

A Change of The Law

- One Jot or One Tittle -

Compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, March 10, 2014

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Scripture is from New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

“All things must be fulfilled” before “jot” or a “tittle” could pass from the Law. **Some believe** these words of Christ must include everything written concerning the Son of God, in all of First Covenant Scripture (The Old Testament). Everything written would have to include His eternal reign as King of kings. His kingdom will have no end, therefore the entire Torah (including the sacrifice of animals under the Aaronic priesthood) will continue forever without any change whatsoever. **They point to** the prophecies of Ezekiel’s Temple, and say those prophecies describe literal animal sacrifices, at a new Temple, during the upcoming millennial reign of Christ. Nothing is “changed” at the Glorious Return. Nothing will ever “pass from the law.”

Others allow for a change at the Glorious Return, because the prophecies of Revelation and the writings of Peter say that “heaven and earth will pass away” on the day that Christ returns in power and glory (*Mark 13:25, Luke 21:26, 2Peter 3:7-12, Revelation 6:14*).

Matthew 5:17-18 [Yeshua speaking] “Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.**” (ASV)

A “jot” or a “tittle” in the Hebrew, is like the dot of an i, or the cross of a t. In other words, nothing could be gone from “the law” (the Torah - the Five Books of Moses) UNTIL:

- 1. heaven and earth pass away*
- 2. all things are accomplished*

Hebrews 7:12 “For the priesthood being changed,
of necessity **there is also a change of the law.**”

*You can see the problem: nothing will be changed vs. something is changed.
Some throw out the Book of Hebrews as uninspired. I do not.
How do we reconcile the two passages?*

Three times, in the New Testament, we find words to the effect that “all things” were fulfilled concerning Him. They were fulfilled by His earthly life and death.

If we **limit** the “jot or tittle” prediction to those “things” that would be fulfilled by the end of his earthly life, and **exclude** prophecies concerning His glorious return, His judgment of the wicked, and His eternal reign, then we can reconcile the two passages. “All things” were fulfilled, therefore the law could be changed, IF heaven and earth passed away.

In the study “[The Change of the Priesthood](#),” I explained that the LORD himself changed the priesthood at Mount Sinai, following the Golden Calf Rebellion. He appointed the male descendants of Aaron as the priesthood “instead of the firstborn” of each tribe (*Num. 8:17-18*). The Aaronic priesthood was a replacement. Once the “sins committed under the first covenant” (the Sinai Covenant with Israel) were washed away by the blood of God’s own Lamb (*Heb. 9:15*), He could change the priesthood BACK to His original appointed order - that of “the firstborn” - the “order of Melchizedek.”

In the study “[Two Covenants](#),” my argument for a “new covenant” is based upon the Mosaic law concerning marriage and remarriage. I am personally convinced that **the “first” covenant (the Sinai Covenant) was rendered obsolete by the death of the betrothed “husband” - God’s Son**. Israel was set free from that “first” covenant of marriage. She was free to enter into a “new covenant” of marriage, with “another man” - the risen Christ (*Rom. 7:2-4*). Because it is a *new* covenant, the LORD can legally change the priesthood and the sacrifices.

NOTE: I do believe that every one of the Ten Commandments is still living and valuable and desired behavior for His bride, by our “new” betrothed husband (2Cor. 11:2). He has promised to write that “law” on our hearts.

The study “[Israel - The People of God](#)” will hopefully convince you that “Israel” is the name of the redeemed people of God. Unrepentant “sinners in Zion” are “**cut off**” **from Israel**, and Gentiles who come to faith in Messiah are “**grafted in**” **to Israel**.

Many in the Hebrew Roots Movement, believe that any change to “the law” as commanded in the Five Book of Moses, is unthinkable. The Temple, with the Aaronic priesthood and the animal sacrifices will be restored, **they say**, and will continue once Messiah has returned in power. We need to look at some of the passages which are sited in support of that position.

Matthew 5:17-18 [Yeshua speaking] “Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.”

He came “to fulfill” the Law. Did He fulfill the Law? Answer: Yes! **The law of sacrifices** - as a prophecy of Messiah’s death, **was fulfilled.** He died as “the Lamb of God.” In that sense, “the law” was fulfilled perfectly!

