

LAYERS OF THE LAW - The Torah Question

Part Four

By Pastor Shane Vaughn, First Harvest Ministries

Hello, and welcome back to our little world. So glad that you could join us today for another journey into the word of the Almighty Yah, the Creator of heaven and earth. Hello, I'm Shane Vaughn of First Harvest Ministries and you are a welcomed guest in our study of the scriptures today.

Well, honest confession is good for the soul isn't it? I have an honest confession to make. Many of you are students of our ministry. You've been with us for a long time, five, six, seven years. And we have taught on a lot of subjects. On our YouTube channel, we have over 600 teachings, did you know that? That's a lot of work. And we have striven over these six years to obey the mandate of God on our life to help bring the message of the kingdom of God to the nations of the world.

We have taught on any subject you can imagine. So, of all those subjects that we've taught on, there is one subject that I never taught because I was afraid of the subject. The subject was intimidating, humiliating and it was just a subject I wasn't ready to deal with because I was not fully persuaded in my own mind. And the apostle Paul tells us to be fully persuaded, to study to show ourselves approved unto God.

And the subject I'm talking about is the Law of God. Sounds simple, I know it sounds very very simple until you start having to deal with the subject. Then it gets real interesting real fast. So what we've done—this is our fourth lesson in a series that we've started where it's our desire to help simplify the law of God. We've titled this series "Layers of the Law" because indeed the law of God has a multiplicity of layers and you have to peel those layers like an onion to get the balance of the law of God. We call that balance the spirit of the law. That's what the Bible calls it.

So I'm going to ask you a favor. If you've landed on this video—maybe someone sent it to you, remember this is part four. There are three other segments ahead of this one that would really give you a much better foundation so that you don't get lost in this lesson. You'll need to go to our website firstharvest.tv for those previous lessons. Just type in the search bar Layers of the Law and the part you need to watch, part one, two or three. Do yourself a favor and take the time. This is so important. Take the time and watch those with us before you start with this one. Go ahead and catch this series from the first edition. If you've gone through all three of them, welcome back and let's get ready!

So why was I scared to teach on the law of God? Well, if we're honest, this is a journey for all of us. Many of us grew up in churches, Christian churches, that did not believe that the law of God was still in effect today. We believed that the law was done away with at Calvary. Yahshua, Jesus, replaced that law, fulfilled that law, and therefore, abrogated that law. This is pretty much our mindset and so maybe you came from the same Christian mindset.

So, once we were introduced to the law of God, then a strange thing happened. We get so excited about the law, we get so excited to obey God, we finally come to understand a relationship with God is not a one-way street of him loving us, but it's a two-way street of us returning that love through our obedience to his commandments. Yahshua said if you love me, what? Keep my commandments. And man that sounds wonderful. All of sudden, the light comes on. We realize the message of greasy grace was a lie inherited by our fathers and taught to us. And we are so excited to be a commandment-keeping, spirit-filled, believing child of God — whew! We're just ready to get started!

That was me seven years ago when I first came to understand that the law of God was still in effect today. So we're running head-forward and we're ready to do this and bam! We run into a conundrum because guess what? There's a lot of laws in the law of God! So we have to deal with the question, which ones do we obey? Do we just obey the 10 commandments, or God forbid, do we have to obey all 613 laws of the Torah? Whew! I hope not because there's some pretty strange laws in there.

Now in previous videos I dealt with some of those strange laws to help you understand what David meant when he said, upon thy law I meditate day and night. David told Yahweh, show me wonderful things *inside* your law. We learn from that that there is a layer behind the letter where the principle, the spirit of the law, lies. And that it is my job and your job to see when the letter doesn't apply, (I don't have time to get into that right now, but I will in a future video), when the letter *can't* apply. Perhaps we don't live in Jerusalem to go to the temple—when the letter cannot apply. We thought about when the ox fell in the ditch, and we're supposed to get it out according to Torah.

So the question then comes up, what if it's a dog in the ditch, do we not have to get the dog out because it says ox? You see, that's the letter of the law. It killeth. It brings no life with it. We taught on this in previous videos, so please make sure you watch those videos.

Now, since I came to this message I, maybe like you, have gone down several roads concerning the law of God. The main road that I went down after I came to this message was...we came down with a doctrine that separates the big laws of

God. We call them the big 10... "thou shalt not..." -all 10 of them. And so what we did was we realized we could not keep all of the Torah, it's impossible—we're going to deal with that in a moment. So when we realized that and we realized that we've got to make a choice between not keeping those laws perfectly—or what'll we do?

So we compartmentalized the law. We called them the big 10 and we separated the law of God from the law of Moses. I went down a path for a long time where we believed that the ten commandments were still in effect today, but the law of Moses, in fact, was no longer in effect. And I was fine with that because it sure makes things a heck of lot simpler doesn't it? Where you can just separate the big 10 from the small ones and we're going to keep those 10 but we're not going to keep those...it just simplifies the law of God. And I liked that. It was very very simple.

But, there's always something in the back of your spirit, your mind, that's always bothering you when you go down that road. And it's a little voice that just never shuts up because it forces you to consistently ask this question. Do you call the Bible the book of Paul, or do we call that the book of Peter, or do we call that the word of Jeremiah, or do we call that the law of Isaiah? No. Why do we not call it that?

