

Messiah, You & Mitzvot
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There are 248 positive (mandatory) *mitzvot* (commandments) in the *Torah* (Law). There are also 365 negative (mandatory) *mitzvot* (commandments) in the *Torah* (Law). That these words need be explained exposes a severe ignorance within the Christian community. Christians have been kept ignorant because preachers have falsely told them that their “Messiah (Christ) **ended the Law**” (a misquotation of Romans 10:4) so that they are “no longer under the Law.” As the result, Christians dismiss the entire 613 *mitzvot* (commandments) by calling them “legalistic” and therefore unnecessary in living “under the grace of God.”

Christians are not aware of most of the *mitzvot*. Therefore, they are unaware of how many *mitzvot* they actually “live out” in expressing their love for their Messiah. Why? The only *mitzvot* they hear preached are from the negative (“thou shalt not”) ones. These sermons elicit responses. Many Christian preachers elicit responses following their sermons as a “vote response” to test how good they have just preached. Sermons on “thou shalt not steal, bear false witness, covet,” and the like, are frequently preached in the Church precisely because they reveal “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). These sermons take advantage of the obvious. Oddly enough, these sermons are often referred to as “preaching the old-time Gospel.” They are, in fact, “preaching the negative *mitzvot*.”

The *mitzvot* have two eternal purposes. Firstly, they reveal Messiah by providing revelations of Him demanding His fulfillment (Matthew 5:17; John 5:46). That is, the *mitzvot* bring us to Messiah. Without the *mitzvot* revealing what sin is (Romans 8:7), men would see no need of a Savior. The *mitzvot* perfectly reveal the need for a Messiah, and, Who that Messiah is. Secondly, the *mitzvot* are to be moved from stone tablets to the Believer’s heart (Jeremiah 31:33) in order to express devotion for her Beloved (Esther 2:4). That is, obeying the *mitzvot* is the intended result of a grateful, preparing bride wanting only to please her Betrothed (II Corinthians 5:9; Ephesians 5:10). The bride’s expression of her love (John 14:15) is obeying her Betrothed’s *mitzvot*. (Revelation 19:7).

Sadly, Christians are kept in the dark concerning the freedom of living out *mitzvot* by false Christian teaching that “Jews are saved by obeying the Law” while Gentiles are “saved by God’s grace through faith in Messiah.” The Jew, Kephas (Peter) settled this issue in Acts 15:1-11. He said two things. Firstly, there is “no difference between us” (Jews and Gentiles) when it comes to receiving salvation. Secondly, he said of all Jews, “we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we (Jews) shall be saved, even as they (Gentiles).” The Jew, Shaul (Paul) confirmed this in Romans 10:1-13. He said, “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Isaiah 45:17; Joel 2:32). Our Jewish Messiah, Jesus, said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:1).

Obeying *mitzvot* does not save. Only faith in the completed work of Messiah saves. That is, faith in the Messiah’s death, burial and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:1-4) can save. If obeying the *mitzvot* saved, then Moses would have entered the Promised Land. The *mitzvot* reveal that only the Messiah, Yeshua, can save His bride. The *mitzvot*, therefore, must reveal Who Messiah is. In his book, *The Heart Of A People*, Moshe Avraham Kempinski dispels the myth that Jews keep the *Torah* (*mitzvot*) to “... ensure a place in Heaven.” He says, “Traditional Jewish understanding sees the fulfillment of the law as simply fulfilling the Will of a Beloved, not as a prescription for perfection or a ticket to heaven” (page 61).

The first sub-section of the 248 positive (mandatory) *mitzvot* (commandments) in the *Torah* (Law) is entitled “**God.**” It contains nine *mitzvot*. None of them have been “done-away-with” or ended by Yeshua ha-Mashiach. In fact, our Messiah has established these nine *mitzvot* in the hearts of all Believers according to Rav Shaul (the Apostle Paul). Paul says in Romans 3:31, “Do we then make void the law (*Torah*) through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law (*Torah*).” These nine *mitzvot* are:

1. Believe that God exists - Exodus 20:2 (see: Hebrews 11:6)
2. Acknowledge God's unity (Godhead) - Deuteronomy 6:4 (see John 17:11,21)
3. Love God - Deuteronomy 6:5 (see: I John 5:2-3)
4. Fear God - Deuteronomy 6:13 (see: II Corinthians 7:1)
5. Serve God - Exodus 23:25 (see: Colossians 3:24)
6. Cleave to God (by imitating the wise) - Deuteronomy 10:20 (see: I Corinthians 11:1 NIV)
7. Swear (make vows) only by God's Name - Deuteronomy 10:20 (see: Matthew 5:37)
8. Imitate God - Deuteronomy 28:9 (see: I Peter 1:16)
9. Sanctify ("hallow") God's Name - Leviticus 22:32 (see: Matthew 6:9)

These nine *mitzvot* are listed above to ask Christians, "which one has been done-away or nullified by the death, burial and resurrection of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ?" The answer is: **"NONE OF THEM!"** In fact, all are prerequisite firstly to our salvation and secondly to our relationship with our Messiah. As noted above, the corresponding *B'rith ha-Desha* (New Testament) quotations reveal how Messiah "established" them in all Believer's hearts. Once this is clearly understood, Christians can no longer say, "The *Torah* (Law) nor the *mitzvot* (commandments) are "done-away-with" by our Messiah! As the above nine *mitzvot* are reviewed, one must ask themselves "which one of them has been nullified?" Again, the answer is **"NONE!"** Which one of them has been established and clarified by Yeshua? The answer is **"ALL OF THEM!"**

Mitzvah (commandment) number one is to "Believe that God exists." Exodus 20:2 says, "I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." This *mitzvah* is affirmed in Deuteronomy 5:6; Psalm 81:10; Isaiah 43:3; 48:17; 51:15 and Hosea 13:4.

