good works. Jesus did show a BETTER way – to follow Him fulfils following the Laws of God, but to follow Jesus means to obey Him. He showed the way of grace, of relationship and of freedom by the Spirit of the Lord.

Martin Luther almost went insane trying to achieve goodness through good works. As Gentiles we cannot follow the 613 Laws because we aren't born of ethnical Israel, as many laws pertain to their customs and traditions. Luther also said the Law discovered the disease (of sin), while the Gospel gives the remedy. How true. Praise God. The Law shone the light on our frailty and falling short of morality, but in Christ we find redemption and the grace to be healed and to overcome the disease.

God's truth is eternal and revealed His heart by showing what pleases Him through the Laws as given to Moses. God's truths have never changed – they are absolute. His Law is His Word, and His Law is the standard of living in holiness and purity. But, we are called not to follow the Law to the letter but in Spirit and truth – we accomplish this by following Jesus and staying true to Him and His teachings.

Jesus is the higher and pure law, but within Him is the encapsulation of the Law of Moses. You see, in order for the Gentiles to be set apart, the Father called them to follow Jesus in Spirit and truth, therefore follow His teachings and truths. Yet, these teachings and truths is intertwined the very laws of Moses! Jesus in essence never contradicted the Laws of Moses. He never contradicted the 10 Commandments. His teachings and the way He lived was in essence (therefore in spirit) the very obedience under the Law. Yet in Christ, we follow the higher spiritual Law, but by doing so, we also adhere to the Laws of Moses.

This may seem strange to grasp, but again it needs to be stressed we are never UNDER the Law. Our salvation is not determined by the Law of Moses. Yet you also need to realise that Jesus will not dismiss laws and truths that in its very design are to produce the fruits of righteousness and holiness. You see, the Laws of Moses are not evil or wicked. How can they be if God gave the laws to Moses! At the time of Jesus on earth, if He contradicted the Law of Moses He would contradict the Father. Yet the Father knew the Gentile race was ethically not the Jews, so in His Son he made it possible to live by Spirit and truth so that we may obey the Law, yet not to the letter but by the Spirit.

Thus, we are still under Grace, yet by Grace we follow Christ in whom is the Law fulfilled. Jesus never went against the Law. In fact, He stayed true to the Jewish customs and traditions. Jesus, however, wanted the people to understand that by following Him you fulfil the Law on a much higher level because you now follow it in Spirit and in truth.

Consider what Jesus said in Matthew 5: 17Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

There has been much speculation to what Jesus meant when He says I came to fulfil the Law and not to do away with it. Arguments have raged if this means that we should still follow the Law to the letter while others feel that the Law doesn't apply anymore, therefore it causes man to live under the old dispensation.

One can approach the problem from the following angle: the Law was given to the people to set them apart to be holy. We can all agree on that assumption. The Lord wanted a people who were set apart. The Lord gave laws that were not so much to bind Israel but to set them apart physically and spiritually from the pagan tribes. The Lord was setting the scene for a holy priesthood – and this blueprint will one day be fulfilled in Jesus to lead the Gentiles to become a holy priesthood (1 Peter 2).

The Lord did not give the Law to burden the people or for them to be yoked. If they obeyed the Law, which were designed to instill in them a deeper appreciation of purity and holiness, then they will enjoy the blessings of the Lord. By obeying the Law, the people would be free from the yoke and bondage of paganism.

We can also agree that Lord is the same as in the days of Israel. If this is so, then His opinion regarding holiness and purity, and His opinions of achieving it by walking in His truth and Word, doesn't change. If this is so, one can begin to agree that maybe it will be wiser to consider that the Laws of Moses is a true depiction and reflection of the heart of the Lord and how the Lord regards sin and the need for holiness. It is not devilish by intent, yet impossible to fulfill or follow, thus the need for a Saviour in whom IT IS FINISHED.

We must therefore not dismiss the Law, but we should rather be taking note of it, begin to look at it so that we can understand the essence of it. The essence of it speaks about the Lord, His character and how he wants us to be set apart as a holy priesthood.

If we can agree on this point, then consider that Jesus would not want the people to forget the Law, but that they should rather learn and understand its intent and purpose. Jesus often taught the Old Covenant Law. But then again, since we do not follow the physical law, then we also need to understand that the Old Covenant Law as it stands by itself cannot override the New Testament Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Consider also what Paul writes in "Galatians 5: 13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!" So to walk in love you fulfill the Law! And since Jesus is Love and He fulfilled the Law, if you thus abide in Him and walk by His Love, you have fulfilled the Law. Everything about God is about love, and the 613 laws of Moses was not to punish or to cause harm, but to protect, nurture, to create an atmosphere of thriving and prospering for the common good.

Therefore, if we seek the higher ways of love, we then walk in God's perfect will and God's holiness. And so it says in 1 Corinthians 13:13 New King James Version: "And now

abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” So as we abide in Christ, we walk in hope, in love, and in faith, yet the greatest pursuit is love, for in love is the fulfillment and the completion of the Law. Jesus fulfilled the Law by offering Himself as the greatest act of love unto a world broken and lost. Glory to God.

Take a look at the following two Scriptures out of Revelations: “Chapter 12: 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” And also “Chapter 14: 12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

Both chapters speak of the end time believers, born of the woman (who gave birth to the male Child, thus Israel, through which the Church is born), and such believers state they kept the commandments of God and have the testimony, or the faith, of Jesus Christ. So yes, it is very clear according to Scriptures, we are not to forsake God’s commandments, for God is not a lawless God. It says in “1 John 3: 4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.”

In God there is no darkness. No sin. He therefore cannot be lawless. He is a God of law and order. Thus we must follow God and His commandments, thus His teachings that are fulfilled in Him. If you study the 613 Laws of Moses, specifically the ones dealing with morality, you will get a clearer picture of God and His commandments. Again, God has never changed.

In Matthew 19 we read: 6 Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” 17 So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” 18 He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ 19 ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

Jesus linked obedience to God’s commandments, thus the commandments of His Father, to everlasting life! Yes, Jesus by this time had not yet died to institute the New Covenant, but as we saw in Revelations, if we wish to overcome and be victorious then we must view God’s commandments still as being important. The commandments Jesus gave was part of the 10 Commandments, which if you view it closely, remains an important moral code of conduct towards God and towards society. We must thus not regard God as one who is lawless and without order, for in God’s Kingdom there is still law and order.

In John 5 we read (Jesus speaking): “39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.” Again, we see here that Jesus says only in Him we



find life. Yet, how does this align with Matthew 19 where Jesus connected the commandments with everlasting life? Simple, because the Law, including all commandments, are fulfilled in Jesus. Follow Jesus, obey Him and submit to Him, then one will follow God's commandments

In John 5, Jesus also said: "46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" Everything in the Old Testament was a shadow of the things to come. Even though fulfilled in Christ, they are hold important lessons and truths. This is why Jesus placed emphasis on the writings of Moses.

Reality is, when Jesus taught the Jews in His earthly ministry, He taught as an Old Covenant teacher, and strictly taught under the Old Covenant, and out of the Old Covenant. The reason being that He Himself came or was born under the Old Covenant and could only teach by using the Old Covenant scriptures. For it says in Galatians 4:4: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the LAW." Yet at the same time Jesus came to fulfill the Law, so that ultimately we are delivered from an Old Covenant mindset to a New Testament mindset. And that is a mindset of grace, yet serving a God of Law and Order.

James 1 refers to the law of liberty when he writes from verse 21: Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

It says in "2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The law of liberty is when we truly follow the Lord as worshippers in Spirit and truth, considering the Truth of God (John 8:32) also sets us free, yet the law of liberty according to James does not acquire total passivity, but still work, thus we must be doers. However, we are not saved by such work, but such an action of serving in the Kingdom flows from the liberty in God which comes from grace and mercy.

Thus, the law of liberty contrast the Law of Moses, considering the one seeks obedience to work for in such obedience is blessings, while in our liberty we strive to serve God in the Spirit. And as we move in the Spirit of God, we move to glorify God in our actions, and as we glorify Him in our work of love and servanthood we shall be blessed.

It says in "Galatians 5:13: For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." The law of liberty is not one of lawlessness, but to serve God in the Spirit and in truth, thus it seeks to mobilise a people to be believers of faith, yet not enslaved but liberated.

Paul of course addressed the issue of the Law of Moses in Galatians 3: 1 O foolish

Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? 5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” 7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.”

Paul made it clear that one cannot walk by the law of liberty, thus by the Spirit, by merely standing on the lineage of Abraham. We walk in such a law by faith, not by our works. The Christian will be effective in his service because of Jesus, who hails from the lineage of Abraham, yet in whom we find our liberty by faith.

He also writes: “19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”

Paul makes it clear that the Jews were guided and taught in moral living by the laws of Moses, but under the Covenant of Grace we are taught the true ways of the Kingdom by being led in Spirit and truth. For only Christ can give life and make us righteous by His Blood. No external law can achieve such a purpose.

In Ephesians 2 we read: “11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— 12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

To put this in context, it says in Genesis 17:10-13: This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.

A servant who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant."

The key here is that circumcision was to be a "sign of the covenant" that had already been given, with no strings attached, to Abraham. The rite of circumcision was made a part of the Law of Moses several hundred years later when God gave instruction concerning the birth of a male: "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised" (Leviticus 12:3).

This practice was continued generation after generation, but when the nation of Israel was forced to wander 40 years in the wilderness the rite of circumcision temporarily ceased. As soon as the nation of Israel crossed the Jordan into the land of milk and honey the Lord God immediately gave a command to Joshua: "At that time the Lord said to Joshua, 'Make for yourself flint knives and circumcise again the sons of Israel the second time.'" (Joshua 5:2). After all, Covenant is very important to God. Now that they were in the land, back in the place of faith enjoying obedience and fellowship with God, the practice of circumcision was restored and the people of Israel were blessed by God.

We also read His promise in Deuteronomy 30:6: "Moreover, the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live." This type of circumcision, by definition a circumcision of the spirit and not the flesh, goes to the heart of a man, to his soul, his essence, his attitudes and relationship with God.

Because this theme of an inner circumcision is so important, God repeats and stresses it, as in Deuteronomy 10:12-16: "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. And to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good? Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. Yet on your fathers did the Lord set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. Circumcise then your heart, and stiffen your neck no more."

God required the Jewish people to keep all His statutes and laws, yet that was a tall order. The prophet writes: "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away." -Isaiah 64:6. On one hand God tells Israel to keep all His statutes. On the other the prophet recognizes the human condition: we all fall short of perfection and therefore cannot possibly keep all the Law all the time.

The idea of "circumcision of the heart" is found in Romans 2:29. It refers to having a pure heart, separated unto God. Paul writes, "A Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter." These words conclude a sometimes confusing passage of Scripture regarding circumcision and the Christian. Verses 25-29 provide context: "For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you

break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.”

Paul is discussing the role of the Old Testament Law as it relates to Christianity. He argues that Jewish circumcision is only an outward sign of being set apart to God. However, if the heart is sinful, then physical circumcision is of no avail. A circumcised body and a sinful heart are at odds with each other. Rather than focus on external rites, Paul focuses on the condition of the heart. Using circumcision as a metaphor, he says that only the Holy Spirit can purify a heart and set us apart to God. Ultimately, circumcision cannot make a person right with God; the Law is not enough. A person's heart must change. Paul calls this change “circumcision of the heart.”

This concept was not original with the apostle Paul. As a Jew trained in the Law of Moses, he was certainly aware of this discussion from Deuteronomy 30. There, the Lord used the same metaphor to communicate His desire for a holy people: “And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live” (Deuteronomy 30:6).

Remember physical circumcision was a sign of Israel's covenant with God; circumcision of the heart, therefore, would indicate Israel's being set apart to love God fully, inside and out.

John the Baptist warned the Pharisees against taking pride in their physical heritage and boasting in their circumcision: “Do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham” (Matthew 3:9). True “children of Abraham” are those who follow Abraham's example of believing God (Genesis 15:6). Physical circumcision does not make one a child of God; faith does. Believers in Jesus Christ can truly say they are children of Abraham “if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29).

God has always wanted more from His people than just external conformity to a set of rules. He has always wanted them to possess a heart to love, know, and follow Him. This is being guided by the inner moral laws of God.

That's why God is not concerned with a circumcision of the flesh. Even in the Old Testament, God's priority was a spiritual circumcision of the heart: “Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, circumcise your hearts, you men of Judah and people of Jerusalem, or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done” (Jeremiah 4:4).

Both Testaments thus focus on the need for repentance and inward change in order to be right with God. In Jesus, the Law has been fulfilled (Matthew 5:17). Through Him, a person can be made right with God and receive eternal life (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9). As Paul said, true circumcision is a matter of the heart, performed by the Spirit of God.

It is also important to note, that even before the laws of Moses there existed a sense of right and wrong, and there were moral laws in place. Morals speaks of standards of behaviour, thus principles of right and wrong. Man has throughout history made all kinds of laws and at the same time offered philosophical ideas and teachings in morals and ethics.

Closely linked to morals is virtue, which refers to being good. It has to do with your qualities. Virtue is defined as moral excellence, thus goodness, righteousness and thus a conformity of one's life and conduct to moral and ethical principles. Kindness is a virtue, as is prudence or discretion. Morals have to do with principles of conduct, ethics and behavior.

Ethics on the other hand is a system of moral principles. Ethics is concerned with what is good for individuals and society and is also described as moral philosophy. The term is derived from the Greek word ethos which can mean custom, habit, character or disposition. While ethics has been deemed as a system of principles that helps us tell right from wrong, good from bad, the problem is many times it is man or a group of people who determine what is ethical.

Thus, according to some understanding, ethics leans more towards decisions based upon individual character, and the more subjective understanding of right and wrong by individuals – whereas morals emphasises the widely-shared communal or societal norms about right and wrong.

One of the Greek philosophers, Aristotle, defined moral virtue for example as a disposition to behave in the right manner and as a mean between extremes of deficiency and excess, which are vices. He said we learn moral virtue primarily through habit and practice rather than through reasoning and instruction. He found that moral virtues are exemplified by courage, temperance, and liberality, while the key intellectual virtues are wisdom, which governs ethical behaviour, and understanding, which is expressed in scientific endeavour and contemplation.

You can also define virtue as conformity of life and conduct with the principles of morality. The virtues are thus the practical attitudes and habits adopted in obedience to those principles.

We read in Philippians 4:8: Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

In 2 Peter 1 we read: 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith



virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

It is always been God's intention for us to walk in virtues that are noble, pure, and glorify God. For then we pursue a particular moral excellence. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is a biblical term that sums up nine attributes of a person or community living in accord with the Holy Spirit, and thus we display noble virtues. They are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Hebrews 13 for example provides some moral direction: 1 Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. 3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also. 4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. 5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say:

Values after all defines one's character, for we shall be known by our fruits. And as we walk in godly virtues, as led by the Spirit of God, our conduct and our behaviour shall glorify God. We need to remember that true morality, thus what is right and wrong, has been determined by God.

In regard to ethics, Christians frequently use the Ten Commandments as a framework for the key principles of Christian ethics. What is important is that Scriptures defines from Genesis to Revelations how a believer must conduct himself according to certain values, in order to pursue moral excellence and be ethically sound. The Law of Moses thus encapsulated such virtue, morality and ethical behaviour, while the Apostle Paul for example in Colossians 3 and Ephesians chapter 4 and 5.

For example in Ephesians 4 we read: 17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

In Matthew 6 we read how we are (verse 33) to first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Thus we must pursue God's

holiness and purity, thus moral excellence and to walk in virtue that speaks of a life in Christ. The Law of Moses certainly guided Israel to understand such behaviour and conduct, as was taught by Jesus and the Apostles. Moral and virtue excellence is thus defined by man, or by any law, but is the fruit of a life yielded to God and which has been molded by the inner working of the Holy Spirit.

It should be noted that no government is the guardian of morality. The church should guard morals by teaching the morals of God. Government only make laws to govern society but even such laws may be immoral and unjust. All forms of injustices, violence, abuse, hatred and racism is for example a moral issue.

The government can only enforce laws but in a reactionary manner. It can never prevent injustice for such action springs forth from the wells of man's soul and spirit. The entire world is burning with hell fire because of moral corruption, as a result of spiritual impoverishment.

If morals have eroded and spiritual anarchy exists, the guardian – thus the church and not government - is to be blamed. Sadly the church has become immoral, spiritually bankrupt in following God, perishing because of a lack of knowledge of God and His Kingdom and has failed to shine the light for she herself wallows in the dark. Governments never function from a position of divine truth or purity, so a cripple state of lawlessness is expected, yet the Church is supposed to uphold truth, justice, purity and love. There is so much darkness because the light has not shone. And if the church is not truly loving by preaching the love of God, do we then truly know God? Yes the world is collapsing in the muck of carnality and hate, yet the Church builds its own paneled houses of self-glory and enlightenment of worldly wealth instead of the Kingdom of peace, redemption and praise.

Believers must guard against immorality but upholding God's truths and values of the Kingdom. In Romans 1 we read: "28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them."

Indeed, those who reject God, and reject His ways fall into moral corruption, and even their values are corrupt. Their entire character becomes tainted. This has nothing to do with the Laws of Moses, but simply natural laws of right and wrong that has always existed.

In Genesis 6 we read: 5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And

the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Did these people transgress the laws of Moses? Of course not. They transgressed the moral laws of God that has been in existence since the days of Adam and Eve. They did not pursue moral excellence or display any virtue of excellence. So we must also be careful not to weigh up our moral action purely by looking at the laws of Moses, for God's laws of right and wrong has always been in existence. When we speak about not being under the Law of Moses, it pertains far more to the religious and ceremonial laws, instead of the laws pertaining to morals.

In Genesis 4 we find that Cain kills Abel. We read: 10 And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. 11 So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth."

Cain transgressed a moral law always in existence yet not defined by any law. And he was punished for such a transgression.

Many philosophers and academics in history have supported natural law, which is a system of law that purports to be based on values intrinsic to human nature that can be deduced and applied independent of positive law (the enacted laws of a state or society). According to natural law theory, all people have inherent rights, conferred not by act of legislation but by "God, nature, or reason." Natural law speaks of God's laws of right and wrong which are thus ancient, and not defined by man but instinctively part of man.

The Law of Moses dealt a lot with morality, which is something we cannot merely dismiss. Sure, the laws of ceremonies and rituals for example was strictly applicable to the Jews, but God remains a God of law because God has been in existence before the Law of Moses and on earth there has always been a moral right way and wrong way. This was demonstrated in the Garden of Paradise when the Lord spoke about not eating from a certain tree. Since the beginning of creation certain things have been regarded as morally sound and some not.

Regarding ancient moral laws and the Law of Moses (613 stipulations), there is also something else which is very important to remember. It says in Genesis 1 that mankind was given the authority to rule on earth, therefore be good stewards and custodians. Mankind was supposed to take up authority in a morally pure manner, replicating the state of moral soundness as found in the Garden of Paradise.

Man soon found himself on the wrong moral path, as seen with Cain, and it accumulated to a state of great wickedness until God destroyed the earth (the domain of man) with a flood. Man thus needed to be guided morally by a strict set of principles, hence the Law of Moses. This will ensure man can govern and rule morally just, even if it was just the

immediate domain of Israel.

But without the indwelling presence of God this is a tall order, for truly a man's morals cannot be shaped by external laws but by inner conformation to what is true and noble. The 613 certainly provided the guidelines how to rule justly, even though God's intention was for Him to solely rule Israel. Of course, Israel opted for a king, thus for man to rule them instead of God.

God has always intended for man as the legal custodians to rule morally just, but this can only happen when man reconnects with God and when God can tabernacle with man. And so, with the indwelling presence of God, man is now conformed internally to walk in moral soundness, and is called to shine the moral light in a dark immoral world. Thus, those who are reborn are not called to know good morals or good governance through external laws, but the inner law of God as fulfilled by Jesus. For then we know not just what it means to be morally sound as intended in the Law of Moses, but what it man to walk in moral soundness as found in the Garden of Paradise.

When studying the Law, we should realise that the Old Covenant truths can only be correctly interpreted and correctly taught in the light of the New Testament reality of the finished work of Jesus Christ. For it says in "Galatians 4:5 KJV: To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." We are also mindful of "John 1:17: For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

To understand God in His fullness, and to view His plans and purpose, we need to study Old Covenant truth but within the broader scope of the ministry of Jesus. To teach the Old Covenant Law without considering the New Testament reality of the finished work, would constitute undermining the purpose, the power and the redemption found in the Blood of Jesus. So again, does the Old Covenant Law still have value to us as New Testament Believers? Absolutely. As long as we always read it, study it, and teach it from a New Testament perspective, primarily considering the moral importance it teaches and also based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ.

As mentioned, we also have not fully understood the purpose of the covenant. If we read Jeremiah 31, then we comprehend the purpose of the New Covenant was not for us to become less lenient in attitude and behaviour towards holiness or the law, but the intent was that by the covenant of grace the spiritual law will dwell inside of us. Once the spiritual law encapsulating the 613 Laws of Moses, therefore the Ten Commandments, habitually is interwoven into our spirit, then we can fulfill the Law by walking in Spirit and Truth. And again such laws was simply a solidifying of laws already in existence.

Before Moses there were laws in place in the world, and such laws pertained to all man. The Laws of Moses pertained only to Israel.

This boils down to natural law, which is a theory in ethics and philosophy that says that human beings possess intrinsic values that govern our reasoning and behavior. Natural law maintains that these rules of right and wrong are inherent in people and are not

created by society or court judges. And where would such values spring forth? Yes, from God, who made all mankind!

Natural law thus says that certain rights, moral values, and responsibilities are inherent in human nature, and that those rights can be understood through simple reasoning. In other words, they just make sense when you consider the nature of humanity. Throughout history, the phrase “natural law” has had to do with determining how humans should behave morally. The law of nature is universal, meaning that it applies to everyone in the same way.

This means that, what constitutes “right” and “wrong,” is the same for everyone, and this concept is expressed as “morality.” As an example of natural law, it is universally accepted that to kill someone is wrong. Thus killing another person is forbidden by natural law, not just the Law of Moses, no matter the circumstance, as it goes against the human purpose of life.

Thus, we need to understand that by the covenant the Lord agrees by the Blood that we are saved, while our agreement is that we honour the covenant by honoring the spiritual laws of holiness. The spiritual laws do not save us but the Blood does, but as a sign of our agreement and our obedience unto the covenant, we follow the spiritual law unto purity and holiness.

Yet, the spiritual laws, and you can also say the ancient moral laws, have been cast aside. It has been replaced by a misconception of God’s grace. He is longsuffering, yet we have had 2000 years of making an end to our trespasses! Wake up Bride! We have moved further and further away from the moral laws as the boundaries of right and wrong keeps becoming blurred.

And the purpose of the inner law? So that God can teach us by the Spirit! So that at the foot of the cross we may have victory! The covenant allows us by the law to seek Him day and night. The intention of the covenant is for man to be ultimately taught by God, thus to understand the moral laws that have always existed and that exist in mankind.

The higher spiritual laws are in Jesus and by that measure holiness is again measured. Haven’t we been made holy by the Blood? Yes, we are saved by the blood and made new, but holiness is a process of purification by obedience and sacrifice. This is confirmed by Psalm 19.

One cannot follow the ancient moral and even spiritual laws of God without understanding the nature, scope, purpose and spiritual depth of the Laws of Moses.