We call it the word of God, the word of Yahweh. Because even though Paul wrote a book, it was not Paul that wrote it. It was the Holy Spirit, the mind of Yahweh, that entered into his mind and formulated this Bible perfectly. So we call it the word of Yahweh or the word of God. Now, if that's what we call it, then I had to deal with the honesty of separating the law of God from the law of Moses, when in fact, it was God, Yahweh, that gave that law to Moses.

So how does it mysteriously become Moses' law when the Bible tells us Yahweh gave it to him? Yahweh gave Paul the book of Romans, did he not? But we don't call it Paul's word. We call it the word of God. So for years I had to deal with that voice in my head that said, hey Shane, you are oversimplifying this issue to keep from dealing with it. And that was a fact.

I did not want to deal with that little word that causes me so much terror. And it shouldn't. It's a beautiful word, and it's the word *Torah*. And in all of my teachings, I have never dealt with the Torah—until this lesson. So may the Lord help us to dive into this today. And see if we cannot find the perfect plumb line in the word of God.

Now, once I dealt with the question of "was the law of Moses God's law or Moses' law?" —I had to be honest, I had to say, well, God gave it to him—it's still the law

of God. Alright, soon as we climb that mountain and conquer that thought process, we come down to the valley again and fall right into a cave. What is that cave? Here it is. No one alive, you or me, the strictest man on the earth except for Yahshua himself—can honestly say that they obey the Torah. All 613 laws. No one can say that. Nobody!

Then we run into another wall. If you break one law, you've broke them all. So now let's just go the total opposite way and forget the law! This is a subject that the Father has to give us clarity about.

Let me prove to you. How many of you watching me are commandment keepers as far as the holy days are concerned? Passover, Pentecost, Shavuot, Tabernacles—you keep the holy days, congratulations. You're doing more than most Christians. You have an understanding of the holy days. But according to Torah, you've never kept one correctly unless you went to Jerusalem, and even more than that, you went to the temple. Well, there is no more temple. It's an impracticality. It cannot happen.

So does that mean that we cannot keep the holy days? It does mean that if you don't understand my previous lessons on the layers of the law. And if you don't meditate on that law and find the meaning behind it, then you can say we cannot keep the holy days correctly.

But in fact we can. Why? Because there's another temple on the earth today. There was a temple when that law was given and in fact everyone lived there. But the principle behind going to the temple is because that's where the congregation would assemble in unity and keep the holy day. But that temple is gone. There's another temple on the earth today and I'm one of the stones of that temple.

So when you and I come together...two or three gather...when these "stones" join together in any location, the temple is formed and we are in fact keeping the *spirit* of that law, the principle of that law, the higher meaning of that law. So we come into that equation in our thinking and we begin to meditate on every law. Remember the principles I taught you previously. When you study the law you have to do it with these three mindsets.

Number 1: God, Yahweh, has never given a bad law. Because why? God is good. His law is good. Paul said his law is spiritual, meaning it has an intent behind it that only the spiritual will find that intent. When you understand that God never gave a bad law, then you have to find the meaning behind it and live that principle in that law when you cannot live the letter of that law for whatever reason.

So, if we know that nobody can keep all 613 laws of the Torah completely, it's much easier—just categorize the big 10 and let's keep those.

Now, the intent of the law and David's desire to meditate on it should be your challenge. I want you to listen to me. Meditating on the law is different than reading the law. If we went by the letter of the law, we would not need to meditate on it. We wouldn't need for God to show us wonderful things inside of his law... we could just read the letter. And in fact that's what legalists do.

For example, in the Torah, we are told that if my oxen were to come into your pasture you were not supposed to keep that oxen, but rather you were supposed to care for it, feed it, and return it to me the owner. Okay, that's what the letter says. But what if it's my dog that comes into your yard? My precious dog comes to your yard and you don't return that dog to me. You keep it for yourself. Well, technically you obeyed the letter of the law because the law says nothing about a dog. But when you begin to meditate on that law about the oxen, you find the meaning behind it, the principle, and you get that principle in your mind by the agency of the Holy Spirit...and all of a sudden, the principle, the spirit of that law begins to live through you.

There's another law in the Torah. It's called the law of the parapets. It says if a man builds a house, he was supposed to put parapets, or fencing, around his roof. This is a command from Moses God gave him to put in the law. And we could look at that and say...see we cannot keep that law anymore. It's gone. It doesn't apply. Nobody I know of has a flat roof anymore. But when you meditate on that law and you say, why did God give that law in Torah?

Torah is instructions in righteousness. It's an instruction book on how to do the right thing. When you understand that and you say, ok God I've got a pitched roof. I can't put a parapet around my roof. Then you pray and you meditate and all of a sudden it dawns on you—the purpose of that law was to protect innocent life, so someone would not fall off your roof. Personal responsibility is the principle behind that law in the Torah. So in fact, wouldn't it be crazy for us to say that law's been done away with? What? The law of personal responsibility? If you've got a dangerous place in your yard, put a fence around it. That's the Torah! Instructions in the right way of living.

