

How to Worship

in Spirit

and in Truth

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Table of Contents

Before reading, please ask the Holy Spirit to guide you into truth as you seek to worship God with all your heart, and your soul, and your might.

<u>Section</u>		<u>Page Number</u>
One:	Where is Jesus in the Old Testament?	2
Two:	Who Is Israel?	3
Three:	What is the New Covenant?	4
Four:	Are Law and Grace Opposites?	5
Five:	Who Establishes True Worship?	6
Six:	What is the Mark of the Beast?	7
Seven:	Why Did Jesus (Yeshua) Come to Earth?	8
Eight:	Why do Most Churches Observe Sunday?	9
Nine:	Are the Dispensation and Rapture Theories Biblical?	10
Ten:	What are False Prophets and Itching Ears?	11
Summary		12

PLEASE NOTE: All Scripture quotes are from the King James Version.

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How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

One: Where is Jesus in the Old Testament?

Jesus said several times that the Old Testament was about him. In John 5:39-47 He states both that “the scriptures” (which in His day consisted solely of the Old Testament) “testify of me” and that Moses (who wrote the first five books of the Old Testament) “wrote of me.” Luke 24:25-27 records that after his resurrection he began “at Moses” and “expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” So where, specifically, does the Old Testament speak of Jesus? We never see his name there. Or do we? Who is Jehovah/Yehovah (spelled YHVH in Hebrew, written LORD in English), whose name appears over 6800 times in the Old Testament? We’ve always been taught that He is “the Father”, but could He really be Jesus? Yeshua is his real name in Hebrew, and means “salvation”. When you compare what the Old Testament says about Yehovah, and what the New Testament says about Yeshua you’ll see the same thing:

Who was the creator? Genesis 1 tells us that it was “God”, and Genesis 3:1 clarifies that as “the LORD (YHVH) God.” John 1:3, speaking of Yeshua, says that “all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.” So Yehovah/Yeshua is the creator.

Who did people see? John 1:18 and 6:46 both say that no man hath seen God the Father. John 5:37 adds we have never heard His voice. Was Yehovah the Father that no man has seen? No, because men did see Yehovah: Jacob in Genesis 32:30; Moses in Exodus 33:11, and the mixed multitude in Deuteronomy 5:4. His voice was heard giving the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai. So Yehovah /Yeshua, were seen and heard, but the Father was not.

Who led the Exodus? Exodus 3:2 tells about Moses’ encounter with “an angel of Yehovah” (who is identified as Yehovah in verse 4.) Stephen tells the Jews in Acts 7:38, speaking of Yeshua, that “this is he...which spoke to him (Moses) in the Mount Sinai”, that appeared to Moses in the bush (vs 30-31), and that showed “wonders and signs” in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness (vs 36). So who led the people in the wilderness after the Exodus? The Old Testament tells us it was Yehovah, and the New Testament tells us that it was Yeshua. So Yehovah/Yeshua led the Exodus.

Who is the first and the last, or the alpha and omega? Yehovah in Isaiah 44:6 and 48:12, Yeshua in Revelation 1:17-18 and 22:13.

Who is the Saviour? Yehovah in Isaiah 43:11, Yeshua in Luke 2:11.

Who is “I AM”? Yehovah in Exodus 3:14, Yeshua in John 8:58. Consider this quote from page 34 in the book *Shocked by the Bible*, by Joe Kovacs: The Jews knew exactly what Jesus meant. He had a relationship with Abraham and publicly identified Himself as the “I AM” of the Old Testament, the same one who spoke to Moses. Thus, they sought to stone Him for calling Himself God, the God of the Old Testament. It’s strange how the Jews who hated Jesus during His earthly ministry were able to understand this truth, and yet so many Christians today who say they “love the Lord” have no idea Jesus clearly identified Himself as the God of the Old Testament.

What this means is that Jesus is Jehovah of the Old Testament. When reading the Old Testament, every time you see “the LORD” or any other reference to the Creator/Saviour/First and Last, just substitute the name “Jesus” (or better yet, his real Hebrew name “Yeshua”). Yeshua wasn’t some new God that came to replace Yehovah. The Bible indicates that they are one and the same, and true worship will reflect that reality.