The spiritual laws are of even higher standards than the physical law. Within the Body of the Bride we find the operation of a spirit of falseness and deceit while acts such as abortions, divorces, adultery and idolatry take place regularly.

We have also failed to follow the Ten Commandments spiritually. For example, theft and murder is far more intricate under the banner of the spiritual law: there is the theft of



time, the theft of talent, murder by words, the murder of spiritual truths and so on. There is no universal agreement in the Bride as to what is right and what is wrong. The Bride has many interpretations of right and wrong because we have dismissed God's truths by dismissing the Laws and even the Old Testament.

But the Lord is calling forth last day judges who will determine and administer spiritual law and justice. In agreement we must seek holiness. What is wrong is wrong. Sin is sin. No more excuses. Holiness will be demanded.

To understand the need for the return of the Law, read Nehemiah chapter 8 to 9, and specifically 2 Kings 22 and 23 (King Josiah). How did revival and restoration start in the days of Josiah? It started when he decided to rebuild and restore the house of the Lord! Revival and restoration begins when we turn our eyes back to God and His true Kingdom (not man-made religions, programmes, doctrines, ministries – but a return of truth in Spirit).

When Josiah began to work on the House of the Lord, the Book of Law was found.

Now, here is the key to everything - ONE OF THE MOST IMPROTANT MESSAGES AND TRUTHS THAT NEED TO BE RESTORED UNTO THE BRIDE IS THAT THE BOOK OF THE LAW NEEDS TO BE REDISCOVERED IN OUR SPIRIT (ERGO, THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS THAT ENCAPSULATES ALL THE LAWS OF MOSES AND THE ANCIENT MORAL LAWS TO BRING FORTH THE HIGHER AND TRUE SPIRITUAL LAWS OF THE FATHER)

This is where we as the Bride have made the mistake - we have dismissed the Laws of Moses as rubbish and obsolete, yet Jesus' teachings on truths and spiritual laws and spiritual guidelines in essence and in spirit fulfils the 613 laws of Moses. It also fulfil ancient moral laws.

People argue that the 613 laws is all about rituals, traditions, cultures, trivial matters and customs - yes, it is true, but, in essence, it also reveals in intimate detail the heart of the Father - and this has never changed. How then do we interpret the 613 laws into spirit and truth?

This can only be done by knowing and understanding the teachings of Jesus and the Holy Spirit (through the apostles and prophets). The seven letters to the churches in Revelations reminds us to listen to what the Spirit is saying, yet we have decided to hear what man says instead.

What was the biggest motive for the 613 laws - TO MAKE A HOLY NATION SET APART IN SPIRIT FROM PAGANISM, BONDED TO THE LORD IN TRUTH AND LOVE.

What is the biggest motive for the New Covenant: TO MAKE A HOLY NATION APART IN SPIRIT FROM PAGANISM, BONDED TO THE LORD IN TRUTH AND LOVE.

So, Josiah found the Book of Law and when they found it, they realised the errors of their ways and then there was REPENTANCE. The people realised how far they had

drifted from the truth and how far they have failed to be a nation set apart. We, as the Bride, have also failed to see how far we have drifted from truth. Since we have lost touch with the ancient moral laws, at least we get a glimpse of such a truth in the Law of the Lord, which exposes and reveals what is right and wrong, what is holy and unholy and what is pure and impure.

**HOW CAN WE REPENT IF WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT AND WRONG?** We do not know the errors of our ways because we have been building our own houses instead of the House of the Lord.

To put it bluntly and logically, if we dismiss the 613 Laws out rightly in all and any form, then we might as well dismiss the Ten Commandments and then we might as well dismiss the two greatest commandments. We then also dismiss all moral and natural law. If we fail to adhere to the greatest commandments then we dismiss the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the enduring love of the Father? We are then doomed to be governed by our instincts, desires, dreams, motivations and aspiration beyond the boundaries of divinity.

Without a doubt, we have drifted dangerously far away from adhering to the laws of the Lord spiritually by failing to walk in Spirit and truth. We have chosen to govern ourselves according to our own truths and our own perceptions on truth. Any surprise then as to why we have drifted so far from the truth and God's divine plan? We would love to dismiss the Old Testament as tales and stories. We would love to regard it as events that has passed and no longer is viable in today's post-modern society.

If we are constantly busy with our own ways then we move into flesh, into fear, into the natural realm and then eventually we fail to hear and see and speak spiritually! When this happens, we drift away from the absolute One God and His absolute and eternal truths. Human rights (an invention of man) are now regarded as more important than God's natural and holy truth.

So after the people repented in the days of Josiah (there was first the reading of the Law), the people mourned and wept and cried. They then smashed and destroyed altars and high places of worship that stood against God. Repentance needs to lead to action, and such action is to admit what is wrong and to destroy it. We need to return to truth.

Joshua went into the Promised Land with a mandate from God to destroy the seven pagan Canaanite tribes. God never asks of us to simply address the matter or debate it of think about it, no, He commands a complete and utter destruction through direct action. Josiah had to take that action - same as Samuel, David, Samson, Daniel, Jesus and Paul.

If we fail to take action, then we turn the sin into iniquity by advocating it. After the Law had been read, which led to repentance and action, the Lord blessed the nation, restoring them unto a state of revival.

True revival therefore breaks forth like a new day when we build His Kingdom, return

unto the higher spiritual laws, rediscover God's ancient moral laws, repent, take action and then continue to seek Him.

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul writes the following: 23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. 24 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being."

Twice in his first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul uses the statement "all things are lawful unto me" (KJV), also used in in 1 Corinthians 6:12.

In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul is finishing up his address of several specific sins the Corinthian believers were tolerating: some church members were taking advantage of each other in court (verses 1–8), and others were practicing immorality (verses 12–20). In this context, the apostle says, "All things are lawful unto me." In this verse, Paul seems to be anticipating an argument from those who justified their sin in the name of "Christian liberty." His point is that liberty has limitations. He moves right into proofs that sexual immorality is at odds with the Christian life, and no amount of "Christian liberty" can excuse it.

The NIV translation of 1 Corinthians 6:12 brings out more clearly the idea that Paul is quoting those who objected to his reprimand: "I have the right to do anything,' you say—but not everything is beneficial. 'I have the right to do anything'—but I will not be mastered by anything."

It seems that some within the Corinthian church were using "I have the right to do anything" as a mantra, repeating it whenever they were questioned about their behavior. Paul responds to their mantra by adding his own clauses: "but not everything is beneficial" and "but I will not be mastered by anything." Even if all things were lawful, not everything should be done, and nothing should be allowed to enslave us as a sinful habit.

In 1 Corinthians 10, the issue is eating meats offered to idols. Paul again turns to the mantra of the Corinthians: "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not" (verse 23, KJV). He then goes on to make the case that eating meat sold in the marketplace is not wrong in itself; however, if eating meat offered to idols caused anyone to stumble, then that activity becomes wrong. Christian liberty is limited by at least two considerations: 1) what is the effect of this action upon oneself? and 2) what influence will this action have on "Jews, Greeks or the church of God" as a whole (verse 32)? Our goal must be to seek "the good of others" (verse 24), not just our own good (cf. verse 33). After all, we as Christians are not governed by lawlessness, but by God, and by His moral and spiritual laws.

Christian liberty ceases to be "Christian" and becomes libertinism when we engage in acts of immorality or fail to truly love one another. First Corinthians 10:31 sums up the matter well: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

## A closer study of the Law

The 613 Mitzvoth ("commandments"), also "613 Mitzvos" Hebrew: מצוות ג"תרי, are statements and principles of law and ethics contained in the Torah or Five Books of Moses.

These principles of Biblical law are sometimes called commandments (mitzvot) or collectively as the "Law of Moses" (Torat Moshe, משה תרת, "Mosaic Law," or simply "the Law."

The 613 commandments are either "positive commandments" to perform an act (mitzvot aseh) or "negative commandments" to abstain from certain acts (mitzvot lo taaseh). There are 365 negative commandments, corresponding to the number of days in a solar year, and 248 positive commandments, ascribed to the number of bones and significant organs in the human body.

Three categories of negative commandments fall under the category of yehareg ve'al ya'avor, meaning "One should let himself be killed rather than violate it". These are murder, idolatry, and forbidden sexual relations.

By looking closely at the Law of Moses, you can see the teachings of Jesus reflected in them – the Law, fulfilled by Jesus, in essence teaches us the value of life, family, holiness and having a true relationship with the Lord.

Paul said the following about the Law in his letter to the Galatians:

15 Dear brothers and sisters, here's an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or amend an irrevocable agreement, so it is in this case. 16 God gave the promises to Abraham and his child. And notice that the Scripture doesn't say "to his children," as if it meant many descendants. Rather, it says "to his child"- and that, of course, means Christ. 17 This is what I am trying to say: The agreement God made with Abraham could not be canceled 430 years later when God gave the law to Moses. God would be breaking his promise. 18 For if the inheritance could be received by keeping the law, then it would not be the result of accepting God's promise. But God graciously gave it to Abraham as a promise. 19 Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins. But the law was designed to last only until the coming of the child who was promised. God gave his law through angels to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people. 20 Now a mediator is helpful if more than one party must reach an agreement. But God, who is one, did not use a mediator when he gave his promise to Abraham. 21 Is there a conflict, then, between God's law and God's promises? Absolutely not! If the law could give us new life, we could be made right with God by obeying it. 22 But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ.

Was Paul dismissing the Law? Of course not! He was however admonishing the Galatians to be careful that they don't seek their salvation and hope solely in the Law

beyond Jesus! The Law unto itself produces no fruit or salvation, yet in itself it does point to the transgressions of man. The Law helped man to realise how far they have fallen in their shortcomings of being holy and pure.

The Galatians had to understand that there was no righteousness by simply following the Law. If they followed the Law then it becomes dead works and then we are cursed for we are hoping only good works will save us.

Instead, Paul was insisting that one should be following God in holiness and purity. Following the Lord in Spirit and Truth will cause us to follow the Law in spirit – again, the Law has not passed away but it is enveloped in the Spirit.

But it seems the church has decided that dismissing the Law is the right way to go, therefore worshipping the Lord without any parameters or guidelines. For this reason there is much doubt about what is right and wrong.

Isaiah 56: 1Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

Micah 6 : 6Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? 7Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

To truly discover the spiritual essence of the Law, now resting in Jesus, we first need to know what the Law says. For the Law is a reflection of the Father's heart and how the Lord deems what is right and wrong.

The purpose of the Law was for man to live holy and pure unto the Lord and unto his fellow man. Yet, by simply following the Lord unto the letter without divinity is but falling into the trap of religiosity and legalisms. It will bind us and cause us to stumble in our efforts to draw closer to the Lord.

The Law of Moses is divided into ceremonial, moral and customary laws. Jesus, the foundation and the cornerstone of our faith, laid down two commandments that sum up all the statutes, ordinances and laws (Matthew 22:37-40).

Matthew 22:37-40: 37And He replied to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (intellect). 38This is the great (most important, principal) and first commandment. 39And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as [you do] yourself. 40These two commandments [a]sum up and upon them depend all the Law and the Prophets.



Jesus says that upon these two commandments depend on all the Law ...

Exodus 20: 1THEN GOD spoke all these words: 2I am the Lord your God, Who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3You shall have no other gods before or besides Me. 4You shall not make yourself any graven image [to worship it] or any likeness of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5You shall not bow down yourself to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, 6But showing mercy and steadfast love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments. 7You shall not use or repeat the name of the Lord your God in vain [that is, lightly or frivolously, in false affirmations or profanely]; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. 8[Earnestly] remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (withdrawn from common employment and dedicated to God). 9Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your domestic animals, or the sojourner within your gates. 11For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it [set it apart for His purposes]. 12Regard (treat with honor, due obedience, and courtesy) your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land the Lord your God gives you. 13You shall not commit murder. 14You shall not commit adultery. 15You shall not steal. 16You shall not witness falsely against your neighbor. 17You shall not covet your neighbor's house, your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.

Taking a step back in reflection, one comprehends that the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20, resting on the foundation of Jesus, is therefore resting on the two greatest commandments. So the Ten Commandments is an expansion of the two greatest commandments that rests in Jesus, who is the first fruit. Everything implodes and rests in God the Father.

We need to understand that even though it is good to know what the greatest commandments are, it is however the application and the scope of executing them that is explained in Exodus 20.

Now, let us step back from the Ten Commandments, and see how the Lord shows Moses how to apply these two greatest commandments in greater scope, depth and understanding by introducing the 613 Laws.

The 613 Laws is an expansion of the Ten Commandments, which is an expansion of the two greatest commandments, which is a summary of the essence of Yehsua, who rests in YHVH.

Therefore, by following the 613 Laws in a spiritual context as fulfilled in Jesus, we ultimately uphold the Ten Commandments and also the two greatest commandments.

Everything set out in the Law of Moses is designed around the two greatest commandments and it guides, teaches and shows how to worship the One True God while also respecting, serving, loving and supporting our fellow brothers and sisters in the Body.

To even begin studying the Law of Moses in its simplicity, let us remind ourselves about the teachings of Jesus.

In a nutshell, Jesus taught:

- How to live according to the Fruits of the Spirit (kindness, gentleness, meek, loving)
- How to follow His teachings, which comes from the Father
- Taught on forgiveness, love, hope and faith
- He is the Way, Truth and Life
- He is the Bread of Heaven and Water of Life
- He is the Vine and both Jew and Gentile are being crafted into vine that rests in the vineyard
- The ministry of the Holy Spirit
- Charity and lending support
- How to stand strong in times of persecution
- How to live poor in spirit
- Not to dismiss the Law
- To be the light and salt for the world
- To love your enemies
- Not to judge
- Not to worry for our provision is in the hands of the Father
- To have faith and walk and operate in faith

Jesus showed us to operate in the Spirit, operate in the Fruits of the Spirit, in the power of the Father, how to serve, how to minister, what is true ecclesia life and how to overcome.

After Jesus, the Holy Spirit came to lead us to Jesus (and therefore His teachings) and ultimately to the Father. He came to lead us in all truth and remind us of all truth. He came to convict us of sin and of righteousness.

After the outpouring of the Spirit, the apostles and disciples began teaching on

worshipping the one and true God, about the Spirit, about the spiritual gifts, about the spiritual fruits, about just and moral behaviour and ultimately, the upholding of the two greatest commandments, therefore the Ten Commandments and therefore the 613 Laws of Moses.

The greatest commandment, which is to love your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind (intellect), is summed up by the first four laws of the Ten Commandments, which is expanded on by the first ten laws of the 613 Mitzvos.

1) To know that G-d exists (Ex. 20:2; Deut. 5:6); 2) to entertain the idea that there is any god but the Eternal (Ex. 20:3); 3) not to blaspheme (Ex. 22:27; in Christian texts, Ex. 22:28, the penalty for which is death (Lev. 24:16) (negative); 4) to hallow G-d's name (Lev. 22:32); 5) not to profane G-d's name (Lev. 22:32); (CCN155). 6) to know that G-d is One, a complete Unity (Deut. 6:4), 7) to love G-d (Deut. 6:5); 8) to fear Him reverently (Deut. 6:13; 10:20) (CCA4); 9) not to put the word of G-d to the test (Deut. 6:16); 10) to imitate His good and upright ways (Deut. 28:9).

This also corresponds to what Jesus said (Luke 10): 25And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 26He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? 27And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

We have therefore already begun obeying the first 10 laws of Moses when we love the Lord! These Laws have also not been contradicted by Jesus but supported whole heartily!

The Law of Moses, fulfilled in Jesus, sought to spiritually and practically define a nation of people who are not of this world, who are not like the pagans, who are holy and pure unto the Lord and who walks in God's love, truth, fellowship and fairness.

It teaches about the second great commandment of loving each other – therefore many of the Laws deals with how to fairly and with love and respect treat your family, your spouse, your business partner, your slave, the poor, the needy and the unfortunate and the desperate.

Laws about love and brotherhood: 26) to love all human beings who are of the covenant (Lev. 19:18), 27) not to stand by idly when a human life is in danger (Lev. 19:16), 28) not to wrong any one in speech (Lev. 25:17), 29) not to carry tales (Lev. 19:16), 30) not to cherish hatred in one's heart (Lev. 19:17), 31) not to take revenge (Lev. 19:18), 32) not to bear a grudge (Lev. 19:18), 33) not to put any Jew to shame (Lev. 19:17), 34) not to curse any other Israelite (Lev. 19:14), 35) not to give occasion to the simple-minded to stumble on the road (Lev. 19:14), 36) to rebuke the sinner (Lev. 19:17), 37) to relieve a neighbor of his burden and help to unload his beast (Ex. 23:5), 38) to assist in replacing the load upon a neighbor's beast (Deut. 22:4), 39) not to leave a beast, that has fallen down beneath its burden, unaided (Deut. 22:4) (CCN183).

The following laws deal with the poor and unfortunate: 40) Not to afflict an orphan or a widow (Ex. 22:21), 41) not to reap the entire field (Lev. 19:9; Lev. 23:22), 42) to leave the unreaped corner of the field or orchard for the poor (Lev. 19:9), 43) not to gather gleanings (the ears that have fallen to the ground while reaping) (Lev. 19:9), 44) to leave the gleanings for the poor (Lev. 19:9), 45) not to gather ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard (Lev. 19:10), 46) to leave ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10; Deut. 24:21), 47) not to gather the peret (grapes) that have fallen to the ground (Lev. 19:10), 48) to leave peret (the single grapes) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10), 49) not to return to take a forgotten sheaf (Deut. 24:19), 50) to leave the forgotten sheaves for the poor (Deut. 24:19-20), 51) not to refrain from maintaining a poor man and giving him what he needs (Deut. 15:7), 52) to give charity according to one's means (Deut. 15:11).

It is critical for the Bride to understand the spiritual essence of the Law. The Law is God's truth and God's truth is the Law. The Law has only now been given a spiritual texture, just as the Tabernacle in the days of Moses serves a blueprint to our spiritual journey into the Holy of Holies.

Think for moment about the laws pertaining to not having a tattoo or not shaving your beard in a certain way. The argument goes that today we cannot do this because our bodies are the temple of the Lord – this is of course true. BUT, the reason why the Lord gave these laws was that at the time the Canaanites, as a pagan people, would as part of their religious practices cut themselves, make markings on their skins (tattoos), dress a certain way and dress up in a certain way. So the Lord wanted Israel not to look or act like the pagans by admonishing them not to tattoo their bodies or cut themselves or defile themselves.

Let us then look at the laws of idolatry that will directly break the greatest commandment and see that we cannot dismiss the 613 Laws of Moses but should be spiritually mindful of them and adhere to them (keeping in mind the explosion these days of spiritists, clairvoyants, mind readers, magicians and so on).

#### Idolatry, Idolaters and Idolatrous Practices

- 312. Not to make a graven image; neither to make it oneself nor to have it made by others (Ex. 20:4)
- 313. Not to make any figures for ornament, even if they are not worshipped (Ex. 20:20)
- 314. Not to make idols even for others (Ex. 34:17; Lev. 19:4)
- 315. Not to use the ornament of any object of idolatrous worship (Deut. 7:25)
- 316. Not to make use of an idol or its accessory objects, offerings, or libations (Deut. 7:26)

317. Not to drink wine of idolaters (Deut. 32:38)
318. Not to worship an idol in the way in which it is usually worshipped (Ex. 20:5)
319. Not to bow down to an idol, even if that is not its mode of worship (Ex. 20:5)
320. Not to prophesy in the name of an idol (Ex. 23:13; Deut. 18:20) Not to hearken to one who prophesies in the name of an idol (Deut. 13:4) Not to lead the children of Israel astray to idolatry (Ex. 23:13)
321. Not to entice an Israelite to idolatry (Deut. 13:12)
322. To destroy idolatry and its appurtenances (Deut. 12:2-3) (affirmative).
323. Not to love the enticer to idolatry (Deut. 13:9)
324. Not to give up hating the enticer to idolatry (Deut. 13:9)
325. Not to save the enticer from capital punishment, but to stand by at his execution (Deut. 13:9) (negative).
326. A person whom he attempted to entice to idolatry shall not urge pleas for the acquittal of the enticer (Deut. 13:9)
327. A person whom he attempted to entice shall not refrain from giving evidence of the enticer's guilt, if he has such evidence (Deut. 13:9) (negative).
328. Not to swear by an idol to its worshipers, nor cause them to swear by it (Ex. 23:13)
329. Not to turn one's attention to idolatry (Lev. 19:4)
330. Not to adopt the institutions of idolaters nor their customs (Lev. 18:3; Lev. 20:23) Not to pass a child through the fire to Molech (Lev. 18:21) (negative).
331. Not to suffer any one practicing witchcraft to live (Ex. 22:17) (negative).
332. Not to practice onein (observing times or seasons as favorable or unfavorable, using astrology) (Lev. 19:26) Not to practice nachesh (doing things based on signs and portents; using charms and incantations) (Lev. 19:26)
333. Not to consult ovoth (ghosts) (Lev. 19:31)
334. Not to consult yid'onim (wizards) (Lev. 19:31)
335. Not to practice kisuf (magic using herbs, stones and objects that people use) (Deut. 18:10)
336. Not to practice kessem (a general term for magical practices) (Deut. 18:10)
337. Not to practice the art of a chover chaver (casting spells over snakes and scorpions) (Deut. 18:11)



338. Not to enquire of an ob (a ghost) (Deut. 18:11) Not to seek the maytim (dead) (Deut. 18:11)
339. Not to enquire of a yid'oni (wizard) (Deut. 18:11)
340. Not to remove the entire beard, like the idolaters (Lev. 19:27) Not to round the corners of the head, as the idolatrous priests do (Lev. 19:27)
341. Not to cut oneself or make incisions in one's flesh in grief, like the idolaters (Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1)
342. Not to tattoo the body like the idolaters (Lev. 19:28) Not to make a bald spot for the dead (Deut. 14:1) Not to plant a tree for worship (Deut. 16:21) (negative).
343. Not to set up a pillar (for worship) (Deut. 16:22)
344. Not to show favor to idolaters (Deut. 7:2)
345. Not to make a covenant with the seven (Canaanite, idolatrous) nations (Ex. 23:32; Deut. 7:2) (negative).
346. Not to settle idolaters in our land (Ex. 23:33) (negative)
347. To slay the inhabitants of a city that has become idolatrous and burn that city (Deut. 13:16-17) (affirmative).
348. Not to rebuild a city that has been led astray to idolatry (Deut. 13:17)
349. Not to make use of the property of city that has been so led astray (Deut. 13:18)

The Laws of Moses were also quite practical, such as the laws about eating certain substances like a pig (which we know today is not hygienic). Considering also how closely Israel stayed geographically for a long time, it is logical to issue laws of purification and cleansing, for you can just imagine how quickly a disease will spread throughout the tribes! It is like a virus that spreads through a computer network – same debacle. So the Lord issued laws to serve as measures of quarantine to prevent any spreading of diseases or bacteria.