Before we go any further I want to ask you a question. Are you a Catholic or a Protestant? Most of you watching me, you're going to fall in one of those categories. And the majority are probably Protestant. So I want to ask you another question. Why are you a Protestant? Why are you not a Catholic? Now many of you might say, well I don't believe like the Catholic Church believes. They believe in purgatory, they believe in praying to Mary, they believe in this,

they believe in that, and I don't believe in any of that. Well, I understand where you're coming from, but do you know that's really not why you are a Protestant.

The reason we left the Catholic Church during the Reformation was not over any of those things. We left the Catholic Church because of something called *Sola Scriptura* and papal infallibility. *Sola Scriptura* is a Latin word for "Scripture Alone". You see, the Catholic Church, great people, but they do not believe that scripture alone is the word of God. Rather they believe in the infallibility of the papacy or the pope.

The Catholic Church believes that the traditions of the church that have been handed from one generation to the next, from one pope to the next—they believe that the commands of the pope when spoken *intrata* which means 'from the throne of Rome' is equal to and sometimes even superior to the word of God.

Martin Luther came out of the Catholic Church over this issue because he believed that the word of God was the final authority in all things. That's what I believe, hopefully, that's what you believe. Let me give you an example. If you don't believe that the Catholic Church believes that.

What day of the week is the seventh day of the week? Everybody knows...come on, you know. It's Saturday. Go look at a calendar, starts on Sunday, ends on Saturday, right? Everybody in history knows it...go read your history books and you'll find out that the whole Christian church kept the weekly Sabbath on Saturday. Now this latest up until pope Gregory, some 300 hundred years after the death of the apostles, made what they called an edict or bull. He hated the Jewish people. He hated the Jewish Sabbath. So he changed it. And I don't have time to prove it in this lesson, just go google it.

He changed it and he did it because of those detestable Jews. He hated them. As a matter of fact, this is what led to much antisemitism, it came from the Catholic Church. So what did he do? He changed the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday. And now all of his "daughters" obey his command rather than the word of God. They keep the Sabbath day on Sunday rather than Saturday. Not all of us. The remnant still keeps Saturday as the Sabbath day.

Now here's the point. The Catholic Church mocks the Protestants for saying they're not Catholic. And I can show you quotes from the popes of Rome where they look at the Protestants and laugh, and say, if you don't believe in the authority of the pope, then why do you keep a Sunday Sabbath when that's the pope's Sabbath?

Now I'm not here to teach on the Sabbath day, but I'm here to prove the point about Sola Scriptura. We do not believe like the Catholics. We don't believe the pope has the authority, or anyone has the authority, to add to or take away from the word of God. This religion is called Catholicism and Protestantism. It all flows together adding to and taking away from the word of God.

But keep this in mind as we go forward. Catholicism believes in the tradition of the church as being equal to the word of God. Let me read to you from their Westminster Confession. It says that this living transmission accomplished by the Holy Spirit is called tradition since it is distinct from the sacred scriptures. Did you hear that? The pope's authority is distinct from the scriptures, but yet inspired by the Holy Spirit, and this is considered just as sacred as the Holy Spirit.

Now why am I talking about all this? Because you cannot understand Torah, law of God, law of Moses, until you understand the doctrine of tradition and the doctrine of the infallibility of the leaders of the church.

Now, in past year, I've had to deal with the fact because we had indeed gone down a path where Torah was impossible to keep and so, therefore, we just pretty much put it on the back shelf and that was it. But then I had to deal with this. If Torah is bad, and we'd been led to believe that Torah is impossible to keep — it's what was nailed to the cross, blah blah blah — but if Torah is bad, then God is bad.

If Torah is impossible to keep, then God is impossible to please. That's a fact that you can't run from no matter how hard you want to. And believe me, I wanted to. I knew that couldn't be true because God's never given a bad law. So I had to deal with this Torah subject and that's where today's lesson is coming from.

Now, the problem we run into with the Torah is it seems like the apostle Paul despised the Torah. Let's go to Galatians 5:1. Let's read what Paul said about this Old Testament law called Torah.

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Entangled again. He's talking to the Jewish people that's come to Christ, faith in Messiah. And they were all Torah keepers. Now it looks like he's telling them here that Christ has set them free and that they should never go back to that yoke of bondage.

So here's my question. Was the law of Moses, the Torah, a yoke of bondage? Now in my previous days, I would've told you yes, Paul is not talking about the ten commandments here, he's talking about Torah, he's talking about the law of Moses. But I was wrong. I was very very wrong. And there's one thing I will always submit to and that is the word of God. But you see, brothers and sisters, that neither the Torah nor the ten commandments is the bondage that Paul is speaking about in this verse.

So what is he speaking about? We're going to get there. Stay with me, please. Just stay with me. How are we going to get to the understanding of what bondage Paul is talking about? We're going to get there because today you are going to get an understanding of the word *Jewish Law*. Right that down in your notes...

Jewish Law

You're also going to learn about...

Torah

You're also going to learn about...

10 Commandments

So these are three separate things that I want you to learn about today. Let's say it again. #1) Jewish Law, #2) Torah, #3) the 10 Commandments or the Law of God. (I'm gong to call them "the big 10" from here on out.)

Now, those three words that I just told you are the three pieces of the puzzle that gets us all confused about the law of God. Is one of them the law of God and not the others? Is one of them not the law of God? There are three pieces to this puzzle and one piece of that puzzle is the piece that Paul despised.