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Two: Who Is Israel?

Abraham and his descendents were originally referred to as “Hebrews” (Genesis 14:13). His grandson, Jacob, was renamed Israel by God in Genesis 32:28. The term Israel grew to mean much more than just referring to Jacob himself. Throughout the Old Testament, it is used over 2000 times. It can refer to 1) the twelve sons of Jacob, 2) the mixed multitude who escaped Egypt during the Exodus, 3) the Promised Land of Israel in the Middle East, and 4) ten of the tribes when the united house of Israel split into the two houses of Israel and Judah. The term “Jew” is derived from the name Judah (one of Jacob’s sons), and properly refers only to descendants of Judah, not to every descendant of Jacob or Abraham.

Studies outside the scope of this article have searched through history to show that these ten tribes migrated north and west, and the majority of people in Britain and America are descended from these northern tribes. Most of the residents of the land of Israel descended from the tribe of Judah. (The online version of this handout will have some references if you want to study this further.)

In the New Testament, the word Israel appears over 60 times. In the Greek, it is Strong’s Concordance #2474, defined as “the adopted name of Jacob, including his descendents (literally or figuratively).” This confirms that in the New Testament, Israel is used figuratively – not only referring to the genetic bloodline of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

God promised Abraham in Genesis 12:2 that he would be a “great nation”. The Hebrew word translated as “nation” is Strong’s 1471 “goya”, which is defined in Strong’s as “a foreign nation; hence a Gentile.” This same word appears in the Old Testament hundreds of times, sometimes translated as Gentiles and as heathen, but most often as nation or nations. When God promised to make Abraham a “great nation”, notice he didn’t say he would give him “many descendants” which would have only meant his physical offspring. Instead, God was including anyone who would claim the promise as Abraham’s seed, and thus heirs to the covenant that God entered into with Abraham.

Galatians 3:29 confirms this, when we are told that if we are Christ’s, we are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 4:28 says that “we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise”. Both of these were directed to the Galatians, who were Gentiles, not descendents of Abraham. The only covenant that God made was with the house of Israel (Hebrews 8:10). He made no covenant/promise outside of Israel. So if we are not part of Israel, we are not heirs to the covenant of Abraham, thus we are not heirs to any covenant at all. God made no other covenant for the Gentiles.

Revelation 21:12 tells us that the New Jerusalem, the Holy City of God, has twelve gates, and upon each gate is written one of the “names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” These are the only entrances to the city, and although we may not know now under which tribe God will count us, surely the Holy Spirit will guide us to which gate to walk through when the time comes. But we must indeed be identified as belonging to one of the tribes of the children of Israel and walk through one of those twelve gates to enter in the city.

When Bible prophecy speaks of “Israel”, instead of assuming it refers to a small plot of land in the Middle East populated with descendants of the tribe of Judah, you should consider that it actually can mean either those Gentiles who are grafted in, or the actual “lost tribes of Israel” whose descendants became most of the people of “Britain and America”. In other words, either way, YOU are Israel!

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Three: What is the New Covenant?

Have you been told that we are no longer under the old covenant, so the Old Testament no longer applies to your Christian walk? By wrongly believing that we are living under the terms of the New Covenant, many disregard a good share of God's instructions for our lives as found in Torah. (Torah means "law" and refers to the five books of Moses - Genesis through Deuteronomy). Yet when looking at the wording of the new covenant, you'll find that it is all future tense, and that the events that define the new covenant have not yet occurred.

Look at key phrases of Hebrews 8:8-12 (parentheses mine): Behold, the days come (future tense), saith the Lord, when I will (future tense) make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah (notice there is NO covenant outside of the children of Israel): For this is the covenant that I will (future tense) make with the house of Israel (again, not with the Gentiles or a new group called Christians) after those days (future tense), saith the Lord; I will (future tense) put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts (God's laws are the central focus in the new covenant): and I will (future tense) be to them a God, and they shall (future tense) be to me a people: And they shall not (future tense) teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall (future tense) know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will (future tense) be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I (future tense) remember no more.

The apostle Paul quoted these words from Jeremiah, yet when he wrote them it was well after the resurrection. If Paul believed and taught that the new covenant was now in effect, would he not have said things like "now that those days have come..." and "God has now...", etc? Look at each of the events that define this new covenant. None of them have yet occurred.