Look the Laws pertaining to forbidden sexual relations:

82) not to indulge in familiarities with relatives, such as kissing, embracing, winking, skipping, which may lead to incest (Lev. 18:6), 83) not to commit incest with one's mother (Lev. 18:7), 84) not to commit sodomy with one's father, 85) not to commit incest with one's father's wife (Lev. 18:8), 86) not to commit incest with one's sister (Lev. 18:9), 87) not to commit incest with one's father's wife's daughter (Lev. 18:11), 88) not to commit incest with one's son's daughter (Lev. 18:10), 89) not to commit incest with one's daughter's daughter (Lev. 18:10), (90) not to commit incest with one's daughter, (91) not to commit incest with one's father's sister (Lev. 18:12), 92) not to commit incest with one's mother's sister (Lev. 18:13), 93) not to commit incest with one's father's brother's wife (Lev. 18:14), 94) not to commit sodomy with one's father's

brother (Lev. 18:14), 95) not to commit incest with one's son's wife (Lev. 18:15), 96) not to commit incest with one's brother's wife (Lev. 18:16), 97) not to commit incest with one's wife's daughter (Lev. 18:17), 98) Not to commit incest with the daughter of one's wife's son (Lev. 18:17), 99) not to commit incest with the daughter of one's wife's daughter (Lev. 18:17), 100) not to commit incest with one's wife's sister (Lev. 18:18), 101) not to have intercourse with a woman, in her menstrual period (Lev. 18:19), 102) not to have intercourse with another man's wife (Lev. 18:20), 103) not to commit sodomy with a male (Lev. 18:22), 104) not to have intercourse with a beast (Lev. 18:23), 105) that a woman shall not have intercourse with a beast (Lev. 18:23), 106) not to castrate the male of any species; neither a man, nor a domestic or wild beast, nor a fowl (Lev. 22:24).

These laws are very straightforward and it upholds the sanctity of the family, of purity, of holiness, and it advocates God's order when it comes to relations between man and woman. Today we know that such "untoward" sexual behaviour leads to all kinds of sexually transmitted diseases and also birth defects – also then realise if such practices were to go on unchecked how quickly the nation of Israel, especially in the wilderness, will be ravished by a pandemic as we have today with Aids. Imagine also the countless of birth defects.

So the Lord was very practical in many ways, but He was also teaching spiritual principals and truths.

Take for example the Laws pertaining to agriculture: Not to cross-breed cattle of different species (Lev. 19:19), not to sow different kinds of seed together in one field (Lev. 19:19), Not to sow grain or herbs in a vineyard (Deut. 22:9) (negative), not to eat the produce of diverse seeds sown in a vineyard (Deut. 22:9), not to work with beasts of different species, yoked together (Deut. 22:10)

What was the Lord teaching us? Well, look at what Paul was saying: 2 Corinthians 6  
 14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?  
 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?  
 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.  
 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.  
 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

So the Lord was teaching the principal of 2 Corinthians 6 that supports the following: Matthew 6:24 (New International Version) 24 "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

The laws on separation of animals and crops teaches about the very heart of our spiritual

walk for the Lord commands that there will be no mixing of holy and unholy, truth and lies, God and Lucifer. Jesus teaches us that we cannot serve Him and the world. The Lord has always intended for His children to be set apart - to be holy, not conforming to the world but being transformed in the Lord. The 613 Laws achieved that goal with the Israelites and now the essence of the teachings of Jesus (fulfilling the 613 Laws) also needs to set us apart.

Many of the dietary laws therefore sought to teach Israel about the importance of purification and cleansing and how this relates to being holy and pure. Today, we are also reminded of the need for purification and cleansing, but on a higher level, by being pure and holy for we are the temples of the Lord and the Spirit has been set to consecrate and sanctify us.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; 19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? 20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

The Laws of Moses was not given merely to punish the people or to confuse us. The Laws practically and spiritually taught about the 10 Commandments and therefore the greatest two commandments. It spoke of God's heart for a pure and holy nation just as we are called to be a holy and pure priesthood - walking in the much higher spiritual laws within Jesus.

On a last note, let us keep in mind how important it is to read the Word of the Lord for it is our nourishment and strength. The Israelites understood this and were governed by the following laws pertaining to the Torah (the Word): 11) to honor the old and the wise (Lev. 19:32), 12) to learn Torah and to teach it (Deut. 6:7), 13) to cleave to those who know Him (Deut. 10:20), 14) not to add to the commandments of the Torah, whether in the Written Law or in its interpretation received by tradition (Deut. 13:1), 15) not to take away from the commandments of the Torah (Deut. 13:1), 16) that every person shall write a scroll of the Torah for himself (Deut. 31:19).

Now, look at the teaching of Jesus that supports the commandments regarding the Torah:

Matthew 4:4: But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Matthew 13:19-23: When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he

not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended; He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful; But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Luke 9:26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life

1 John 2:14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

1 John 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Revelation 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

And, just as reading the Word is so important, so is prayer and even this was given as commandments: to pray to G-d (Ex. 23:25; Deut. 6:13); to recite grace after meals (Deut. 8:10)

Prayer is important, so is blessing our food for it teaches us the spiritual principal of gratitude, leaning upon Him, trusting and having faith in the Lord and being thankful for He is our provider and strength.

Laws of Jesus Enveloping Spiritually the Laws of Moses – Scriptures

Some believe that since salvation is free and available only by the grace of Jesus, that it is inappropriate to suggest that Jesus had any commandments.

Even though the Bible makes it very clear that faith in Jesus is the only way to be born again and go to Heaven, to follow Jesus means to follow His commandments and to

obey Him. He is the Lord and He shall be revered and obeyed.

In this article, find a list of some of the old laws of Moses, and how Jesus fulfils these laws through the higher spiritual laws under the Covenant of the Blood. Therefore, in Jesus is the fulfilment of the Law, and to obey Jesus is to ultimately obey all the Laws.

Jesus's New Testament Commandments are not to be obeyed/observed as a way to reach Heaven, but as an act of obedience, love, and reverence for our Saviour, and because He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments " (John 14:15, KJV).

Jesus said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:5-7). Our salvation is free and only available through faith in Jesus.

Although these Commandments are not numbered in numerical order, as are the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament, most Bible Scholars agree that they are most assuredly the Commandments of Jesus.

As we study the following Scripture it will also become very clear, that God is not only the God of Grace, He is also the God of expectations.

"The Greatest Commandment"

Jesus was asked: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. Matt 22:36-40 (Amp)

This fulfills the Old Testament Law of Exodus 20:

Then God spoke all these words:

2 I am the Lord your God, Who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 You shall have no other gods before or besides Me. 4 You shall not make yourself any graven image [to worship it] or any likeness of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 You shall not bow down yourself to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, 6 But showing mercy and steadfast love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments. 7 You shall not use or repeat the name of the Lord your God in vain [that is, lightly or frivolously, in false affirmations or profanely]; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. 8 [Earnestly] remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (withdrawn from common employment and dedicated to God). 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your domestic animals, or the sojourner within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made

the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it [set it apart for His purposes]. 12 Regard (treat with honor, due obedience, and courtesy) your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land the Lord your God gives you. 13 You shall not commit murder. 14 You shall not commit adultery. 15 You shall not steal. 16 You shall not witness falsely against your neighbor. 17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house, your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.

Therefore, to obey the greatest commandments is to obey the Ten Commandments.

Now consider, how the Greatest Commandment – especially the first commandment which correlates with the first four laws of the Ten Commandments when it comes to loving God – speaks directly and addresses the Old Laws on Idolatry. To obey the Greatest Commandment is to disobey God and to walk in idolatry.

#### Idolatry, Idolaters and Idolatrous Practices

- Not to make a graven image; neither to make it oneself nor to have it made by others (Ex. 20:4)
- Not to make any figures for ornament, even if they are not worshipped (Ex. 20:20)
- Not to make idols even for others (Ex. 34:17; Lev. 19:4)
- Not to use the ornament of any object of idolatrous worship (Deut. 7:25)
- Not to make use of an idol or its accessory objects, offerings, or libations (Deut. 7:26)
- Not to drink wine of idolaters (Deut. 32:38)
- Not to worship an idol in the way in which it is usually worshipped (Ex. 20:5)
- Not to bow down to an idol, even if that is not its mode of worship (Ex. 20:5)
- Not to prophesy in the name of an idol (Ex. 23:13; Deut. 18:20)
- Not to hearken to one who prophesies in the name of an idol (Deut. 13:4)
- Not to lead the children of Israel astray to idolatry (Ex. 23:13)
- Not to entice an Israelite to idolatry (Deut. 13:12)
- To destroy idolatry and its appurtenances (Deut. 12:2-3) (affirmative).
- Not to love the enticer to idolatry (Deut. 13:9)
- Not to give up hating the enticer to idolatry (Deut. 13:9)
- Not to save the enticer from capital punishment, but to stand by at his execution



(Deut. 13:9) (negative).

- A person whom he attempted to entice to idolatry shall not urge pleas for the acquittal of the enticer (Deut. 13:9)
- A person whom he attempted to entice shall not refrain from giving evidence of the enticer's guilt, if he has such evidence (Deut. 13:9) (negative).
- Not to swear by an idol to its worshipers, nor cause them to swear by it (Ex. 23:13)
- Not to turn one's attention to idolatry (Lev. 19:4)
- Not to adopt the institutions of idolaters nor their customs (Lev. 18:3; Lev. 20:23)
- Not to pass a child through the fire to Molech (Lev. 18:21) (negative).
- Not to suffer any one practicing witchcraft to live (Ex. 22:17) (negative).
- Not to practice onein (observing times or seasons as favorable or unfavorable, using astrology) (Lev. 19:26)
- Not to practice nachesh (doing things based on signs and portents; using charms and incantations) (Lev. 19:26)
- Not to consult ovoth (ghosts) (Lev. 19:31)
- Not to consult yid'onim (wizards) (Lev. 19:31)
- Not to practice kisuf (magic using herbs, stones and objects that people use) (Deut. 18:10)
- Not to practice kessem (a general term for magical practices) (Deut. 18:10)
- Not to practice the art of a chover chaver (casting spells over snakes and scorpions) (Deut. 18:11)
- Not to enquire of an ob (a ghost) (Deut. 18:11)
- Not to seek the maytim (dead) (Deut. 18:11)
- Not to enquire of a yid'oni (wizard) (Deut. 18:11)
- Not to remove the entire beard, like the idolaters (Lev. 19:27)
- Not to round the corners of the head, as the idolatrous priests do (Lev. 19:27)
- Not to cut oneself or make incisions in one's flesh in grief, like the idolaters (Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1)
- Not to tattoo the body like the idolaters (Lev. 19:28)
- Not to make a bald spot for the dead (Deut. 14:1)

- Not to plant a tree for worship (Deut. 16:21) (negative).
- Not to set up a pillar (for worship) (Deut. 16:22)
- Not to show favor to idolaters (Deut. 7:2)
- Not to make a covenant with the seven (Canaanite, idolatrous) nations (Ex. 23:32; Deut. 7:2) (negative).
- Not to settle idolaters in our land (Ex. 23:33) (negative)
- To slay the inhabitants of a city that has become idolatrous and burn that city (Deut. 13:16-17) (affirmative).
- Not to rebuild a city that has been led astray to idolatry (Deut. 13:17) (negative).
- Not to make use of the property of city that has been so led astray (Deut. 13:18) (negative).

The Greatest Commandments also deals with the following Laws of Moses:

- To know that G-d exists (Ex. 20:2; Deut. 5:6)
- Not to entertain the idea that there is any god but the Eternal God
- Not to blaspheme (Ex. 22:27; in Christian texts, Ex. 22:28), the penalty for which is death (Lev. 24:16) (negative).
- To hallow G-d's name (Lev. 22:32)
- Not to profane G-d's name (Lev. 22:32)
- To know that G-d is One, a complete Unity (Deut. 6:4)
- To love G-d (Deut. 6:5)
- To fear Him reverently (Deut. 6:13; 10:20)
- Not to put the word of G-d to the test (Deut. 6:16)
- To imitate His good and upright ways (Deut. 28:9)

The Written Word – the Living God who abides in Us: John 1: 1 In the beginning [before all-time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself. 2 He was present originally with God. 3 All things were made and came into existence through Him; and without Him was not even one thing made that has come into being. 4 In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men. 5 And the Light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it [put it out or absorbed it or appropriated it, and is unreceptive to it].

Jesus is the Living Word – and by that Word we must be changed, renewed and conformed into the image of God. We must therefore know the Logos and the Rhema –

the Written and the Spoken Word made alive by the Spirit of the Living God.

This fulfils the Laws of Moses regarding the Torah (the Word):

- To learn Torah and to teach it (Deut. 6:7)
- To cleave to those who know Him (Deut. 10:20)
- Not to add to the commandments of the Torah, whether in the Written Law or in its interpretation received by tradition (Deut. 13:1)
- Not to take away from the commandments of the Torah (Deut. 13:1)
- That every person shall write a scroll of the Torah for himself (Deut. 31:19)

We are also called to cleave to God, to know Him, to know His commandments, to learn His Word and to apply His Word.

Regarding the old law that says That every person shall write a scroll of the Torah for himself. Paul wrote the following: 2 Corinthians 3: 3 Are we starting to commend ourselves again? Or we do not, like some [false teachers], need written credentials or letters of recommendation to you or from you, [do we]? 2 [No] you yourselves are our letter of recommendation (our credentials), written in your hearts, to be known (perceived, recognized) and read by everybody. 3 You show and make obvious that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, not written with ink but with [the] Spirit of [the] living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

We write the Word of God on our hearts – Torah – by becoming a letter from Christ, written with [the] Spirit of [the] living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

This also deals with the Commandment of Jesus: John 15: 15 I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser. 2 Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit [that stops bearing] He cuts away (trims off, takes away); and He cleanses and repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit, to make it bear more and richer and more excellent fruit. 3 You are cleansed and pruned already, because of the word which I have given you [the teachings I have discussed with you]. 4 Dwell in Me, and I will dwell in you. [Live in Me, and I will live in you.] Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (being vitally united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing.

### *Prayer and Blessings*

Jesus taught the following: Matthew 6: 5 Also when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward in full already. 6 But when you pray, go into your [most] private room, and, closing the door,

pray to your Father, Who is in secret; and your Father, Who sees in secret, will reward you in the open. 7 And when you pray, do not heap up phrases (multiply words, repeating the same ones over and over) as the Gentiles do, for they think they will be heard for their much speaking.

And the Lord's Prayer: Pray, therefore, like this: Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed (kept holy) be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven left, remitted, and let go of the debts, and have given up resentment against) our debtors. 13 And lead (bring) us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

This fulfills the Old Laws of Moses regarding prayer and blessing:

- o To pray to G-d (Ex. 23:25; Deut. 6:13)
- o To read the Shema in the morning and at night (Deut. 6:7)
- o To recite grace after meals (Deut. 8:10)
- o Not to lay down a stone for worship (Lev. 26:1)

### *Love and Brotherhood*

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12 KJV)

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." (Luke 6:36 NIV)

This fulfills the Laws of Moses:

- To love all human beings who are of the covenant (Lev. 19:18)
- Not to stand by idly when a human life is in danger (Lev. 19:16)
- Not to wrong any one in speech (Lev. 25:17)
- Not to carry tales (Lev. 19:16)
- Not to cherish hatred in one's heart (Lev. 19:17)
- Not to take revenge (Lev. 19:18)
- Not to bear a grudge (Lev. 19:18)
- Not to put any Jew to shame (Lev. 19:17)
- Not to curse any other Israelite (Lev. 19:14) (by implication: if you may not curse those who cannot hear, you certainly may not curse those who can)
- Not to give occasion to the simple-minded to stumble on the road (Lev. 19:14) (this includes doing anything that will cause another to sin)

- o To rebuke the sinner (Lev. 19:17)
- o To relieve a neighbor of his burden and help to unload his beast (Ex. 23:5) (CCA70).
- o To assist in replacing the load upon a neighbor's beast (Deut. 22:4)
- o Not to leave a beast, that has fallen down beneath its burden, unaided (Deut. 22:4)

Under the Laws of Moses, when it comes to Love and Brotherhood, you also found the Laws pertaining to The Poor and Unfortunate:

- o Not to afflict an orphan or a widow (Ex. 22:21)
- o Not to reap the entire field (Lev. 19:9; Lev. 23:22) (negative)
- o To leave the unreaped corner of the field or orchard for the poor (Lev. 19:9) (affirmative)
- o Not to gather gleanings (the ears that have fallen to the ground while reaping) (Lev. 19:9)
- o To leave the gleanings for the poor (Lev. 19:9) (affirmative)
- o Not to gather ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard (Lev. 19:10) (negative)
- o To leave ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10; Deut. 24:21)
- o Not to gather the peret (grapes) that have fallen to the ground (Lev. 19:10) (negative)
- o To leave peret (the single grapes) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10) (affirmative)
- o Not to return to take a forgotten sheaf (Deut. 24:19) This applies to all fruit trees (Deut. 24:20) (negative)
- o To leave the forgotten sheaves for the poor (Deut. 24:19-20) (affirmative)
- o Not to refrain from maintaining a poor man and giving him what he needs (Deut. 15:7)
- o To give charity according to one's means (Deut. 15:11)
- o To love the stranger (Deut. 10:19)
- o Not to wrong the stranger in speech (Ex. 22:20)
- o Not to wrong the stranger in buying or selling (Ex. 22:20)

- o Not to intermarry with gentiles (Deut. 7:3) (CCN19).
- o To exact the debt of an alien (Deut. 15:3)
- o To lend to an alien at interest (Deut. 23:21)

These laws were given to show how one must always show love and treat the poor around you. It thus deals with charity and brotherhood.

Jesus upheld these spiritual commandments to always show love, to help the poor, to be there for the needy and to be charitable.

Matthew 5: 3 You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste (its strength, its quality), how can its saltiness be restored? It is not good for anything any longer but to be thrown out and trodden underfoot by men. 14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck measure, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praiseworthy, noble, and good deeds and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.

Luke 10: 30 Jesus, taking him up, replied, A certain man was going from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him of his clothes and belongings and beat him and went their way, [unconcernedly] leaving him half dead, as it happened. 31 Now by]coincidence a certain priest was going down along that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 A Levite likewise came down to the place and saw him, and passed by on the other side [of the road]. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he traveled along, came down to where he was; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity and sympathy [for him], 34 And went to him and dressed his wounds, pouring on [them] oil and wine. Then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 And the next day he took out two denarii [two day's wages] and gave [them] to the innkeeper, saying, Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I [myself] will repay you when I return. 36 Which of these three do you think proved himself a neighbor to him who fell among the robbers? 37 He answered, The one who showed pity and mercy to him. And Jesus said to him, Go and do likewise.

Matthew 6: 6 Take care not to do your good deeds publicly or before men, in order to be seen by them; otherwise you will have no reward [reserved for and awaiting you] with and from your Father Who is in heaven. 2 Thus, whenever you give to the poor, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites in the synagogues and in the streets like to do, that they may be recognized and honored and praised by men. Truly I tell you, they have their reward in full already. 3 But when you give to charity, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 So that your deeds of charity may be in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you openly.

*Lord of the Sabbath*



Under the Law of Moses, there were numerous commandments on how to treat the Sabbath holy:

- Not to travel on Shabbat outside the limits of one's place of residence (Ex. 16:29)
- To sanctify Shabbat (Ex. 20:8)
- Not to do work on Shabbat (Ex. 20:10)
- To rest on Shabbat (Ex. 23:12; 34:21)

Keeping the Sabbath holy [or hallow] involved a physical approach to the day, such as not working or not carrying a burden.

Yet, under the New Covenant, Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath.

**Luke 6: Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath:** 6 Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands. 2 And some of the Pharisees said to them, “Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?” 3 But Jesus answering them said, “Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?” 5 And He said to them, “The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

**Healing on the Sabbath:** 6 Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. 7 So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. 8 But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, “Arise and stand here.” And he arose and stood. 9 Then Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?” 10 And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. 11 But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

In Luke 6 demonstrates that ultimately, to keep the Sabbath holy under the Covenant of the Blood is to honour the Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus fulfilled the Laws regarding the physical requirements of Sabbath by becoming the Sabbath and thus spiritually fulfilling and completing the requirements.

We therefore keep and follow the Sabbath when we follow God and stay obedient and faithful to His commandments.

What is the significance for us today when it comes to keeping the Sabbath holy and not to allow the Sabbath to become defiled? We have to remind ourselves that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:5). In the Old Testament, the Sabbath had to uphold as a physical commandment by obeying rules and regulations. But under the New Covenant,

the Sabbath is no longer a physical ceremony but it is a spiritual embodiment to be found in the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings - He who is Jesus. Therefore to keep the Sabbath holy and hallow means not to follow a physical regulation or law by for example keeping a certain day aside, but it means to keep one's entire life aside for purity and holiness as one follows God in Spirit and Truth!

Jesus is the truth and the light and the way. To keep the Sabbath Holy, is to follow His Truth, His Way and Life all day, every day, and every minute! It is not about just keeping one day holy, but keeping one's entire life holy. This then means to have a clean and pure and contrite heart, for then one will ascend the hill of the Lord and stand in His Presence.

To therefore keep the Sabbath is not only a weekly occurrence – as what we get with Sunday Christians – but an every day and every second commitment for we are in a relationship with God. To follow the True Sabbath by serving the Lord translates into a higher spiritual commitment and a higher spiritual walk of loyalty and dedication, which requires denying the self and carrying the cross.

### *Vows, Oaths and Swearing*

Matthew 5:34-37: 4 But I tell you, Do not bind yourselves by an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is the throne of God; 35 Or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you are not able to make a single hair white or black. 37 Let your Yes be simply Yes, and your No be simply No; anything more than that comes from the evil one.

This fulfils the Old Laws of Moses:

- That a man should fulfill whatever he has uttered (Deut. 23:24)
- Not to swear needlessly (Ex. 20:7)
- Not to violate an oath or swear falsely (Lev. 19:12)
- Not to break a vow (Num. 30:3)
- To swear by His name truly (Deut. 10:20) (affirmative).
- Not to delay in fulfilling vows or bringing vowed or free-will offerings (Deut. 23:22)

### *Prophecy*

Matthew 7: Beware of false prophets, who come to you dressed as sheep, but inside they are devouring wolves. 16 You will fully recognize them by their fruits. Do people pick grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every healthy (sound) tree bears good fruit [worthy of admiration], but the sickly (decaying, worthless) tree bears bad (worthless) fruit. 18 A good (healthy) tree cannot bear bad (worthless) fruit, nor can a bad (diseased) tree bear excellent fruit [worthy of admiration]. 19 Every tree that does

not bear good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. O Therefore, you will fully know them by their

This fulfils the Old Laws of Moses:

- To heed the call of every prophet in each generation, provided that he neither adds to, nor takes away from the Torah (Deut. 18:15) (affirmative).
- Not to prophesy falsely (Deut. 18:20)
- Not to refrain from putting a false prophet to death nor to be in fear of him (Deut. 18:22) (negative).

### *Agriculture and Animal Husbandry*

The following Laws of Old may seem trivial, but spiritually, the principle behind the Laws was also addressed by Jesus:

- Not to cross-breed cattle of different species (Lev. 19:19)
- Not to sow different kinds of seed together in one field (Lev. 19:19)
- Not to eat the fruit of a tree for three years from the time it was planted (Lev. 19:23)
- That the fruit of fruit-bearing trees in the fourth year of their planting shall be sacred like the second tithe and eaten in Jerusalem (Lev. 19:24) (affirmative)
- Not to sow grain or herbs in a vineyard (Deut. 22:9) (negative).
- Not to eat the produce of diverse seeds sown in a vineyard (Deut. 22:9) (negative).
- Not to work with beasts of different species, yoked together (Deut. 22:10)

The spiritual principle taught by God was there is no harmony in two things that are opposite, so therefore there is no harmony in serving God and the world, light and darkness, between sin and the spirit.