To “fulfill” the Law, also means to keep it. **Did Jesus “fulfill” the Law?** Yes! Perfectly. **“He was obedient unto death”** (*Phil. 2:8*). He fulfilled every duty to the Law. He can legitimately receive the promises of both the Abrahamic Covenant and the Sinai Covenant.

We who have not perfectly obeyed, can still receive the promises - if we are “in Him” as part of His bride.

The Law was not “destroyed” - it was “fulfilled,” just as Yeshua said. The Law was a prophecy of Messiah - of what He would do for us, and in us. He would be the sacrifice. He would become the High Priest, and He would write His Law on our hearts.

Acts 3:18 “But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.”

The prophets said that “the Christ would suffer.” Did He suffer? Yes.

Acts 13:29 “Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.”

Luke 24:44 [Christ speaking post resurrection] “Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me.”

John 19:28-30 “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, ‘I am thirsty.’ A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”

*All things must be fulfilled. All things were fulfilled.
But heaven and earth did not pass away.
Or did it?*

TIL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS AWAY

Matthew 5:18 [Christ speaking] “**Till** heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished (fulfilled).” (ASV)

2 Peter 3:10 “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”

***The problem** is that the Letter to the Hebrews says that the law has already been changed. In this study we want to understand how the law could be changed, when heaven and earth had not yet passed away. Or had they?*

A DUAL PROPHECY?

A dual prophecy is one which points to more than one fulfillment. Was the prophecy of Christ concerning the Torah, such a prophecy?

- (1) All **was** “accomplished” concerning Him, as the perfect Lamb of God, **and**
- (2) All **will be** fulfilled at the Glorious Return when the “heavens and the earth” (as we know them presently) will pass away.

Both are true?

THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH - PASSED AWAY

When Yeshua died **the great high entrance veil of the Temple was torn in two**, from top to bottom, with the “great noise” of an earthquake.

This veil was 80 feet high. On this veil was a glorious depiction of “the heavens and the earth” - for the LORD “stretches out the heavens like a curtain” (*Isa. 40:22*). God the Father “rent His robe” at the death of His Son. At the same time a great earthquake rent “the earth” beneath Jerusalem. Upon seeing these things, the centurion and those with him at the crucifixion “feared greatly, saying, ‘Truly this *was* the Son of God!’” (*Matt. 27:54*).

Josephus mentions but a single veil (katapevta; J.W. 5.5.5 §219) before a set of doors which serve as the “gate opening into the building.” It had golden doors **fifty-five cubits** high and sixteen broad. Before these hung a **veil** (katapevta) of equal length, of Babylonian tapestry, with embroidery of blue and fine linen, of scarlet also and purple, wrought with marvelous skill. Nor was this mixture of materials without its mystic meaning. It typified the universe. (Continued next page)

For the scarlet seemed emblematical of fire, the fine linen of the earth, the blue of the air, and the purple of the sea; the comparison in two cases being suggested by their colour, and in that of the fine linen and purple by their origin, as the one is produced by the earth and the other by the sea. On this tapestry was portrayed a panorama of the heavens, the signs of the Zodiac excepted . . .) J.W. (5.5.4 §211-5.5 §219 LCL)

Yeshua was master of the dual prophecy. When He died, **heaven and earth on the Temple veil was torn in two, with the roar of an earthquake**. When He returns in glory, He will “rend the heavens” (*Isa. 64:1*). “The sky will recede “as a scroll when it is rolled up” (*Rev. 6:14*). “Heaven and earth will pass away” with the greatest earthquake ever known (*2Pet. 3:7-12, Rev. 16:18-20*). Every mountain will be flattened and every island will sink into the sea.

1. All was fulfilled.
2. Heaven and earth passed away, when the veil of the Temple was rent.
3. Reconciliation for sin could now come through the blood of God’s Lamb, and through God’s anointed High Priest, rather than through the blood of animals.
4. This was a change!

I CHANGE NOT

Malachi 3:6 “For I am the LORD, I change not;”

Psalms 89:34 “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips.”

These verses have been quoted to support the teaching that God will never change His Sinai Covenant with Israel. And He didn’t. **The LORD did not “change” that covenant**. That “first” covenant of marriage was simply rendered “obsolete” when the betrothed husband of that covenant died. A “new covenant” of marriage was needed, with the risen Christ.

