

e-concepts

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The Mosaic Law should be applied not performed

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All Scripture should be applied today (2 Timothy 3:16). But a prominent theme of the New Testament is that **the Mosaic Law is not mandated as a directive for the church**. Actually, the Mosaic Law was not mandated for much of the Old Testament either (Genesis 1—Exodus 19). The Mosaic Law was not given until the 1500s B.C. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses (for the first 80 years of his life) were part of the Torah, but they were not under the Mosaic Law. **For example**, Abraham was married to his half-sister, which would have been sinful under the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 18:9-11). Adam was to be a vegetarian and Noah could eat any animal if he drained the blood out of it. Neither of those food commands are part of the Mosaic Law. **So, the Torah has laws that contradict the Mosaic Law**. The Law was given to Moses to establish Israel as a nation of God.

Christ and the apostles grew up and lived under Judaism, so they did Jewish things, not just Mosaic Law things. Going to synagogues on the Sabbath is not part of the Mosaic Law. Actually, Jesus seemed to strengthen the other commands (*You have heard...but I say to you* – Matthew 5:21ff) and weaken the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8; 10-12; Mark 1:21; 2:23-24, 27-28; 3:2-4; Luke 6:1-9; 13:10-16; 14:1-5; John 5:9-18; 7:22-23; 9:14-16). **For example**, in Israel, when a man was found *gathering wood on the Sabbath day...the Lord said to Moses “he shall surely be put to death,”* so the congregation stoned him to death (Numbers 15:32-36). But Jesus defended His disciples for picking grain, rubbing it in their hands to remove the chaff, and eating it on the Sabbath. It is hard to specify a difference between the mechanical act of gathering wood on the Sabbath and the mechanical act of gathering, rubbing the chaff off, and eating grain on the Sabbath. **The mega point Jesus made throughout His ministry was that pleasing God was not about keeping mechanical laws but conforming to the character of God.**

Peter was a Jew to the core, which means he tried to keep all the dietary regulations of the Law. But God showed him a sheet with all kinds of animals forbidden to eat under the Mosaic Law. Then God told Peter to *kill and eat*. *But Peter said, “By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean.”* Again a voice came to him a second time, *“What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.”* This happened three times (Acts 10:14-16). **The point seems to be, don’t argue with God when He says the Mosaic Law is over.**

After Paul and Barnabas had been teaching for a while in Antioch, some Jewish Christians came from Judea telling believers they had to be circumcised to be saved. Paul and Barnabas had a *great dissension and debate with them*, so the brothers in Antioch decided Paul and Barnabas should go to the *apostles and elders* in Jerusalem to make a decision about this. While there, Peter stood up and said, *“Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?”* (Acts 15:10). Peter made an interesting point. How realistic is it to ask the Gentile believers to keep the Mosaic Law, when the Jewish believers couldn’t keep it? James suggested they *not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles but they abstain from things contaminated by idols... from fornication... from what is strangled and from blood*. **However, the apostles and elders did not require the church to keep a Sabbath day.**

Paul and Barnabas went on the first missionary journey up into Galatia. After that, Paul wrote to them about some Judaizers who were telling them to keep the Mosaic Law. Paul called that a *different Gospel* (Galatians 1:6). **Paul drove home his point about the end of the Mosaic Law** in Galatians 3:24-25. *Therefore, the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. Paul calls the Law a tutor and clearly says, we are no longer under it how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.*

The *days* he is referring to are Sabbath days, because he told the Colossians, *therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day* (Colossians 2:16). The danger of keeping a “Lord’s Day” is to think the other days are our days. It’s the same as tithing which assumes 90% is ours. In fact, every day and all our money is the Lord’s. **So, if you want to keep the Sabbath day, fine, no problem, unless you tell others that they should also keep it.** The principle is, *one person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind* (Romans 14:5).

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Romans 10:4)

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