Matthew 6: 24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise and be against the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions, or whatever is trusted in).

1 Corinthians 6 [Paul]: 15 Do you not see and know that your bodies are members (bodily parts) of Christ (the Messiah)? Am I therefore to take the parts of Christ and make [them] parts of a prostitute? Never! Never! 16 Or do you not know and realize that when a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? The two, it is written, shall become one flesh. 17 But the person who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. 18 Shun immorality and all sexual looseness [flee from impurity in thought, word, or deed]. Any other sin which a man commits is one outside the body,

but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Do you not know that your body is the temple (the very sanctuary) of the Holy Spirit Who lives within you, Whom you have received [as a Gift] from God? You are not your own, 20 You were bought with a price [purchased with a preciousness and paid for, made His own]. So then, honor God and bring glory to Him in your body.

2 Corinthians 6: 4 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers [do not make mismatched alliances with them or come under a different yoke with them, inconsistent with your faith]. For what partnership have right living and right standing with God with iniquity and lawlessness? Or how can light have fellowship with darkness? 15 What harmony can there be between Christ and Belial [the devil]? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement [can there be between] a temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in and with and among them and will walk in and with and among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 17 So, come out from among [unbelievers], and separate (sever) yourselves from them, says the Lord, and touch not [any] unclean thing; then I will receive you kindly and treat you with favor, 18 And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

*In the order of God – Man meant for woman, and woman for man*

Just as Jesus upheld the order of God that light and darkness cannot mix, that sin and the spirit cannot co-exist, just so He upheld the principle that there is only harmony in the order of God when man and woman co-exists, and not man with man or woman with woman.

While it is true that there is no New Testament record of where Jesus explicitly stated that homosexuality is wrong, He did in fact condemn the behaviour. Matthew 19: 4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ “and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’”

What did Jesus therefore say about God’s creative work? Did He make Adam and Joseph? Did He create male and male, or did He create male and female? According to this passage, what has been God’s plan for sexual union [one flesh] since the beginning of time? Was His plan for a male partner to be joined to another male partner, or was it for a husband to be united to his wife? According to this passage, is a man to cleave to his male partner, or to his spouse?

Since Jesus approved of His Father’s plan [one man, one woman, one flesh,] could we correctly say that Jesus condemned homosexuality?

It is also written in John 5:46-47: “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

What law was Jesus born under? What law did He live under? He lives under the Law of

Moses (Galatians 4:4.) Did Jesus endorse and follow the Law of Moses? Of course He did, for He fulfilled it but didn't abolish it!

What did the Law of Moses say about homosexuality? Read Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Deuteronomy 23:17). The act is prohibited simply because it is against the order of God.

Since Jesus was born and lived under the Law of Moses, and since He endorsed the Law of Moses, and since the Law of Moses explicitly condemned homosexuality, then could we correctly say that Jesus also condemned it? John 16:12-15: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for he will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you"

The Spirit was to guide the disciples into all truth. Since the apostles would be guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit, and since the Holy Spirit would not speak on His own authority but instead would speak on the authority of Christ, and since the Holy Spirit would take of what was Christ's and declare it to the apostles, then by the apostle's speak/write/teach, when the Holy Spirit guided them in the authority of Christ.

And so, what did one of these apostles [Paul] say about the practice of homosexuality? (Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Paul condemned it, because Jesus condemned it.

Jesus therefore also uphold the old Laws regarding clothing, which speaks directly to the fact that a man must behave like a man and a woman like a woman [unlike these days when man appear to be women and women appear to be men].

- That a man shall not wear women's clothing (Deut. 22:5)
- That a woman should not wear men's clothing (Deut. 22:5)
- Not to wear garments made of wool and linen mixed together (Deut. 22:11)

### *Ritual Purity and Impurity*

There are numerous laws in the Old Testament regarding ritual purity and impurity, and focussed on what rituals, ceremonies, dietary habits and so on (including the laws of leprosy and other sicknesses).

Jesus, however, introduced the Higher Law that we are clean by the Blood of Jesus, but He does teach the following when it comes to purity and impurity [which fulfils the old laws]:

Mark 7: 15 There is not [even] one thing outside a man which by going into him can pollute and defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him and make him unhallowed and unclean. 16 If any man has ears to hear, let him be listening [and let him perceive and comprehend by hearing]. 17 And when He had left the crowd

and had gone into the house, His disciples began asking Him about the parable. 18 And He said to them, Then are you also unintelligent and dull and without understanding? Do you not discern and see that whatever goes into a man from the outside cannot make him unhallowed or unclean, 19 Since it does not reach and enter his heart but [only his] digestive tract, and so passes on [into the place designed to receive waste]? Thus He was making and declaring all foods [ceremonially] clean [that is, abolishing the ceremonial distinctions of the Levitical Law]. 20 And He said, What comes out of a man is what makes a man unclean and renders [him] unhallowed. 21 For from within, [that is] out of the hearts of men, come base and wicked thoughts, sexual immorality, stealing, murder, adultery, 22 Coveting (a greedy desire to have more wealth), dangerous and destructive wickedness, deceit; unrestrained (indecent) conduct; an evil eye (envy), slander (evil speaking, malicious misrepresentation, abusiveness), pride (the sin of an uplifted heart against God and man), foolishness (folly, lack of sense, recklessness, thoughtlessness). 23 All these evil [purposes and desires] come from within, and they make the man unclean and render him unhallowed.

### Criminal Laws

- Not to slay an innocent person (Ex. 20:13)
- Not to rob by violence (Lev. 19:13)
- Not to defraud (Lev. 19:13)
- Not to covet what belongs to another (Ex. 20:14)
- Not to crave something that belongs to another (Deut. 5:18)
- Not to indulge in evil thoughts and sights (Num. 15:39)

Jesus, however, introduced the higher law, bringing our spiritual actions and morality in general also into the realm of the criminal: 1 You have heard that it was said to the men of old, You shall not kill, and whoever kills shall be liable to and unable to escape the punishment imposed by the court. 22 But I say to you that everyone who continues to be angry with his brother or harbors malice (enmity of heart) against him shall be liable to and unable to escape the punishment imposed by the court; and whoever speaks contemptuously and insultingly to his brother shall be liable to and unable to escape the punishment imposed by the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, You cursed fool! [You empty-headed idiot!] shall be liable to and unable to escape the hell (Gehenna) of fire.\

1 John 2: 9 Whoever says he is in the Light and [yet] hates his brother [Christian, born-again child of God his Father] is in darkness even until now. 10 Whoever loves his brother [believer] abides (lives) in the Light, and in It or in him there is no occasion for stumbling or cause for error or sin. 11 But he who hates (detests, despises) his brother [in Christ] is in darkness and walking (living) in the dark; he is straying and does not perceive or know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

The only way to truly deal with criminal behaviour and criminal intent is through the



principle of forgiveness, love, and not judging.

Matthew 18: 21 Then Peter came up to Him and said, Lord, how many times may my brother sin against me and I forgive him and let it go? [As many as] up to seven times? 22 Jesus answered him, I tell you, not up to seven times, but seventy times seven!

Matthew 6:12: 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven (left, remitted, and let go of the debts, and have given up resentment against) our debtors.

Mark 11:25-26: 25 And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and let them drop. 26 But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your failings and shortcomings.

Matthew 6: 14 For if you forgive people their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their trespasses [their]reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.

Matthew 5:38-39: 38 You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the evil man [who injures you]; but if anyone strikes you on the right jaw or cheek, turn to him the other one too.

### *Loving One's Enemies*

Jesus taught the following:

Matthew 5:43-45: 3 You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy; 44 But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 To show that you are the children of your Father Who is in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the wicked and on the good, and makes the rain fall upon the upright and the wrongdoers [alike]. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward can you have? Do not even the tax collectors do that? 47 And if you greet only your brethren, what more than others are you doing? Do not even the Gentiles (the heathen) do that? 48 You, therefore, must be perfect [growing into complete maturity of godliness in mind and character, having reached the proper height of virtue and integrity], as your heavenly Father is perfect.

This fulfils the Old Laws when it comes to the treatment of Gentiles, who were seen many tiems as the enemies of the Isrealites. Again, God's love shines so bright:

- To love the stranger (Deut. 10:19) (CCA61).
- Not to wrong the stranger in speech (Ex. 22:20)
- Not to wrong the stranger in buying or selling (Ex. 22:20)

- Not to intermarry with gentiles (Deut. 7:3)
- To exact the debt of an alien (Deut. 15:3) (affirmative).
- To lend to an alien at interest (Deut. 23:21) According to tradition, this is mandatory (affirmative).

#### *Other teachings and commandments of Jesus*

"Treat Others As You Would Like To Be Treated." (Based on Matthew 7:12, restated in Luke 6:31). "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matthew 7:12 KJV)

#### YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN

John 3: 3 Jesus answered him, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, that unless a person is born again (anew, from above), he cannot ever see (know, be acquainted with, and experience) the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus said to Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter his mother's womb again and be born? 5 Jesus answered, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, unless a man is born of water and [even] the Spirit, he cannot [ever] enter the kingdom of God. 6 What is born of [from] the flesh is flesh [of the physical is physical]; and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not [do not be surprised, astonished] at My telling you, You must all be born anew (from above).

#### END DISPUTES QUICKLY

Matthew 5: 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way traveling with him, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. 26 Truly I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last fraction of a penny.

#### WHATEVER CAUSES YOU TO SIN, GET RID OF IT

Matthew 5: 29 If your right eye serves as a trap to ensnare you or is an occasion for you to stumble and sin, pluck it out and throw it away. It is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be cast into hell (Gehenna). 30 And if your right hand serves as a trap to ensnare you or is an occasion for you to stumble and sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better that you lose one of your members than that your entire body should be cast into hell (Gehenna).

#### GIVE WHAT PEOPLE ASK OF YOU, AND GIVE MORE THAN IS REQUIRED

Matthew 5: 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your undershirt (tunic), let him have your coat also. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two [miles]. 42 Give to him who keeps on begging from you, and do not turn away from him who would borrow [at interest] from you.

#### WHEN YOU FAST, DO IT SECRETLY, NOT FOR SHOW

Matthew 6: 16 And whenever you are fasting, do not look gloomy and sour and dreary

like the hypocrites, for they put on a dismal countenance, that their fasting may be apparent to and seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full already. 17 But when you fast, perfume your head and wash your face, 18 So that your fasting may not be noticed by men but by your Father, Who sees in secret; and your Father, Who sees in secret, will reward you in the open.

#### STORE UP YOUR TREASURES IN HEAVEN, NOT ON EARTH

Matthew 6: 9 Do not gather and heap up and store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust and worm consume and destroy, and where thieves break through and steal. 20 But gather and heap up and store for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust nor worm consume and destroy, and where thieves do not break through and steal; 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

#### DO NOT WORRY ABOUT YOUR MATERIAL NEEDS

Matthew 6: 25 Therefore I tell you, stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink; or about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life greater [in quality] than food, and the body [far above and more excellent] than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father keeps feeding them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 And who of you by worrying and being anxious can add one unit of measure (cubit) to his stature or to the span of his life? 28 And why should you be anxious about clothes? Consider the lilies of the field and learn thoroughly how they grow; they neither toil nor spin. 29 Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his magnificence (excellence, dignity, and grace) was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and green and tomorrow is tossed into the furnace, will He not much more surely clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not worry and be anxious, saying, What are we going to have to eat? or, What are we going to have to drink? or, What are we going to have to wear? 32 For the Gentiles (heathen) wish for and crave and diligently seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows well that you need them all. 33 But seek (aim at and strive after) first of all His kingdom and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right), and then all these things taken together will be given you besides. 34 So do not worry or be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries and anxieties of its own. Sufficient for each day is its own trouble.

#### ASK GOD FOR WHATEVER YOU WANT TO HAVE

Matthew 7: 7 ]Keep on asking and it will be given you; keep on seeking and you will find; keep on knocking [reverently] and [the door] will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who keeps on asking receives; and he who keeps on seeking finds; and to him who keeps on knocking, [the door] will be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, if his son asks him for a loaf of bread, will hand him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will hand him a serpent? 11 If you then, evil as you are, know how to give good and advantageous gifts to your children, how much more will your Father Who is in heaven [perfect as He is] give

good and [i]advantageous things to those who keep on asking Him!<sup>12</sup> So then, whatever you desire that others would do to and for you, even so do also to and for them, for this is (sums up) the Law and the Prophets.

#### FOLLOW THE NARROW PATH TO LIFE

Matthew 7: 3 Enter through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and spacious and broad is the way that leads away to destruction, and many are those who are entering through it. 14 But the gate is narrow (contracted by pressure) and the way is straitened and compressed that leads away to life, and few are those who find it.

#### EXERCISE POWER OVER UNCLEAN SPIRITS

Matthew 10: And Jesus summoned to Him His twelve disciples and gave them power and authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out, and to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of weakness and infirmity.

Matthew 10: 8 Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Freely (without pay) you have received, freely (without charge) give.

#### DO NOT TAKE THE TITLES 'MASTER' OR 'FATHER' FOR YOURSELF

Matthew 23: 6 And they take pleasure in and [thus] love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, 7 And to be greeted with honor in the marketplaces and to have people call them rabbi. 8 But you are not to be called rabbi (teacher), for you have one Teacher and you are all brothers. 9 And do not call anyone [in the church] on earth father, for you have one Father, Who is in heaven. 10 And you must not be called masters (leaders), for you have one Master (Leader), the Christ. 11 He who is greatest among you shall be your servant.<sup>12</sup> Whoever exalts himself [with haughtiness and empty pride] shall be humbled (brought low), and whoever humbles himself [whoever has a modest opinion of himself and behaves accordingly] shall be raised to honor.

#### HAVE TOTAL FAITH IN GOD FOR EVERYTHING

Mark 11: 2 And Jesus, replying, said to them, Have faith in God [constantly]. 23 Truly I tell you, whoever says to this mountain, Be lifted up and thrown into the sea! and does not doubt at all in his heart but believes that what he says will take place, it will be done for him. 24 For this reason I am telling you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe (trust and be confident) that it is granted to you, and you will [get it].

#### **A disciple obeys the commandments of God**

John 15:9-12: 9 “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. 11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 12 This is My commandment, that you love

one another as I have loved you.

Being a true disciple of the Living God means walking in obedience.

Yet, the Lord is grieved for we have not followed His commandments and we have failed to adhere to His commandments. When we think of commandments, we tend to think Old Testament, and we get this kind of bitter taste in the mouth.

The Church has argued and debated tirelessly against the Old Testament and the validity of the Old Testament, and in the end the Church has thrown the baby out with the bath water.

We want to be a free loving Church, basking in the grace and mercy of God, soaking up His love, enjoying His blessings, and love that feel of a community where there is no judgement or condemnation.

This is indeed the God whom we serve. A loving God who is full of mercy and love and hope and kindness. He has blessed us with all he blessings (Ephesians 1:2), and indeed, there is no condemnation for who are in Christ (Romans 8:1).

But this is the problem. There is no condemnation when we are in Christ, and according to Jesus, to abide in Him means to love Him and to love Him means to follow His commandments.

The Lord pressed it on my spirit that we do not follow His commandments anymore, because we lack knowledge, understanding and wisdom. We have hardened our hearts and we have set ourselves to eventually resist commandments, for that tends to feel legalistic. We are so afraid of entering the domain of the Old Testament that we would rather avoid it completely.

And this is why we lack wisdom.

We know the greatest laws - Matthew 22:35-41: 35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Few would argue with these commandments. But do we know that there are roughly between 40 and 50 commandments issued by Jesus [depending on how you view duplications]. The fact remains Jesus made numerous commandments, and He expects us to follow them. If this was not the case, then explain Matthew 28:19-20: 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

We must go and make disciples, but in order to make disciples, we need to teach all that

Jesus has commanded. He in fact taught His disciples to follow numerous commandments, which spiritually upholds the commandments as taught to them by the Father through the old physical laws.

Jesus said in Matthew 5 that He came to fulfil the Laws of God. Matthew 5:18-20: 17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. In Him is the fulfilment, not the cancellation, of God's commandments.

The word 'fulfil' in this context is the word Pleroo which implies "to complete," or to completely accomplish the purpose God intended. Heaven and earth have still not passed away. The word "destroy" (kataluo in Greek) means "to loose or unloose what was before bound" so, if Jesus somehow transformed the law so that we don't have to keep it, He loosed us from its obligation. But Jesus emphatically tells us that He did no such thing.

Jesus concludes His statement about God's law with a solemn warning to religious teachers: "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (verse 19).

Some carelessly assume and assert that "these commandments" refers to the teachings of Christ that follow in the remainder of the chapter. Not so! The wording of the Greek text simply will not allow such an interpretation. Actually, the word in verse 19 translated "breaks" (luo in Greek) is related to the word in verse 17 rendered destroy (katalu). Luo literally means "to lose." The Greek concept of destruction is to break or take apart. Loosening a part is the first step in taking apart-thus breaking or destroying-an object. So Jesus' warning not only applies to anyone who disobeys even a minor detail of God's law and teaches others to do the same. Even "loosing," or relaxing, any of the requirements is forbidden, because that is the first step toward destroying the law. Jesus pronounces the severest penalty on any who would break or loosen even the least of the Old Testament commandments.

To put it simply, to follow Jesus is to follow God's Laws. But to follow Jesus means to follow the higher spiritual laws that encapsulate the old laws. To put it another way, we must keep the spirit of the law, not just the letter. This is possible only through the presence of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:7-9).

It is also true that when Jesus talks about fulfilling the Law, He is not just referring to the Ten Commandments. Remember, in the days of Moses, there were 613 Laws that expounded on the Ten Commandments. What we need to understand it how the entire



LAW of the old and the new is now spiritually fulfilled [completed] in Jesus, and such Law by the Spirit is not loosened or relaxed or compromised to make way for man's interpretations.

For example, where Moses taught we shall not kill or murder, Jesus teaches that it is also murder to hate your brother. Where Moses teaches about adultery, Jesus teaches about just looking at a woman with lust is adultery. The Law of Jesus is the higher law – for example, abortion is also murder, but the higher law is spiritual abortion when we lead not someone to Christ but lead them away from Jesus.

We shall not commit sexual immorality, but the higher law stipulates we shall; not commit spiritual fornication when we serve God and the world {for this is spiritual prostitution}. We are called to feed and take care of the poor and hungry and needy, but this higher law stipulates that we need to feed them spiritually by feeding them the Bread of Life {Jesus}.

God's two greatest commandments is to love Him and then to love others. We also read that all commandments hang upon these two. After all, the first four commandments of the 10 Commandments deals with how to love God and the next six on how to love mankind. The 613 Laws of Moses then elaborates how to execute the 10 commandments so that we uphold the two greatest commandments. The Law of Jesus encapsulates spiritually all that has been said by God from the beginning of time.

Of course, the ceremonial rituals of the Old Testament no longer applies to the born again believer, because Jesus – who is the better way – became the great and final high priest who has once and for all died for our sins so that we have redemption by the Blood. All of the old feasts have also been spiritual fulfilled by the higher law, such as Passover being fulfilled by the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. The Feast of Weeks that follows 50 days after Passover has been fulfilled by Pentecost, when then Spirit of the Lord was poured out.

So Jesus came to show us the better and higher way. He came to show us the higher spiritual law that envelops and encapsulates the old laws.

In response to the young man who asked Him what to do to inherit eternal life, Jesus said, "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). The verses following clearly identify the commandments He referred to as those God gave in what we call the Old Testament. He cited several of the Ten Commandments as well as the fundamental commandment to "love your neighbour as yourself" to make the point. Matthew 19: 16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" 17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." 18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 19 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" 20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I

still lack?" 21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions

On another occasion, Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Clearly, Jesus believed in, taught and kept all the commandments of God during His earthly ministry. He also commanded His disciples to be "teaching them [new converts] to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20).

So when a disciple walks in God's commands, and he worships in spirit and truth, he thus walks in God's higher spiritual laws and ways.

But this does require obedience unto God's laws as upheld by Jesus, such as considering the higher ways of spiritual adultery and idolatry.

If the two greatest commandments are to love God and to love others, then a disciple needs to walk in such commandments. We need to love God above all, and we need to love others without being jealous, envious, bitter, cruel or unkind. To love others means to walk in the Spirit of the Lord, manifesting the fruits of the Spirit to the glory of God.

If we truly uphold God's commandments, there will no idolatry in our life, no sin, no immorality, no wickedness and no evil. If we love and obey the Lord, we will stop arguing our immoral ways and repent, for this is what it means to serve the Lord. If we truly uphold God's commandments, we will begin to love others – caring for them spiritually and physically. We will not lust, or cheat them or trick them or deceive them. We will tame our tongue (James 3) and we will tame our heart.

We will walk as children of God as stipulated in Ephesians 4 and 5 and also Colossians 3.

If we follow God's ways, we walk not walk in strife, anger, discord, disunity, but in faith, love and hope.

To love the Lord, means to obey, and this means to walk in His commandments.

We read often how the Lord commanded, for to command implies authority. We read for example in Matthew 11:1-3: 11 Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.

If we ask anybody today what are the commandments of God, we will probably mention the two greatest commandments, but what about the others? Are we mindful of God's higher laws that uphold and fulfils the old laws that deal with morality and our behaviour towards God and each other? Are we aware that we are called to walk in God's Truth, seeking a holy and blameless life where we walk in His Shalom to His glory and for His glory?

This is what it means to walk as a disciple. We need to become mindful again of what God said in the Old Testament, how it operates and functions within the spiritual laws of Jesus and we need to know how to apply such commandments so that we stay true faithfully unto the Laws.

Do we really consider that the higher law of murder is spiritual murder, meaning turning to people to a religion instead of God, as what Jesus accused the Pharisees and Sadducees of in Matthew 23? He accused them of shutting up the heavens and leading people astray. That is spiritual murder.

What about theft? We know what it means to steal, but have we consider that even in church doctrines that are applied wrongfully, such as the teaching of tithing, that we stealing from the people because we manipulating people to part from their money. The New Testament Covenant is about freely giving as the Spirit leads, and not tithing.

Consider also how we steal from someone when it comes to time, and we can steal someone's attention and energy and even joy. Satan does this well, but mankind also excels in such art.

There is a higher law we need to mindful of, but because we lack the understanding and wisdom we would rather ignore it and seek an easier path.

An example of how Jesus fulfil the higher laws, consider John 5:18 where Jesus was accused of breaking a command: Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."

Did Jesus break the Sabbath commandment in the law of God (Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15)? Clearly not, for Jesus said in John 15:10: 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

Why did Jesus say that He obeys the commandments when it appeared he transgressed the Sabbath Law? Remember, Jesus was dealing with the Higher Law. We read in Luke 6: 6 Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands. 2 And some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?" 3 But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?" 5 And He said to them, "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. So one uphold the Law of the Sabbath by following Jesus in Spirit and Truth for He is the Lord of the Sabbath!

Did Jesus destroy the law? Unfortunately, many think He did just that. Even though

they don't say it in those exact words, the result is still the same. Some say Jesus transformed the law, meaning that, by accepting Christ as Saviour, a Christian is somehow credited with the righteousness of Christ. They assume this means we don't need to keep the law, because Jesus allegedly kept it for us, and the law really doesn't apply to us after all. This, however, is not true. We are called to follow God's higher laws.

