

FAITH VERSUS THE LAW

In the Gospel, the word Law is the interpretation of the word Torah. One should always translate Torah in order to really understand the sense of the text. So, when Paul says “As we see it, a man is justified by faith (*in Jesus*) and not by something the Law (*Torah*) tells him to do” (Romans 3,28), the reader does not always understand Paul’s intention who also speaks of “the curse of the Law” (Galatians 3,13). But in reading that one is saved by faith in Jesus Christ and not by the deeds of the Torah, which has become “a curse”, one understands the importance of faith and the futility of material worship prescribed by the Torah (see the text “[Cult and Place of Worship](#)”).

To this some respond: But Jesus said: “Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law (*Torah*) or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them. I tell you solemnly, till Heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, not one little stroke, shall disappear from the Law **until its purpose is achieved**” (Matthew 5,17-19). This is true! Jesus came to accomplish the Torah, not in its worship, but in the prophecies that announce His advent. Through the Advent of Jesus, the Messiah, everything, in the Torah, is thus **already** realized.

In fact, there are two categories in the Torah (the Law):

1. The category of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20,1-17) and Messianic prophecies (Genesis 3,15 and 49,10 / Numbers 24,17 / Deuteronomy 18,15), which **Jesus came to accomplish**.
2. The category of worship that **Jesus came to abolish**. It is this category that is described in the following text.

1. Consecration of the Priests

Exodus 29,22: “. . . You will then take the fatty parts of the ram: the tail, the fat covering the entrails, the fatty mass over the liver, the two kidneys with their covering fat and also the right thigh –for this is a ram of investiture. . . .”

Exodus 29,29-30: “Aaron’s sacred vestments must pass to his sons after him, and they will wear them for their anointing and investiture. Whichever of the sons of Aaron succeeds him in the priesthood and enters the Tent of Meeting to serve in the sanctuary, will wear them for seven days.”

Compare with the Priesthood of Christ:

Hebrews 4,14-5,10: “Since in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven, we must never let go of the faith that we have professed. . . (5,9-10) . . . he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation and was acclaimed by God with the title of high priest of the order of Melchizedek.”

Revelation 1,6: “He made us a line of kings, priests to serve his God and Father; to him, then, be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.”

Revelation 5,10: “You made them a line of kings and priests to serve our God and to rule the world.”

Revelation 20,6: “Happy and blessed are those who share in the first resurrection; the second death has no power over them but they will be priests of God and of Christ and reign with him for a thousand years.”

2. Daily holocaust

Exodus 29,38-42: “This is what you must offer on the altar: two yearling male lambs each day in perpetuity. The first lamb you will offer at dawn, and the second at twilight, and with the first lamb, one-tenth of a measure of fine flour mixed with one-quarter of a hin of pounded olive oil and, for a libation, one-quarter of a hin of wine. The second lamb you will offer at twilight, and do it with a similar cereal offering and libation as at dawn, as a pleasing smell, as an offering burnt for Yahweh, a perpetual burnt offering for all your generations to come, at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before Yahweh, where I shall meet you and speak to you.”

3. Sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins

Leviticus 4,3: “If the one who sins is the anointed priest, thus making the people guilty, then for the sin which he has committed he must offer Yahweh a young bull, an unblemished animal from the herd, as a sacrifice for sin.”

Compare with

Matthew 26,26-28: “Now as they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to the disciples. ‘Take it and eat’, he said, ‘this is my body’. Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them. ‘Drink all of you from this,’ he said, ‘for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’”

4. Unclean animals

Leviticus 11,3-7: “You may eat any animal that has a cloven hoof, divided into two parts, and that is a ruminant. The following, which either chew the cud or have a cloven hoof, are the ones that you may not eat: you will regard the camel as unclean, because though it is ruminant, it does not have a cloven hoof. . . (11,7): you will regard the pig as unclean, because though it has a cloven hoof, divided into two parts, it is not a ruminant etc. . . ”

Compare with

Matthew 15,10: “He called the people to him and said, ‘Listen, and understand. What goes into the mouth does not make a man unclean; it is what comes out of the mouth that makes him unclean.’”

Acts 10,9-16: “Next day, while they were still on their journey and had only a short distance to go before reaching Jaffa, Peter went to the housetop at about the sixth hour to pray. He felt hungry and was looking forward to his meal, but before it was ready he fell into a trance and saw heaven thrown open and something like a big sheet being let down to earth by its four corners; it contained every possible sort of animal and bird, walking, crawling or flying ones. A voice then said to him, ‘Now, Peter, kill and eat!’ But Peter answered, ‘Certainly not, Lord; I have never yet eaten anything profane or unclean’. Again a second time, the voice spoke to him, ‘What God has made clean, you have no right to call profane.’” This was repeated three times, and then suddenly the container was drawn up to heaven again.