See the study “[Two Covenants](#).”

And there is another way of looking at this. The LORD’s intention - His plan from eternity, was that His Son would become the perfect “sacrifice for sin,” the High Priest over Israel redeemed, and the King of kings. **His plan has not “changed.”** It remains the same.

A CHANGE OF THE LAW

The “first covenant” was not “changed.” It was rendered “obsolete.” It was a covenant of marriage, and it was rendered obsolete by the death of the betrothed “husband” (*Jer. 2:1-3, Jer. 3:14, Jer. 31:32, Ezek. 16:32, Rom. 7:1-4*).

Hebrews 8:13 “When He said, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete.” (NAS)

We are betrothed to Yeshua Messiah by a new covenant of marriage. Under this new covenant the priesthood belongs to Christ and to those who are His. He is *both* King and High Priest forever (*after the “order of Melchizedek”*). His redeemed will reign as “kings and priests upon the earth” (*Rev. 5:10, 20:6*).

Hebrews 7:12 “For the priesthood being changed,
of necessity there is also a change of the law.”

I see the work of a new generation of Pharisees, teaching a return to every aspect of “first covenant” law-keeping, including the sacrifice of animals through a restored Aaronic priesthood at a rebuilt Temple on the Mount. They deny the existence of a “new covenant,” and insist that we are under a “**renewed**” covenant. The flaw in that argument concerns re-marriage.

Israelite men were forbidden to remarry wives they had divorced for adultery or idolatry. The LORD divorced His “wife” Israel, for repeated idolatry. He could not re-marry her. By dying, He rendered the “first” marriage covenant obsolete. When He was raised on the third day, He became “another man” who could enter in to a “new” covenant of marriage with Israel (*Rom. 7:4*).

NO ADDITIONS - NO SUBTRACTIONS

Deuteronomy 4:1-2 “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you. You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”

Deuteronomy 12:32 “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.”

This is very serious! The LORD pronounced a curse upon “the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them” (*Deut. 27:26*). The Pharisees of Christ’s day believed that failure to keep every word of the Torah, would bring upon them the curse of God. No wonder there was such a conflict! No wonder Paul and all of the first believers were persecuted.

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul clearly stated that physical circumcision for Gentile converts was no longer necessary. He went much further saying that those who became circumcised in order to become “partakers of the covenant,” were “fallen from grace” and “estranged from Christ” (*Gal. 5:5-6*). Certainly this was a “change of the law.” Circumcision was the law under the “first” Covenant (*Gen. 17:10, Exo. 12:44-48, Lev. 12:3, Jos. 5:3-5*).

There were those in Paul’s day - converted Pharisees - who vehemently taught that all new converts must be physically circumcised, and agree to keep all the Law of Moses (including thrice yearly pilgrimage to the Temple at Jerusalem and the offering of animal sacrifices). These Pharisees did not believe that any part of the Torah could be changed.

Hebrews and Galatians spell out clearly **what has changed** under the New Covenant:

1. **The Aaronic priesthood** (a temporary substitute) for the original order of “the firstborn,” is exchanged for the priesthood of Messiah at the “true Tabernacle” - Heaven itself.
2. **The blood of animal sacrifices** (which could only be performed by an Aaronic priest), is exchanged for the blood of God’s perfect Lamb.
3. **Circumcision of the flesh** (which was a blood sacrifice), in order to become a partaker of the “covenant of promise,” is exchanged for the “circumcision of Christ” - the circumcision of the heart - by faith.
4. **The laws forbidding social fellowship and intermarriage between Jews and believing Gentiles** are done away, because Christ has rendered all believers “clean.” Uncircumcised Gentiles who come to believe in Yeshua Messiah, receive the Holy Spirit and are “grafted in” to Israel redeemed.

Either we reject the Letter to the Hebrews and much in the letters of Paul, or we accept that some things are “changed” from “first covenant” to “new covenant.”

WHY DID PAUL OFFER SACRIFICES AFTER THE DAMASCUS ROAD VISION?

