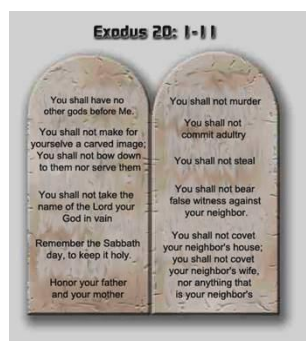


Grace...

does not grant a license for transgressing
Gods commandments!

By
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*Gods Verbond,
altoosdurend en eeuwig*

Grace does not grant a license for transgressing Gods commandments!

Many well-meaning Christians are misled regarding the life under grace versus the maintenance of God's Law (Torah). Many brothers and sisters have no insight into the functioning of God's commandments, statutes and laws that were given to the people of Israel. They think that the Old Testament only consists of the Law and the New Testament only consists of grace and promises without the Law. This is the reason why they erroneously think that the Old Covenant was abolished and that only grace and the many promises that are received by faith are left. Many people expect to receive the promises of God by faith, but are disappointed as a result of their insistence on lawlessness. Many trustful people think that something is wrong with the Law, because, so they say: if it had been good, God would not have replaced it by a New Covenant. Well, the solution is very simple: God has his Law (Torah) not replaced by a covenant of grace and promises, but God has renewed His covenant, which was sealed by the blood of animals, by a covenant that was sealed by the blood of Yeshua of Nazareth.

How did God's grace work under the "Old" Covenant?

If someone, during the Old Covenant, violated God's Law (Torah), the repenting sinner had to go to the temple to appear before God's face. For that was where God's glorious presence was; above the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy. In the ark of the covenant under the mercy seat, lay the two tables of stone, written by the finger of God, the Ten Words, with which the Covenant of blood was made. The repented sinner had to confess his sins, while laying his hand on the head of an animal. His sin became covered by the blood of the innocent animal. Then, at the end of the year, on Yom Kipur, the High Priest went into the Most Holy, also with the blood of an animal, to bring before God all confessed sins and all unconscious sins to reconcile the whole nation. Paul writes: "But in those [sacrifices there is] a remembrance again [made] of sins every year. For [it is] not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:3-4, KJV).

So, sin was covered by the blood of animals, but not taken away. Ultimately, Yeshua fulfilled this shadow service, by acting as High Priest of the New Covenant, and "by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us]" (Heb. 9:21b). So, through Yeshua's sacrifice our sins have been blotted out (Heb 9:26). God accepted this perfect sacrifice of the sinless blood of Yeshua and He gave Yeshua complete righteousness and the inheritance that was promised to Abraham. The result of all this has its climax in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Shavuot (Pentecost). The Holy Spirit fell on all who confessed Yeshua as the Lamb of God that had been slain on the cross of Calvary, bringing reconciliation of sin. In this way Yeshua, by his blood, brought the sacrifice at which all believers from Adam have looked out for.

How does God's grace work under the 'New' Covenant?

Paul writes: "For as many as have sinned without Law shall also perish without Law: and as many as have sinned in the Law shall be judged by the Law (and perish); (For not the hearers of the Law [are] just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified)" (Rom. 2:12-13). Paul also writes: "Now we know that what things so ever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law (the transgressors): that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the Law [is] the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:19-20).

Now, if a man, Jew or Gentile, sins against God's Law under the New Covenant, he should repent and go to God by a new and living way. God's throne is in the Most holy and God's Law is the criterion in the judgment of every man. Thus, when a man, convinced of sin, accepts the blood of Yeshua the Messiah for the remission of his sins, he will receive forgiveness. And by having put on righteousness as a breastplate, through the righteousness of Yeshua, he receives a new and living way to get into God's presence. Paul writes: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And [having] an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:19-22).