1. **"I will put my law in their mind and write them in their hearts"** (vs 10). Not only does this make it absolutely clear that God's law is not done away with when the new covenant does take effect, but it is quite evident in our world today that God's law is not in the hearts of everyone. Otherwise, there would be no murder, theft, lies, or the breaking of any other commandment.
2. **"All shall know me, from the least to the greatest"** (vs 11). If Yeshua taught and believed the new covenant took effect with his death and resurrection, then why, forty days later, did he give the "Great Commission" just as he was about to ascend to heaven? Commanding his disciples to go into all nations teaching about him would have been unnecessary had the New Covenant already been in effect. And if this is in effect today, why do we still send out missionaries? Do all know him today? No.
3. **"Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"** (vs 12). Do you believe that God will no longer remember any sins you commit today? Don't stake your eternal salvation on the answer to this question being "no". Repentance is as necessary today as it was before the cross because our sins are still remembered.

Nothing in this New Covenant description gives any indication that the time of the new covenant will occur prior to the second coming of Yeshua. At that time, those of us blessed enough to be part of the new earth will all know him, we will have his law in our hearts so that we will never sin again, and our sins from the old earth he will remember no more. But that hasn't happened yet.

So the obvious conclusion is that we are still under the first covenant. The only change is that instead of offering the blood of bulls as a sin sacrifice, we claim the blood of Yeshua. It is only those who accept His sacrifice on their behalf who receive forgiveness of sins. Those who don't accept His sacrifice have no part of forgiveness. Clearly a need for sin sacrifice still remains. Those who try to throw out any of God's laws under the guise of now being under a new covenant need to rethink their theology.

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Four: Are Law and Grace Opposites?

Many Christians have been told that God's grace means that we no longer need to be obedient to the law of God, even though Paul, from whom they claim this idea, says the exact opposite in Romans 6:15-16. Paul clearly says that we are servants to whatever we obey: sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness. Is your goal in Christendom death or righteousness? If death, then go ahead and sin (transgress the law – 1 John 3:4), but if your goal is righteousness, then be obedient unto the law.

Many have been led to believe that law and grace are opposites, but they are not. Both law and grace are immutable in God's universe. The opposite of law is lawlessness. The opposite of grace is merciless judgment. We don't want either lawlessness or merciless judgment. It would be a complete twisting of Scripture to say that Yeshua came so that lawlessness could abound, or to say that those who show their love of Yeshua by keeping his commandments (John 14:15) will be shown merciless judgment.

Who does Scripture tell us will have right to the tree of life? Revelation 14:22 – they that do the commandments. What will make us be called great in the kingdom of heaven? Matthew 5:19 – doing and teaching even the least of the commandments. How do we enter into eternal life? Matthew 19:17 – keeping the commandments. Who does the enemy attack? Revelation 12:17 – those who keep the commandments. What can be said of those who do not keep the commandments? 1 John 2:4 – he is a liar and the truth is not in him. Do any of those verses sound like God's people are not to follow his law?

Some say that Jesus replaced God's commandments with only two – Matthew 22:37-40, love God with all thy heart and soul, and love thy neighbor as thyself. Instead of serving as proof that the Old Testament laws were voided, these are actually Old Testament quotes. (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18). What Jesus was really teaching is expressed in the last verse of this passage: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." This simply means that everything commanded by the law and taught by the prophets can be summed up in those two ideas. If you love God above all else, you won't have other gods above him, worship idols, take his name in vain, or profane his Sabbaths. If you love your neighbor as yourself, you won't steal, kill, or sleep with his wife. As long as you love God above all and your neighbor as yourself, you will also be obeying "the law and the prophets".

No one believes that Jesus died on the cross so that we could have other gods before him and worship idols. No one believes that Jesus died on the cross so that we could steal, kill and lie. Yet they think it is okay to forget the only commandment that starts with the word remember, because it is only when you bring up the Sabbath commandment that people will start objecting by saying such things as, "We aren't under the law" or changing the subject by saying, "We should worship God daily." Yes, we should, three times a day (Daniel 6). But what they don't realize is that **if we are not under God's Sabbath, we are also not under his perpetual covenant** (Exodus 31:12-17) of which his Sabbaths are a sign.