The word Torah is a very interesting word. It has two meanings when you look it up in the dictionary. But most Christians are confused between the Torah and the law of Moses. They don't understand these words. They're foreign to them. After today's lesson, I pray you have a complete understanding.

Technically, if you look up the word *Torah* in the dictionary, it's going to tell you that it's the five books that Moses wrote. And we call those books collectively the Pentateuch, 5 for "penta". And those five books—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus,

Numbers and Deuteronomy were written by the hand of Moses at the inspiration of God.

Now, there's another definition for the Law of Moses or the Torah. And this is the fly in the ointment. Here's your second definition. The Body of Wisdom and Law contained in scripture...and other sacred literature and ORAL TRADITION. Underline that word 'oral tradition' if you're taking notes. Here is the fly in the ointment. Here's the piece of the puzzle that messes the puzzle up completely.

The oral tradition. Do you remember me just a few moments ago wasting all that time talking about the Catholics and you were thinking in the back of your mind, what does this have to do with Torah? It has everything to do with Torah. Because Catholicism and Judaism are evil twin sisters. That's right. And we're going to learn about that today. Let's go to Galatians 1:11-14. Now I'm in no hurry today—if you need to pause the video and come back that's perfectly fine. But I'm going to get this lesson out from start to finish—I believe it's that important.

Galatians 1:11-14

But I certify you, brethren (that means 'I tell you the truth') **that the gospel which was preached by me is not from man. For I did not receive this gospel from men, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Yahshua HaMashiach** (Jesus Christ).

(verse 13) For you have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jew's religion, (not Torah, not the law of Moses, not the ten commandments, but the *Jew's Religion*. What was the name of the Jew's religion? Judaism. Write that in your notes. He said in the times past, I was in the Jew's religion.)

(verses 13-14) ...how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and destroyed it, and profited in the Jew's religion (Judaism) **...above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of** (what?) **...the traditions of my fathers.**

No mention of the Torah, no mention of the 10 commandments, no mention of the law of God as written by Moses. But there was another religion in the land of Paul that was not Torah in the strictest sense of the word. There was another religion called the *Jew's religion* which was Judaism. And if you will read this carefully, you will find out that Paul's battle in the New Testament is not with Torah...it's not with the law of Moses...it is not with the 10 commandments. His battle was with Judaism, the religion of the Jews.

And right in these verses, Paul makes it plain that in times past, he was a part of the Jew's religion. What does that mean? He's making it abundantly clear to

everybody that's listening to him. He is no longer practicing Judaism. He despises Judaism. And this is what his war is with—not the Torah, the law of Moses or the 10 commandments, but rather the traditions of his fathers.

Let's go to verse 20 of the same chapter in Galatians. Paul is so serious and wanting to make it so plain that he is no longer in Judaism, that he says this in verse 20.

Galatians 1:20

Now the things that I right unto you, behold, before Yahweh, I lie not.

He's saying...I'm serious brethren. I'm no longer associated with the religion of the Jews. Now here's the problem—when you read the word of God and you see the word Torah, law of Moses, law of God, you automatically clump all of that into one category...Judaism. And you couldn't be more wrong. There's nothing that God hated more or that Paul hated more or that Yahshua hated more than the Jewish religion. Now why is that? I'm going to explain it to you, hang tight.

God hates Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, Pentecostalism, Baptist-ism, Charismatic-ism. He hates any "ism" that creates a religion of works in addition or less than what his word says. And this is exactly what the Jewish religion was. A bunch of traditions that does not find their roots in the written word of God.

As a matter of fact, I get accused all the time from my former associates...brother Vaughn has converted to Judaism. I despise those words...I reject them...I send them back from whence they came. I'm as far from Judaism as I am Catholicism. Both of them cause me to want to cry aloud and spare not to COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE!

And sadly, many of you that God has called out of Catholicism, Protestantism—you thought he called you to Judaism when, in fact, he was calling you back to the faith of Israel, the word of God, the Torah, the law of Moses, the law of God. That's what he called you back to, but you went to a man's religion called *Judaism*...and there is the elephant in the room.

We often think that Judaism is the religion of Abraham or the religion of the Old Testament. We think of it as the original religion almost with a sacred reverence...the Jews said...and the rabbis said. When people want to argue with me about my doctrines, they immediately want to go to some Rabbi Coonhead, somebody I've never heard of...Rabbi so-and-so that goes to the Kabbala School of the 2nd Degree of Solomon's Temple.

Let me tell you something, let me tell you this right now. That doesn't impress me anymore than St. Augustine, Origen or any of them impress me if they are contrary to the word of God, you see? I'm not impressed with rabbinic Judaism. I'm impressed with the plain dictates of the word of God. That's why we don't keep Passover like the Jews do. We don't do it the way they do. We do it the way the Bible said to do it!

The truth is, Judaism is not the religion of Abraham because Abraham lived two generations before Judah was ever born. That's where the name Judaism comes from...Judah. Well Judah wasn't born for two generations after Abraham. So no, Judaism is not the faith of Abraham. As a matter of fact, Abraham was simply a practitioner of the law of God that God gave to him.

