As Patrick sat in the pew listening to his minister quote Old Testament passages in the New Testament, he began to wonder why so many ignore the Old Testament Scriptures. He said to himself, if my Savior and His apostles followed the Old Testament writings, shouldn’t we today? After the service he approached his minister and asked, “Why don’t we use the Old Testament more often?” The minister replied, with a look of concern, “We are now living under a new dispensation. The Old Testament was given to the Jews and the New Testament to the church.”

Even though this account is fictional, there are many like Patrick with this same key question. Why do so many today view the Old Testament and the Hebraic faith as obsolete? Why does churchianity accept the authority of the New Testament, but dismiss its foundation, which is the Old Testament?

We will explore this question now and explain why the church deviated from its Hebraic roots. We will also reveal why the promise in the New Testament is Hebraic and not Grecian, as so many assume today. We’ll see evidence from the Bible that the Messiah and His apostles, including Paul, held the Old Testament as authoritative and were law observant. Buckle up and brace yourself for a spiritual journey that will unravel years of man-made tradition.

‘I Come to Fulfill’
Ironically, one of the easiest methods of confirming the church’s connection to the Old Testament and to its Hebraic faith is through Christian scholarship. Even though many ministers will gloss over the origins of the church, scholars and historians freely acknowledge its connection to the Old Testament.

Author Paul D. Wegner in his book, The Journey from Text to Translation, states: “The word old when it refers to the Old Testament, is not derogatory, nor does it mean the Old Testament is obsolete. Jesus [Yahshua] himself said, ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them’...Initially early Christians and Jews both worshipped in synagogues (Acts 3:1; 4:1; 5:42; 6:9-10; 13:14-15, 42; 14:1; 17:1-
2), using the same books of Scripture, namely, the Old Testament,” p. 32.

What an amazing admission! This author confirms that the term “Old Testament” is not to be viewed negatively or as obsolete. As evidence for this, he refers to Matthew 5:17, where the Messiah confirms that He came not to destroy but to fulfill the law.

The word “fulfill” in this passage comes from the Greek *pleroo*. Strong’s defines this word as, “to make replete, i.e. (literally) to cram (a net), level up (a hollow), or (figuratively) to furnish (or imbue, diffuse, influence), satisfy, execute (an office), finish (a period or task), verify (or coincide with a prediction).” *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon* provides this definition, “…used to fulfil, that is, to cause God’s will (as made known in the law) to be obeyed as it should be, and God’s promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfilment.”

Yahshua came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill, i.e., to obey and follow it (establish it, Greek *Diaglott*). An example of this fact is found in Matthew 3:14-15: “But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Yahshua answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.”

The word “fulfill” here is from the same Greek word *pleroo*. Here it refers to Yahshua’s obedience to the act of baptism. This, along with many other passages, confirms that the Messiah’s intent was never to make the law obsolete. He came to set the example as an obedient Son to His Father and a Savior to mankind.

**Only Through the Old Testament**

This reference goes on to state that both the Jews and early New Testament believers worshiped in the synagogues together using the same book, i.e., the Old Testament. This concept that the Old Testament is no longer valid is simply not true. Not only is it binding, but the Messiah and His apostles viewed it as the foundation of Scripture. Therefore, those who argue that the Old Testament is no longer necessary are rejecting a significant part of Yahshua’s own ministry.

It is to this point that authors Alan Johnson and Robert Webber state, “In Jesus’ [Yahshua’s] attitude toward the Old Testament one can glean a considerable range of information on his understanding
of the nature and authority of the Bible. He either quotes or alludes to the Old Testament more than 150 times in the Synoptic Gospels alone. He thus exhibits a deep respect for the Bible…. Using the threefold division of the Old Testament familiar to his audience he sweepingly affirmed that the whole Old Testament had a bearing on his mission. Nothing was excluded,” *What Christians Believe – A Biblical and Historical Summary*, pp. 23-24.

**Yahshua’s Faith in the Old Testament**

This reference affirms a very important fact. Yahshua viewed the Old Testament as authoritative and part of the inspired Word. He used the Old Testament writings to establish His position and purpose. Such evidence cannot be understated. As these authors succinctly stated, “Nothing was excluded.”

