

The **LAW** has Spoken!

Court in session – Stephen accused of breaking the LAW

“Order in the court! Order! Order!” The judge pounded the gavel; the chatter ended with the final blow. “Bring out the final witness!”

“State your name,” the judge ordered.

“My name is Fable.”

“State your occupation.”

“Storyteller.”

The judge pierced him with a frigid glare.

“I tell you the truth,” the illegitimate replied with folded hands in prayer.

“Give us your witness.”

“I heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God. This fellow never stops speaking **against this holy place** and **against the law**. We heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and **change the customs Moses** handed down to us” (Acts 7:11-14).

Immediately, the audience broke out into a roar of words. They rolled their fists into tight canon-balls, their stormy eyes and twisted movements told the verdict. They shouted, “Stone him! Stone him!”

“Order in the court! Order!” the judge shouted. “It is the role of this great Sanhedrin that anyone who preaches and does **NOT keep the laws, ordinances, and judges of Moses MUST die!**”

“Wait!” Stephen standing among his



people, his very people, turned to each of the members and pleaded, “Hear me!” He began by reviewing their history—a chosen people—gone astray. “You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: **You always resist the Holy Spirit!** Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now, **you have betrayed and murdered him—you who have received the law** that was put into effect through angels but have **not obeyed it.**”

Suddenly, Stephen looked up in wonder. “**Look! I see the glory of God and Yashuah standing at the right hand of God.**” The people covered their ears and yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him” (Acts 7:51-53).

The witnesses who had dropped Stephen’s clothes by the feet of Saul, the Saul of Tarsus went their way, whispering among each other, “That will teach him for opposing us.”

“Yeah, he was too smart for his good,” another muttered.

“Though,” the older one added, “he was a law-abiding brother.”

“But,” another interrupted, “Well, you heard him! He deserved what he got! He accused us of murdering our Messiah! He accused us of resisting the Holy Spirit!

He accused us of being stiff-necked and uncircumcised! And—that man, Yashuah is not at the right hand of God. Our Messiah has not yet come! **Our Messiah will embrace our Jewish traditions.**”

The illegitimate witness stood behind Saul, pushing his weight to one side to get an unobstructed view of the bloody event and giggled with each hit. His sunken eyes created a socket of shadows, thick scars on his face and arms spoke boldly of a battle-filled life.

“He, that man, Stephen,” he coughed out, “—he did say that Yashuah changed the law—didn’t he?” His head turned just enough to catch Saul in the corner of his eye. He released a ghoulish smirk. “Didn’t he?”

Saul ignored the question staring at the dying man before him. His nod with each throw kept the frenzy flowing.

Stephen dropped to his knees and pleaded, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” He fell limply on a rocky bed covered in his own blood.

Paul stood looking down. His tall shadow covered the dead man. He dug his foot into the ground and kicked up a cloud of dirt spraying the body before him. He walked away brushing his hands,



everypainterpaintshimself.com

disappearing among the people.

GOD'S LAW: Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Saul, a Hebrew of Hebrews was born from the tribe of Benjamin. A noted zealot trained at the feet of a great and honored teacher of the law, Gamaliel (Acts 5:34) participated in the merciless persecution that preceded Stephen's death. "Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison" (Acts 8:1-3) until the risen Yashuah stopped him on his way to Damascus.

There in the desert, Yashuah struck him down blinding him. "Saul, why do you persecute me!"

"I am serving God." His hands pressed against his eyes, "Help me!" Saul cried.

"You will go to the people who fear you; they will heal you."

Saul turned in circles. Stopping at intervals, he stumbled crying out, "Are you still here?"

His friends in the distance mumbled, "He's gone mad!"

That dramatic interaction between Yashuah and Saul on that day began the miraculous transformation from Saul's self-righteous **stone-heart** into a humble, **heart of flesh** where he learned that the works of the law cannot bring salvation, for his righteousness through keeping the law was but filthy rags compared to the righteous that comes from having God's Holy Spirit. Saul was horror-struck when he realized that he had authorized the death sentence of many faithful Believers. Forever grateful for God's grace, Saul committed himself to serving God. Now, **he** became the target of the religious leaders in Jerusalem and his support for the early Christian church became the battle he would fight to his death.