Jesus was, however, opposed by those who were holding onto the traditions of man. It says in Matthew 15:9: " 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." Jesus quoted this statement from Isaiah 29:13 and applied it to the "tradition of the elders" (Matthew 15:2) as taught and practiced by the hypocritical, self-righteous scribes and Pharisees who sat in judgment of Him.

These "commandments of man" were also known to the Jews as the "oral Torah" or the oral law. It was this distorted interpretation of the law that Jesus sought to correct in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus therefore was never attacking the Old Testament – how can He for the Laws came from His Father - but the understanding many of his hearers adopted.

Jesus thus taught on the proper application of the commandment upon which the particular tradition was based. He thus fulfilled the Law in its entirety by restoring it to its complete original meaning and intent. Our righteousness must therefore exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20) in that we must keep the law of God in its proper intent.

This therefore means following the higher Law of Jesus that spiritually encapsulates all laws.

When the Jews charged Jesus with breaking the Sabbath (John 5:18), they were accusing Him of violating their misguided human traditions regarding the Sabbath. The Gospel accounts contain many such confrontations during which Jesus' conduct on the Sabbath was condemned by the legalistic scribes and Pharisees (Mark 2:23-28; Mark 3:1-6).

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus offers to live in us. But He does not live our lives for us. We must all repent and yield ourselves as servants of righteousness, with the realisation that God is working in us "both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). Love is the basis of God's law, and one cannot claim to love God apart from obedience to His commandments (1 John 5:2-3, 1 John 2:4).

By replacing the laws and commandments of God with human traditions – meaning our interpretations of God's Laws – then we walk in deceit and are in danger of being swallowed by such deception like the Scribes in the days of Jesus. If we truly want to follow God in Love, we must obey in Love. We cannot teach His commandments if our human traditions override the Truth of God. We can thus only be true and real disciples of God when we allow His commandments in accordance to the Spirit to work in our lives. Then only can we follow and teach as Jesus commanded.

## Legalism, Liberty, License

One has to consider the biggest challenge these days for a Christian is how to balance living in the liberty of the Spirit while not flowing into legalism and license [freedom to sin].

It is the same argument regarding censorship. Some will say censorship of anything leads to a rebellion to want what we can't have or see or taste or touch, while others will say censorship keeps us at bay and allows the filtration of any bad influences. Others will argue that the lack of censorship is good, but then there is the school of thought that a lack of control leads to outright rebellion.

This is the same with God. Is it good to walk in strict observance of His commandments, or is good to allow some room for enjoyment? Will allowing some liberties not lead not a licence to be rebellious and sinful, while will not walking according to strict observance cause legalism and a religious heart to set in.

Can we see how difficult it is these days to make sure we must walk a balanced life, because God is one of order and balance, not of disorder and extremes?

Ultimately our relationship with God should be one of balance, but this requires wisdom, it requires maturity, it requires humility and a keen walk with the Spirit. The Lord calls us to lead balanced lives, not one of the extremes, for extremes in any measure causes us to be out of balance.

We are called not to walk in the extreme of liberty or legalism, but to walk by Grace in the Spirit of God so that we can manifest fully His holiness and glory.

When it comes to walking in liberty or legalism of the Spirit, we many arguments to support our theories, But as one learns, arguments are a means of justifying what we want, instead of allowing God to dictate the Truth. As we will see, there is only one way to follow a true path, and that is following the Spirit. So we have arguments that abound that once saved always saved.

When it comes to the issue of living in the liberty of the Spirit, debates are soon ignited regarding holiness. Some will say we have been made holy by the Blood of Jesus, while some will argue that there is no condemnation for those in Christ, and some will argue that as long as our spirit is redeemed who cares if the soul keeps on rebelling.

This is indeed a tricky issue. We can think of Romans 8 that speaks of nothing separating us from the love of God, so we can therefore ponder that Paul meant that once we have indeed been redeemed, then the deal is certain.

Ponder also the following Scripture:

1 Thessalonians 4: NKJV: 3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who

do not know God; 6 that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. 7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. 8 Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

Amplified version:

For this is the will of God, that you should be consecrated (separated and set apart for pure and holy living): that you should abstain and shrink from all sexual vice,<sup>4</sup> That each one of you should know how to possess (control, manage) his own body in consecration (purity, separated from things profane) and honor, 5 Not [to be used] in the passion of lust like the heathen, who are ignorant of the true God and have no knowledge of His will, 6 That no man transgress and overreach his brother and defraud him in this matter or defraud his brother in business. For the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we have already warned you solemnly and told you plainly. 7 For God has not called us to impurity but to consecration [to dedicate ourselves to the most thorough purity].

Let us also consider that in Revelations chapter 2 and 3 we read seven times in the seven letters to the churches regarding the rewards for those who overcome.

To overcome therefore by all accounts is an important aspect of our journey, so therefore, if we have to overcome, then surely this will also mean a responsibility from our side to lead a holy and pure life in order to obtain the awards of God.

Yes, Jesus died on the cross for our sins, so we can work for our salvation. But surely, we have a responsibility to work out our salvation. It says in Philippians 2: 12 Therefore, my dear ones, as you have always obeyed [my suggestions], so now, not only [with the enthusiasm you would show] in my presence but much more because I am absent, work out (cultivate, carry out to the goal, and fully complete) your own salvation with reverence and awe and trembling (self-distrust, with serious caution, tenderness of conscience, watchfulness against temptation, timidly shrinking from whatever might offend God and discredit the name of Christ).

To work out applies a process of moving forward ... if all has been done on the cross then there is nothing to sort out. But clearly, we still have a race to run, and we need to walk in the holy fear of the Lord so that we obtain our crown and prize. If we, therefore, become too liberal or too legalistic, are we then not in danger of not working our salvation?

There are arguments that despite all our efforts, we can never lead a holy life and that despite all our efforts, we will always be sinners. We debate that this viewpoint is alright, as long as one repents. We have after all, by the thesis of this argument, been redeemed, justified and sanctified. This, therefore, gives us a certain licence to act liberally according to the world, for by the Blood there is always forgiveness.



Thus, by this argument, we come to a familiar saying: Once saved, always saved.

Can we, therefore, fall away and lose our salvation, or are we always saved no matter what?

This is the crux of the debate, and depending on one's point of view, it will determine how you conduct yourself.

Since the Word says we have to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, it thus in essence implies fearing the Lord and obeying His will. As mentioned, to work out speaks of progression, but it also speaks of a positive momentum forward instead of just remaining stagnant in one's ways or even backsliding.

If we argue that once saved always saved, then one has to fear that licence will always exist to live also in the world, for there is then no fear for God. If one believes that one can fall back, then the possibility exists of being too legalistic in one's attempt to always please God through good works.

Ultimately, when we consider the debate around the freedom of the Spirit in light of living holy, we have to consider the following aspects:

- A) Difference between a true follower and a believer
- B) The Covenant of God
- C) God's Sovereign Will for us to be filled with Glory (Romans 8)

To consider point A, consider Jesus' teaching in John 3. Jesus makes a clear distinction between a follower of God and those who simply believe in Jesus. A follower is born again and is led by the Spirit. A believer believes, but has not yet submitted and is thus not really following the Lord. A believer believes and follows, and has therefore submitted.

So in essence, a great problem with Christianity today is that all believers are considered children of God. There is, however, a difference between those who follow Jesus by worshipping in Spirit and Truth and those who simply believe in His divinity.

One is the true believer who lives for God completely, the other ends up following a religion designed to worship Jesus.

Galatians 5 makes it clear that there is the ways of the world/flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. And those who walk by the Spirit (Romans 8) will not walk in the ways of the flesh, and for those who are in the Spirit, for them there is no condemnation.

Therefore Paul also draws a distinction between walking according to the Spirit and the flesh; therefore for him as for John (see 1 John 2) there are two distinct paths – the path of the Spirit and the path of the world.

Thus, there is a distinction between walking the two paths, but you cannot walk both. This implies there is a path of holiness [a life in the Spirit] and a path of the flesh [life in

the world].

Therefore, there is no such thing as walking in the liberty of the Spirit while holding on to a licence to follow the world. Our true liberty is to worship the Lord out of love and respect, which will determine our conduct and which will ultimately negate any legalism that is the foundation of a religious spirit.

Those who therefore follow the Spirit are the true born again believers, and those who simply believe or follow a religion will end up following another path of legalism which can also allow the advocacy to sin.

We can argue this as much as possible, but we either follow God in Spirit, thus led by the Spirit, or we follow an idea. One is based on relationship, the other on man-made rules and regulations. The former gives life, the latter kills.

Therefore, for those who walk according to the Spirit, they will strive for holiness, for this is the work of the Spirit within man. And by such a believer there is a great hunger and a desire to shake off the world and to seek God.

For such a believer, there is no point arguing about legalism and liberty or licence, to follow the Spirit is about the liberty not to sin. Such is the desire of the born again believer.

On the other hand, those who follow a religion, or an idea of God, or their own version of such a spiritual walk, most likely end up grappling with issues regarding liberty, legalism and license to sin.

They struggle because they are not led by the Spirit, for the Spirit works within the true follower to be conformed in the glorious image of God. This is the work of religion, which exalts man as god.

Indeed, by the Blood of Jesus, we have been justified, but this does not mean that those justified by grace can sin as much as they want.

Romans 6:1-2 says, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer in it?"

Secondly, consider point B. By the Covenant, we have an agreement with the Lord. He redeems, but now we have to follow His ways, His will and His Kingdom. There is a contract in place.

The southern and northern tribes of Israel thought they were beyond God's reproach, but they endured His judgement at the hands of Assyria and Babylon because they didn't stay true to the Covenant with God (Deuteronomy 28).

However, we can argue that Israel has never been forsaken by God and still plays a crucial role in His end of day's plans. Israel has always remained God's chosen nation,

and once again they will be saved at the coming of Jesus. This however does not negate the fact that for about 2500 they have endured terrible hardship, which is part of their judgment.

Then, do we only endure judgement when we obey not the Covenant or are there more serious consequences?

Consider the following verses:

Hebrews 6: 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.

Hebrews 10 says: 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Either way, if we believe that we can lose our salvation or only endure judgment, the fact remains there are consequences when we chose to either stifle the move of God in our lives through a legalistic or religious mind-set or when we chose to offend the Lord by climbing into bed with the world.

If we think about it, if we obey not God by walking in Spirit and truth, then surely there is no real deep relationship with God.

Our argument then lies with the true follower – what then happens if we live in the license of the world and not in the embrace of God?

One has to consider what John writes in his epistles. He makes it clear that one cannot walk in darkness and in light. Therefore, for him there remains the true path of following God (expounded by Romans 8). Thus, if one is really following God, then there will be the fearful working out of one's salvation, but for those who live for God and the world, how deep is their love for God really? I John 1: 5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

A Covenant is in place for the born again, Spirit filled believer, but the evidence of such a commitment is their fruits and desire to stay true to the Covenant. For those who then obey, there is judgement but no falling away.

However, we also do find those who are in the world while trying to serve God, but their fruit will not speak of a deep relationship. Will they then be true unto the Covenant by

walking in Spirit and Truth? The chances are slim.

Is there then a possibility for such a person to fall away? Most certainly, because ultimately Romans 8 has to apply to the true spirit-filled, born again believer who stays true to the Covenant, and whose endeavours to walk in sanctification and glorification.

After all, if you are not walking in the Spirit and in Truth, how long can one really stand against the corruptive ways of the devil and the world?

Regarding point C, it says the following:

Romans 8: 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Indeed, it is the Lord's desire for us to be glorified. This is after all His Will. A true believer stays true to the Lord's will, otherwise, the Lord's Prayer of Matthew 5 is but a rambling of words. If it is His will for us to be glorified, then surely this means it is His will for us to move from glory to glory by walking in holiness.

2 Corinthians 3: 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Lord has called us to walk in His ways, to His glory, and to live a full life of glory. He wants all that we do be to His glory and for His glory. In the end, a lot of what we do is about our motivation and intent. Legalism prevents us from moving into God's glory because is motivation is based on duty, and duty speaks of motivation of self-gain and honour. Neither can we live a life where we hold onto the world, advocating the sin, because this is idolatry and rebellion in the eyes of God?

1 Corinthians 10 addresses the aspect of being over religious and legalistic to the point where one is unable to flow in the liberty of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 10: Flee from Idolatry: 14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. 15 I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say. 16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread. 18 Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? 19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? 20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. 22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? 23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. 24 Let no one seek his own,

but each one the other's well-being. 25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; 26 for "the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness." 27 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. 28 But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness." 29 "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience? 30 But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks? 31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, 33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Therefore, true glorification comes when we allow ourselves to be led completely by the Spirit to the glory of the Lord and not for self-glorification.

Such glorification is settled in a deep motivation to love and please the Lord, not merely out of duty, but out of a relationship. This is the crux of "James 1:25: But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." Liberty by grace is to the licence to sin, but to please God and to glorify Him. Such a state of being led by the Spirit unto a state of glorification will surely guard us against becoming legalistic or religious to the point where the liberty of the Spirit is quenched, and similarly, it will guard against becoming too free in the world and taking liberty with God.

We must in the end remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 24: 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you ahead of time.

The devil wants us to lead a life that takes us away from the liberty of the Spirit. If we become too religious or too liberal in the world, we will not be led by the Spirit and this will allow his ways of corruption to dig into our soul.

Jesus' warning is clear that the devil will try any means possible to deceive us so that we are no longer in Jesus, and by that position we are not condemned.

Let us also keep in mind the following Scripture out of Revelation 13 regarding the beast out of the earth: 13 And it performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view of the people. 14 Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth. It ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

We must never, but never become complacent in our walk with God. For this world seeks to deceive and to lead the disciple astray. We must never fall into a comfort zone, for then we will surely be deceived. We need to remain vigilant, always in the Spirit,

always in the Truth, for then we will walk a path that glorified God.

In the liberty of the Spirit lies victory, but in legalism and in worldly licence lies deceit and spiritual corruption.

Consider Hebrews 12: The Discipline of God: 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. 5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

We have to constantly keep in mind the truth of Galatians 2: 19 "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

So yes, all that we do must to glorify God. And we also need to stand upon 2 Corinthians 3:17: Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (emancipation from bondage, freedom).

In order for us to therefore really and truly walk in the ways of God, we need to stop making excuses in order for the Lord to strengthen us, even by discipline, so that we can lead victorious lives of overcoming.

We need to remain true to the path and true to the Lord in order to walk in the liberty of His will, purpose and plan.



## **Liberty, License, Liberty – Truths of Jesus and the Law of Moses**

Much of the argument of liberty, legalism and licence also revolves around the Law of Moses. Many would argue that we are not under the Law, thus to follow the Law is legalism.

Some will then again argue that without any respect for the Law in any form, leaves the Christian without any boundaries within to act and therefore stands in danger of moving in the realm of having a license to act as pleases.

This is indeed a very difficult debate, and for those who think it is clear cut are naïve.

After all, we know that God wants us to live in the liberty of the Spirit. Such a liberty has been brought by a price. We after know we are no longer under the Law of Moses but are under the Law of Jesus Christ.

We would therefore love to say that the only way we can live in the liberty of the Spirit is to become consciously aware that we cannot please or delight God through our acts or works, thus we must keep on having faith in God.

But this is where it gets tricky. How then do we live in the liberty of the Spirit when we break down all the barriers of the Law?

The Scriptures teach us that we are to live holy lives and avoid sin (Colossians 1:5-11). Just because we are saved and eternally justified before God (John 10:28), that is no excuse to continue in the sin from which we were saved. Of course, we all sin (Romans 3:23). But the war between the saved and sin is continuous (Romans 7:14-20) and it won't be until the return of Jesus that we will be delivered from this body of death. To seek sin continually and use God's grace to excuse it later is to trample the blood of Christ underfoot (Hebrews 10:29) and to reveal the person's true sinful, unsaved nature (1 John 2:4; 2:19).

If we say we live according to the Law of Jesus, how then do we ascertain what is right and wrong if we fail to live by any real standards of God's laws?

We certainly argue that as Christians we should have a basic idea of what is right and wrong, as taught by Jesus. Thus, many would then argue that to live in the liberty of the Spirit implies living according to the teachings of Jesus, and therefore avoid any legalism or avoid the pitfalls of having a license to sin.

Romans 6: From Slaves of Sin to Slaves of God: 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! 16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked

that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul's argument in Romans 6 stands that even though we are no longer under the Law of Moses, we are under a law of Jesus; therefore we have to remain true and real to the ways of God. We are indeed no longer slaves to legalism and to a legalistic religion, but we are slaves to Jesus – meaning we must walk in obedience, truth and faithfulness to His commandments.

We need to remember that what Jesus taught, in a technical sense, expounded on the Law of Moses, for He Himself said that He did not come to do away with the Law but to fulfil the Law. Jesus was teaching at the time Jews, thus He Himself was speaking within a Judaic context and within a Judaic culture, and He was showing them a better way to live.

Indeed, the better way according to Jesus is to adhere and to follow Him, and not merely to follow a set of rules as taught by Moses.

But this is where the trouble starts. Jesus never shot down Moses, or the Laws. How could He, for those Laws were given by His Father? Jesus never spoke negatively against them, for then He was saying His Father was wrong to introduce such laws.

Luke 18: 18 A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 19 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. 20 You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'" 21 "All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said. 22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 23 When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. 24 Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! 25 Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." 26 Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?" 27 Jesus replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God." 28 Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!" 29 "Truly I tell you," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God 30 will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal

life.”

Matthew 22: 34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” 37 Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

We are thus faced with a conundrum.

Today, many would simply say that we must do away with the Law of Moses because when we break one commandment we break them all. It is also true we cannot please God through good works and staying obedient unto all His laws.

However, keep in mind the 613 laws of Moses expounded the 10 Commandments – are we thus so bold to say that we wish to live in the liberty of the Spirit without adhering to the 10 Commandments?

Let us be honest. No one can live up to the 10 Commandments all the time, and if we try, then we face judgement. So the reasoning goes that we have been saved by the Blood of Jesus, and so by faith and repentance our sins have been forgiven and so the only way we can be walk as children of God is to follow and obey the Spirit instead of trying to work out our salvation through obeying the commandments.

That is a fair argument, because one cannot ignore the truth that we are only saved and redeemed by the Blood of Jesus, that we will never be able to fully please God by always doing good works and that we are redeemed by faith in God alone.

The truth also stands that we follow the Law of Jesus and not the physical religious or ceremonial or moral 613 Laws of Moses.

But again, if we talk about holiness, what does this imply? Is holiness a mere state of living in obedience to the Holy Spirit, or is obedience also living and acting like a Christian whose thoughts are renewed and whose heart is set upon the throne room of heaven?

But then, how can we live holy without any boundaries or parameters?

Some say the Holy Spirit will guide us in what is true and right. Problem is there is a big difference between being filled by the Spirit and being led by the Spirit. Dare to say, the Church today is not really following the Spirit, for the Spirit leads us in all truth. If one judges all the false doctrines and man-made systems today that surrounds the Christian faith, then one has to question if the believer is really submitted to the Holy Spirit? If this is not the case, then how can the Spirit guide anyone who is still self-centred and self-driven?

The tendency in the modern day church has been to simply get rid of the notion of Laws, in case we fall into legalism, and let us rather lean towards liberty that borders on having a license to act as one desires. It seems legalism has become a greater fear than living in a state of the freedom of the Self.

What then holds the greatest danger? Being too legalistic or being liberated in the Self? These are two extremes.

The challenge still remains how to live in the Liberty of the Spirit, while still being respectful of both the pros and cons of living in a state of legalism and a state of license.

Let us consider Paul. He argued vehemently in the Book of Galatians and Romans that the believers should stay away from the Law of Moses and that they should strive for the Liberty of the Spirit. He also warned about being the indulgences of living for the Self, which causes justification of all sins.

Galatians 3: Faith or Works of the Law: 3 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. 2 I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? 4 Have you experience so much in vain—if it really was in vain? 5 So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? 6 So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” 7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. 8 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. 10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” 11 Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” 12 The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.” 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” 14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. 15 Brothers and sisters, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. 16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ. 17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. 18 For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on the promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. 19 Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was

given through angels and entrusted to a mediator. 20 A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one. 21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. 22 But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. 23 Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. 24 So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. 25 Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. 26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatian 4: 21 Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. 23 His son by the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a divine promise. 24 These things are being taken figuratively: The women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. 25 Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written: "Be glad, barren woman, you who never bore a child; shout for joy and cry aloud, you who were never in labor; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband." 28 Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 At that time the son born according to the flesh persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. 30 But what does Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." 31 Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.

Galatians 5: New International Version (NIV): Freedom in Christ: 5 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. 2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. 4 You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. 5 For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. 7 You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth? 8 That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 9 "A little yeast works through



the whole batch of dough.” 10 I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion, whoever that may be, will have to pay the penalty. 11 Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. 12 As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves! 13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 15 If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

1 Corinthians 6: 12 “I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but I will not be mastered by anything. 13 You say, “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both.” The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. 15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! 16 Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” 17 But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit 18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. 19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Romans 7: New International Version (NIV): Released From the Law, Bound to Christ: 7 Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? 2 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. 3 So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress



if she marries another man.<sup>4</sup> So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. <sup>5</sup> For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. <sup>6</sup> But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. **The Law and Sin** <sup>7</sup> What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” <sup>8</sup> But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. <sup>9</sup> Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. <sup>10</sup> I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. <sup>11</sup> For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. <sup>12</sup> So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. <sup>13</sup> Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. <sup>14</sup> We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. <sup>15</sup> I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. <sup>16</sup> And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup> As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. <sup>19</sup> For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. <sup>21</sup> So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. <sup>22</sup> For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; <sup>23</sup> but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. <sup>24</sup> What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

We have to remember that Paul was a Jew and was raised in the system of the Law. He knew what it means to religiously follow every small detail of the commandments. He knew what it meant to meticulously live as a Jew, and fearing that if it was not done precisely and accurately he would be struck down by a wrathful God. Through this process, Paul did learn what sin is, but he also learned that he could not deal with sin through such a process. Only once he is liberated by Jesus can he come to the Lord in faith and only the Lord to strengthen Him to overcome.

Paul argued about the Law to the Jews, not the Gentiles. We will never know what it means to be under the Law, but that is also our problem. The Jews knew what it really means to serve a holy God where there is no room for error. But the Lord didn’t want the

Jews to love and fear Him simply because they had to, He wanted them to love and fear Him because of their faith and love in Him.

This is also the case with us today. We are not called to do good works simply out of the motivation to please Him, but out of our relationship with God.

So when Paul was penning his epistles, he argues that even though the Law did wonders to teach the people holiness and purity, in itself it was designed to fail because spiritually the Jews weren't living in holiness and love because of their lack of relationship with God. For them it had become a routine and a ritual – very much like religion – and so Paul realised the dangers of following the 613 Laws of Moses religiously because they were hoping for salvation based on strict adherence to the physical requirements.

But Paul, being a strict Jew himself, realised that in Jesus there is a greater liberty – the liberty still to be holy and pure. Yet he advocated that instead of following 613 Laws to the letter, rather follow Jesus in Spirit and Truth for in Jesus is the Law and where the Spirit of the Lord is so is liberty.

The problem facing the Jews back then still faces us today. They could not understand how to balance following Jesus but still staying true to their culture without becoming too promiscuous. They also failed to see there is a better way of following the Law in Spirit and in Truth, thus adhering to the spiritual principals of the Law.

After all, the Law of the Spirit of Truth sets us free, but the Law of sin and death leads us in wickedness (Romans 8).