So now we are back to the question in the first paragraph. Is your goal in Christendom death or righteousness? If death, then go ahead and disobey the law, but if righteousness, then be obedient unto the law. All of it. If you break one, you are guilty of breaking all (James 2:10). If we break one, and repent, then he is faithful and just to forgive us (1 John 1:9). But where are we told we can break even one of them any time we want without repentance and be forgiven? No where. We were given grace *for* obedience, not *in place of* obedience. (Romans 1:5)

You can't pick and choose which of God's commands you should keep. Your only choice is to choose this day whom you will serve (Joshua 24:15). Do you choose sin, or obedience?

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Five: Who Establishes True Worship?

Is there anything in Scripture that leads us to believe that God doesn't care when or how we worship him, or that any type of worship is acceptable to him? Is there anything that leads us to believe that a church or pastor or pope or any other human being should determine the way we worship? No, there is not. Quite the opposite, in fact. If you believe that God is really God, then you should also believe that he has the right to dictate how he is to be worshipped.

God specifically tells us that we are not to worship him the way that pagans worship their gods. Deuteronomy 12:30-32: "Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

Every bit of your worship should have a "Thus saith the LORD" after it, no adding or subtracting. It should clearly not be something that God calls "the way of the heathen" (such as Christmas trees in Jeremiah 10:2-4) or "greater abominations" (such as sun-day worship in Ezekiel 8:15-16).

If your worship can be traced to manmade tradition, it is worship in vain. (Matthew 15:3-9 and Mark 7:6-13). God doesn't make an exception for people who say, "Oh, but it doesn't mean that to me. I'm doing this to honor God." Our worship either pleases him or it doesn't. The purpose is not to please ourselves. Look at what God did with the sacrifice of Cain. (Genesis 4:3-5) Cain brought the sacrifice that was pleasing to himself, that seemed like it would be pleasing to God as the firstfruits offering, but it was not the type of sacrifice that God wanted.

If you really want to worship God, and really let HIM be Lord, then you will worship him when and how he wants to be worshipped. Put yourself in his shoes for a moment. If you are celebrating a special event, are you going to feel honored if people show up a day late, bring you gifts you don't want, and serve you food you don't like? Then why do you think you can treat God like that and he will be pleased?

The pagan roots of most of what passes for Christianity today is widely known. Isn't it time you stop bringing a sacrifice that is not pleasing to God, and say you are doing it to him? The same God that brought captivity for unpleasing worship in Amos 5:21-27 is the same God you claim to worship. Are you doing it your way, or His? Only one way is right.

John 4:23-24: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

The Father is seeking true worshippers. Will you be among them? Or will you be like Cain and seek your own way?

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Six: What is the Mark of the Beast?

No Christian wants to take the mark of the beast, but with all the theories of who the antichrist is, and what the mark of the beast is, how can we be sure that we don't take it by innocent error?

There are only two groups of people in the last days: 1) those who worship the beast (Revelation 13:8), and 2) those who worship God (Revelation 14:7). The real issue boils down to worship. Another way of classifying these two groups are those who receive the seal of God in their forehead (Revelation 7:2-3), and those who receive the mark of the beast in the forehead or hand (Revelation 14:9). The seal or mark is just the indication of which of the two groups we are in, of who we are worshipping.

Several verses give hints to the word "seal". I Kings 21:8 and Esther 8:8 refer to the seal of the king, which was his ring or signet that he would imprint to show something was from him. The seal would identify the title and territory, and we still do this today. For example, the Seal of the President of the United States has the title (President) and territory (United States). Isaiah 8:16 says to "seal the law among my disciples" so perhaps we should look to God's law to find God's seal. There is only one of his Ten Commandments that has his "seal": the fourth (Remember the Sabbath) in Exodus 20:8-11. It has his title (Creator) and territory (heaven, earth, and sea).

Next let's look up the word "mark." In Revelation, the word mark appears several times, always referring to the mark of the beast. In Ezekiel 9:4-7 there is a mark of God, and all who did not have it were slain, just like in Revelation, all who do not have God's mark, or seal, are slain. Those in Ezekiel with the mark were those who repented of all the sin taking place in Jerusalem. Those who mourned sin (defined as the transgression of the law – 1 John 3:4) received God's mark and were saved. So here the mark was given to those who loved the law of God.