The sacrifice that Yeshua the Messiah brought on the cross of Calvary is the blood of the New Covenant. Under the New Testament, the believer receives forgiveness of sins based on this blood sacrifice and the believer benefits the full inheritance that Yeshua received. The entire inheritance is not only forgiveness of our sins but also healing of our grief and sorrow and the healing of all of our diseases. Yeshua has borne everything on the cross. "Surely he (Yeshua) hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. (...) But he [was] wounded for our transgressions, [he was] bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace [was] upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (...) (Isa. 53:4-5).

What Yeshua has obtained on Calvary is the full victory over the adversary and his rule. Through the victory of Yeshua, and the sacrifice of his blood, believers of all times are brought to glory by this one sacrifice on Calvary. All those who have put their faith in Yeshua the Messiah, received complete redemption, deliverance and healing and eternal life by the faithful acceptance of this one offering.

By grace our sins are blotted out, but the Law is not "done away" with

Paul gives us a very insinuating warning: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some [is]; but exhorting [one another]: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully (that is breaking the Law) after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. [It is] a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:24-31).

These are certainly words that should be taken in consideration to keep us from willingly ignoring God's Law. For indeed there are many people who, by the deceptions of the adversary, sin again and again with in their mind the 'lying solution' to directly confess these sins and accept forgiveness. They are deceived by the adversary, and despite being reconciled, they assume they live under grace and are still sinners. Deceived as they are, believing they are still sinners, they soon give themselves a 'license' that allows sin, and people are easily inclined to think that God thinks the same way about it. Paul writes: "...for by the Law [is] the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). If a man is justified by faith, and is accepted by God as son or daughter in the Messiah, than this righteous man (believer) shall live by faith. This believer will be driven by love, by the power of the Holy Spirit which lives in him, to live according to God's Law. The believer would, out of love for God and his neighbor, not want to transgress God's Law or abolish it.

Paul writes: "Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law" (Rom. 3:31). The word 'establish' is a verb and indicates that the believer acts in accordance to the Law. Further, Paul writes: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members [as] instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the Law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:12-15). We wouldn't, after having received grace (forgiveness of sins), again and deliberately walk in sin, would we? Once freed from the bondage of sin, would we want to return to live under the yoke of slavery (of sin) again? Paul delightfully goes further. He writes: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17-18). "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Messiah our Lord (Rom. 6:22-23). Praise God for his mercy!

Preserving faith overcomes sin and walks in obedience.

Paul gives us a strong encouragement to persevere in faith and overcome. He writes: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Now the just shall live by faith: but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10:35-39). Paul clearly concludes: "Wherefore the Law [is] holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 7: 12). What God requires of man is total obedience to the Law. But man, who is still under the bondage of sin, is not able to comply with this requirement (obedience - righteousness). As a result of his sinful nature, sinful deeds and desires, man - which is not born again - is constantly condemned by God's Law. Only by accepting God's grace by faith, by the substitute sacrifice of Yeshua the Messiah, is there no condemnation anymore for the believer in Messiah. Paul writes: "[There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin (disobedience) and death (judgment). For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin (disobedience) in the flesh: That the **righteousness of the Law** (obedience) **might be fulfilled in us** (believers), who walk not after the flesh (sin), but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1-4).

Hence, it is impossible that man could walk in obedience without having received the Spirit. Therefore Paul writes: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:14-16). Led by the Holy Spirit we, in Messiah, are more than conquerors. Those who are born of the Spirit (born again) will conquer through this Spirit.

God's Covenant

In order to gain some insight into the workings of God's Covenant, we will start to determine what the Bible exactly writes about God's Covenant. At Mount Sinai God declared His covenant with great voice to his people, the seed of Abraham. This Covenant is not new, but has always been the criterion in God's judgment of sin. God made His covenant known with the following words: "And Jahweh spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only [ye heard] a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, [even] ten commandments; and he wrote them upon **two tables of stone**. Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true Laws, good statutes and commandments: And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and Laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant:" (Deut. 4:12-13; Neh. 9:13-14).