Paul did not want his people to be caged by routine and ritual, especially when they feared one little mistake will lead to their demise. In Christ he saw a greater hope and purpose – but the end result was the same, which is to be holy and pure.

**Romans 8: Life Through the Spirit:** 8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

Where then does the answer lie? If we say we want to live holy, how are we going to achieve this without considering the Laws of God? If we say we want to be free in the Lord, how are we going to prevent from justifying our actions when we are in danger of

moving beyond God's ways of right and wrong?

I truly believe the biggest problem with this conundrum is how we perceive the physical Laws. One can agree that if we try to physically obey the Laws – specifically the 10 Commandments – then we are in trouble. After all, how many of us are really keeping the Sabbath Holy as commanded?

If we can't keep it holy, we then break all other nine of the commandments and therefore come under the curse of disobedience.

The way we should perceive the Laws is thus not physically but spiritually.

Many years ago, the Lord spoke about the Law and how it has become misinterpreted and even rejected. We must be careful not throw the baby out with the bathwater. Indeed, we **DO NOT LIVE BY THE LAWS OF MOSES BUT BY THE LAWS OF JESUS.**

Romans 13: Love Fulfills the Law: 8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. 9 The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

No one can live by the laws of Moses and so try to please God. Let us keep that in mind. We are not called to sacrifice bulls or lambs! But what we can do is to live by the Law of Jesus, and so the question of how to live in the Liberty of the Spirit comes down to understanding what it means to live according to the Law of Jesus.

Our problem today within Churches is our sheer ignorance and lack of understanding of the Laws of Moses. We fail to understand their design, their purpose and their intent.

The purpose and intent and design were for a people to live holy and separated unto God in body, soul and spirit. And the only way it could have been done before the birth of Jesus was a structured set of 613 Laws, which became the constitution of the Israel. Still today, the Law of Jesus is designed to set us apart for Holiness, and we must therefore allow God to lead and guide us in accordance to His truth and will.

## A Prophetic Thought on Unity and Separatism

The world is in chaos because we are trying to separate what God has called unto unity, and trying to unite what God has separated! We live in perilous times where God's order is constantly being challenged, questioned, defied and even demonically rejected. The Church needs to take a stand for God's order.

We live in times where for example gender roles and identity are blurred, thus what God has separated – man from woman – has become blurred. It says in “Genesis 2:21: And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.” God separated the rib from Adam to create to make the woman. The rib was removed, and so it says in verse 23 she has been taken out of Man. God never intended for man and women as a gender to be one, even though they are one spiritually in the Body of Christ. So this is a case where the world pushes a diabolical agenda of unifying what God has clearly separated.

In churches we are also called to guard against the separation of the unholy from the holy, the common from the common, the truth from the lies, and the spiritual from the natural. And the more the world rebels and challenges God's order, we are finding how the gender and sexual orientation lines for example are being blurred in an attempt to unify, instead of keeping clear boundaries of separation. In the meantime, the devil is pushing to separate what God has ordained to be united, such as the sanctity of marriage, and the Body of Christ (for this reason we sit with thousands of denominations). Yet in the marriage there remains a clear order. It says in “Ephesians 5: 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

In marriage, the MAN and the WOMAN are called to be one, yet this has nothing to do with gender fluidity. The world has challenged this order for man and man or woman and women to become one, yet woman was created from the rib of man. God's order is

clear, but the world seeks to challenge and defy God's order of unity and separation to create a new and diabolical order which is in alignment with the kingdom of darkness.

In the Garden of Paradise, in Genesis 3 we read: "24 So God drove the man out; and at the east of the Garden of Eden He [permanently] stationed the cherubim and the sword with the flashing blade which turned round and round [in every direction] to protect and guard the way (entrance, access) to the tree of life." Now imagine what would have happened if Adam and Eve tried to defy God by breaking down that barrier of separation! It would have been outright rebellion. Yet, this is what the world and the church is doing daily. We are challenging God by insisting the barriers being broken down, while at the same time we are erecting other barriers and walls of division based on our prejudices. We are breaking down or blurring lines in order to create a unity, disguised under the banner of love and equality. Just as the devil rebelled, so he wants mankind to rebel against God's order, His truth and ways. This is indeed perilous times which calls for great discernment, understanding, wisdom and understanding regarding God's will and His order.

In the same chapter of Genesis, the Lord said the following: 15 "And I will put enmity (open hostility) between you and the woman, and between your seed (offspring) and her Seed; He shall [fatally] bruise your head, and you shall [only] bruise His heel." Many consider this verse the protevangelium, thus the first announcement of the gospel. This is the first prophecy about the Messiah (Christ), who through His death on the cross and resurrection would ultimately defeat Satan, the power behind the serpent, with a death blow (see Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31; Romans 16:20; Galatians 4:4; Revelations 12:17).

Still today, by the Blood of the Lamb there should be a separation from those who are born of God and those who still follow the devil. This is clearly evident in Revelations 21 of the New Jerusalem: "27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." And also "Revelations 22: 14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie." Thus, those who have not followed God, will be forever separated from His Glory for they will not be allowed to dwell within the city.

Also note, because of the fall into sin, Adam and Eve were separated from the garden.

This is therefore a very important verse, because God has ordained there should be a separation between what is evil and what is right, and that there should be no fellowship between the followers of Christ and the followers of darkness. Yet sadly, so many Christians it seems want to follow God and the world, therefore not keeping separated from that which corrupts, defiles and destroys. Jesus said in John 8:12: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of

life.”

As Christians, we are called to walk in light, not darkness! We must keep ourselves separated from the darkness, for this is God’s order. Yet when we break down such barriers to also seek the darkness, then we are in rebellion against God. And the devil is pushing for this agenda, which is to break down God’s perfect order.

And how glorious it is to know that indeed Jesus fatally bruised the head of the devil, for it says in “Colossians 2:15: When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities [those supernatural forces of evil operating against us], He made a public example of them [exhibiting them as captives in His triumphal procession], having triumphed over them through the cross.” The devil but only bruised the heel of the Lord, for Jesus was crucified but rose from the grave to pay the King’s ransom for all mankind!

It says in “Psalm 133:1: Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!” There is therefore great power when we abide in the Lord, and when we abide in His order. Yet the devil seeks to defy such order, and to destroy God’s holy ways. We need to therefore be discerning to what is God’s order, to what must be separated and what is called to be united. For example, “Psalm 1 says the following: 1 Blessed [fortunate, prosperous, and favored by God] is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked [following their advice and example], nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit [down to rest] in the seat of scoffers (ridiculers).” This speaks of a separation between the dark and the light, just as there is a separation between the truth and what lies is.

Thus, in the eyes of God there is separatism, but separatism is from the holy from the unholy, the common from the uncommon and the immoral from the moral. This is Paul’s argument in 2 Corinthians 6: 14 Do not be unequally bound together with unbelievers [do not make mismatched alliances with them, inconsistent with your faith]. For what partnership can righteousness have with lawlessness? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony can there be between Christ and Belial (Satan)? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said: “I will dwell among them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 17 “So come out from among unbelievers and be separate,” says the Lord, “And do not touch what is unclean; And I will graciously receive you and welcome you [with favor],

This is also the basis for 1 John 2: 15 Do not love the world [of sin that opposes God and His precepts], nor the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust and sensual craving of the flesh and the lust and longing of the eyes and the boastful pride of life [pretentious confidence in one’s resources or in the stability of earthly things]—these do not come from the Father, but are from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and with it its lusts [the shameful pursuits and ungodly longings]; but the one who does the will of God



and carries out His purposes lives forever.

So there must be a separation between the believer and the world, yet we must also be united in Christ. It says in “Romans 8:35: Who shall ever separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?” Yes, by the Blood of Jesus, we are now united with God, yet daily the devil seeks to destroy the believer’s life in order to bring about separation.

In Ezekiel 44: 23 it says: “And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.” This was in connection with the duty of the priests in Israel. In 1 Peter 2 we read: “4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” As priests of the Lord, we must like the priests of old as be able to know the difference between what is right and wrong, and what is common and uncommon, and what is natural and unnatural.

Right in the beginning at the creation of all things, God separated for example night from day, the land and water, and land and the sky. There was a reason for this, just as there is a reason for God separating and God uniting. Yet the devil will always try to attack God’s order, and bring about a different and a false order. In the Tabernacle, God separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. This was done for a reason for the time was not yet ripe for God to permanently dwell within and with all man. This was done in the time of Jesus, whose death and resurrection tore that veil in two and opened the way for the reality of John 3:16 so that we may all abide and walk with God. What God separated for a reason, He then removed also for a reason. Yet the devil is again trying to reverse the order of things by using traditions, religion, and legalisms to again erect the “veil” to separate man from God.

Crux of the matter is that what God has united and joined together, man must not separate (Mark 10:9). This applies in context to divorce, but it applies spiritually to God’s order as well. So whenever we seek to divide and separate based on race, status or class, then we are falling prey to the work of the devil. As children of God we must uphold the Truth of the Word, thus keep united what God unites and keep separated what God has ordained to be divided.

## Order and blessing

There is a distinct coloration between the periods of covenant throughout the Scriptures and spiritual order and disorder. Depending on the level of order we are experiencing, we can either walk in the peace of the Lord or in the fear of the world.

Time periods of order:

\* Paradise: Adam and Eve (COVENANT OF INNOCENCE)

Complete external and internal order. There was no curse, sin, sickness, or death. Adam and Eve had one prime task namely to worship (fellowship) with God. They were to obey God, including not eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

This was the height of God's blessings, yet pride caused Adam and Eve to fall. Their disobedience had an impact on God's order throughout the world and His blessings.

\* Paradise to Noah (COVENANT OF CONSCIENCE)

Complete external and internal disorder. God could not dwell with man as with Adam and Eve because of sin. Earth, Satan, man, and women are under a curse. Sickness and eternal death is now reality. Man has now attained knowledge of both good and evil (conscience-decisions can be made). Man however chooses evil (Cain), even though there was the option of fellowship and obeying God (blood sacrifices). Man fails to establish order in accordance with God, and therefore Great Flood.

Lowest point of God's blessing.

\* Noah to Abraham (COVENANT OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT)

God now puts into motion His perfect plan to reestablish limited external order and future complete internal order through the covenant made with Noah. This covenant included that man would now be responsible for governing the actions of others (capital punishment also instituted). Again, man has a choice, by following his conscience for good, by calling upon the Lord and by sacrificing blood offerings. Yet, again, man fails to establish God's order by not governing successfully and therefore suffers. God confused their languages (Tower of Babel) and disperses man.

No order yet. As possible order could be increased, so does God's blessing. Yet, man choose disorder and no blessing.

\* Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to the Law of Moses (COVENANT OF PROMISE)

God's continues with His plan for future limited external order and complete internal order by making a covenant with Abraham (chosen lineage through whom God would reveal His glory to the world). Limited internal and external order is possible Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and children. However, for such order to take place, they had to choose good (conscience), call upon the Lord, offer blood sacrifices, govern wisely, and obey

God in terms of circumcision and commit no idolatry.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob successfully walk in God's order, living under the Covenant promise. Such promise speaks of Abraham's seed will be numerous; that Canaan will be conquered; financial prosperity will be enjoyed and that a spiritual seed will also arise.

However, God's order is broken when the nation became slaves to Egypt. Therefore, they were slaves to the Pharaoh (no external order). God had to judge Egypt so that He could continue with His ultimate plan of reestablishing future perfect order.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob enjoyed great blessing, yet man's slavery broke the blessing, suffering under the cursed hand of the Pharaoh.

\* Mosaic Law to Jesus (COVENANT OF TEN COMMANDMENTS)

Under Law of Moses, limited external and internal order is now possible to a greater number of people. Since the earth is still under a curse, and man still full of sin, the Law introduces civil and ceremonial laws so that the people through set rules can meet the standard of God.

They also had to obey the covenant requirements of Abraham to live in the covenant promises. Since God can't dwell among the children internally because of sin, He can dwell with them externally.

The tabernacle (Moses) and the temple (Solomon) are temporary structures so that the nation could obey God in order to receive His blessings.

Limited external order is established by choosing God and not idolatry, by choosing blessing and not curses.

Ten Commandments, orderly worship and living for God establish God's order. The nation could enjoy God's limited internal and external order, since God's blessing included freedom from sickness, protection from enemies and economic prosperity.

God's future plan for perfect internal order is still in place since the Messiah will arise from this nation.

Blessing increased as from the days of Abraham. Yet, after the days of David, the House of Israel and Judah enjoyed little blessing since numerous kings choose not to walk with God.

\* Jesus to New Heaven and New Earth (COVENANT OF GRACE):

Covenant of grace replaces covenant of Ten Commandments.

God's order for complete internal order and limited external order comes into play when Jesus was crucified.

Complete internal order established and made possible by the Blood of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

There is still only limited external order, as in the days of Moses when only limited external order was possible.

Earth is still under a curse, yet Christ took upon Himself the curse. Therefore, complete internal order lies in Christ, while complete internal and external disorder lies in all that is not under the Blood.

The Christian practices limited external order in a world of extreme disorder through order in fellowship, church, family, ministry, and work (we still enjoy the covenant blessings of protection of sickness, financial prosperity and protection but only when we obey and love God in body, soul and spirit).

The Great Commission, God's commands and God's covenants come into effect. We must live by faith and not by sight, and we need to claim our covenant promises.

God's order made possible by the Blood of Jesus can only be broken when we choose (conscience) evil.

Clearly, as with the seven year tribulation, judgment will come upon those who choose not to abide in the Lord, therefore those who live in disorder.

Blessing keeps increasing. Responsibility of decision lies with us. God's fullness can either be enjoyed or the consequences of sin.

\* New Jerusalem (COVENANT OF THE MILLENNIUM)

Complete internal and external order is established. The entire curse is now lifted, and there is also now no more sin, sickness, and death. Judgment has come. Man, who has chosen God, lives eternally. Man and God are again reunited as in the days of Paradise.

Complete eternal God's blessing and presence.

Four stages of man's spiritual existence:

At the moment, man can't dwell in the spiritual state of paradise or in the spiritual state of the New Jerusalem. The earth is still under the curse of sin, and only freedom exists in the Blood of Christ. Therefore, man can only move into a spiritual realm of existence in accordance with the existing curse (keep in mind we live under the Covenant of Grace).

1) Pharaoh state of existence:

As the Israelites were slaves to the Egyptians, so are those who are not under the Blood of Jesus.

For those outside the Covenant, they find themselves under complete slavery of sin, sickness and death. There is no Godly external or internal order, causing the slave of sin to seek order through complete self-gratification and self-fulfillment. \* God's blessing is absent.

- \* God's lack of order is similar as in the period between Paradise and Noah.
- \* Parable of the sower: hard path (devil has taken away the word of salvation).

### 2) Aaron state of existence:

The Israelites were freed from their bondage through wonders and signs. Our salvation is also a miracle and a sign of God's wonderful grace, love mercy. They were allowed to wander the desert, seeking of the Promised Land.

However, many did not enter the Promised Land, because they murmured, were slaves to lust, they tested the Lord, bowed to idolatry and allowed fornication into their hearts (1 Corinthians 10).

Aaron was called for a great purpose, as we all have a meaningful calling. He was called to act as high priest, and so we are also called to be a holy priesthood. Aaron, even though being Moses' spokesman, did not enter the Promised Land. He feared man instead of God, while he bowed to idolatry (Golden Calf). He murmured against Moses and walked in disobedience at the time when Moses was to produce water from a rock.

When we submit to the Blood of Christ, we are called for a calling and are offered the opportunity of entering the land of milk and honey (fullness of Christ). However, like Aaron, we could fail to enter the Promised Land when we fail to completely submit, surrender, and die in ourselves unto and for God. When we fail to grow in God and we fall into the trap of fearing man and not God.

\* God's order is similar as with the period between Abraham and Mosaic Law, which means we are only experiencing limited internal and external order. Such order is experienced because we have not completely submitted, surrendered and obeyed God. Even the possible limited order is under threat, as in the days of Abraham, when we do not obey, love and fellowship with God.

- \* Parable of the sower: stony ground (Word failed to grow and take root).

### 3) Joshua state of existence:

Joshua saw the Promised Land and led the people across the Jordan. He walked in the fear of the Lord, which is evident since the fear of God went before the people to give them victory over the occupying forces in the Promised Land. Joshua remained true and faithful to God, willing to grow, submit, and seek God (accompanied Moses on Sinai). He survived the dessert and tasted the fruits of abundance, power, and blessing from God in Canaan.

Like Joshua, we also wander the dessert, but we can also survive if we choose to grow spiritually maturity. Only when we have surrendered, willing to learn and fellowship, can we also enter the abundance and glory of the Promised Land. Joshua was a servant of Moses, but since he had the attitude of a slave, he was exalted to succeed Moses. Aaron on the other hand had a high place in society but was humbled by not entering

the Promised Land.

\* God's order is similar as in the time of the Mosaic Law to Jesus. As we grow more intimate with God, we begin to enjoy greater order in our lives. Freedom from sickness, protection and economic prosperity is more of a reality. Yet, we are still in the process of submitting, walking in obedience and carrying our cross to enjoy the fullness of internal order and maximizing external order in a world of disorder.

\* Parable of the sower: thorny ground (abundance and the promises of God could be hindered when we allow fear and worry to grow in our hearts).

#### 4) Christ state of existence

Once we pass over the Jordan – which is a step of faith - we begin our journey of discovering the fullness of Jesus. In the land of milk and honey dwell the power, glory, presence and awesome blessing of the Lord.

However, in the Promised Land we have to remain faithful and obedient since we are now dwelling in God's glory.

As the Israelites turned away from God while in the Promised Land and judgment came upon them, we must be seeking a deeper relationship with God daily.

In this state of existence, we grow to become like Christ, therefore our responsibility and accountability grows.

\* God's order is similar to the perfect covenant of grace, where the curse, now on Jesus, is lifted from our shoulders. We now dwelling in divine union and love with God (as far as possible) while still on earth. We live in complete God's order by living according to His word, will, commandments and teachings.

Our ministry, calling, purpose, families, work and all else externally is under God's control and order. God's blessing is now abundant as we move in His order and perfect, pleasing and good will.

\* Parable of the sower: fruitful path (Word has taken root and has grown).

#### *Tabernacle*

The four phases of spiritual existence, coupled with the periods of Covenants, are linked to our spiritual journey through the spiritual journey and are therefore linked to internal and external order:

1) Beyond the front gate, allowing entry into the front court is the wasteland. Those living in the Pharaoh state have not yet knocked on the door (Jesus), and still have to enter the spiritual tabernacle (relationship with God). Therefore, no external or internal order is experienced.

2) Both those who are in the Aaron and Joshua state of existence have to move through the outer court, where we accept Christ as our Saviour. However, those in the Aaron



state will move in and out of Holy Place (back to outer court) more frequently because they have not yet completely surrendered and are not willing to let the truth of Christ set them free. The process of seeking complete internal and limited external order (where possible) is in progress. There is even the danger of moving out of the front gate, back into the wasteland.

3) Those in the Joshua state move into the Holy Place with the mind of moving beyond, always seeking more of God. We begin to surrender in spirit, soul and body by allowing the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to change, renew, restore and heal us. Process of seeking complete internal and limited external order is now more advanced as submission, surrender, and obedience opens us to God's healing and truth.

4) Those in the Christ state dwell in the Holy of Holies, where the complete presence of God and His glory, blessing, and power is manifested. Complete internal and limited external order (as far as possible) is experienced, unlocking God's blessings. To remain in the spiritual Holy of Holies, we have to walk in faith, love and fear of the Lord. We must be holy, righteous, obedient, faithful, trusting in God and living the truth of the salvation of the Gospel and the Kingdom.

\*\* Man can constantly move in and out of the four states of existence, therefore also their place in the tabernacle. The responsibility therefore rests with us how much we seek God and His blessings. Disobedience was the fall of man into the curse of sin. Obedience is therefore the key for man to fall under the blessing of the Blood of Jesus and to thus walk in His order. Where there is order, there is no strife, confusion or fear, but peace and direction.

## Rebellion fades the straight path

Isaiah 30: Woe to the rebellious children, says the Lord, who take counsel and carry out a plan, but not Mine, and who make a league and pour out a drink offering, but not of My Spirit, thus adding sin to sin; 2 Who set out to go down into Egypt, and have not asked Me—to flee to the stronghold of Pharaoh and to strengthen themselves in his strength and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

The tale of Samaria's and Judah's rebellion is a stark reminder that rebellion does not pay. It has never paid and will never pay. The Lord teaches us to pray, but how can we say let His will be done when we are rebellious? We are rebellious whenever we follow not God's will, His ways, His path, His wisdom, His truth and in His Spirit.

Indeed, we reap what we sow. We cannot walk in light and in darkness. We cannot walk in truth and deception. We cannot serve two masters. If we do, we are rebellious and rebellion never pays.

Just ask Satan and every person who has ever thought they can rebel against God's ways.

Today, we live in a rebellious society. The world is rebelling against God. Man has set up his own truth, and is determined to be governed by his own rules and laws. Man has today hardened its hearts to God's way, but man will reap what it is reaping.

Romans 1: 18 For God's [holy] wrath and indignation are revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who in their wickedness repress and hinder the truth and make it inoperative. 19 For that which is known about God is evident to them and made plain in their inner consciousness, because God [Himself] has shown it to them. 20 For ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature and attributes, that is, His eternal power and divinity, have been made intelligible and clearly discernible in and through the things that have been made (His handiworks). So [men] are without excuse [altogether without any defense or justification], 21 Because when they knew and recognized Him as God, they did not honor and glorify Him as God or give Him thanks. But instead they became futile and godless in their thinking [with vain imaginings, foolish reasoning, and stupid speculations] and their senseless minds were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools [professing to be smart, they made simpletons of themselves].

The fall of Samaria and Judah is a spectacular example that God shall not be mocked, of how stubborn we can be if we do not listen, and that there are consequences to our rebellious actions. Keep in mind that upon the death of Solomon in 931 BC the united kingdom of Israel was split with ten northern tribes pulling away and forming their own nation using the name Israel. The two remaining tribes in the south continued under the name of Judah.

During the next 209 years the northern kingdom of Israel continued its worship of idolatry until in 722 BC God used the Assyrians as His hammer of judgment. The

southern kingdom of Judah continued on for another 134 years after Israel's fall only to be judged for its spiritual adultery by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chronicles 36:17-20).

Isaiah, Amos, Hosea and Micah were also prophets who lived in the eighth century BC and they all addressed the religious and social evils of Israel and Judah in their own day. Amos and Hosea spoke against the people of the Northern kingdom of Israel (capital Samaria), and Micah and Isaiah spoke against the people of the southern Kingdom of Judah and its capital Jerusalem.

Crucially, Isaiah lived to see what happened when the Northern Kingdom of Israel was invaded and dismantled by the Assyrians in 721BC (2 Kings 17:5-41) in fulfillment of the prophecies of Amos and Hosea, and this terrifying event deeply affected people like Isaiah and many others in Judah and Jerusalem. They perceived that if God's people in the south continued to sin like those in the north, they would fall in a similar way. What then would happen to God's Covenant and His people? What would happen to the Temple, if Jerusalem were to be captured?

Isaiah lived for many years during the reigns of four kings of Israel (1:1), and by the time he was an older man, he was a prophet of repute and a close confidante of King Hezekiah (1:1 – see chapters 36-39); he prophesied from around 760 BC to 700 BC and perhaps even later.