The seal of God is in the forehead (the mind, belief), and the mark of the beast can be in the forehead or in the hand (going along with it even if you don't necessarily believe it). We find that all of the words of God were to be "a sign...as frontlets between thine eyes" (Deuteronomy 6:8 and 11:18). The Hebrew word translated as "sign" is Strong's 226. This same word is also translated as "mark" in Genesis 4:15. So we could say that God's words (his law) were as a sign, or mark, in the forehead. Another use of the word "sign": Exodus 31:13-17 refers to the fourth commandment as a sign of the perpetual covenant between God and his people throughout our generations.

So here is what we have seen: 1) the real end time issue comes down to who we worship, God or the beast, 2) we ALL receive a seal, sign, or mark, either from God or from the beast, 3) a seal contains the title and territory of the ruler, 4) the fourth commandment contains the seal of God (title and territory), 5) God said to "seal the law" in Isaiah 8:16, so the seal and law are again linked, 6) the fourth commandment is called a "sign", which could also have been translated "mark", 7) the mark of God was tied to his law in Ezekiel, 8) the law was a mark at the forehead, and 9) the commandment that contains the seal of God deals with when we worship. See how all of this is tied together?

If you want to avoid the mark of the beast, perhaps you should take a closer look at the fourth commandment. There is plenty of evidence to show that **in the last days, the Sabbath could be the very issue that distinguishes those who worship God from those who worship the beast.**

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Seven: Why Did Yeshua Come to Earth?

It seems that many people don't have a firm grasp on why Jesus came to earth, with some acting as though He came to start a new religion for the Gentiles, separate from Judaism, with a whole new set of doctrines, and that the main effect of his ministry was to free us from the bondage of the law that had been given at Mt. Sinai. But do his red letter words, spoken directly from his mouth, confirm this belief?

Yeshua affirmed the validity of Deuteronomy when he quoted from it three times to counter the temptations of satan in Matthew 4. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:17-18), he is as specific as he could possibly be when he said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law" and "Till heaven and earth pass" (heaven and earth are still here) "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." How much more direct could he be? In Matthew 19:17, he specifically states that to enter into eternal life, you must keep the commandments. When asked which commandments, he lists from among the Ten Commandments, leaving no question that he affirms their continued validity.

Reading the rest of Matthew 5, he repeatedly magnifies the law. He extends the sin of murder to having anger in your heart, and the sin of adultery to having lust in your heart. Is it logical to interpret these passages to mean that the laws against murder and adultery have been done away with? Then why interpret Scripture to mean that any other laws were done away with?

In Matthew 7, His words warn us that the road to salvation is narrow with few going in, while the way to destruction is wide. Stories such as Noah and Lot exemplify how it is a small minority saved in times of judgment. Many will come to him in the day of judgment thinking that they have served him, only to be told that he never knew them, and to "depart from me, ye that work iniquity." See also Matthew 25:41.

Skipping forward to Matthew 9: 5-6, he tells his disciples not to go to the Gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He repeats this in Matthew 15:24. **He came as a Messiah to the Israelites. If he is not the Hebrew Messiah promised in the Old Testament, then he is not a Messiah to anyone, as there is no other Messiah promised.** The only route for Gentile salvation found in Scripture is to be grafted in to the root of Israel (Romans 11:13-24). The only covenant is with Israel (Hebrews 8).

Yeshua calls himself the Lord of the Sabbath day, affirming it, not destroying it. In fact, it is the only commandment that he instructs us to pray that we do not have to break during the tribulation (Matthew 24:20). This verifies that he knew it would still be valid in the end of the age. Other passages assure us it will be valid into eternity. In Matthew 15, Yeshua says it is worship in vain to break a commandment in favor of tradition, yet that is exactly how most churches worship today.