If churches today understood these crucial facts many of today’s erroneous beliefs would not exist. If they understood the faith of their Savior, they would freely recognize the significance of the Old Testament and teach it to their congregations.

Author Earle E. Cairns corroborates this conclusion in his book, *Christianity Through the Centuries*: “Christianity may have developed in the political milieu of Rome and may have had to face the
intellectual environment created by the Greek mind, but its relationship to Judaism was much more intimate. Judaism may be thought of as the stalk on which the rose of Christianity was to bloom…. Judaism provided the heredity of Christianity and, for a time, even gave the infant religion shelter…. The Jewish people still further prepared the way for the coming of Christianity by providing the infant Church with a sacred book, the Old Testament. Even a casual study of the New Testament will reveal Christs’ and the apostles’ deep indebtedness to the Old Testament and their reverence for it as the Word of [Yahweh] to man…. The books of the Old Testament and the books of the New Testament, given under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, were to be the living literature of the Church,” pp. 44-46.

Even though the early church had to deal with Rome and the Greek culture, its relationship is most closely tied to Judaism. This statement cannot be overemphasized. Without Judaism or the Old Testament there would be no assembly or New Testament.

Therefore, to state that we are now living under a new dispensation, i.e., the New Testament, and free from that archaic Old Testament could not be further from the truth. Christianity’s roots are deeply grounded in the faith given to Abraham. Those who ignore this fact ignore the origins of their faith.

Interestingly, the Roman Empire initially made little distinction between Judaism and the New Testament assembly. Believers in the Messiah were simply seen as another sect of Judaism. It was not until the Church began to pull away from Judaism that Rome became suspicious and began to persecute Christianity. Rome respected ancient traditions. This is why they exempted the Jews from certain requirements, including of worship of state deities and temple sacrifices. However, once the church began to form its own identity, they no longer enjoyed many of the conveniences provided to the Jews.

Old Testament’s Messianic Prophecies
Perhaps the most important connection between the Messiah and the Hebraic faith is the many Messianic prophecies found in the Old Testament. It was upon this ancient text that the Messiah and His
apostles hung their ministry.

One of the earliest references to the Messiah is found in Deuteronomy 15, “Yahweh thy Elohim will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of Yahweh thy Elohim in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of Yahweh my Elohim, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And Yahweh said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him,” verses 15-18.

This prophecy pertains to the Messiah. Evidence for this fact is in Acts 7:37. Why is this passage important or possibly more significant than other Messianic prophecies? First, Moses draws a parallel between him and the coming Savior. Second, like Moses, this coming Messiah would speak Yahweh’s Word and command authority.

This second point is noteworthy, as it conveys that Yahshua has the ability to interpret and even provide commandments in the New Testament. We find many examples of Yahshua commanding by enhancing or clarifying Yahweh’s Word. One example is found in the beatitudes where He states that to even look and lust after a woman was the same as committing adultery. This authority would have also extended to rules regarding worship, as we find for instance in 1Corinthians 11, where Paul commands that men leave their heads uncovered and ladies cover their heads during times of formal worship. After all, Yahshua instructed all the apostles, including Paul, who received His message by direct revelation, Galatians 1:12, 17-18.

Therefore, this Old Testament prophecy not only provides evidence for the Messiah’s coming, but also the depth and scope of His message and authority. This last point is especially important considering the many commandments He personally gave in the New Testament.

Of the prophets in the Old Testament, possibly the one to provide the most insight into the Messiah is Isaiah. From this prophet we have prophecies regarding Yahshua’s first and second comings. This includes the Messiah who would come and die for the sins of mankind
and the Messiah who will return to establish Yahweh’s Kingdom on earth.

One of the most pivotal prophecies regarding his First Coming is Isaiah 7:14. It reads, “Therefore Yahweh himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

This prophecy focuses on the Messiah’s birth. It states that He would be born of a virgin. From the first chapter in Matthew, the Bible confirms that Mary was a virgin when she conceived Yahshua. She was engaged or betrothed to Joseph, Yahshua’s legal father, but they had not yet fulfilled their nuptials. Instead of natural conception, the Bible records that the Messiah was conceived through the Holy Spirit. On this point it’s important to note that the Holy Spirit represents the Father’s power and is not a separate entity. If the Holy Spirit were
a separate being, it (or he) would have been the father of Yahshua and not Yahweh.