In the Book of Isaiah, we read how the prophet spoke numerous against Judah's rebellion. The Lord spoke loud and clearly of their rebellion, of their wicked ways, of their idolatry and that they weren't keeping to the paths of the Lord. Yet, the people refused to listen.

The first recorded prophecies of Isaiah, however, are a stinging attack on God's people for wandering far from the God who had created them and chosen them. In chapter one, we read of the nature of the rebellion against God by His people. Firstly, the people are 'weighed down' and 'corrupted' by sin (1:4), but they have also turned away from God and have 'forsaken the Lord' (1:4.)

Isaiah 3: 3 For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, is taking away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff [every kind of prop], the whole stay of bread and the whole stay of water, 2 The mighty man and the man of war, the judge and the [professional] prophet, the one who foretells by divination and the old man, 3 The captain of fifty and the man of rank, the counselor and the expert craftsman and the skillful enchanter. 4 And I will make boys their princes, and with childishness shall they rule over them [with outrage instead of justice]. 5 And the people shall be oppressed, each one by another, and each one by his neighbor; the child shall behave himself proudly and with insolence against the old man, and the lowborn against the honorable [person of rank]. 6 When a man shall take hold of his brother in the house of his father, saying, You have a robe, you shall be our judge and ruler, and this heap of ruins shall be under your control - 7 In that day he will answer, saying, I will not be a healer and one

who binds up; I am not a physician. For in my house is neither bread nor clothing; you shall not make me judge and ruler of the people. 8 For Jerusalem is ruined and Judah is fallen, because their speech and their deeds are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His glory and defy His glorious presence.

At the time of the prophets, there were also many false prophets who spoke peace that the people had nothing to worry about. Yet, God had spoken, and before they knew it, Assyria stood at Samaria's door in 720BC to claim the northern kingdom and carry away the ten tribes.

Following these four prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel spoke God's word. The people, however, refused to listen and to turn from their ways. And before the people to the south knew it, in 605BC, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, stood at the gates of Jerusalem.

The people refused to listen to God's judgment, and today, we are also refusing to follow God's warning to turn from our wicked ways and follow God.

Jeremiah grew up in the golden years of King Josiah's reign. Josiah was instrumental in a great reformation sweeping the south, and so Jeremiah in shock and horror witnessed the land's fall into spiritual apostasy. During the last 25 years of Jerusalem's existence, the prophet Jeremiah, realizing the nation's decay of moral and spiritual values had reaped its harvest, remained faithful urging the people of Judah to accept God's punishment upon the nation.

Jeremiah 2: 2 And the word of the Lord came to me [Jeremiah], saying, 2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says the Lord: I [earnestly] remember the kindness and devotion of your youth, your love after your betrothal [in Egypt] and marriage [at Sinai] when you followed Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. 3 Israel was holiness [something set apart from ordinary purposes, dedicated] to the Lord, the firstfruits of His harvest [of which no stranger was allowed to partake]; all who ate of it [injuring Israel] offended and became guilty; evil came upon them, says the Lord. 4 Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. 5 Thus says the Lord: What unrighteousness did your fathers find in Me, that they went far from Me and [habitually] went after emptiness, falseness, and futility and themselves became fruitless and worthless? 6 Nor did they say, Where is the Lord, Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, Who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death and deep darkness, through a land that no man passes through and where no man dwells? 7 And I brought you into a plentiful land to enjoy its fruits and good things. But when you entered, you defiled My land and made My heritage an abomination [detestable and loathsome]. 8 [Even] the priests did not say, Where is the Lord? And those who handle the law [given by God to Moses] knew Me not. The rulers and secular shepherds also transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by [the authority and in the name of] Baal and followed after things that do not profit. 9 Therefore I will still contend with you [by inflicting further judgments on you], says the Lord, and with your children's

children will I contend. 10 For cross over to the coasts of Cyprus [to the west] and see, send also to Kedar [to the east] and carefully consider; and see whether there has been such a thing as this: 11 Has a nation [ever] changed its gods, even though they are not gods? But My people have changed their Glory [God] for that which does not profit. 12 Be astonished and appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked and shrivel up with horror, says the Lord [at the behavior of the people]. 13 For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and they have hewn for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns which cannot hold water.

Jeremiah 9: 3 And they bend their tongue, [which is] their bow for the lies [they shoot]. And not according to faithfulness do they rule and become strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know and understand and acknowledge Me, says the Lord.

Ezekiel was already in captivity along with so many other Jews in Babylon by the time we read of his harsh words of correction and judgment. In all, Ezekiel and Jeremiah painted a picture of doom and gloom, of Judah's sins and wickedness, of a people who had forgotten God and His ways. They spoke to the people, to the leaders, but sadly none seemed to listen.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, first came to Jerusalem in 605BC. But the people refused to listen to God's Word to surrender to Babylon, so the Lord would send Babylon's army to Jerusalem's gate two more times.

2 Kings 24: 24 In his days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years; then he turned and rebelled against him. 2 The Lord sent against Jehoiakim bands of Chaldeans, of Syrians, of Moabites, and of Ammonites. And He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by His servants the prophets. 3 Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the Lord, to remove them out of His sight because of the sins of Manasseh according to all he had done, 4 And also for the innocent blood that he shed. For he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the Lord would not pardon. 5 The rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of Judah's Kings? 6 So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers. Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead. 7 The king of Egypt came no more out of his land, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to Egypt's king, from the River of Egypt to the river Euphrates. 8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began his three-month reign in Jerusalem. His mother was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. 9 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, in keeping with all his father had done. 10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11 Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his servants were besieging it. 12 Jehoiachin king of Judah surrendered to the king of Babylon, he, his mother, his servants, princes, and palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. 13 He carried off all the treasures of the Lord's house and the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the

Lord, which Solomon king of Israel had made, as the Lord had said. 14 He carried away all Jerusalem, all the princes, all the mighty men of valor, 10,000 captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest of the land. 15 Nebuchadnezzar took captive to Babylon King Jehoiachin; his mother, his wives, his officials, and the chief and mighty men of the land [the prophet Ezekiel included] he took from Jerusalem to Babylon into exile. 16 And the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon all the men of valor, 7,000, and craftsmen and smiths, 1,000, all strong and fit for war. 17 And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his stead and changed his name to Zedekiah. 18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began his eleven-year reign in Jerusalem. His mother was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19 He did evil in the sight of the Lord, in keeping with all Jehoiakim had done. 20 For because of the anger of the Lord it came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that He cast them out of His presence. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Under Zedekiah, the national leadership in Jerusalem continued to follow their wicked ways. Zedekiah was ordered by the Lord to submit and endure the rulership as a vassal of Babylon. He did not listen. He disobeyed, and so sought the help of the Egyptians, and so the people fell into deeper idolatry, serving the queen of heaven.

When Babylon came for the third time to the gates of Jerusalem in 586, they laid siege to the city, and for two years Zedekiah had to watch as his people suffered famine, plague and eventually the sword.

Zedekiah (Mattaniah, 597-586 B.C.) attempted to escape, but was captured and taken to Babylon in chains. The Babylonians killed his sons in his sight and then blinded him. The walls of Jerusalem were destroyed and the temple burned to the ground. All of the city's treasurers were taken to Babylon. The remaining leaders of Judah were killed and the rest of the people were carried into captivity to Babylon.

Only the very poorest people remained in Judah in the hills who later fled to Egypt (2 Kings 25:23-30). Jeremiah was also one of those people who chose to flee to Egypt.

It has been estimated by scholars that about 50 000 people were marched into captivity in Babylon. The important thing to note is that the Babylonians did not replace the people of Judah with other captives as the Assyrians had done in the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C. The land of Judah and Jerusalem remained vacant for seventy years until the Lord brought a remnant of His people back to the Promised Land.

The Chronicler tells us in vivid terms the reason for the exile (2 Chronicles 36:14-16). "They mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people until there was no remedy."

King Jehoiachin, who had chosen to eventually submit, would eventually be released from prison and would sit at the dining table of the king of Babylon.



Jeremiah was there in the city right to the end, when the city and the temple once and for all fell, and he with so many others had to flee to Egypt for refuge.

There are consequences to our rebellion, because God shall not be mocked.

When Ezra reflects on Israel's idolatry, we read the following in Nehemiah 9: 26 Yet they were disobedient and rebelled against You and cast Your law behind their back and killed Your prophets who accused and warned them to turn to You again; and they committed great and contemptible blasphemies. 27 Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies, who distressed them. In the time of their suffering when they cried to You, You heard them from heaven, and according to Your abundant mercy You gave them deliverers, who saved them from their enemies.

Indeed, there are consequences to our rebellion.

It says in Proverbs 3: 6 In all your ways know, recognize, and acknowledge Him, and He will direct and make straight and plain your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; reverently fear and worship the Lord and turn [entirely] away from evil.

We have to remember that rebellion is like the sin of witchcraft (1 Samuel 15:23). Rebellion is not trusting and leaning and relying on God, in accordance to Proverbs 3, and thus if we rely in our strength or in another alliance, we commit idolatry. Idolatry opens the doors to all kinds of demonic influences, because we give the devil the ground and the right to attack and harm us.

Zedekiah for example trusted and relied on Egypt to come to his aid, and we find this sad state of affairs repeating itself throughout the history of the Israel's kings. As soon as we take hold of God's hand while clinging to another partnership, then we are making an alliance with two masters. We can only serve one, for God shall not be mocked.

Baal worship was rife in the days of Israel before the fall to Assyria and Babylon. The people were reliant on a blessed harvest, so they would serve God as the Lord who would give them the former and latter rains, but they also wanted to serve Baal, who was the god of fertility. So the people thought if God failed to send the rain, then surely Baal will provide. We read in 1 Kings 18 of the conflict between Elijah and the 800 plus prophets of Baal and of the Assyrian religion. Of course, Elijah prevailed; for God is alive and all other gods are either demons or do not even exist!

We cannot serve two masters, for that is rebellion and idolatry.

Regarding rebellion, the Lord once showed prophetically how His children keep on walking away from Him, only to come back later with 'blood' of sin and rebellion and idolatry on their hands. The children who have chosen their own path would then return, time after time, expecting God to wash their hands clean and forgive them. God is a merciful and gracious God, but how long will He tolerate our sins, our idolatry, our rebellion, our stubbornness, and our desire to always follow after the world?

1 John 2: 3 And this is how we may discern [daily, by experience] that we are coming to

know Him [to perceive, recognize, understand, and become better acquainted with Him]: if we keep (bear in mind, observe, practice) His teachings (precepts, commandments). 4 Whoever says, I know Him [I perceive, recognize, understand, and am acquainted with Him] but fails to keep and obey His commandments (teachings) is a liar, and the Truth [of the Gospel] is not in him. 5 But he who keeps (treasures) His Word [who bears in mind His precepts, who observes His message in its entirety], truly in him has the love of and for God been perfected (completed, reached maturity). By this we may perceive (know, recognize, and be sure) that we are in Him: 6 Whoever says he abides in Him ought [as a personal debt] to walk and conduct himself in the same way in which He walked and conducted Himself.

John 14: 21 The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me; and whoever [really] loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I [too] will love him and will show (reveal, manifest) Myself to him. [I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and make Myself real to him.]

For we have to understand, the Lord has tolerated our selfish ways and our rebellion, but we make a huge mistake if we do not realise that the Church has drifted far away from God's Truth and Word. We run an institution called Church, fostering a religion called Christianity, and we keep the sheep bound and tied.

And we keep on thinking we can toy with God. Samaria and Judah found out that it is a dreadful thing to fall in the hands of the Living God.

The Lord spoke that He shall not be mocked, and there is only a small window still open for us to repent and turn back to Him. Our idolatry and rebellion is like a dead stench in His nostrils, and He is calling us out of the Babylon spiritual apostasy.

Look at the Church today. There are gifts, but where is the character? There is knowledge, but where is the wisdom? There is the prosperity, but where is the holiness?

Character, wisdom and holiness come by the inner working of the Spirit while knowledge, prosperity and gifts are obtainable without the inner working of the Spirit.

The Lord says the time and the season has come again for us to get out of spiritual Babylon, to get out of the valley of indecision and idolatry and sin, and to come up the mountain of the Lord where He will teach us His ways (Isaiah 2).

For just as judgment came in three waves to Judea, so the Lord's judgment upon His Church will come in greater waves of intensity. The third wave ended in the final destruction of Jerusalem, and just so with each wave, the Lord will warn and speak, and if we continue to harden our hearts and refuse to listen to the ways of God, we shall then also be plundered and endure the sword, famine, plague and drought.

So the Lord says that those who will now listen to God, even walking in rebellion, will have to endure the judgment of their sins, just as King Jehoiachin did who eventually surrendered. At least, he did surrender, and even though in a prison for a while, he was

released by the king of Babylon to enjoy continuous blessing.

Zedekiah refused to submit and endure the prison until the end of his days. Just so, there are those today who will refuse to submit, who will refuse to turn to God's ways, and so the judgment will be severe but there will no release from prison.

And those who stand at the head of the flock, but who walk in rebellion, be aware that just so will their flock suffer as Zedekiah's people suffered during the days of the siege. For the Lord says that the veil is torn in two, and for those who follow a rebellious shepherd instead of the true King, are also rebellious for the Lord has sent His Son, His Spirit and Word so that we can walk in all truth. And for those who seek the ways of the rebellious leader that they choose to form a tie and a link, and so they will also be judged until they repent of their ways.

The Lord says that the Church of today is a rebellious house, but out of the rebellious house will arise the true Bride of the Lord who worships in Spirit and Truth. Praise the Lord!

Rebellion only hardens our hearts, and it will cause us to sit in the counsel of the wicked and follow the ways of a religion, of the Self and even of the devil himself (Psalm 1).

So the Lord says that He will keep on sending His servants and messengers to speak against rebellion and idolatry, but how we need to listen for let those who have an ear hear what the Spirit of the Lord says (Revelation 2, 3).

It says in Romans 3: 10 As it is written, None is righteous, just and truthful and upright and conscientious, no, not one. 11 No one understands [no one intelligently discerns or comprehends]; no one seeks out God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have gone wrong and have become unprofitable and worthless; no one does right, not even one! 13 Their throat is a yawning grave; they use their tongues to deceive (to mislead and to deal treacherously). The venom of asps is beneath their lips. 14 Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood. 16 Destruction [as it dashes them to pieces] and misery mark their ways. 17 And they have no experience of the way of peace [they know nothing about peace, for a peaceful way they do not even recognize]. 18 There is no [reverential] fear of God before their eyes.

Indeed, without God, we shall continue in our rebellious and unrighteous ways. Only when we abide and rest in God, shall we find our way, and shall we walk in God's blessing and order.

We are also reminded of Revelation 2: 4 But I have this [one charge to make] against you: that you have left (abandoned) the love that you had at first [you have deserted Me, your first love]. 5 Remember then from what heights you have fallen. Repent (change the inner man to meet God's will) and do the works you did previously [when first you knew the Lord], or else I will visit you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you change your mind and repent.

Ultimately, let us remember 2 Thessalonians 2 which speaks of the one who comes as the lawless one. Satan, the great dragon, is rebellion personified, and he wants us to be rebellious so that we will lose our way. After all, the antichrist is the one of lawlessness. 2 Thessalonians 2: 6 And now you know what is restraining him [from being revealed at this time]; it is so that he may be manifested (revealed) in his own [appointed] time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness (that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority) is already at work in the world, [but it is] restrained only until he who restrains is taken out of the way. 9 The coming [of the lawless one, the antichrist] is through the activity and working of Satan and will be attended by great power and with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs and delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders - 10 And by unlimited seduction to evil and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing (going to perdition) because they did not welcome the Truth but refused to love it that they might be saved.

And so Paul reminds us in conclusion the following: 15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions and instructions which you were taught by us, whether by our word of mouth or by letter.

Let us seek the Lord, turn from our rebellious ways, and turn to God as our true love, so that we may be betrothed unto Him until we partake of the heavenly feast for all eternity!

## Walking in the Order of God

Proverbs 14: The Wisdom [godly Wisdom, which is comprehensive insight into the ways and purposes of God] of the prudent is to understand his way, but the folly of [self-confident] fools is to deceive (verse eight). 9 Fools make a mock of sin and sin mocks the fools [who are its victims; a sin offering made by them only mocks them, bringing them disappointment and disfavor], but among the upright there is the favor of God. 12 There is a way which seems right to a man and appears straight before him, but at the end of it is the way of death. 14 The backslider in heart [from God and from fearing God] shall be filled with [the fruit of] his own ways, and a good man shall be satisfied with [the fruit of] his ways [with the holy thoughts and actions which his heart prompts and in which he delights]. 16 A wise man suspects danger and cautiously avoids evil, but the fool bears himself insolently and is [presumptuously] confident. 19 The evil men bow before the good, and the wicked [stand suppliantly] at the gates of the [uncompromisingly] righteous. 24 The crown of the wise is their wealth of Wisdom, but the foolishness of [self-confident] fools is [nothing but] folly. 26 In the reverent and worshipful fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and His children shall always have a place of refuge. 27 Reverent and worshipful fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death. 30 A calm and undisturbed mind and heart are the life and health of the body, but envy, jealousy, and wrath are like rottenness of the bones. 33 Wisdom rests [silently] in the mind and heart of him who has understanding, but that which is in the inward part of [self-confident] fools is made known.

Ephesians 4: Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ: 4 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called ; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. 7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people." (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

There is a specific order when it comes to God, and when we fail to walk in such order, then we walk in disorder. And such order can only come when we walk in the will of God. And to walk in the will of God means to walk in obedience, in faithfulness and in truth. As soon as order is established in one's life, meaning walking in His will and walking in obedience, then everything clicks into place.

As soon as we get into His order, then there is a shifting and an alignment in the spiritual realm. But order calls for deep introspection ... we need to make sure we walk in the spiritual capacity that is in alignment with His order, which means walking in His fullness, living for His Glory, seeking His will.

Then truly, order flows out of oneself into one's immediate environment such as one's relationships, work, and ministry. Unless we get first and foremost ourselves into alignment with His will and order, then our lives will be one of disorder, panic, strife and chaos.

Where there is disorder or lack of direction, look inward. As soon as we are in His order, then the mechanics can click into place. It says in James 3 regarding two kinds of wisdom: 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

If we therefore fail to walk in the wisdom of God – which is pure, peace-loving, considerate and submissive – then we walk in disorder. Any other wisdom causes disorder, because we rely on our own strength, on our own will, on our own intelligence, on our own resources and on our own wisdom. This will only bring us into trouble, because only the Lord knows what is truly best for us and what path we need to follow.

It says in Proverbs 3: New King James Version (NKJV): 3 My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; 2 For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart, 4 And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. 8 It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones. 9 Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine. 11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction; 12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.



Jeremiah 9: 23 Thus says the Lord: Let not the wise and skillful person glory and boast in his wisdom and skill; let not the mighty and powerful person glory and boast in his strength and power; let not the person who is rich [in physical gratification and earthly wealth] glory and boast in his [temporal satisfactions and earthly] riches; 24 But let him who glories glory in this: that he understands and knows Me [personally and practically, directly discerning and recognizing My character], that I am the Lord, Who practices loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, says the Lord. 25 Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will punish all who though circumcised [outwardly, in the flesh] are still uncircumcised [in corresponding inward purity]

It is because mankind wants to call the shots that the world is in such chaos. We make laws according to our own motivation and desire. We change natural and spiritual laws, we defy Divinity, we determine what is right and wrong, and so end up with a planet that is full of plague, strife, famine, war, and chaos. As long as mankind wants to be in control, there will be disorder.

History after all testifies to such disorder. In this new millennium, the world is in financial turmoil because mankind has determined its course without the guidance of the Lord Almighty. We have chosen what the truth is, and such truth these days is moral relativism where truth is determined by the individual. Nothing is really sacred anymore, or forbidden, or unnatural, or an abomination.

Laws of countries as determined by constitutions – especially in the Western world - are liberal at best, for these days freedom of the self and expression is more important than the order of God. In the east, legalistic political and religious systems have called for greater conservatism, but in itself, such laws are not in alignment with God and thus promote equally a different kind of yoke and bondage upon the people.

With God there are not extremes, only balance, because order is balance.

With God, everything is about balance. Extremes cause disorder. With God, nothing is out of balance. The entire universe –known and unknown – is in balance. Man has been designed by God to be a marvellous creation of balance. Our bodies function in accordance to balance.

If we live not according to God's will, then we are out of balance. And such balance is one where our spiritual life is balance with our physical live. Our spirit, soul and body must be in balance, otherwise there is an extreme.'

It says in 1 Thessalonians 5:23: [Blessing and Admonition] Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Indeed, the Lord is concerned about our entire being. It doesn't help with our spirit being disciplined, yett our soul is still caught up in the world causing our flesh to sin. We after all cannot be cursing and blessing (James 3), neither van we serve two master, nor

can we walk in the light and in darkness.

God's balance determines that we walk as determined in Romans 8: 8 Therefore, [there is] now no condemnation (no adjudging guilty of wrong) for those who are in Christ Jesus, who live [and] walk not after the dictates of the flesh, but after the dictates of the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life [which is] in Christ Jesus [the law of our new being] has freed me from the law of sin and of death.

God's balance determines that we are born again [our spirit is thus redeemed], but now our soul [mind, heart and will] also needs to come into alignment with God. Our minds needs to be renewed, and the Law of Jesus has to burn in our hearts, and our will must be submitted to God.

It says in 3 John 1: 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in every way and [that your body] may keep well, even as [I know] your soul keeps well and prospers.

Indeed, God's intention is not just for us to be so spiritually high minded that our soul and body suffers. We cannot just concentrate on the spirit, causing the body to fall apart. We cannot just concentrate with our soul on the things of this God but we fail to realise that God has also placed us on earth to enjoy His creation.

Everything therefore needs to be in balance and in order. It helps us none to lock ourselves in a room and pray for a year while the soul and body collapses. It helps us none to pray to God while we are enjoying the world's pleasures to the extreme.

There needs to be balance. There needs to be Godly and human love in our lives. There needs to be spiritual food and natural food to feed and nourish. We need to be spiritually disciplined, but also physically [exercising, sleeping enough, living healthy, having fun]. We need to enjoy life, but not according to worldly standards, but in the standards of the Lord.

We can be so spiritual that we forget God has made earth for us to enjoy. We can be so soul minded that we forget the spiritual realm.

1 Peter 5: Amplified Bible (AMP): 7 Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully. 8 Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant and cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger], seeking someone to seize upon and devour. 9 Withstand him; be firm in faith [against his onset—rooted, established, strong, immovable, and determined], knowing that the same (identical) sufferings are appointed to your brotherhood (the whole body of Christians) throughout the world.

2 Timothy 1:7: For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.

With God it is all about order, and when we think of a big machine, it is about balance.

So we need to look inward, to be obedient and to be faithful.

Job 37: Amplified Bible (AMP): 15 Do you know how God lays His command upon them and causes the lightning of His [storm] cloud to shine? 16 Do you know how the clouds are balanced [and poised in the heavens], the wonderful works of Him Who is perfect in knowledge?

We need to follow His will, and then one's immediate environment falls into place.

If one experiences unrest, chaos and disorder or panic is any part of one's life, then there is a lack of order, so one has to look at why one is outside the will of the Lord or have failed to walk in obedience.