His red letter words verify the eternal nature of the law rather than verify the theory that the law was nailed to the cross. What was nailed to the cross was the debt of our sins. Yeshua came for that purpose alone: to save us from our sins. From the lips of John the Baptist in John 1:29, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." Isaiah 53:10 says that He will be "an offering for sin." In Matthew 26:28 Yeshua himself said that his blood was shed "for the remission of sins." 1 John 1:7 says that His blood "cleanses us from all sin", 1 John 3:5 says "he was manifested to take away our sins", and Revelation 1:5 says he "washed us from our sins in his own blood." Never will you find a single passage where he says he came to replace his law with grace. Instead, He supplies grace through his blood when we repent of falling short of his law.

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Eight: Why do most churches observe Sunday?

Throughout his earthly ministry, Yeshua and his disciples kept the seventh-day Sabbath. (Luke 4:16 is one of many texts that verify this fact.) Similarly, the disciples and the Church in the book of Acts, after the resurrection, also observed the Biblical Seventh-day Sabbath of the Ten Commandments. You will see this in Acts Chapter 13, verses 14, 27, 42, 44, Acts 15:21, 16:13, 17:2, and 18:4.

You also see that the annual feast day Sabbaths (holy days) were observed after the cross as well. The disciples kept the very first holy feast day post resurrection – Acts 2:1, so clearly they weren't taught and didn't believe the annual Sabbaths were nailed to the cross. Yehovah established the feasts post-resurrection via the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost – Acts 2:2-4. Why would Yehovah choose a feast day to memorialize in this way if he wanted us to know the feast days were done away with at the cross? Wouldn't he have chosen any other day but the feast day if he had changed it? The Apostle Paul kept and taught the feasts post-resurrection – Acts 18:21, Acts 20:6, 1 Corinthians 5:7, 1 Corinthians 16:8. The feasts are far more than party food days. Each one teaches us a lesson about God's plan of redemption for fallen mankind. No wonder satan wants to blot them out and distract us with pagan celebrations instead.

Jeremiah 16:19 tells us that in the end days, the Gentiles will realize that their fathers have inherited lies. Sunday worship is chief among them. There is no weekly Sunday worship found anywhere in Scripture. So where does it come from? History shows that it came by a decree of the Catholic Church, at least three hundred years after the death and resurrection of Yeshua.

In the *Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, you will find:

Q. Which is the Sabbath day? A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea, (AD 336) transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday. —Rev. Peter Geiermann, C.S.S.R., (1946), p. 50.

Letter from C.F. Thomas, Chancellor of Cardinal Gibbons on October 28, 1895, in speaking of Sunday: "Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act...And the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters. "

While the Catholic Church takes credit, and even refers to it as the "mark" of their authority (refer back to the Mark of the Beast article to ponder that choice of words), ultimately, the source of Sunday worship comes from a source higher than man. Daniel 7:25 proclaims clearly that it is the antichrist who "thinks to change times and laws." There is only one law that deals with time, and that is the Fourth Commandment, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." But note that this power only "thinks" to change the times and laws. Ask yourself this: **Do you believe that there is any power that is greater than God, and has the actual power to change God's times and laws?** If you do, then you should stop calling yourself a Christian and stop claiming that you worship the God of the Bible. But if you don't believe another entity can change God's word, are you willing to obey it as written?

Perhaps you have been led to believe that God made this change. His own words prove that is not true. Malachi 3:6, "For I am the LORD, I change not." Psalm 89:34, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." God wrote in stone with his finger that the Sabbath is the seventh day. If God calls the seventh-day His Sabbath, you should too. You can't go wrong when you are agreeing with God!

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Nine: Are the Dispensation and Rapture Theories Biblical?

Dispensationalism is a popular teaching that history has been divided into seven different sections, or dispensations, in which the people of God in each time period have a different testing for sin and a different method of judgment by God. Dispensationalism has four fundamental tenets:

Tenet #1: Israel and the New Testament church are two different people of God. Does Scripture teach two different bodies of God, with Israel and Christians being separate bodies? 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 clearly states that there is one body, whether Jew or Gentile. Ephesians 3:6 states the Gentiles are fellow heirs of the same body. John 10:16 says there is one fold with one shepherd. Other verses showing one body, one church, under one Messiah are Colossians 1:17-24, and Ephesians 4:5 and 5:23.

