



Did Yeshua Break the Law?

Glad You Asked!

*Dear Jewish Voice: After reading your November/December 2006 issue article, "did Yeshua Break Torah?" I have to wonder if Jewish voice is really Christian at all. You obviously believe Jesus (Yeshua) is the Messiah, but judging from this article you do not accept much of the New Testament. I quote: **"and if one of the later epistles says to break the law, it cannot be a correct translation."** thus you sweepingly deny the inerrancy of the bible.*

All this seems based upon your understanding of the meaning of "fulfill" in matt. 5:17 - and on that basis deny the validity of everything the Apostle Paul, including Romans 10:4, Heb. 10:9, Eph. 2:15, col. 2:14, etc., etc. But "fill up" is only one of several understandings of pleroo. It can also mean "satisfy, finish, complete, end, etc. which meaning is correct must be judged on the basis of which best reconciles the various applicable bible passages. Obviously, the church has held, from ancient times, that only "finish" or "end" (or words which have this meaning) qualify.

Paul was very specific, in Gal. 5:3, that to keep part of the law obligated one to keep all of the law.

And Paul was answering a challenge from the Judaizers of his day. Are we seeing a re-emergence of this ancient heresy?

I believe you need to decide whether you are a Messianic Christian or a Messianic Jew. I will be praying for you.

TK, Email

Shalom Tk,

Thank you for taking the time to write with your concerns. I am sorry that you misunderstood the article by Akiva Shalom, an Israeli Believer, and also that you took it as a mission statement for Jewish Voice.

First, understand that as Hebrew-speaking people come to faith, especially Israelis, they learn the Gospel very much like the first Believers – from a very Hebraic, foundational context – pre-Constantine. They recognize Yeshua’s and Paul’s words within the Hebraic idioms and culture and Torah meaning just like the First Church did – they have not been conditioned by centuries of various Christian, denominational traditions.

As a Jewish person myself, I can tell you that when you come to find out that Yeshua IS the Messiah, it is a very awe-inspiring revelation, and when you read His words – within the context of the whole of Scripture, you consider them ALL authoritative, as they are the *WORD OF GOD*. It is so wondrous and beautiful! As you read through the New Testament Scriptures from that standpoint, you do not see a tearing down of God’s foundation – you see a building up and are awe-struck and reverent beyond words...and the first time you meet with Gentiles that laugh and say “oh, throw away this and we don’t go by that!” you are shocked and wonder at their lack of devotion and respect.

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You see, the issue of Torah has LITTLE to do with salvation – it is love. It is revelation about a Holy God and how to live as His beloved People. It was given to a people **already redeemed by grace.**

God chose a people that were least among peoples – not because they earned or deserved being redeemed, but through His compassion He revealed Himself to the entire world as God of love. Through their weakness He revealed Himself as the One and only Almighty God. Through their history He revealed the best and worst that is within the nature of mankind and revealed His Heart, and His Desire of how a people separated unto Him should live ... what a redeemed people *looks like, eats like, lives like...*

And through them He brought forth the Messiah of the world – that through Him all the families of the earth would be blessed – would have

redemption... but again, *how then does the redeemed man live* after receiving such a glorious free gift at such an unfathomable cost?

Would we resent God if He said that His best is the same yesterday today and forever? Especially when we find out that what changed the way we think about these things goes back to a fallen church, mixed with paganism, and Church fathers divorcing the Church from Israel because of anti-Semitic error?

These things are fact. Yet, God's love is extended and abundant to us in our man-made traditions and puffed-up attitudes between denominations. *Such is His amazing love.*

Therefore, surely we can make room for brothers to embrace the simple Word at face value. ***How can we make room for every possible thing in the name of "Christianity" except believing and loving God's Word?!***

If you read through the article again, he did not call into question the veracity of the New Testament, but rather ONE'S INTERPRETATION. **He holds Yeshua above all. He holds the Word above all men** – that's what the article says. Certainly we should all do this.

And consider, we have so many different New Testament versions

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and so many different New Testament denominations, faiths, and doctrines. There are many variations in belief, but it is safe to say that Yeshua never wavered. In fact, He allowed people to walk away because His sayings were too hard.