This Saul, whose name was changed to Paul studied and obeyed the law even as a child. A brilliant orator and educated at the most reputable schools, he was indeed prepared for something great. Daily, he fought the battle of words with carefully formulated arguments leading listeners to truth and repentance. Paul upheld the Law of God always, as did Yashuah. Both leaders left their ignorant and foolish accusers without a defense and angry.

Paul came to Antioch in Pisidia and cried out in the temple on the Sabbath, "Let the Law of God and the Prophets speak!"

The converted Gentiles heard and



tcapologetics.org

begged Paul to teach them the Law and the writings of the Prophets on the next Sabbath (Acts 13:42).

“But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. But while the disciples stood around him, he got up and entered the city” (Acts 14:19-20).

Undeterred, Paul continued only to be accused again. “When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, ‘This fellow persuades men to worship God **contrary to the law**’” (Acts 18:12-13).

Paul confronted his accusers and announced that he will take the vow, cut off all of his hair as a public example showing that he has **not forsaken the words of Moses** and that he does **not teach that Yashuah changed the law of God**. He pacified the mob enough for the moment.

He traveled to Ephesus and preached to the Christians. They asked him to stay longer with them, but he needed to keep the Holy Days in Jerusalem. “I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing” (Acts 18:20-21). Traditionally, the Holy Days were celebrated in Jerusalem.

Before his accusers, Paul kept the Sabbath and preached to the Jews and Gentiles. He kept all of the Leviticus 23 feast days upholding all that Moses taught and yet, they still pursued him.

When Paul returned to Jerusalem, James took him aside and asked him why he was not teaching circumcision to the Gentiles.

“The religious leaders—you know they are watching you. We must teach **the full measure of the Law of Moses**,” James warned.

Paul replied, “These Gentiles, James—they love the word of God. They need time to change. Look, I’m working with them in stages. They can’t drop all of their pagan practices in one day and pick up an entirely new set of practices the next.” Paul grabbed the fold of James’ cloak and urged him, “They’re our brothers—they’ve been far away for so long and now, they want to return to God who are we to add a burden too heavy for them to bare.”

“Oh, Paul—I too long for the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. The ones who should be supporting us create stumbling blocks every day, every hour, every minute, every second! And you—circumcision—”

“Listen, we know that 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” (Romans 2:25-29).

James' eyes watered. He pulled Paul into a loving embrace. "I know, I know—they watch our every word and action, so to accuse us."

"Don't fear for my life," Paul said. "I'm sent to our brothers and they will listen. I will not allow the physical act of circumcision to be confused with being saved. Oh, James you know that we're no better than our Gentile brothers. Yes! The law we must keep—but keep it understanding that salvation is through grace not by works—or circumcision."

Paul went his way, returning to Galatia and found the Gentiles observing pagan times and seasons. His heart heavy with sorrow, he asked in disbelief, "How is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days and months and seasons and years. **I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain**" (Galatians 4:8-11).

The Jewish religious leaders dressed in their elaborate head coverings, embroidered cloaks and linen undergarments stood like a temple of pillars and platforms. They carried their law under their arms, lurking in the shadows to catch Paul the moment he entered the city. The circumcision law lay on their judgement plate.



When Paul returned to Jerusalem, the brothers received him with open arms, but the heavy lines across their forehead, their weary eyes spoke of a different welcome.

"They're coming! Paul, they'll get you this time! Purify yourself with these four men and take the vow. Take that plate from them" they pleaded.

"I don't fear them, but I will do as you say."

At the end of seven days, his accusers seized him shouting, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and **our law...**" (Acts 21:28).

The whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. Rioting burst out into the streets. They dragged Paul into the town square and beat him. The Roman commander stood horrified watching the crazed masses.

"They're going to kill him," he mumbled. "For what?" he whispered under his breath. In fear of losing control of the people, the Roman commander ran to the platform and shouted, "People of

Jerusalem what is the cause for this senselessness!”

The people replied each with a different story, a slighted accusation, a death sentence.

“Commander,” one of the soldiers shouted. “This man is the cause of the trouble!”

“Then—arrest him!” He turned to his soldiers, “Put him into the barracks—for his protection.”

“Wait!” Paul pleaded. “Let me first speak to **my** people.”

“You are as crazed as they are.” Still, the commander nodded his approval.

Paul turned to the people. “Please hear me. Let me share my story with you.” The people glanced to each other and crossed their arms in unison resembling the piety of the Sanhedrin.