Tenet #2: There was a period of law and a period of grace, which are mutually exclusive. You will find law and grace in both the Old and New Testaments. (There are far too many examples to cite but here are a few: Genesis 6:8; Psalm 84:11; Matthew 5:17; 1 John 3:4) Law and grace are both very much part of God, and there is only one unchanging God in both the front and back of your Bible. If grace were the sole basis of the new covenant, then why does Hebrew 8:10 state that the new covenant consists of putting “my laws in their mind, and in their hearts”? There is no new covenant without the law of God.

Tenet #3: The New Testament church is a parenthesis in God’s plan, not foreseen in the Old Testament. The third tenet tries to account for a lack of Old Testament mention of a lawless Gentile covenant. If God had intended to form a new church with a new law (or with no law), according to Amos 3:7 he would have told the prophets about this, but no prophet ever teaches that a new group of people with a new law will be raised up. Instead, the prophets revealed that the house of Israel would be rebuilt, such as in Amos 9:11, which is referenced in Acts 15:14-18. God declared the end from the beginning (Isaiah 48:10) and there is nothing unforeseen – certainly not a 2000 year period of time when a new church with new rules would be in effect.

Tenet #4: There is a difference between the rapture and the second coming, which are divided by a seven year period of tribulation. The fourth tenet also fails. Several of the parables in Matthew 13 leave no room for an imaginary rapture. The parable of the wheat and tares in Matthew 13:30 shows that the tares are gathered first, then burned, then the wheat is gathered to the barn. It is further spelled out in Matthew 13:38-43. The rapture teaches the opposite, that the wheat is gathered, then seven years pass, then the tares are burned. The parable of the net in Matthew 13:47-50 says that at the end of the world the angels sever the wicked from among the just, while the rapture theory claims that the just were removed seven years prior.

The very clear words of Matthew 24:29-31 further prove this point. Yeshua plainly states that “immediately after the tribulation” the angels “shall gather together his elect”. It can’t possibly be any clearer than that! The elect are not gathered until after the tribulation. Anyone who says otherwise is directly contradicting Yeshua.

Dispensationalism is nothing but a failed attempt to free oneself from the necessity of obedience to God’s law. In truth, it is theological evolution in disguise. It treats the Jews like knuckle-dragging apes who had the law, but we upright Christians have evolved onward to grace. Please don’t stake your eternal salvation on this theory, because it directly contradicts the clear words of Scripture.

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Ten: What Are False Prophets and Itching Ears?

Warnings in preparation of the end times are replete with counsel to beware of false teachers and false prophets. We not only have to watch for them, but we must watch ourselves. We need to heed warnings against being lukewarm believers choosing fables over truth and deceiving ourselves.

Matthew 24:5 gives a warning that many misinterpret. Yeshua says that “many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ, and shall deceive many.” Often this is interpreted that many shall come saying that they (the deceivers) are Christ. But the warning is that the people come in Yeshua’s name saying that Yeshua is Christ, but then after that go on to deceive many by teaching falsehoods. How deceived would you be if a stranger approached you on the street and said, “I am Jesus/Yeshua” and started preaching? You would probably think he was insane or drunk and walk away, but the odds of you believing him and being deceived are likely pretty slim. But that isn’t the warning being given here. The warning is that many will come in the name of Jesus, saying that Jesus is Christ, yet they still deceive many. In other words, preachers in their pulpits are far more likely to fulfill this Scripture than a crazy guy on the street. Isaiah 8:20 gives us an easy key to determining a false prophet – if they speak not according to the law. Anyone who tries to tell you that the law was nailed to the cross is by definition a false prophet.

Similar warnings against false prophets are found in Matthew 7:15-16, Matthew 24:11, and 2 Corinthians 11:13. Yet these false preachers, with their prosperity gospel, once saved always saved lie, and grace-excusing-sin messages will have a ready audience, as foretold in 2 Timothy 4:3-4: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” If you want to find truth, Psalm 119:142 tells you where to look: “Thy law is truth.”

2 Peter 3:16 warns of the unlearned (those not knowledgeable of Torah) and unstable (not strongly rooted in faith and truth) who will twist Paul’s writings and other Scriptures to their own destruction. That is a powerful warning. Those who have been taught that the Old Testament has been done away with, and thus not studied it and don’t know what it teaches, are highly susceptible to falling for the twisting of truth, and becoming deceived. Mathew 24:24 warns that these false prophets will be capable of deceiving even the very elect. That is why knowing the truth, worshipping in truth, and being set free by the truth, is so critical as we enter the last few years of this earth’s history.