The **first table of stone** teaches us **the love to Jahweh**:

- 1^e Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- 2^e Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image ...
- 3^e Thou shalt not take the name of Jahweh thy God in vain ...
- 4^e Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

The **second table of stone** teaches us **the love to the neighbour**:

- 5^e Honour thy father and thy mother
- 6^e Thou shalt not kill.
- 7^e Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- 8^e Thou shalt not steal.
- 9^e Thou shalt not bear false witness
- 10^e Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house ...

The Words of the Covenant which God spoke are written down in Exodus 20:2-17. The wise preacher of Ecclesiastics writes: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this [is] the whole [duty] **of man**" (Eccl 12: 13). King David writes in his Psalm: "The Law of Jahweh [is] perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of Jahweh [is] sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of Jahweh [are] right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of Jahweh [is] pure, enlightening the eyes" (Ps. 19:7-8). David lets himself be exhorted by it, because the blessings only come by keeping the Law, as it is written: "Moreover by them is thy servant warned: [and] in keeping of them [there is] great reward" (Ps. 19:11). Yeshua also made the following condition: "And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [there is] none good but one, [that is], God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Mat. 19:17).

However, for man it is impossible to keep the Law out of his own strength, without the help of Yeshua. As a result of man's sinful nature, he is constantly in rebellion with God's righteous demands. Paul writes: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but [how] to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:18-9). Therefore Yeshua writes that we can't do anything without Him: "I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Still, God gave a wonderful provision in order to enable us to keep His Law. He gave us the capability to fulfill the demand of the Law by the rebirth through the Spirit, by the Spirit who lives in us. Indeed, Paul writes: "For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:3-4).

Many people do understand that the Law is holy, righteous and good, but they do not understand that the Law is spiritual, and so they try to observe the Law in the flesh. Paul earlier said: "Wherefore the Law [is] holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good... For we know that the Law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. 7:12, 14). Yeshua clearly shows us that keeping the Law is not only an external matter; the Law reaches the heart of man, and is therefore spiritual. On the 6th and 7th commandment he writes: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill (sixth commandment); and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" (Mat. 5:21-22). Furthermore, Yeshua says: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery (7th commandment): But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mat. 5:27-28). Paul writes: "For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things [are] naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:12-13).

'Giving account' has to do with the fact that every man is responsible to be obedient to God's will. And God's will is described in God Law. Paul writes: "What shall we say then? [Is] the Law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the Law: for I had not known lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7). Obedience to God's Law therefore requires a sincere servitude of the heart. Only a born again and Spirit-filled man is able to, by the indwelling Holy Spirit, come to be obedient. Paul writes: "... so that the **requirement** (obedience) of Law **might be fulfilled** in us (born again and Spirit-filled believer), who walk not after the flesh, but the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4). Yeshua once rebuked the Pharisees and the scribes with the following words: "But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? [Ye] hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, But in vain they do worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men" (Mat. 15:3, 7-9).

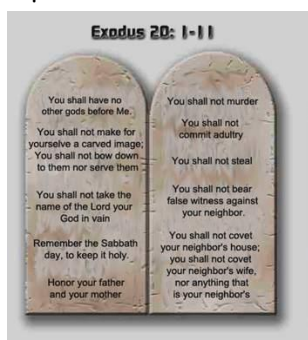
John writes in his letter: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law; Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1John 3:4, 9). Isn't it great to have insight into God's Law? Isn't it great to reach a glorious victory over all iniquity, by the Holy Spirit that lives in us? Before, we served sin, and we were slaves of sin, but now we serve righteousness in complete freedom, that is, obedience to God's demand. We are determined to be obedient, through the power of the Spirit. James made a nice statement: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one [point], he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:10-12). James calls God's Covenant the "Law of Liberty". This points out flawlessly that those who transgress the Law, are not 'Free' but 'Bound'. This also shows that God's Covenant forms a perfect whole that can be compared to a chain with ten inseparable links linked together. When one link breaks, the whole chain is broken.