The only law that Abraham knew in his day was a stone that was in the center of Ur of Chaldees, and written on that stone was the law of Hammurabi. I strongly recommend this book you can get on Amazon. It's entitled: "The Laws of Moses and the Code of Hammurabi" by Stanley A. Cook. It was so intriguing to me to see how close this law is with the Torah. And it existed in the city of the Ur of Chaldees. As a matter of fact, they trace Hammurabi's roots back to the Ur of Chaldees. Quite an interesting book.

But the point I'm making is, Abraham knew nothing about Judaism. Judaism became a religion—an "ism" after the children of Israel were held in Babylon for 70 years. And when they came back to Jerusalem, they brought this hybrid religion with them that led them up to the second temple era. But the original faith of Israel before it was polluted with Judaism was simply the worship of Yahweh and obedience to his commands.

Now, because we don't understand this and I didn't understand this and I'm sure you might not have, but because we don't know about Judaism, we fail to understand what Paul meant when talking about his previous way of life. Paul was wanting to put something way behind him. Now we used to think he was talking about the Torah, the law of Moses—that he wanted to put way behind him. But in fact, that is not what he was talking about. He was talking about Judaism.

There's a book called "Judaism When Christianity Began (A Story of Belief and Practice)" by Jacob Neusner. Listen, if you are serious about this subject, this book is a must for your library. This author has over 1,000 published books on this subject of Judaism. I'm going to tell you when you read that book, all of a sudden the light starts coming on in your head of what Paul despised. And this author is phenomenal. He was a professor at Yale and so many of the authoritative collegiate centers. You need that book. Order it off of Amazon.

Now, let's talk about Judaism as we try to come to a close here very soon. Judaism is a religion. It's not a faith. It's a religion. And every religion has a story. Every religion does. The muslims have a story about when Muhammad rode a horse to heaven. Christianity has a story of when Jesus died on the cross, rose from the dead and went to heaven.

Judaism has a story. And they put this story forth and they sell it and they propagate it. And this story basically tells where they started, their great early revivals, who their leaders were, where it all began, where it's going or where they think it's going when it's not really going anywhere, what it is, what its doctrines are, what it believes. And this is what Rabbinic Judaism is.

For example, I come from a Pentecostal church. We can tell you where we started —Azusa Street. We can tell you who the leaders were. We can tell you about our mighty revivals, where we think we're going. It's a story. Every religion has a story.

Judaism has a story. And do you know how their story is preserved? Now we all have ways of preserving it and in our church and our religion, we have a library with all of our things in there. Well Judaism keeps their story in what's called "The Sayings of the Fathers". It's a sacred collection written by their sages from all these years past. Now at one time these were not written down...they were transcribed or transferred orally from one generation to the next.

Now, the sayings of the fathers...it's very important that you understand this. Here is what they, the rabbinic Jews, believe. They do not believe that Moses received the full Torah. Now this is where this lesson gets good, it's where the light will begin to come on in just a few moments.

Those of rabbinic Judaism of which Paul was a member did not believe that the full Torah was given to Moses, but rather, they believe that Moses received a starting point in their religion of Judaism. And that Moses didn't write all of the revelations down, but rather he told them to his protégé Joshua. And then they believe that Joshua kept those in his memory and that God gave Joshua more, and that Joshua told it to Caleb. And that these memories floated along in the process of tradition.

Remember I told you earlier—the Catholic Church believes that the tradition of the popes and the church is just as sacred as the scriptures? That's a fact by the way. Rabbinic Judaism believes that the oral passing-along of these commandments and different things, these conversations—they are just as sacred as what Moses got on Mt. Sinai.

They believe they were orally transferred beginning a chain of tradition. And that this chain transcends Sola Scriptura (scripture alone). These men in Judaism are known as “The Men of the Great Assembly”. The men from Moses, Joshua, Caleb, on down the line to their famous sages...that all these men make up the assembly, what they call the Men of the Great Assembly.

They believe that the oral tradition is part and parcel—meaning completely equal to the written law of Moses, the Torah. Just as much as what Moses wrote, they believe that these traditions handed down are equal if not in some cases even greater.

Ladies and gentlemen, the religion I just described to you...the religion of oral tradition, is the religion of the Pharisees of which Paul tells us he was the most zealous member of that group of Jews, the ones that did not believe that Moses’ written Torah was all there was to Torah. They didn’t believe that the law of Moses was just the writings of Moses, but rather that all of these other parts were included in what they called the law of Moses. Now collectively all of these traditions were called *The Law of Moses* in the pharisaic tradition. All of these laws were under the rubric, or category, of the law of Moses or Torah.

Now, let’s see the problem with that. Let’s go to Exodus 24:3-4. We’re going to find out why Paul wanted to put a thousand miles of distance between him and the pharisees!

Exodus 24:3-4

And Moses came and told the people all the words of Yahweh, and all the judgments, and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which Yahweh has said we will do. And Moses wrote all the words of Yahweh, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

How many of the words did Moses write down? He wrote down everything that God told him to write. All the judgments, all the law that God gave him...he wrote it down. Now that’s what I believe because I’m not a pharisee. I don’t believe that anything that anyone besides Moses added to these laws are part of Torah, are part of the law of Moses. They’re part of a chain of tradition which there may be nothing wrong with those traditions, except when you put them on par with what Moses wrote down.

How do I know that they're not equal? Because Yahweh himself came on a mountain of fire and smoke and everything else, and gave these to Moses. Moses wrote everything down.