Isaiah also mentioned that He would be called “Immanuel,” meaning, “El with us.” In point of fact, this is not a proper name, but a title expressing Yahshua’s future role within the millennial Kingdom. During this future time, He will reign and govern this earth with righteousness, Isaiah 11:1-5 and Revelation 20:6. Also, those from the first resurrection will assist him as a kingdom of priests, Revelation 5:10.

Perhaps the greatest Messianic prophecy is found in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. There the prophet delivers a powerful prophetic message that is still heard over many pulpits today. He describes the suffering Messiah.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of Elohim, and afflicted. 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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Yahweh hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was taken as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased Yahweh to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Yahweh shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities,” Isaiah 53:3-11.

This prophecy was written some 700 years before the Common
Era and was pivotal for the Messiah and the apostles in the New Testament. Here are some highlights. Through this prophecy we find evidence that the Messiah looked like any other Jew. This certainly discounts the common portrayal of the Messiah that displays Yahshua as a tall European with long flowing hair. Most Jews during the first century were of olive or darker skin color with short curly hair.

It also confirms here that Yahshua died to pay the penalty of sin for many. This is the central message of Yahshua’s ministry. Through His sacrifice we find justifications from our previous iniquities. Simply put, without Yahshua and His sacrifice, we would all be left in our sins without any Savior or recourse. Amazingly, this crucial message is rooted in the Old Testament.

The first chapter of John confirms that the Jews rejected Yahshua as the Messiah. However, long before John, Isaiah prophesied of this outcome when he stated that He would be “opposed.” Throughout His Ministry, He was not only rejected, but He would eventually die for His message. Matter of fact, He was condemned for doing nothing more than telling the truth, which is also found in this prophecy.

In addition to these, there are many other insightful points that we could glean from this passage. Isaiah, along with many other Old Testament prophets, provides a treasure trove of information about the Messiah. In fact, according to biblical scholars there are 300-400 unique prophecies in the Old Testament pertaining to the Messiah and His Second Coming.

**Messiah Loyal to the Old Testament**

Once we understand the depth of this truth, it’s impossible to ignore the importance of the words given to Moses and the prophets. The fact is, without the Old Testament, the Messiah and the apostles would have been without any way to substantiate their position or authority. For this reason the Old Testament is indispensable to the faith of the New Testament.

The Messiah throughout His ministry also confirmed His deep loyalty to the Old Testament. For instance, in Luke 24:44 He used the Old Testament to confirm His position as the Messiah. He stated, “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all
things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.” The Messiah Yahshua verifies His teachings from the pages of the Old Testament. He conveys to His apostles that all things had to be fulfilled according to the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. Incidentally, these are the three divisions of the Old Testament.

If the Old Testament were not relevant to the Messiah and the apostles, why then does He refer to this ancient source as confirmation for His resurrection and position as the Messiah? Contrary to the assumptions of many, the only book accessible at this time was the Old Testament. The entire foundation of who Yahshua was and what He taught was founded in the text given to Moses and the prophets.

Another example of this profound connection is found in the transfiguration. “And after six days Yahshua taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Eliyah talking with him,” Matthew 17:1-3.

It’s important to begin here by acknowledging that this was a vision the apostles witnessed. The question is, why did Moses and Eliyah appear with Yahshua and what did they represent? The meaning is clear: Moses represented the law and Eliyah the prophets. Together, they verified Yahshua as the Messiah from the law and prophets. This is one more example confirming Yahshua’s position from the Old Testament. The fact is, Yahshua relied exclusively on these Hebrew writings throughout His Ministry.
With such indubitable evidence, it’s a wonder that so many are opposed to the Old Testament. Do we not desire to worship as Yahshua worshiped? Do we not desire to follow in our Savior’s examples? If we do we must then not divorce ourselves from the Old Testament, but view it as the foundation of our faith.