“Please listen!” He waited for their attention. “I was like you today, thinking I was doing our God a service. But, on the road to Damascus, Yashuah spoke to me. He knew me by name. He corrected me and gave the commission to go our brothers—living far away and teach the good news of the



wol.jw.org

gospel—teach them the Way of God—teach ALL people the Way of God. How does that offend you?”

The crowd burst into anger and raised their fists, shouting, “Rid the earth of him! He’s not fit to live!” Madness overtook them and they threw off their cloaks, throwing dust into the air. Wild eyed, they continued like sickened beasts (Acts 22:1-25).

GOD’S LAW IS DESIGNED TO BRING PEACE BY CAREFULLY LIVING EVERY ASPECT OF IT CORRECTLY. THESE PEOPLE EXUDED HATRED AND MADNESS BECAUSE THEY FAILED TO OBEY THE LAW THAT THEY UPHELD SO FURIOUSLY.

The next day, the Roman commander brought Paul before the Sanhedrin to determine exactly what he was doing that turned the whole city into chaos.

Paul took his time to capture the attention of every member of the Sanhedrin, then he said, “My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day” (Acts 23:1).

The high priest ordered that Paul be struck on the mouth. Then Paul said, “God will strike you, **you whitewashed wall!** You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet **you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!**”

He noticed both Sadducees and Pharisees were in the room. “My brothers,” he said, “I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead.”

This ignited the war between the Sadducees and Pharisees. A raging debate flared, consuming every discussion in the temple. Now, even the Roman commander became afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces, so he ordered him to be returned immediately to the barracks.

WHILE THE SADDUCEES AND PHARISEES ARGUED BITTERLY OVER DOCTRINE, the Lord stood near Paul and said, “**Take courage!** As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome” (Acts 23:11).

“The next morning the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul” (Acts 23:12).

GOD’S LAW: Thou shalt not kill.

GOD’S LAW: Thou shalt not bear false witness.

Paul is secretly whisked away and brought to Caesarea at night and brought before Felix, the governor.

Court in session with Governor Felix

Paul’s defense: “I went up to Jerusalem to worship. I was not arguing in the temple or stirring up a crowd. However, I admitted that I **worship the God of our fathers** and that **I am a follower of the Way**, which for them, has become a new sect because we believe in the resurrection. **I continue to uphold the Law** and all that is written in the **Prophets**. I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. I have the same hope in God, yet these men accuse me” (Acts 24:10-16).



shanninlaw.com

I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. I have the same hope in God, yet these men accuse me” (Acts 24:10-16).

Verdict: Not Guilty

Two years later, Festus is governor and Paul is brought before him.

Court in session with Governor Festus

Paul's defense: "I have not done any wrong to the Jews—if, however, I am guilty of anything deserving of death, then, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!" (Acts 25:10-11).

Verdict: Festus replies, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

Court in session with King Agrippa

Paul's defense: "From a child these Jews have known me. I lived as a Pharisee of the strictest sect of our religion. And now, it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. This is the promise our 12 tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?" (Acts 26:4-8).

Paul told his story of his vision with Jesus and the commission given to him. "First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me... I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen—that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people (the Jews), to our Gentile brothers (the 10 tribes of Israel), then to the nations" (Acts 26:20-23).

Paul urged King Agrippa to acknowledge what he understood. "Do you believe the prophets?" Paul pressed him to respond honestly. "I know you do."

King Agrippa replied, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" (Acts 26:28)

Paul responded, "Short time or long—I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains" (Acts 26:29).

Verdict: "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment" (Acts 26:31).

To these Jews who added their traditions to the Law of God and puffed themselves up as experts and enforcers, they could never find peace in God's law because they never kept His law as it was written. The more they elevated themselves, the further they drifted away—from salvation.

To the Romans, Paul preached the Law of God. He taught all of the teachings of Moses and the Prophets carefully. He knew that **obedience to the Law of God fulfills loving God and loving others.**

GOD'S LAW: "For it is **not the hearers** of the law who are righteous before God, but the **doers of the law who will be justified**" (Romans 2:12-13).

GOD'S LAW: "Therefore, the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good" (Romans 7:12).

GOD'S LAW: "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8).

GOD'S LAW: "Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!" (Romans 6:15).

GOD'S LAW: Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Jesus is the example on how to keep the Law of God.