Deceiving ourselves is also a possibility. James 1:22 says that we are deceiving ourselves when we hear, but don’t do, the word. We are told that we must worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24) and that the truth will set us free (John 8:32). The opposite of truth is a lie. Beware of the warning in 1 John 2:4: “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” God says such lukewarm believers make him want to vomit, and that they don’t realize that they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. (Revelation 3:16-17).

Sadly, many people will learn of the truths that have been covered here, and still make a choice to follow after tradition instead of turning toward truth. They believe that giving up their Saturdays and Christmas trees is a cost too great to bear so they cling to fables. ***Imagine yourself standing at the foot of the cross, watching Yeshua’s blood drip from the many wounds he received at his scourging, and from the entry points of the nail spikes. Now, imagine looking him in the eyes as he hangs there thirsting, and telling him that you love him and worship him, but giving up your Saturday is just too much to ask for what he is giving in return.*** May that never be! If you really love him, then keep his commandments. (John 14:15). They are not burdensome (1 John 5:3) but a delight (Isaiah 58:13-14). Anything else is a lie of satan!

How to Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Summary

Jesus/Yeshua preincarnate (before birth) is one and the same as Jehovah/Yehovah/YHVH/LORD in the Old Testament. John 1:1-3 confirms this. Yeshua was the Word, God, from the beginning. This means that everything said and done by God in the Old Testament was done by the same being that hung on the cross for our sins. He is the beginning and the end.

When Bible prophecy is speaking of Israel, rather than a small percentage of Abraham's descendants living in the Middle East, it is actually speaking of modern Christians descended from the ten lost tribes of Israel. Anything that the Bible says is for Israel, is for you.

The New Covenant will not take effect until the second coming of Yeshua. Until then, the first covenant is still in effect. A sin sacrifice is still necessary under this covenant, and we claim the blood of Yeshua as the required sin sacrifice. Without his blood, we have no remission of sin. There is no such thing as a lawless, Gentile covenant.

God's grace provides us mercy at the time of judgment, but it does not negate the law. If there was no law there would be no need of grace, because without law there is no such thing as sin. We must choose if we want to obey sin unto death, or obey God's law unto righteousness.

True worship is defined by God, not by man. He is not pleased with our attempts to worship him by our own means. We must worship him as he instructs, without adding or subtracting, in spirit and in truth.

In the final judgment, there are only two groups: those with the seal of God, and those with the mark of the beast. The seal of God can be found in the fourth commandment. His Sabbath is the sign of his covenant to us. If you are keeping a different day, you are outside of his covenant protection.

Yeshua came to pay the wages of sin, which is death. His perfect life as the promised Messiah provided a sacrifice for our sin. He affirmed the law, told us not to think he came to destroy it, and said it would last as long as heaven and earth are still here.

The one who tries to do away with the law is the anti-Christ. He "thinks" to change God's times and laws, but no power is greater than God. God is eternal and consistent, and promises us he will not change or break his covenant. The sign of his covenant is the Sabbath.

Dispensationalism is unbiblical. It is a form of evolution. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. What was true in the beginning will be true until the end. A pre-tribulation rapture is also unbiblical.

Many false preachers will teach against the law of God, and many lukewarm Christians will gladly follow their lies. But God's sheep hear his voice. If you have heard the voice of God in this teaching, repent of your prior lawlessness, and be obedient to your Lord and Saviour and worship as He commands.

You might be wondering how to keep the Sabbath, which is from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday. Scripture gives many ideas. Rest from the cares of the world, doing no work. Fellowship with like-minded believers, study God's word, spend time in prayer. Get out and enjoy God's creation with a nature hike. Have special family time and devotion. Do good, such as visiting the sick and feeding the hungry. God made the Sabbath for us. He knows our frame, that we are dust. We need a day of rest and rejuvenation. Read Isaiah 58:13-14. Call the Sabbath a delight, delight in Yeshua and receive the blessings that God has promised.