This departure is why so many churches and ministers have deviated and missed the mark of sound biblical doctrine. For example, Yahshua kept the Sabbath, Feast days and dietary food laws. After His death, the apostles did the same. However, today these foundational teachings have been forgotten and replaced with non-biblical, Greco-Roman, beliefs. If we care about following the truth that the Messiah delivered to His apostles, we then must reconsider much of what is taught in mainstream worship.

**Paul’s ‘Autobiography’ Claims Perfect Law Adherence**

The Apostle Paul is credited more than any other Bible writer as starting a new faith from what was delivered in the Old Testament. Most clerics assert that he was anti-law and introduced a new belief system that was more palatable to his gentile coverts. Is this true? Do we find evidence from the New Testament that Paul began a religion that diverged from the Old Testament?

In the third chapter of Philippians he provides somewhat of an autobiography in which he describes his faith. He writes, “Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the assembly; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Messiah,” verses 5-7.

This passage provides great insight as to who the Apostle Paul was before and after his conversion. As with any other good Jew, he was circumcised on the eighth day. He was from the tribe of Benjamin and considered himself a Hebrew of the Hebrews. This repetition shows his emphasis on his Hebraic upbringing. He was also a Pharisee and claims to have kept the law perfectly and was without blemish. He had so much passion and zeal for his Jewish faith that he even persecuted those in the Messiah, including consenting to the death of Deacon
Stephen and imprisoning many believers.

Now after coming to the knowledge of the Messiah, he counted everything else as worthless or a loss. He realized that salvation could not be earned, but came only through faith in Yahshua the Messiah. This change in focus was seen throughout his epistles.

The question is, did this change alter his faith and religious devotion? This is what the vast majority in the church believe, but does this square with the Bible? It’s true that Paul viewed salvation differently after coming to the knowledge of the Messiah, but not once did he forsake the commandments or his Hebraic roots.

One of the best ways to establish Paul’s commitment to the Old Testament is to examine his life after his conversion. The difference between what is heard today in most churches and what is actually stated in the Bible may shock you.

**Paul’s Vow and the Law After His Conversion**

One of the first challenges Paul faced after coming to the knowledge of the Messiah was from the other apostles. In the twenty-first chapter of Acts he is asked specifically whether he was against the Law of Moses. This question was the result of rumors circulating about Paul.

“And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things Elohim had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified Yahweh, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou are come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also
walkest orderly, and keepest the law,” verses 18-24.

Soon after his conversion Paul was suspected of teaching against the Old Testament commandments. To show that he was not opposed to the Law, James suggested that he participate in a vow, most likely a Nazarite vow.

If Paul’s intent were to begin a new faith, here was the perfect opportunity to straighten out his fellow apostles by explaining that the commandments were no longer necessary and that salvation was by faith alone now. But he agreed to participate in this vow, showing his observance of the commandments.

Amazingly, the belief that Paul opposed Old Testament law is still held by most ministers today. Even though Paul agrees to verify his adherence to the commandments, most continue to overlook that fact and perpetuate this false notion about Paul.

In Acts 24:14 he again reaffirms his commitment to the faith delivered in the Old Testament: “But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the Elohim of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.”

The word heresy here is equivalent to the word cult. Even though many viewed Paul as deviating from his former foundation and now was in a cult, he fully acknowledged the faith of his forefathers. He firmly professed that he believed all things written in the law and in the prophets.

How is it possible that he believed all things in the Old Testament and yet taught a brand new religion based on Greco-Roman ideas? Obviously such a notion does not hold up to the scrutiny of Scripture. To state otherwise is to contradict Paul’s own statement! As people misunderstood and misinterpreted Paul during his own day, the same occurs today.

Paul was not an advocate of a new religion; instead he surrendered himself to his childhood faith. He embraced his Hebraic roots, including the law and the prophets. The only difference before and after his conversion involved his view of the Messiah and the impact this had on salvation.

As seen in his autobiography, prior to coming to the knowledge
of Yahshua, Paul considered himself a Pharisee. He was proud of his devotion to the law and believed his efforts made him worthy of salvation. After coming to the Messiah, he realized that works were not enough.

