

Correcting False Impressions

The Christian and the Law

Acts 21:18-26

A. Paul's Report to James and the Elders. 21:18-19

B. The Response of James and the Elders. 21:20-25

1. Glorifying God
2. Their focus on Messianic Jews
 - a. Their number
 - b. Their zeal
 - c. Their misinformation
3. Their advice to Paul. 21:22-24
 - a. Their reflection
 - b. Their request
 - c. Their anticipated result
4. Their reaffirmation of the Gentile policy. 21:25

C. Paul's Cooperation. 21:26

D. Raising Some Questions

1. Was Paul right, or did he make a poor compromise?
2. Should Gentile Christians keep the Law of Moses?
3. Should Jewish Christians keep the Law of Moses?

E. Facts about the Law

1. Terminology
2. Implications

F. The Purpose of the Law

1. To strip away all excuses. Rom. 3:19
2. Never for salvation. Rom. 3:20
3. To give knowledge of sin. Rom. 3:20
4. To stir up more sin. Rom. 5:20; 7:13
5. To lead people to Christ (the Messiah). Rom. 10:4; Gal. 3:24
6. A fitting question: If the goal of the Law is to lead people to the Messiah, why would anyone be obligated to return to the Law?

G. Are We Obligated to Keep the Law?

1. If we are obligated, we must keep the whole Law. James 2:10
2. Example: The law of the central sanctuary. Deut. 12:1-7
3. Jesus, by dying, rendered us inoperative to the Law. Rom. 7:1-6
4. We believers are under a new law.
 - a. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8:1-2

b. The Law of Christ. Gal. 6:2

5. So, are we obligated to keep the Law of Moses?
 - a. The answer: a resounding NO.
 - b. We are obligated to keep the Law of Christ

H. Why Did Paul Make Efforts to Observe the Law?

1. Example 1. Paul made a vow. Acts 18:18. Num. 6:2, 5, 18
2. Example 2. Paul returned to Jerusalem. Acts 20:16; Deut. 16:16
3. Example 3. Paul assisted four men under a vow. Acts 21:23, 26; cf. Deut. 16:16
4. Conclusion. Rom. 14:1-23
 - a. We are not obligated to keep the Law of Moses.
 - b. But we have the freedom to observe the Law of Moses if we choose.
 - c. But we cannot compel others to keep the Law of Moses.
 - d. The Christian who keeps the Law of Moses is not to judge the Christian who does not.
 - e. The Christian who does not keep the Law of Moses is not to hold the Christian who does in contempt.
5. This freedom principle includes dietary laws. Rom. 14:1-3
6. This freedom principle includes observing Feast days and Sabbath days. Rom. 14:5-6
7. We are not to judge one another. Rom. 14:10
8. Paul endeavored to avoid offending Messianic Jews. 1 Cor. 10:31-33
9. My best guess. In Acts 21:21-26, Paul voluntarily kept the Law to avoid offending Christian Jews.

I. Summary

1. We are not obligated to keep any part of the Law of Moses.
2. It is impossible at present to keep the whole Law.
3. We are free to keep parts of the Law of Moses if we wish.
4. We may not judge others who disagree with what we do.
5. We should avoid offending others.

Our main mission in life is to live life for others, not for ourselves.

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5. To lead people to _____ (the _____). Rom. 10:4; Gal. 3:24
6. A fitting question: If the goal of the Law is to _____ people to the Messiah, why would anyone be _____ to return to the Law?

G. Are We Obligated to Keep the Law?

1. If we are obligated, we must keep the _____. James 2:10
2. Example: The law of the central _____. Deut. 12:1-7
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4. We believers are under a new _____.
 - a. The Law of the _____ of _____ in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8:1-2

b. The Law of _____. Gal. 6:2

5. So, are we obligated to keep the Law of Moses?

- a. The answer: a resounding _____.
- b. We are obligated to keep the _____ of _____.

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1. Example 1. Paul made a vow. Acts 18:18. Num. 6:2, 5, 18
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4. Conclusion. Rom. 14:1-23
 - a. We are not _____ to keep the Law of Moses.
 - b. We have the _____ to observe the Law of Moses if we choose.
 - c. But we cannot _____ others to keep the Law of Moses.
 - d. The Christian who _____ the Law of Moses is not to _____ the Christian who does not.
 - e. The Christian who does not _____ the Law of Moses is not to hold the Christian who does in _____.
5. This freedom principle includes _____ laws. Rom. 14:1-3
6. This freedom principle includes observing _____ days and _____ days. Rom. 14:5-6
7. We are not to _____ one another. Rom. 14:10
8. Paul endeavored to avoid _____ Messianic Jews. 1 Cor. 10:31-33
9. My best guess. In Acts 21:21-26, Paul _____ kept the Law to _____ Christian Jews.

I. Summary

1. We are not _____ to keep any part of the Law of Moses.
2. It is _____ at present to keep the whole Law.
3. We are free to keep _____ of the Law of Moses if we _____.
4. We may not _____ others who disagree with what we do.
5. We should avoid _____ others.

Our main mission in life is to live life for _____, not for _____.