5. Circumcision

Leviticus 12,3: “On the eighth day the child’s foreskin must be circumcised.”

Deuteronomy 10,16: “Circumcise your **heart** then and be obstinate no longer.”

Compare with

Jeremiah 4,4: “Circumcise yourselves for Yahweh; off with the circumcision of your hearts (men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem), lest my wrath should leap out like a fire, and burn with no one to quench it, in return for the wickedness of your deeds.”

Romans 2,28-29: “To be a Jew is not just to look like a Jew, and circumcision is more than a physical operation. The real Jew is the one who is inwardly a Jew, and real circumcision is in the heart—something not of the letter but of the spirit. A Jew like that may not be praised by man, but he will be praised by God.”

6. Sabbatical rest

Exodus 31,12-14: “Yahweh then said to Moses: ‘Speak to the Israelites and say, You will keep my Sabbaths properly, for this is a sign between myself and you for all your generations to come, so that you will know that it is I, Yahweh, who sanctify you. You will keep the Sabbath, then; you will regard it as holy. Anyone who profanes it will be put to death; anyone who does any work on that day will be outlawed from his people.’”

Compare with

Luke 6,1-11: “Now one Sabbath he happened to be taking a walk through the cornfields, and his disciples were picking ears of corns, rubbing them in their hands and eating them. Some of the Pharisees said, ‘Why are you doing something that is forbidden on the Sabbath day?’ Jesus answered them, ‘So you have not read what David did when he and his followers were hungry—how he went into the house of God, took the loaves of offering and ate them and gave them to his followers, loaves which only the priests are allowed to eat?’ And he said to them, ‘The Son of Man is master of the Sabbath’..”

7. Stoning of an adulterous woman

Leviticus 20,10: “The man who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife will be put to death, he and the woman.”

Deuteronomy 22,23-24: “If a virgin is engaged to a man, and another man encounters her in the town and has sexual intercourse with her, you will take them both to the gate of the town in question and stone them to death...”

Compare with

John 8,4-10: “they said to Jesus, ‘Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses has ordered us in the Law to condemn women like this to death by stoning. What have you to say?’ They asked him this as a test, looking for something to use against him. But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their question, he looked up and said, ‘If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her’. Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again. When they heard this they went away one by

one, beginning with the eldest, until Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained standing there. He looked up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir', she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you', said Jesus, 'go away and don't sin any more.'"

8. Not to eat blood

Leviticus 17,10-14: "If any member of the House of Israel or any resident alien consumes blood of any kind, I shall set my face against that individual who consumes blood and shall outlaw him from his people. For the life of the creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you for performing the rite of expiation on the altar for your lives, for blood is what expiates for a life. . . "

Compare with

John 6,53: "Jesus replied: 'I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you.'"

9. Unclean pregnancy

Leviticus 12,2-4: "Speak to the Israelites and say: 'If a woman becomes pregnant and gives birth to a boy, he will be unclean for seven days as when in a state of pollution due to menstruation. On the eighth day the child's foreskin must be circumcised, and she will wait another thirty-three days for her blood to be purified. She will not touch anything consecrated nor go to the sanctuary until the time of her purification is over.'"

10. Sexual Uncleanliness

From the man:

Leviticus 15,1-2: "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: When a man has a discharge from his body, that discharge is unclean. . . "

From the woman:

Leviticus 15,19: "Whenever a woman has a discharge and the discharge from her body is of blood, she will remain in a state of menstrual pollution for seven days. Anyone who touches her will be unclean until evening. . . "

When Jesus says: "Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete them..." (Matthew 5,17-19), He does not refer to the deeds of the worship in the Torah, but to the prophecies found therein announcing his Advent. He comes in order to accomplish them. He also refers, of course, to the Ten Commandments: "Therefore, the man who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the Kingdom of Heaven..." (Matthew 5,19)

On the contrary, Jesus denounces as invented, by the scribes and Pharisees, the religious practices of the Torah (Matthew 15,1-20 / Matthew 23).

Likewise, St. Paul rebels against these same practices which he describes as a curse: "The Christ redeemed us from **the curse** of the Law (*Torah*)" (Galatians 3,13).

11. Conclusion

We are saved through faith in Jesus and not by the practice of the Law (Torah) (Galatians 3,2-9). This applies to all the laws of worship in all religions (Torah, Canonical Law, Sharia, etc...)

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