IT IS SIMPLE:

- 1) The Law of God (Romans 3:31; 7:22-25; 8:7)
- 2) The Law of Sin (Romans 7:23-25)
- 3) The Law of Sin and Death (Romans 8:2)
- 4) The Law of the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2)
- 5) The Law of Faith (Romans 3:27)
- 6) The Law of Righteousness (Romans 9:31)
- 7) The Law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21)

The **LAW OF GOD** defines SIN. The **LAW OF SIN** is what we followed **before** we came into the faith. Doing what seems right in your own eyes is interpreted by many as freedom but, when it is outside the Law of God it leads to death, which falls under the **LAW OF SIN AND DEATH**. The **LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE** leads us towards the Law of God. It is the spirit that awakens our awareness that we have sinned and that we are under the death penalty. The spirit leads us into repentance to the **LAW OF FAITH** which conforms our way of thinking to the Word of God. We begin to change and transition into behaviour that is now right, fulfilling the **LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**, which brings us into the **LAW OF CHRIST** which is the **LAW OF GOD**. Christ does only the will of His Father, the eternal unchanging Word of God. <http://www.119ministries.com/teachings/video-teachings/detail/pauline-paradox-part-4-which-law-paul/>

To obey the Law of God is the evidence of our faith in God but, it is God's GRACE through His gift of His Holy Spirit that gives us **the desire to obey His commandments humbly and willingly.**

The **Law of God** and **Grace** go hand in hand.

It is time to let go of the traditions of men—**ALL OF THEM**. Let go of the annual celebrations that are **not written** in the Bible. Many traditions kept by Christians are pagan practices that have been modified to fit the Christian story.

The pagans worshiped rogue gods. Their celebrations were intended to bring defiance against the Almighty God.

Don't risk igniting the jealousy of the Almighty God by breaking the **law: you shall have no other gods before me.**

It is time to carefully follow the Law of God (Mark 7:8).

The **house of Judah** acknowledged the importance of the Law and preached the strict obedience of the **LAW**, while the **house of Israel** battled against them for **GRACE**. From those ancient days until today, neither have fully realized that the TWO belong together. As the two houses belong together, so too, law and grace belong together.

It is prophesied that the **house of Judah** will acknowledge the Yashuah/Christ as their Messiah. "They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son... I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a **spirit of grace and supplication**" (Zechariah 12:10).

The prophet, Hosea recorded the prophecy of the **house of Israel** during the long period between the resurrection of Christ and his return. "For **the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods**" (Hosea 3:4).

21st century Israel, all twelve tribes live **without**:

- Their **KING of kings** who has not yet returned. They also live without the rogue heavenly rulers over them—the ancient god worship.
- The **SACRIFICES** to God were brought to an end with the destruction of the last temple in 70 AD. The **sacred stones** taught by the mystic priests as objects of power, charms of protection from the wrath of the gods and an object that guarantees blessings and healings are no longer common practices.



lifehopeandtruth.com

- The **EPHOD**, which is part of the official dress of the High Priest in Israel is symbolic of true religious practice while the household **idols** are symbolic of false practice (Hosea 3:4). 21st century Jews and Christians do not truly worship God, but nor do they practice fully the old pagan practices.

Hosea 3 describes the Christianity of today, a mixture of truth and falsehood. When **Christ returns, the Holy Spirit will be given to all and the Law of God will be kept carefully**. “I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be **careful to keep my laws**” (Ezekiel 36:27).

“Ephraim strayed, I repented; after I came to understand, I beat my breast. I was ashamed and humiliated because I bore the disgrace of my youth” (Jeremiah 31:19).

“In those days, at that time, the **people of Israel** and the **people of Judah together** will go in tears to seek the Lord their God. They will ask the way to Zion and turn their faces toward it. They will come and bind themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten” (Jeremiah 50: 4-5).

God prophesied hundreds of years ago that He will take the stick of Joseph—which is in the hand of Ephraim and join it to Judah’s stick, making them a single stick of wood in His hand (Ezekiel 37:19). The time is coming when Christ will re-unite the **house of Judah** and the **house of Israel** never to be separated again, as a mirror of **LAW** and **GRACE** that will be fused together as ONE, **FOREVER**.

Compiled by Janette Andrejowich from segments of the comprehensive and extensive teachings from 119 Ministries (Pauline Paradox Series).



Zachariahspatrol.com