The wise preacher once wrote these words: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this [is] the whole [duty] of man (not only for Jews). For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether [it be] good, or whether [it be] evil" (Eccl 12:13-14). And the Psalmist too is very clear when he writes: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119:165). Isaiah ensures us of the blessings resulting from obedience to God's Covenant with the following words: "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:" (Isa. 48:18). You can hardly understand that religious people say that God's Law has 'done away with'. Yeshua said: "And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [there is] none good but one, [that is], God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Mat. 19:17).

The first psalm in the Bible begins with a delightful beatitude: "Blessed [is] the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight [is] in the law of Jahweh; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Ps. 1:1-3).

When Paul teaches the believers in Rome about the disposition of the mind, he clearly states that the mind of the Spirit is live and peace, but the carnal minded is death. He clearly shows here that the enmity against God's Law is discussed. Paul writes: "Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7-8). John writes a whole letter about the love of God where he explains that in the perfect love of God, there is no fear. He writes: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment (curse of the Law). He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother (doesn't love him), he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1John 4:18-21). He continues: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1John 5:2-3).

We will conclude this section with a teaching of Yeshua and Paul. Yeshua was approached by a scribe that asked him the following question: "Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law?" (Mat. 2:36). This question is important because the answer of Yeshua will show what is most important and what God's will for man is, who is



created in His image. Yeshua spoke these words: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is **the first and great commandment**" (Mat. 22:37, 38). This commandment represents also the **first table** of God's Covenant. On the second table of God's Covenant, Yeshua says: "And **the second [is] like unto it**, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these **two commandments** hang **all the law** (Gods covenant) and the prophets" (Mat. 22:39, 40). There are those who claim that Yeshua introduced two new commandments here that would replace God's Covenant. But nothing is further from the truth. Here, Yeshua simply quoted the statements of Moses, like he normally did. For Moses already had spoken these words: "And thou

shalt love Jahweh thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart (Deut. 6:5, 6). Moses already confirmed here that the love of God was a summary of **the first table** of God Covenant. Moses also spoke about **the second table** of God's covenant, which was quoted by Yeshua: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I [am] Jahweh" (Lev. 19:18).

So the conclusion of the whole matter is: Love is the fulfillment of God's Covenant. Paul also in a simple way declares the principle of God's covenant. He writes: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit **adultery**, Thou shalt not **kill**, Thou shalt not **steal**, Thou shalt not **bear false witness**, Thou shalt not **covet**; and if [there be] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love [is] the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:8-10). The commandments Paul brings are all in line with the statements of Yeshua. Love for the neighbor is the fulfillment of the **second table**. Love of God corollary is the fulfillment of the **first table** of God's Covenant. In short; love is the fulfillment of God's Law. Thus it is proven that Gods Covenant is the basis of God's government, perpetual and eternal. It always have been, is and shall be Gods criterion in the entire universe.

God's Covenant is perpetual and eternal

James in his letter makes some splendid statements on who truly is Lawgiver and Judge. He writes: "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (Jam. 4:12). Apart from God there is no Judge or Lawgiver. God's Law is as reliable and as unchangeable as God is unchanging and reliable. James writes about God: "...with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jam. 1:17b). Not a single word spoken by God shall be relinquished or be 'done away' with.

The Psalmist writes: "The works of his hands [are] verity and judgment; all his **commandments** [are] sure. They stand fast **for ever and ever**, [and are] done in truth and uprightness. He sent redemption unto his people: he hath **commanded** his covenant **for ever**: holy and reverend [is] his name" (Ps. 111:7-9). Hallelujah. "Praise ye Yahweh. Blessed [is] the man [that] feareth Yahweh, [that] delighteth greatly in his commandments" (Ps. 112:1).

Yeshua makes an important statement when he says the following: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Mat. 5:17). The word "fulfill" <4137> is a Greek verb. The meaning of this word is as follows: <4137> **Ple'ro-oo, ww**: fulfill, make full, complete, to render full. Yeshua's doing made that God's will (as declared in God's Covenant) was duly (rightly) obeyed and it fulfilled God's promises, which were given by the prophets. It is impossible that God's Covenant was dissolved, for it requires from us to love God and our neighbor; and it never could be right to hate God and our neighbor. The word "fulfill" is also used in the following verse: "And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying," (Mat. 4:13-14).