Notice in this *mitzvah* the use of the word "have brought" rather than the word "has brought." It would be correct if it only said "I have brought ..." It would not be correct for either "The LORD have brought ..." or "Thy God have brought ..." This happens because "I" is modified by "the LORD" and "thy God." God is a "Godhead" (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:8-9). God is called "Elohim" in Genesis 1:1, "Ruach (Spirit) Elohim" in Genesis 1:2 and "Omeyr (Word) Elohim" in Genesis 1:3. From the very beginning of Scripture, God is known as God (the Father), God (the Spirit) and God (the Word). God is One. God's *echad* (unity, or "sameness") is therefore *mitzvah* number two to end any controversy regarding monotheism. Yeshua confirms the "Godhead sameness" in John 14:9, John 8:58 and John 14:16-18. Paul confirms the "Godhead sameness" in Colossians 1:15-19 and Colossians 2:9.

Mitzvah (commandment) number one requires that one "believe" that God exists. That is, fulfilling this *mitzvah* requires faith. This is affirmed by Paul in Ephesians 2:8-9. That God exists requires faith. God's existence requires neither man's acceptance nor man's rejection to be true. That God exists is self-evident. Genesis 1:1 assumes the existence of God. However, if any man wants God's Salvation, that man must accept God's existence by faith.

Hebrews 11:1-3, 6 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. ... But without faith it is impossible to please *him*; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Hebrews 11 serves as commentary, clarity and magnification on this *mitzvah* number one. This is particular in Hebrews 11:1-3 and verse 6. Here, "faith" is made the mandatory component of man accepting the existence of God. This example shows how scripture interprets scripture. It shows the importance of both Covenants (Testaments). It is a classic case in showing how this *mitzvah* has not been thrown away. It clearly shows God's intent in revealing Yeshua as Messiah and having a *mitzvah* move into the hearts of Believers. Each Believer's salvation confirms this *mitzvah*. Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The “faith” required for salvation is God’s gift to each Believer. It is not something conjured up by man. The faith to accept Yeshua as “Immanu El” (God with us) is given by God Himself. God’s faith saves and keeps. Again Paul says, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:16-17). Peter agrees. He says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (I Peter 1:3-5).

Hebrews 11:1-3, 6 links God’s existence to the first positive (thou shalt) *mitzvah* (commandment) which is recorded in Exodus 20:2 to believe that God exists. Romans 1:16-17, in English, contains the words, “... The just shall live by faith.” This is a quotation from Habakkuk 2:4, which says in English, “... the just shall live by his faith.” This may seem a minor difference. It is not. It is a major difference. By properly placing “his” before faith, it makes Ephesians 2:8-9 abundantly clear. “His” faith is the gift of God unto salvation.

The Hebrew text of Habakkuk 2:4 makes the requirement of accepting “His” faith for salvation abundantly clear. It makes fulfilling this *mitzvah* even more exciting. It says, וְצַדִּיק בְּאַמְנוֹתָיו יִחְיֶה (*veh-tzad-dik beh-eh-mu-nah-tho yihch-yeh*). Here, the word for "faith" comes from the Hebrew root word אָמַן (*ah-man*). "Ah-man" primarily means "to prop, to support" (Gesenius, *Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 58) Here, "Ah-man" has the prefix of בְּ (*beh*). This prefix means "in." Also, the suffix added here indicates "his." Simply stated, the Hebrew clearly says, "... the just shall live "in his" faith.

Righteous people believe *mitzvah* number one—that God exists. This *mitzvah* was not removed by our Messiah. He established it. Without it, no one can please God—Jew or Gentile. With it, all Believers are saved. For Believers, *mitzvah* number one has moved to their hearts and is fulfilled in Yeshua ha-Mashiach. Romans 1:14-21 fully reveals both. Galatians 3:1-29 further clarifies that salvation is received by faith. It says clearly the "Messiah has redeemed us from the curse of the law (*Torah*) ... that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (13-14) "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law (*mitzvah*) given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. ... Wherefore the law (*mitzvot*) was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (21, 24)

Finally, Hebrews 10:38 is also a quotation of Habakkuk 2:4. Hebrews 10:38-39 sets the background for Hebrews chapter 11—the "roll-call" of people of faith. It is abundantly clear that all who are mentioned in Hebrews 11 "Lived in His faith." It is also clear that all mentioned are Old Testament Jews "living in His faith." This revelation alone should forevermore silence the foolish statement, "Jews are saved by obeying the *mitzvot* and Gentiles are saved by grace through faith." All men are saved in faith—His faith—given to Believers who "believe" the *mitzvah* that God exists.