You brought up a long disputed issue regarding what Yeshua meant when He said "I didn't come to abolish, I came to fulfill" in Matt. 5:17. In order to understand His Words we have to hear HIM over men's traditions – even though they may be many centuries old. We have to understand within the ENTIRE verse, within the context of HIS understanding and HIS AUDIENCE'S understanding – their language and world. Listen to the strength of the verse – how Yeshua reiterates so that He is not misunderstood:

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5:17-20)

Yeshua says not even the little flourish on the end of one stroke of one letter of the Torah shall pass as long as Earth is still here. Yeshua also makes it clear that it is not a salvation issue – abrogating the Torah and teaching others to disobey the Torah does not mean loss of salvation, but it does compromise one's *heirarchy* in His Kingdom. Apparently His Word is very dear to Him and contains important Kingdom principles. Now, within this context, we can easily see which definition for "pleroo" is appropriate for "fulfill" – it cannot mean finish. There is idiomatic meaning for the first sentence that is very interesting. In Yeshua's time, as in the present, when rabbis and scholars argue over the Scriptures, if one believes someone is incorrectly defining or teaching Torah, he will be accuse them of "abolishing the Torah." Conversely, the idiomatic phrase for correctly interpreting or teaching Torah is "establishing." You can see this in Orthodox Jewish commentaries, and this is exactly how Yeshua's words would have been understood by the Pharisees of His day, *including Paul*. I don't believe Paul would have ever contradicted nor had the authority to override Yeshua.

Paul never called Torah observance heresy – if so, he would have been teaching that heresy and guilty of it himself. He did correct reliance upon Torah for SALVATION, not living according to the Scriptures! Look, the Bereans were commended for making certain that all of his words lined up with the Scriptures – and there was no New Testament in the First Century Church – the Torah was the precious

There would have never been such an idea of throwing out the Torah by those that had actually witnessed them to be TRUE with the birth, death and resurrection of Messiah! The Scriptures were now confirmed! And for First Century Believers, this is the fullness and promise of Judaism – not a new religion.

Word and foundation around and upon all was built. There would have never been such an idea of throwing out the Torah by those that had actually witnessed them to be TRUE with the birth, death and resurrection of Messiah! The Scriptures were now confirmed! And for First Century Believers, this is the fullness and promise of Judaism – not a new religion. The Book of Acts records many thousands of Believers in Jerusalem alone and all of them “zealous for the Law.” Paul himself stood before the Jerusalem Council and testified that he not only kept the Torah, but the traditions of his fathers. He wrote letters about keeping the Feasts – only with newness of a pure heart without the leaven of sin. He did not say do NOT keep the Feasts, they are heresy. But, he did correct reliance upon them for salvation. People then were no different than now – we all must be wary of relying on a comfortable “form of godliness” or a set of rules rather than a full surrender before our Holy God for our eternal salvation.

Now look again at what Akiva said:

“We must be honest and intellectually open in our heart to the **Bible.** **Our first commitment has to be to the Book, not to teachers or leaders, who are just people. Many Jewish and Christian doctrines are men’s teachings. But the truth is in the Bible itself. Test men’s words by it, not the other way around.”**

Here is the heart of the issue regarding what you refer to as Judaizers: a “Judaizer” would claim that salvation is dependent upon keeping the whole of the Torah and the traditions. A Believer who embraces the whole of the Word from Genesis to maps ☺ after coming to faith because he loves the Lord with all his heart, mind and soul, and to him the Word is more precious than gold, is not a Judaizer, nor “legalistic” – his love and reverence is simply like that of the First Century Church – the “*faith first delivered to the saints.*”

Please don’t judge the entire ministry of Jewish Voice based on one article submitted by a ministry friend, either, Ted. Judge us not by a pleasing word this day or a challenging word tomorrow – judge us by our fruits. *Are we proclaiming the Good News of Yeshua to a perishing world? Are we providing relief to needy?* Help us to be faithful in these things. In this there is no division and in this we can glorify the Lord, bless His holy Name, *amen.*

Blessings to you and yours.

Sarah