There can be many things why there is not order, so introspection is always needed says the Lord. Everything but everything clicks into place when we are obedient, faithful, and follow the Lord all the way. Thus, there must be order in any Christian's life – order in ministry, order in finances, order in family, and order in vision.

We can only be at great peace when we are clear in God's movement in our lives, but for God to work as He needs to move, we need to move in the order of God. Everything comes down to being always in alignment with God's Word, otherwise there is disorder. Peace thus comes through order for order is God's manifested will for our lives.

We can for example the power of God when it comes to establishing order in Genesis 1. His might to create order out of disorder is likened to our salvation. Before we come to God, we walk in disorder and our spirit is in disorder, but God wants to bring order.

We must never take our salvation lightly. The salvation of a man is a sweet, glorious but also powerful wonder. There is something incredible powerful and ancient that happens the day that a lost child is clothed with salvation. He or she is adorned with majesty, as we become co-heirs of God's Kingdom.

In the beginning, before Creation was made, there was darkness. Within the darkness, there was no life, there was no joy, there was no substance, and there was no light. Then God spoke, and the Holy Spirit moved. Out of that darkness came light. Out of light came life. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of the God was hovering over the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2)

In a blink of God's eye, there was life. There was night and day; there was water and land. Nature bloomed; the earth was filled with abundant life and it became fruitful, full of vigour and full of expectations. Possibilities for humankind were endless. The salvation of our inner spirit is equal to the magnitude of creation's formation. Why?

Without Jesus our spirit is dead (caused by sin), because Christ in the true life (John 14:6). In our spirit before salvation, there is only nothingness, for we are void of the light of Christ. We experience spiritual darkness. The day that we are born, we enter into a sinful world, and our spirit, soul and body is corrupted by sin. It is only when we are reconciled with God, on the day we call upon the Name of the Lord, that we are saved

and gain God's life again (Acts 2:21,34, Romans 10:9-10).

At the point when our starving spirit cries out for life and light, God speaks life into us, just as he spoke life into creation. At the beginning of creation, on that first day, the Holy Spirit moved to bring life. On the day of our salvation, at the beginning of our new walk with God, the Holy Spirit also sets us free.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 17)

As light entered creation, parting darkness, so does the light of Christ enter the darkness of our dead spirit. From Genesis throughout the Old and New Testament, the light of God has always triumphed over the darkness of Satan. The death of Jesus once and for all broke the darkness of sin and death. .

The darkness of the world in our spirit has to submit to the light of Christ when we are saved. The power of God, that produces spiritual light and life, is wonderfully placed in motion within our being. We are then clothed with beautiful and glorious salvation (Galatians 3:27), covering our nakedness of sin. Such depth of wondrous glory and power is sent directly from the Throne Room of God the Father! The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. (John 1:9).

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." (John 3:19-21)

Salvation is the very enactment of creation set into life within us. Our dead spirit is reborn, revived, restored, and returned to its original purpose and glory. Our spirit has been made to fellowship with God, and to be free from the sin of the world.

What does light achieve? It exposes what dwells in darkness. Therefore the light of Christ exposes our sin that dwells in the darkness of evil. This light needs to be preached to the world so that all may become aware that a Saviour is needed to rescue us from our emptiness. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord." (Ephesians 5:9)

When God moves in our spirit, no darkness can resist. Darkness can't resist because Christ is supreme (Colossians 1:16). The enemy has been defeated and unarmed. Jesus is powerful above everything. He is the Holy Lamb that took away our sins and sicknesses. He died, he rose, and he broke the sting of death (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

That is why no person is beyond the realms of salvation, because no darkness, no matter how thick or vile, can stand against the light of Christ. Out of light comes life and abundance (Revelation 22) as we move closer to God our creator.

This process of salvation demonstrates God's power, and just as it is His order for man to be saved, just so He is a God of order when it comes to all creation and how we conduct ourselves.

Every relationship or position in which the believer may be set, the secret of happiness lies in the maintenance of the divine order. Whether in the family, the household, or the Church, if there be failure to uphold God's order, or if there be the substitution of that which is of man, for the sake of convenience and expediency, confusion and discord must be the inevitable result.

Ultimately, let us remember 2 Thessalonians 2 which speaks of the one who comes as the lawless one. Satan, the great dragon, is rebellion personified, and he wants us to be rebellious so that we will lose our way. He comes as one of disorder, and he wants to disrupt God's order in our lives. He comes to create spiritual anarchy and chaos.

After all, the antichrist is the one of lawlessness. 2 Thessalonians 2: 6 And now you know what is restraining him [from being revealed at this time]; it is so that he may be manifested (revealed) in his own [appointed] time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness (that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority) is already at work in the world, [but it is] restrained only until he who restrains is taken out of the way. 9 The coming [of the lawless one, the antichrist] is through the activity and working of Satan and will be attended by great power and with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs and delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders - 10 And by unlimited seduction to evil and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing (going to perdition) because they did not welcome the Truth but refused to love it that they might be saved.

Romans 1 speaks of the Lord giving people over to their rebellious ways, He therefore allows us to walk according to what we sow. This is confirmed again by Paul in this passage out of Thessalonians: 11 Therefore God sends upon them a misleading influence, a working of error and a strong delusion to

make them believe what is false, 12 In order that all may be judged and condemned who did not believe in [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely on] the Truth, but [instead] took pleasure in unrighteousness. If we then chose a path of disorder by walking not according to His order, we shall sow disorder. Let us then seek the Lord's order, His will and way. Let us test our hearts, examine our ways, so that we remain in His perfect will.

## God upholds Heaven's Constitution and Laws

In all things, the Lord upholds His own truth and Word, which include His laws, His spiritual principles and His spiritual commandments.

There is always therefore with God order. Order exists with order. Since the Lord is just and true, He cannot go against His own commandments, laws and principles. He is a God of order, and thus He cannot exist as disorder. Otherwise, He himself will then be a deceiver, such as Satan.

And such laws and commandments and principles are everlasting, and will forever exist in the Lord. For when it says that what we sow we shall reap, this is a principle of heaven that is everlasting and applies to all mankind for evermore, no matter if we believe it or not. Someone might not believe in gravity, but even when he jumps in the air, he shall fall down.

It says in Isaiah 55 the following: 10For as the rain and snow come down from the heavens, and return not there again, but water the earth and make it bring forth and sprout, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11So shall My word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return to Me void [without producing any effect, useless], but it shall accomplish that which I please and purpose, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55 speaks of a spiritual principle that is everlasting and that will forever apply. Such principles established by the king are irrevocable and infallible. They have been created by God and by that all things, supernatural and natural, are governed.

Now, when a judge hears a legal matter, he has to weigh up a case against the law and thus also the constitution of a country. A judge might have sympathy for an offender, but if the offender has transgressed the law, then the judge must uphold the law and so in his wisdom and expertise hand out an appropriate sentence.

Do we think this is any different with the Lord? We have to understand there are laws and a constitution in heaven that upholds all things and supersedes in importance and value all other constitutions and laws on earth. His laws and His constitution deal with the spiritual realm that is manifested in the natural.

The Lord is the most righteous judge, and He is indeed a fair and just judge, but He has to uphold the sanctity of His own laws and the constitution and principle of heaven. When we therefore transgress, God cannot overwrite or ignore such laws or His constitution or His principles for the sake of ignoring them or for the sheer sake of greater mercy.

If this happens, heaven will fall into a state of anarchy and disorder. God is One of Order. Anarchy cannot exist – that is the game of Satan. If we therefore go against His laws and constitution and principles, do we truly think we shall not receive the just outcome of our disobedience?



Let us say a prisoner comes before the judge and he has been guilty of numerous crimes against humanity. Let us say that the prisoner is pardoned, what will then happen if the prisoner once pardoned keeps on committing sins against humanity? Shall the law turn a blind eye and not punish such an offender?

We who have called upon Jesus are cleansed from our former crimes against Him and the Kingdom of Heaven and against mankind. But we are not free to run around and commit transgressions against the King and His Kingdom and His people at whim without any thought of punishment or correction.

This is however the view of many in the Church. For it is said that once we are pardoned we are always pardoned. Does this then not allow for a state of anarchy and disorder if we believe we are now above the Law of God, even though the most righteous Judge Himself upholds the Law?

Then us think of it this way. A prisoner who gets out early is normally done so on parole. If he transgresses the terms of his parole, then he has to answer to the court.

Jesus paid the King's ransom for our sins, and we are entrusted to Him as our parole officer. We are now called to live as good citizens of Heaven, abiding to the Laws and Constitution of the Kingdom of God. If we do so, thus spiritually abiding in Him (John 15), we shall reap the rewards of our freedom and prosper. Shall we however still be so arrogant as to believe we shall not have to answer to the parole officer if we keep on transgressing?

Indeed, even after we come to Jesus, we sin and transgress, and some of these actions are but unintentional sins that demand from us repentance. However, some sins become iniquity, where we advocate and justify a transgression, while some transgressions become deliberate and intentional.

We have to realise that there is indeed laws and principles in heaven that we need to obey and abide by, and that we ultimately as pardoned parolees of the Kingdom of Heaven need to abide and obey the Constitution of the divine King.

Whenever we thus do not remain mindful of such laws and principles and the Constitution, and thus disobey the King, shall we not expect some form of consequence, even if the King is one of mercy and grace?

Understand then if we transgress, then the laws of heaven need to be upheld. God's grace and mercy is manifested in the King's punishment.

It says that Satan is the great accuser who goes around accusing us before the King. Satan is allowed to do this whenever we transgress and do wrong. He has all the legal right to point out where we have are doing something wrong. Why? Because God has to uphold His Constitution and His Laws.

And Satan knows the Laws and the Principles and the Constitution of Heaven. He knows the Laws of Moses fulfilled in Jesus, he knows the Ten Commandments, he knows how

the citizens of heaven should behave, and he knows God's principles such as reaping and sowing.

We are very arrogant to think we can do what we want without some sort of backlash. If we are operating illegally according to God's laws and constitution, then we give ground for both correction from the King and we give Satan the legal right to attack and accuse us. Job must have been very confused. As far as he knew, he had not transgressed in the eyes of the King. But Satan wanted to prove a point and made unfair assumptions. We however cannot be so bold and arrogant to think that our actions and deeds when performed out of the Will of the King will not be seen and not be tested?

If a parolee has violated his parole regulations, he will surely suffer for it. We, however, serve a just God, but we cannot remain ignorant to the fact that God will simply turn a blind eye to our actions. He must and does uphold the constitution and the laws of heaven.

We see numerous Scriptures which allude to God's laws and constitutions, such as in Exodus 20: 1THEN GOD spoke all these words: 2I am the Lord your God, Who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3You shall have no other gods before or besides Me. 4You shall not make yourself any graven image [to worship it] or any likeness of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5You shall not bow down yourself to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, 6But showing mercy and steadfast love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments. 7You shall not use or repeat the name of the Lord your God in vain [that is, lightly or frivolously, in false affirmations or profanely]; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. 8[Earnestly] remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (withdrawn from common employment and dedicated to God). 9Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your domestic animals, or the sojourner within your gates. 11For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it [set it apart for His purposes]. 12Regard (treat with honor, due obedience, and courtesy) your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land the Lord your God gives you. 13You shall not commit murder. 14You shall not commit adultery. 15You shall not steal. 16You shall not witness falsely against your neighbor. 17You shall not covet your neighbor's house, your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.

Paul wrote two important articles on how as citizens of heaven we should govern ourselves:

Colossians 3: 1IF THEN you have been raised with Christ [to a new life, thus sharing His resurrection from the dead], aim at and seek the [rich, eternal treasures] that are

above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2And set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth. 3For [as far as this world is concerned] you have died, and your [new, real] life is hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in [the splendor of His] glory. 5So kill (deaden, deprive of power) the evil desire lurking in your members [those animal impulses and all that is earthly in you that is employed in sin]: sexual vice, impurity, sensual appetites, unholy desires, and all greed and covetousness, for that is idolatry (the deifying of self and other created things instead of God). 6It is on account of these [very sins] that the [holy] anger of God is ever coming upon the sons of disobedience (those who are obstinately opposed to the divine will), 7Among whom you also once walked, when you were living in and addicted to [such practices]. 8But now put away and rid yourselves [completely] of all these things: anger, rage, bad feeling toward others, curses and slander, and foulmouthed abuse and shameful utterances from your lips! 9Do not lie to one another, for you have stripped off the old (unregenerate) self with its evil practices, 10And have clothed yourselves with the new [spiritual self], which is [ever in the process of being] renewed and remolded into [fuller and more perfect knowledge upon] knowledge after the image (the likeness) of Him Who created it. 11[In this new creation all distinctions vanish.] There is no room for and there can be neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, [nor difference between nations whether alien] barbarians or Scythians [who are the most savage of all], nor slave or free man; but Christ is all and in all [everything and everywhere, to all men, without distinction of person]. 12Clothe yourselves therefore, as God's own chosen ones (His own picked representatives), [who are] purified and holy and well-beloved [by God Himself, by putting on behavior marked by] tenderhearted pity and mercy, kind feeling, a lowly opinion of yourselves, gentle ways, [and] patience [which is tireless and long-suffering, and has the power to endure whatever comes, with good temper]. 13Be gentle and forbearing with one another and, if one has a difference (a grievance or complaint) against another, readily pardoning each other; even as the Lord has [freely] forgiven you, so must you also [forgive]. 14And above all these [put on] love and enfold yourselves with the bond of perfectness [which binds everything together completely in ideal harmony]. 15And let the peace (soul harmony which comes) from Christ rule (act as umpire continually) in your hearts [deciding and settling with finality all questions that arise in your minds, in that peaceful state] to which as [members of Christ's] one body you were also called [to live]. And be thankful (appreciative), [giving praise to God always]. 16Let the word [spoken by] Christ (the Messiah) have its home [in your hearts and minds] and dwell in you in [all its] richness, as you teach and admonish and train one another in all insight and intelligence and wisdom [in spiritual things, and as you sing] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to God with [His] grace in your hearts. 17And whatever you do [no matter what it is] in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus and in [dependence upon] His Person, giving praise to God the Father through Him. 18Wives, be subject to your husbands [subordinate and adapt yourselves to them], as is right and fitting and your proper duty in the Lord. 19Husbands, love your wives [be

affectionate and sympathetic with them] and do not be harsh or bitter or resentful toward them. 20Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord. 21Fathers, do not provoke or irritate or fret your children [do not be hard on them or harass them], lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated. [Do not break their spirit.] 22Servants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not only when their eyes are on you as pleasers of men, but in simplicity of purpose [with all your heart] because of your reverence for the Lord and as a sincere expression of your devotion to Him. 23Whatever may be your task, work at it heartily (from the soul), as [something done] for the Lord and not for men, 24Knowing [with all certainty] that it is from the Lord [and not from men] that you will receive the inheritance which is your [real] reward. [The One Whom] you are actually serving [is] the Lord Christ (the Messiah). 25For he who deals wrongfully will [reap the fruit of his folly and] be punished for his wrongdoing. And [with God] there is no partiality [no matter what a person's position may be, whether he is the slave or the master].

And also ...

Ephesians 4: 12His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church), 13[That it might develop] until we all attain oneness in the faith and in the comprehension of the [full and accurate] knowledge of the Son of God, that [we might arrive] at really mature manhood (the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ's own perfection), the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ and the completeness found in Him. 14So then, we may no longer be children, tossed [like ships] to and fro between chance gusts of teaching and wavering with every changing wind of doctrine, [the prey of] the cunning and cleverness of unscrupulous men, [gamblers engaged] in every shifting form of trickery in inventing errors to mislead. 15Rather, let our lives lovingly]express truth [in all things, speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly]. Enfolded in love, let us grow up in every way and in all things into Him Who is the Head, [even] Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One). 16For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts), closely joined and firmly knit together by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part [with power adapted to its need] is working properly [in all its functions], grows to full maturity, building itself up in love. 17So this I say and solemnly testify in [the name of] the Lord [as in His presence], that you must no longer live as the heathen (the Gentiles) do in their perverseness [in the folly, vanity, and emptiness of their souls and the futility] of their minds. 18Their moral understanding is darkened and their reasoning is beclouded. [They are] alienated (estranged, self-banished) from the life of God [with no share in it; this is] because of the ignorance (the want of knowledge and perception, the willful blindness) that is deep-seated in them, due to their hardness of heart [to the insensitiveness of their moral nature]. 19In their spiritual apathy they have become callous and past feeling and reckless and have abandoned themselves [a prey] to unbridled sensuality, eager and greedy to indulge in every form of impurity [that their depraved desires may suggest and demand]. 20But you did not so

learn Christ! 21Assuming that you have really heard Him and been taught by Him, as [all] Truth is in Jesus [embodied and personified in Him], 22Strip yourselves of your former nature [put off and discard your old unrenewed self] which characterized your previous manner of life and becomes corrupt through lusts and desires that spring from delusion; 23And be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind [having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude], 24And put on the new nature (the regenerate self) created in God's image, [Godlike] in true righteousness and holiness. 25Therefore, rejecting all falsity and being done now with it, let everyone express the truth with his neighbor, for we are all parts of one body and members one of another. 26When angry, do not sin; do not ever let your wrath (your exasperation, your fury or indignation) last until the sun goes down. 27Leave no [such] room or foothold for the devil [give no opportunity to him]. 28Let the thief steal no more, but rather let him be industrious, making an honest living with his own hands, so that he may be able to give to those in need. 29Let no foul or polluting language, nor evil word nor unwholesome or worthless talk [ever] come out of your mouth, but only such [speech] as is good and beneficial to the spiritual progress of others, as is fitting to the need and the occasion, that it may be a blessing and give grace (God's favor) to those who hear it. 30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God [do not offend or vex or sadden Him], by Whom you were sealed (marked, branded as God's own, secured) for the day of redemption (of final deliverance through Christ from evil and the consequences of sin). 31Let all bitterness and indignation and wrath (passion, rage, bad temper) and resentment (anger, animosity) and quarreling (brawling, clamor, contention) and slander (evil-speaking, abusive or blasphemous language) be banished from you, with all malice (spite, ill will, or baseness of any kind). 32And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tenderhearted (compassionate, understanding, loving-hearted), forgiving one another [readily and freely], as God in Christ forgave you.

In Job 1 it says the following: 7And the Lord said to Satan, From where did you come? Then Satan answered the Lord, From going to and fro on the earth and from walking up and down on it.

Indeed, Satan walks the earth looking for those who transgress the laws of the high King so that He may accuse. He is looking as a roaming lion to devour the people of the earth, and he has legal right to influence and deceive those who transgress the laws of heaven.

Satan is active day and night and it because he knows the constitution and laws of heaven better than us that he can constantly trap us and condemn and accuse us. It is time that we also take heed of what is written and so overcome by remaining true unto God and His laws. Even those who do not know God are still bound by laws and the constitution, for one reaps what one sows. For the truth of heaven dictates salvation through YAHU'SHUAH and everlasting life. Those who do not know Him will be subjected to the laws of Heaven.

And this is surely what will happen on the day of the great judgment. The most righteous judge who is God will uphold the laws and constitution of heaven, and all

action will be weighed by it and so judgment will be passed. Indeed, God is merciful and loving and just, but His truth shall be upheld for all time.

We often see God's action to be cruel, but we misunderstand the fundamental principle that His laws must be upheld lest we fall into lawlessness. Indeed, if we transgress, who is at fault? Satan deceives and tempts and influences, but we are the ones who make the choices and such choices always have consequences. This is why it is so important to remain in the will of God and to trust Him as the sovereign divine King.



## All things proper

One thing that mankind needs to remember, and very quickly, is that there are consequences when we defy God's order and truth. And God is a God of order. Yet mankind seems to forget this daily. This world and the heavenlies function according to God's order. Dominion is His order, for everything that has been created functions according to God's order and had a set place in His creation.

Man as God's created dominion is allowed to operate on earth, but within certain parameters. This is order. Sadly, history attests how mankind has also constantly defied God's order, and have constantly attempted to step out of his or her PROPER domain, meaning functioning according to God's true design, purpose and nature.

Mankind after all now wants to call the shots, and wants to function and live by its own rules and ideas. Yet this is rebellion when we seek our own way, for God's order has defined for example mankind as consisting out of man and as woman. There are clear boundaries. We are not gods and we do not choose to redefine such parameters and boundaries. We are but mortal, yet granted by the Blood of Jesus the opportunity to have communion and fellowship with Divinity.

Mankind's nature to rebel, as seen in the Garden, is as a result of the devil's influence who himself rebelled against God's order. Yes, the devil challenged God's dominion – His seat of power. Just so mankind has since the start defied God and God's order by seeking to be gods over granted dominion, to change natural laws and to determine what is right and wrong.

It says in the Book of Jude: "6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day ..." Take note of the word PROPER, which implies something which is a correct type or form, thus suitable or appropriate. With God, there is order, and such order is proper. With God, proper means creation is in alignment with what is good and true. In Jude we learn how even certain angels defied what is suitable or appropriate and thus for their punishment they have been chained.

In Genesis 1 we read: "29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Right at the beginning, all things were good. Man was never intended to devour other creatures carrying blood, for man was given to authority to be good shepherds of the earthly creation. This included man not harming man. Yet Adam and Eve fell into sin because they stepped out of their PROPER place, and so the curse came on the earth. God's order implies goodness, for when we truly follow God and His ways then THINGS

ARE GOOD AND PROPER. And this implies to our daily lives as we follow and pursue God. Step out of God's order we then step out of God's goodness and what is proper becomes improper. And carnality is not proper. The work of the flesh (Galatians 5) is not proper. Challenging God is not proper, but foolishness.

Systemically since the Garden, because of the devil's influence, mankind has continued to challenge God's order, and today we sit in a world where all things natural to man are unnatural to God and all things natural to God is now unnatural to man. And yes, we reap what we sow, and so we reap what is not good, what is improper and we reap disorder. And man, as the legal custodians of earth, have been more than willing to allow the devil to play on their domain by turning the ear and the heart towards darkness, deception and depravity. And so the world burns with hell fire, for we have defied God, and defied His Way, Truth and Life. If we seek goodness, and we seek His proper will on earth as in heaven, then we need to seek Jesus and follow His Way, His Truth and uphold Life as ordained and properly designed.

Rebellion is nothing more than to resist, challenge and try to usurp God's Order, His Truth and His Way. This is why mankind is so much in trouble, for what is now proper to us is not proper to God. And so the devil has a field day on earth, destroying and pillaging, for he continues to influence the rebellious to become even more rebellious, and for the unjust and the unclean to continue seeking an improper path of rebellion and chaos. And thus we read in "Revelations 22: 11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him [e]be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

Because of the spiritual corruption in the Garden of Eve, as a result of an illegal predator that promotes a different order, all of a sudden Cain kills Abel, spilling blood. This is not proper. The violence on earth in the days of Noah was not proper. It was rebellion that harvested destruction and anarchy. This is the time we also live in, and thus we are reminded in Matthew 24 that "as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be (Verse 37)". Noah's days were characterised by disorder, and defiance. This is the times we live in as well. Perilous times of defiance against a proper and true God. Yes, eventually over time the good stewards of earth has devoured the creation it is supposed to protect, all because of choosing an importer path. Indeed, this is what happens when we step out of God's order and defy what is proper and right in the eyes of God.

What is proper is to be in alignment with God's word and truth, for then we are function in God's order. And God's order holds blessings and life. It holds goodness. And it holds His will that shows u the ancient of paths of abiding with Divinity.