Here one can clearly see that Yeshua, by moving to Capernaum, fulfilled the word of the prophet Isaiah. 'To fulfill' has to do with doing something. Paul writes to the Galatians: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal.6: 2). 'To fulfill' here, has to do with bearing each other, so, to do something! For Yeshua, it was the most ordinary thing to speak as the Father had spoken. He says to his disciples: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10). This is plain language. When Yeshua says something, it is always clear. He teaches his disciples to do the same as he did. Yeshua clearly said: "remain in my love" (John 15:9); "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14); "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12); "These things I command you, that ye love one another" (John 15:17).

Yeshua speaks the same words as the Father. To love one another is the summary of the second table of God's Covenant. Fifty years after Yeshua's crucifixion, John writes: "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1John 2:6); "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1John 3:4). John doesn't tell us here that sin was the violation of God's Covenant, but that sin is the transgression of the Law. John clearly shows here that God's Covenant is still in force in the New Testament. He also says: "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth" whereby he confirms that the binding commitments of God's Covenant are for all. Every nation, every man, every person that commits sin, violates God's Covenant. The fact that God's Covenant is perpetual and eternal, is irrefutably proved by the fact that Yeshua, the only begotten Son of God, had to die for our transgressions of God's Covenant. Paul writes: "Messiah died for our sins" (1Cor. 15:3). If God's Covenant could have been dissolved, and 'done away with', it wouldn't have been necessary for Messiah to come and die for our sins. The fact that Yeshua had to die for our sins positively proves the perpetual nature and immutability of God's Covenant. Messiah had to come and die in order to meet the requirements of God's covenant or otherwise the whole world would die. Sixty five years after the crucifixion of Yeshua, John writes in his book Revelation: "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14: 12). Here John gives a description of the believers who are ready to meet Yeshua. They keep the commandments of God and the faith in Yeshua. The Bible is clear: God's Covenant is perpetual and eternal.

God's Covenant and the Law of Moses

In order to understand the relationship between God's Covenant and its ceremonial laws, it is important to look again at the various texts of the Old Testament and to clarify them using New Testament statements. James gives a title to God's Covenant, distinguishing it from all other Laws. He calls it the "Royal Law". He does so with the following words: "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Lev. 19:18); ye do well. But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors" (Jam. 2:8-9). One task of God's Covenant is to convince of sin. Paul also clearly stated: "What shall we say then? [Is] the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7).

Thus we see clearly that for Paul it was crystal-clear that the Law is the criterion in the judgment of good and evil. Paul knows that lust is sin because it is written in God's Covenant. The 10th commandment tells us:

"Thou shalt not covet" (Ex. 20: 17). Ecclesiastes makes a strong statement by saying: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this [is] the whole [duty] of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether [it be] good, or whether [it be] evil" (Eccl 12:13-14). He doesn't write that this only applies for the Jew; he clearly writes that keeping the commandments is for all people.