Now in the religion that Paul practiced, traditions taught by men transcended everything that Moses wrote down. So you've got to be very careful when you come into the New Testament and you see the law of Moses—remember what they mean by that phraseology. The pharisees in mentioning the law of Moses are not talking about what we just read in Exodus—everything that Moses wrote down. They're talking about everything that Rabbi Mahamahooba wrote, and everything that Rabbi Chomahooma wrote and everything Rabbi William wrote.

When they say the “law of Moses” — that it's this collective collection of rabbis and sages, and that corporately it comes under the name "The Law of Moses" — because Moses started this chain. So this is why you've got to be very careful because the law of Moses referred to by the Pharisees is not the law of Moses...it's a chain of law.

Now, here comes a man on the scene by the name of Yahshua (Jesus to many people) and buddy, he comes and challenges the keeping of these oral traditions head on. He becomes the pharisee's worse nightmare, and Paul becomes an even worse nightmare. And then you and I become nightmares to the spirit of the pharisees.

Now I sort of know how Yahshua felt dealing with these pharisees, I know how Paul felt. I unfortunately do know how they felt. How? Because I have personal experience in this area. I came from an old fundamental church that preached against a man or woman wearing short sleeves. Our sleeves had to be long, maybe that's why I still wear so many long sleeves. I got comfortable with that I suppose. But, literally, you were not allowed to wear short sleeves. This was a tradition started by the old elder that was the pastor there, and the old saints, they thought it was a sin to do that. And I'm not putting down on them if you're watching me and you came from the same church, this is not a put-down, I'm trying to give you an example.

Now they couldn't point to one scripture anywhere in the word of God where this was a commandment from God. They couldn't do it. No, there was no way they could do it. So while they're keeping that tradition, no short sleeves, they were breaking the Sabbath day and keeping the Sabbath on Sunday instead of the seventh day of the week. There were people in the church married to each other's wives, swapped them around three or four times ya know, but don't wear short sleeves.

Now here's the point. Where did they get that from—no short sleeves? They did not get it from the word of God. They started a tradition...maybe they were trying to keep everybody modest...they may've thought if you wore short sleeves, it wouldn't be long before there'd be no sleeves, then no shirt at all. I get that. I totally respect that. But that's a tradition of the elders. That's perfectly fine if you want to live by that tradition. But don't you ever compare it to the law of God, and don't you ever tell a person they're required to do that to be right with God, or to be right with the church.

Because now you're a "pharisee". You've created a law out of thin air and equated it with the law of the commands of God, and you've created a tradition with no scriptural foundation.

Now, let's find out what Yahshua thought about this. Matthew 15:1-2.

Matthew 15:1-2

Then came to Yahshua scribes and Pharisees...

Now what have we found out about the Pharisees? Paul was a member of them and these men believed that all of the oral traditions were the law of Moses.

...which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?

Transgress the what? Not the word of God, not the written law of Moses, not the ten commandments, because in fact, you can search those laws from top to bottom, you'll never find one commandment that says you have to wash your hands before you eat.

...for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

Why are they transgressing? Now that word transgress is a pretty big word. The law of the elders, the traditions of the elders...why are they doing that? Notice who these people are. Scribes (which is the word for sages) of the Pharisees.

Now Yahshua was the law of God in flesh. The law of God was inside of him. He kept that law. And here is the living law of God that's about to set these preachers straight. Continue in Matthew 15.

Matthew 15:3-6

But he answered and said unto them, Why do you transgress the commandments of God with your tradition?

They asked him...why do you transgress the commandments of the elders? And he says, wait buddy, before we deal with the transgression of the oral tradition of the elders, let's talk about the law of Moses, the law of God—let's talk about it. He said, you're transgressing that while you're keeping the tradition of your church—the pharisee church.

(verse 4) For God commanded, saying, Honor your father and mother, and, He that curses father or mother, let him die the death.

Now this is important. This is a hybridization of the law of God, the ten commandments, the law of Moses, because in fact the ten commandments mentions nothing about cursing your father or mother and letting you die if you do. But Moses' law that he wrote down does talk about the death of a child that dishonors his parents. So Yahshua is endorsing both of those sets of laws, Moses and the ten commandments.

(verses 5-6) But you say, Whoever will say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatever you might be profited by me, And honor not his father or his mother, he will be free. Thus have you made the commandment of God of no effect because of your tradition.

The oral traditions of the elders that was passed down orally. Somebody one day made up this law that you've got to wash your hands before you eat to be right with God. It's a good tradition, nothing wrong with it, but you can't judge and condemn anyone by it because it's not the law of God. And it's not in the written law of Moses, nor the written ten commandments. So you just can't do that folks. You just can't do it. Now I'm not going to explain what he meant about honor father and mother there, it's another subject, but basically, they were not taking care of their parents and making excuse for it. And he said, look guys, while you're washing your hands, your mama and daddy are over there suffering, hardly able to eat and wash their bodies while you're over here, etc. So in other words, he's setting them straight, amen?