We cannot deny it happened. The story was faithfully preserved in Acts Chapter 21, because it ended with Paul’s arrest. At the end of his third missionary journey, Paul returned to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost. He had been away from Judea for many years. He had apparently taken a Nazarite vow, for which he had his hair cut off some weeks before reaching the City (*Acts 18:18*). (*See Numbers 6:2,5,9,18.*)

The LORD gave Paul several warnings along the route, that he would end up in chains if he went to Jerusalem. (See Acts 20:22-23, Acts 21:4, Acts 21:11.) But Paul was determined. Upon reaching Jerusalem he met with “James and all the elders” of the church, who joyfully told him of all the converts from the Jews who had come to believe in Yeshua as the Christ. These Jewish converts were also “zealous for the Law” (Acts 21:20). They continued to bring animals for sacrifice, to the Temple.

Acts 21:21-24 [James speaking to Paul] “but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.”

“What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law.”

There were several sacrifices involved in this process of purification. Paul went to the Temple, and paid the money for the sacrifices, but before they could complete the process of purification some of the Jews from Asia recognized Paul - and a riot ensued. From that day on Paul remained a prisoner of Rome.

Why did Paul do as the Elders directed? Did he believe that the blood of animals really effected anything at all? Did he cross the line? Did he strike the rock twice? We are left to wonder.

I think we must consider the possibility that Paul was going through the motions, in order to dispel prejudice against the Gospel, from the Jewish community.

1 Corinthians 9:20 “And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might win those who are under the Law;” (NAS)

*Paul did not regard himself as “under the Law.” He was acting a part.
To the Galatians he wrote:*

Galatians 5:18 “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

In the same passage of Acts, James (speaking to Paul) repeats the consensus of the Jerusalem Council, which they issued back in Acts 15. Paul and Barnabas traveled to Jerusalem for that Meeting, to argue that physical circumcision was not necessary for Gentiles who had come to believe. Peter stood up, with his report about the rooftop vision, and the baptism of Cornelius and his household (*Acts Cpt 10*). “The Holy Spirit fell upon them, (*uncircumcised Gentiles*) as upon us at the beginning (*in the upper room*)” (*Acts 11:15-17*). And Peter concluded, “Who was I that I could withstand God?” His argument carried, and believing Gentiles were welcomed into the newly formed congregations of those who served Jesus as the Christ.

Acts 21:25 [James speaking for the Council] “But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, [physical circumcision and sacrifices at the Temple] except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.” *These things would allow Gentiles to meet with Jews for worship.*

Jews continued to sacrifice at Jerusalem. Gentiles did not. Are you starting to see why some in the Messianic community are teaching that Jews are still obligated to keep the sacrificial law, and to circumcise their male newborns, while Gentiles never were.

This would certainly keep up the “wall of division.” Personally - I cannot accept a two tiered system, with different requirements for Jews vs. Gentiles. All human beings are “saved” in the same way - “by grace,” “through faith.”

Romans 3:21 “God’s saving justice was witnessed [*prophesied and acted out*] by the Law and the Prophets, but now it has been revealed altogether apart from law:” (NJB)

WHY THE CONFUSION CONCERNING THE LAW?

We wonder why they didn’t “get it” - that something was “changed.” Easy for us to say. The Jerusalem Temple has been gone for 1900+ years. It wasn’t so easy for them. They had 1200 years of Tabernacle and Temple history, and teaching. Not so easy to dismiss. They had laws forbidding social fellowship with uncircumcised Gentiles. Not so easy to dismiss.

The Temple was destroyed in 70AD, and Jews were banished from Jerusalem. A terrible persecution followed, that lasted for many years. If the LORD had allowed the destruction of the Temple sooner, the ensuing persecution might have hampered the early spread of the Gospel. Better that the destruction be delayed, even if it meant that some confusion lasted among believers, concerning the “change” from “first covenant” to “new covenant.”

The problem for our day - coming very soon, is that a third Temple will be restored on the Mount - before the return of Christ in glory. Many will go there to offer sacrifices. But the LORD will not be there. An imposter will “sit in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2Thess. 2:3-4). He will claim to be Christ returned. Only the anointed “Son of David” was allowed to sit within the Temple court.

Those who have not studied “the law” for themselves, with the New Covenant writings and much deep prayer, may be deceived by the imposter to come.

Remember: You are an Israelite - “grafted in” by faith.

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.
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