Further, James writes that we will be judged by this Law. He writes: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of Liberty.." (Jam. 2:12). James calls God's Covenant 'The Law of Liberty'. This is the same Law which states: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me ... Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy ... Thou shalt not commit adultery ... Thou shalt not kill..." (Ex. 20 :3-17). James calls God's Covenant the 'Law of Liberty' because, for God's children, it is no problem to be guided according to it. God's commandments are fulfilled by love. People who live in the world and don't know God, are bound by their sins to him, who is the god of this world, the adversary. The adversary bounds all man by their sin and deceives them, making them think they are 'free'. Earlier, James calls it the 'Law of Liberty', the 'Royal Law' (Jam. 2:8). This is the Law whereby every man shall be judged. God's Covenant wasn't established on Mount Sinai, but has always been an expression of God's righteous judgment. God has decreed a system of sacrifices besides His Covenant which by its rites and ceremonies pointed at Yeshua the Messiah. For example, we already see Job sacrificing for his children's sins, as it is written: "And it was so, when the days of [their] feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings [according] to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually" (Job 1:5). This sacrificial system was already known in the days of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:3-5). For Paul said: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb 11:4). Noah also proves to be acquainted with God's sacrificial system, for it is written: "And Noah builded an altar unto Jahweh; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar" (Gen. 8:20). So, you can see that the practice of burnt offerings was already known from time men fell into sin. God's Covenant was declared by God himself from Mount Sinai with an **audible voice**. It is written: "And Jahweh spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only [ye heard] a voice. And he declared unto you **his covenant**, which he **commanded you to perform**, [even] **ten commandments**; and he wrote them upon **two tables of stone**" (Deut. 4:12-13). This Covenant of God is complete and 'and he added no more'. It is written: "These words Jahweh spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me" (Deut. 5: 22).

Yeshua summarized this in a beautiful manner when he quoted from the Law of Moses: "And thou shalt love Jahweh thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18). The first four commandments govern the love of God and the last six commandments govern the love of the neighbor. God's Covenant is declared further in the five books of Moses by **statutes, judgments, testimonies rights and ordinances**; this is called the '**Law of Moses**' (Torah).

The "Law of Moses (Torah) provides alongside statutes, judgments, testimonies rights and ordinances also **ceremonial laws**, as it is written: "This [is] the law of the **burnt offering**, of the **meat offering**, and of the **sin offering**, and of the **trespass offering**, and of the **consecrations**, and of the sacrifice of the **peace offerings**; which Jahweh commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto Jahweh, in the wilderness of Sinai" (Lev. 7:37-38). These **ceremonial laws** were instituted on behalf of the transgressions of God's Covenant by man. Therefore it is written: "And they removed the burnt offerings ... as [it is] written in **the book of Moses**. And so [did they] with the oxen" (2Chr. 35:12). This book of Moses was commissioned by Moses to be placed **beside** the ark of the covenant: "take this **book of the law**, and put it **in the side** of the ark of the covenant of Jahweh your God, that it may be there for a **witness against thee**" (Deut. 31:26). This phrase "witness against thee" implies all the curses, declared through Moses, that would come over the nation that accepted the Covenant in case of transgression (Deut. 28:15-68). **God's covenant** however, was laid **into** the **ark of the Covenant** on God's command: "And he took and put the testimony **into the ark** ... and put the mercy seat above upon the ark:" (Ex. 40:20).

This ark of the Covenant is a shadow of the true ark of the covenant in heaven. John sees the ark in heaven and testifies of it: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail" (Rev. 11:19). Eventually, in the end, all men shall be judged according to God's criterion. Only those who, by the '**Law of Moses**' are reconciled by the blood of the Lamb of God, of which the animal sacrifices were a shadow, shall be justified and inherit the earth.

The **ceremonial law could not purge our conscience** and could not possibly make him who serves God (the believer) perfect. For Paul writes: "Which [was] a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; [Which stood] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed [on them] until the time of reformation" (Heb. 9:9-10). Therefore, Paul writes: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14).

Thus, the **ceremonial law was temporary** because it was imposed until the time of reformation. This reformation was brought by Yeshua. He obtained, by his own blood, an eternal redemption. Paul writes: "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us]" (Heb. 9:11-12).

The **ceremonial law** with all its blood sacrifices of bulls and goats was **disannulled** by the offering of the body of Christ and the pouring out of His blood, because Yeshua fulfilled the ceremonial law and he became a surety for a better testament. Paul writes: "For there is verily a **disannulling** of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, ...but the bringing in of a better hope [did];... By so much was Jesus made a surety of a **better testament**" (Heb. 7:18-22).