Now let's continue reading there in Matthew and let's skip down to verse 7. This is going to be interesting. I love what he says here in Matthew 15:7. Can't nobody set you straight and cut you with that sword like the son of God could. And he hated pharisaical religion. And so did Paul. He's talking to pharisees, Paul's religion now. The one that Paul says is now in his past. Now notice that not one time has Yahshua put down on the law of Moses, not one time on the Torah. He's putting down on their oral traditions that they were calling the law of Moses.

Matthew 15:7-9

You hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draws near unto me with their mouth, and honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Commandments of who? Men. Men who thought they were equal to Moses. They added these commandments all through the years, the traditions of the elders, and they were calling that the law of Moses, the Torah. Because they believed that this collection of their teachings was part of Torah. It's no wonder we get so confused in the New Testament.

Let's keep on this vein. Let's go to Matthew 5:21-22 where Yahshua is speaking.

By the way, please share this if it's a blessing to you. We don't ask for money, but this is a way for you to give back to the ministry if you've received from it. Share, share, share.

Matthew 5:21-22

You have heard that it was said by them of old time.

Now listen carefully. He said...you have placed your faith on what you have heard from the old elders. He said...you've heard it said by those old elders...

Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment, But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause... (and it goes on...)

Notice what he didn't say. He didn't say...you read in the law of Moses or the Torah. He said...you've heard it said...because these traditions were the traditions of the elders that were passed down—they would talk about *not killing* but they didn't say anything about killing somebody's character—it was the traditions of the elders.

Matthew 5:28

But I say unto you, That whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.

What he's saying here is... you've heard the elder's speak, you've regarded that as the law of Moses, but I'm ready to reveal to you the *spirit* of the law that was behind the law of Moses. You see, these pharisees only believe Moses' writings were part of the Torah. And this is what causes Yahshua to say in Matthew 5:17-18.

Matthew 5:17-18

Think not that I come to destroy the law, or the prophets, I come not to destroy them, but to live them out (fulfill).

Now listen to what he says. He's ready to start a war with the pharisees because he's about to come against their entire religion. Of what? They believe that all of the oral tradition was part of the law. But he's about to set them straight. He told them...I didn't come to destroy the real law.

(verse 18) For truly I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle will in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

What did he just tell them? I'm not interested in your oral tradition, but there is one law that will never pass away, and I'm here to endorse it, I'm here to live it — and that's the written law that Yahweh gave to Moses. And he wrote every bit of it down. You added all kinds of stuff to it. That law will pass away. It's going to go to the cross. But this law, the real law of Moses, Torah, the ten commandments, will never pass away. Not one jot or one tittle, referring to the fact that he was talking about the written law.

Now, when Yahshua came to the earth, there were two groups of Jews that wanted control...the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The pharisees believed in the authority of the oral law. They called it the law of God, the law of Moses. The sadducees not so much. They were more for the written law of Moses than the pharisees were. Paul was not a member of the sadducees. He was zealously a member of the Pharisees, the one that got their religion from *men*. They learned from the oral traditions of the elders, whereas the sadducees stuck with the written law of Moses.

Now, it is with that understanding that we're about to see a great revelation about some problems in the early New Testament. Real quickly, I want to give you some traditions that were added to the law of Moses that continued down through Paul's day. Number one, if you'll go read the Pentatauch, Moses's law, you'll find out that God never intended to segregate Israel from the rest of the world. Quite the contrary. God intended to use Israel to be a light to the nations of the world. So that those nations would desire Israel's God.

God, Yahweh, told Israel through Moses' prophet, though the writings of Moses, to always welcome the stranger, to let the stranger even join Israel, and he even allowed the gentile, the stranger, to go to the temple and offer sacrifices. This was Moses' law, the law of Torah.

But thousands of years later, all of that had changed. Now we got a new religion that's not based on Torah, it's based on traditions of men. Because after the Babylonian exile, by the time they got back to the second temple era, gentiles weren't even allowed on the grounds of the temple. And now they had created a man-made law called "the law of common men".

So basically, gentiles were unclean. Jews were clean, but a Jew could become unclean (just like a gentile), if he were to touch a gentile. That process was called *common* — it was where a clean person, not technically a gentile, becomes *common*, because they touched a gentile. This is not based on the law of Moses or the Torah. This was added by very carnal-minded elders. So, this is why many of the problems arose in the early church among the pharisees. And Paul despised them.

Let's turn now to the book of Acts and let's see what was going on in the early church. This is good stuff. Acts 15:1-5

Acts 15:1-5

And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Unless you are circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small argument with them (i.e. they had a huge fight), they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question. And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles, and they caused great joy among the brethren. And when they came to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up (in the church) certain of the sect of the Pharisees (Paul's former religion that he was putting way behind him...not the Torah, not the commandments, but Judaism) ...which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

Listen to me carefully. They just referred to the law of Moses when, in fact, the law of Moses is the Pentateuch, the Torah. But these men were referring to oral traditions of their elders and they call that the law of Moses. How do we know it? Because they were of the Pharisees.

Now, let's go to Galatians 1:11-12. Now in these verses we're going to see that Paul's writings were not a war with Torah but with the pharisees.

Galatians 1:11-12

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not from men. For I neither received it from men (my elders), neither was I taught it (through the traditions of elders), but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Paul is disavowing the practice of the oral tradition of men as being equal to the word of God. They are referring to the oral traditions. Paul is referring to the divine revelation of the word of God. Paul wants to make it abundantly clear that he is done with the oral traditions of men. Now verses 15-20 of the same chapter.

Galatians 1:15-20

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son to me, that I might preach him among the heathen (gentiles), immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood (men, elders, sages, rabbis). Neither did I go up to Jerusalem to them who were apostles before me, but I went to Arabia, and returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles I saw none, except James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

What he is trying to tell these former pharisaical Jews that have come to Messiah is—listen guys, this is not oral tradition. I did not get this and call that the law of God or the law of Moses. This came directly from God to me. You see, in Jewish tradition, you receive from one rabbi or one sage, and then you pass that to another. Paul said, that's not the case, we're done with that. We're going *Sola Scriptura*, the word of God, the written word of God alone. He's making a total break from Judaism, not Torah, not the law of God, but Judaism.

Galatians 2:11-14.

Galatians 2:11-14 [paraphrased]

But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him right to his face, because he was wrong.

Peter comes to Antioch where Paul is and Peter starts acting like a Pharisee.

(verse 12) For before certain pharisees came down here with James, Peter was eating with the Gentiles, (he was touching them; he was going against the oral tradition of the elders that said you couldn't even touch a gentile or you'd be unclean; he was ignoring that) ...but when these pharisees came down, he withdrew himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision (Jewish faith).

(verses 13-14) And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas (my companion) also was carried away with their dissimulation (stupidity). But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel (the word of God)...

Now the only word of God he had at that time was Torah. I saw that they were not walking in Torah because in Torah, they were told to win those gentiles to become members of the house of Israel, to interact with them, to let them in the temple...that's Torah. When I saw Peter was not walking in Torah, but rather after the traditions of the elders...

(verse 14) I said unto Peter before them all...if thou, being a Jew, are acting like a gentile, rebellious, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as the Jews?

In other words, if you're going to be corrupt and walk after the traditions of the elders and mistreat these men, why would you compel them to become a Jew?

Now, let's go to Acts 10:28. Now what's in Acts chapter 10...that famous vision that everybody in the Christian church gets wrong, about Peter seeing these unclean animals in a vision. They think all of a sudden we can eat unclean food now. We can eat rabbit, rats, bats and dogs and horses, catfish, shrimp and crawfish and pigs...all these unclean animals!

Peter's vision had nothing to do with that. God sent a vision to correct the pharisaical mind of Peter that had believed the traditions of the elders about the Gentiles rather than Torah. Peter had believed that if he had touched them, he would've become common. So God drops a sheet down that's got animals in it, clean and unclean. Yeah, there's deer over here and pig over there. And in this sheet, these animals are all falling over each other...the clean animal's going to accidentally touch the unclean animal. And does that make the clean animal common now—unclean? No, no, no, no, no.

As a matter of fact, if you'll read over in Acts chapter 10, verse 28, Peter knew that this vision wasn't about unclean food. He knew better. As a matter of fact, he basically told God—no sir, your word, your Torah tells me not to eat unclean food, I know you wouldn't tell me to do something contrary to that. So it took Peter three days to figure out the meaning of the vision.

And these Christian preachers...it takes them one reading of Acts 10 and they think they've got it figured out. But it took Peter three days to figure it out. And let's read what the conclusion was that he finally came to in Acts 10:28.

Acts 10:28

And he said unto them, You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew... (now he said it is an unlawful thing—not according to Torah, but according to the traditions of the elders) ...to keep company, or come unto one of another nation, but God has showed me... (not that I can eat unclean food) ...that I should no longer call any MAN... (nothing to do with food) ...common or unclean.

In other words, God came down and corrected his version of the Torah that was not Torah at all. It was his religion, Judaism—God had to get all of these traditions out of their mind that didn't line up with the Torah.
Galatians 2:15-16.

Galatians 2:15-16

We who are Jews by nature, and not of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Yahshua, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Remember in an earlier verse we read, they said that for these men to be saved they had to be circumcised? That was an added tradition of the elders, a work of the law. And he said...listen we are Jews, we've been circumcised, but that won't do it—you have to have faith in Messiah. Let's go to Titus 1:14. Let's see if we can't tie some of these cut loose ends up.

Titus 1:14

Not giving heed to Jewish fables, (not to real Torah, but fables added to the Torah) ...and commandments of men... (Amen. Commandments of men... what is he calling Jewish fables? The commandments of men that were added to the Torah.) ...that turned from the truth.

He's calling the Torah in the New Testament...he's calling that the truth. And he's calling these added traditions the commandments of men.

So, here's the question: If the Torah, the law of Moses, is still in existence today, we come back to the question...how do we keep them? Those questions are answered in the previous videos before this one. But in the next video, I'm going to try to help you understand how you can keep the law of God. I don't like calling it the Law of Moses because it was given by God. It would be like calling this (New Testament) the Book of Paul or the Book of Peter. It's the Word of God. The Law of God has a Spirit behind it. The Layers of the Law. And once you get a spiritual mind and that law gets written in there, all of a sudden every meaning

behind every law will find a fulfillment in your life. Remember most of the laws of God are about protecting life, loving your neighbor as much as you love yourself, and loving God. I pray you've been blessed! God bless you. I'll see you next time.

firstharvest.tv/video/1419

Contact: brothervaughn@gmail.com