God has put the **ceremonial law to an end** in a verily spectacular way: the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from top to bottom at the moment Yeshua died on the cross of Calvary and yielded up the ghost. "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent..." (Mat. 27:50-51).

The **ceremonial law has ceased to function**. Daniel prophesies: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy... And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.." (Dan. 9:24-27). Yeshua "fulfilled" this prophecy perfectly. After the resurrection, Yeshua went to heaven to go into the Most Holy to obtain an eternal redemption by his precious and sinless blood.

God's Covenant is for ever and ever, for the Psalmist writes: "Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever" (Ps. 119:152). God's Covenant is celebrated as follows: "The law of Jahweh [is] perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of Jahweh [is] sure, making wise the simple" (Ps.19:7). Paul writes: "For we know that the Law is spiritual" (Rom. 7:14).

Those brothers and sisters who would which to declare **God's Covenant** or the **Law of Moses** as being "**fulfilled**" and "**nailed to the cross**" will have to realize that all what God says, by definition, is His Word; His command: God makes **no** distinction between them. Commandments that deal with perverse and incestuous relationships are stated in Leviticus 18, and God states in verse 26 that they are abominations of men and that his people have to live according to **His statutes**. Furthermore, the Torah clearly teaches that eating pork should be an abomination for men (Leviticus 11), while he also calls it an abomination when people evoke the dead.

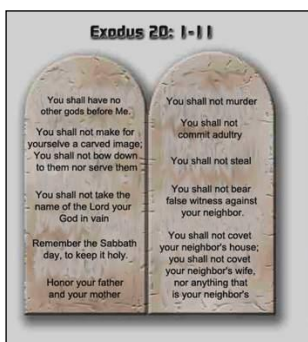
God forbids it like this: "You shall therefore keep **My statutes** and **My judgments**, and shall not commit [any] of these abominations, [either] **any of your own nation** or **any stranger** who dwells among you" (Lev. 18:26). After reading these passages, who would want to claim that perverse relations, eating pork meat and evoke spirits are any less important than keeping the **Sabbat** and celebrate **God's Feasts**? Who would like to declare Leviticus 18 as being '**fulfilled**' and '**nailed to the cross**?' and thereby legalize those practices in the New Covenant? No one, right? No!

Grace is a gift of God

It will be clear that Gods grace does not undermine the maintaining of **God's Covenant** or the **Law of Moses** and grace neither dissolves nor disposes one of them. Grace is a gift of God which, under the Old Covenant was manifested by the **ceremonial law** by the offering of the blood of animals, and under the New Covenant by the blood of Yeshua the Messiah. Yeshua took our guilt and died on the cross. Out of love, God offers us the possibility to accept the blood sacrifice; when we accept this blood sacrifice, this is God's grace. What Yeshua has accomplished at Golgotha is the complete victory over sin and death. Through the victory of Yeshua, and the sacrifice of his blood, believers of all times are brought to glory by one sacrifice. All those who have put their faith in Yeshua the Messiah, receive by the faithful acceptance of this one offering complete redemption, deliverance and healing and eternal life.

Praise God for His grace!

Summary



James calls it the "Royal Law" (Jam. 2:8), spoken by God's audible voice (Ex. 20:17; Deut. 4:12-13), written with God's finger on tables of stone (Ex. 24:12, Ex. 31:18), put in the ark of the Covenant by Moses (Ex. 40:20; 1Ki. 8:9; Heb. 9:4), a perfect Law that converts the soul (Ps. 19:7), established forever (Ps. 11:8), was fulfilled but not destroyed by Yeshua (Mat. 5:17), instituted as the knowledge of sin, (Rom. 3:20, 7:7), became visible in the true Temple of God in heaven (Rev. 11:19) of which the Holy Spirit says:

"Behold, the days are coming, says Jahweh, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah--" (Jer. 31:33).

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Be welcome every Sabbat morning and experience that the joy of Jahweh is our strength.
Place of gathering: "De Havenkerk", Ieplaan 9, 2951 CB Alblasserdam (The Netherlands), at 10.30.