**Harmonizing Faith and Law**

The question is, did this newfound revelation radically change Paul’s view on the Law?

He answers this question in the third chapter of Romans: “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the Elohim of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one Elohim, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not: yea, we establish the law,” Romans 3:27-31.

Even though Paul understood that a believer was justified by faith apart from works, he also understood that this did not revoke the need for obedience to the law. In verse 31 he states that believers are to establish the law. The word “establish” comes from the Greek histemi. *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon* defines this word as, “… to establish a thing, to cause it to stand, to uphold or sustain the authority or force of anything.”

Notice that this definition conveys the thought-sustaining authority of a thing. In this instance it’s referring to the authority of the Old Testament commandments. So while a person may not be justified through the Law, this does not negate or remove our obligation to obey. The law is a measuring stick that defines right living. When we remove that measuring stick we have no way to measure what is right and wrong.

Sadly, this is exactly what has occurred in our culture today. Years ago people looked to the Bible as the absolute source of truth and morality. Today this is no longer the case. People now believe that truth is a personal preference. For example, many see nothing wrong with living together out of wedlock or two people of the same gender marrying. Because society no longer acknowledges
sin and the Bible as the standard of morality, such examples of sin are now tolerated and even paraded.

From this passage and many others like it, Paul explains that faith and law are not diametrically opposed but complement each other. Faith brings us to Messiah through repentance and justification, and the Law provides a method of sanctification, i.e., the process by which a believer is found righteous. The Law is more than a random set of rules, but is a blueprint for virtue and morality.

**First to the Jew**

Another way of viewing the importance of the Old Testament is to understand Yahweh’s plan of salvation. The truth was first delivered to Israel. This is a historical fact! Only afterwards was it brought to the gentiles or those outside of Israel. Paul confirms this in Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the good news of Messiah: for it is the power of Elohim unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

Paul is speaking here about salvation and confirms that it was first delivered to the Jews, representing Israel, in the form of the Old Testament and later it was given to the gentiles. Contrary to what some believe, salvation along with the many other concepts did not originate in the New Testament. These truths were firmly established first in the Old Testament.

For example, the word “salvation” is found 119 times in the Old Testament of the King James Bible. The word “faith” is found twice, i.e., Deuteronomy 32:20 and Habakkuk 2:4. Remarkably, Paul in Romans 1:17 quotes Habakkuk when describing the
“righteousness of faith.”

Similarly, we find the word “grace” mentioned 39 times from Genesis through Zechariah. It first appears in Genesis 6:8 in reference to Noah. If not for this man finding grace, all the human race would have been destroyed through the flood. Yahweh’s divine favor on Noah led to the preservation of mankind.

These examples illustrate that the message of salvation and redemption was first delivered to Israel in the Old Testament. It also verifies that these core concepts are not Grecian, but Hebraic in origin. As seen earlier, the assembly blossomed from the Hebrew faith. This was, and remains, its foundation.

Many have the impression that after the death of the Messiah these promises were transferred from the Jews to the church. They were not transferred, but extended. In other words, the church or more properly, the assembly or congregation, did not replace Israel, but was absorbed into Israel.

**Israelites Defined**

Paul confirms this truth in two key passages in Romans. There he describes the attributes of a true believer and the process by which the gentiles are grafted into the Hebraic promise. For nearly 2,000 years this truth has been hidden by the church.

Many believe that the church replaced Israel in the New Testament. Theologians call it “replacement theology.” This doctrine wipes the New Testament clean of its Hebraic roots, something that the apostles never intended or taught.

In one of the most insightful verses, Paul in Romans 9:4 describes a believer as an Israelite and provides several key attributes. It reads, “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of Elohim, and the promises.”

Notice that Paul does not use the word “Christian,” but “Israelite” to describe a New Testament believer or disciple of the Messiah. In addition, he provides six characteristics that all believers have in common.

The first attribute mentioned is the “adoption.” This word derives
from the Greek *huiothlesia* and refers to sonship. In Exodus 4:22, Israel is called Yahweh’s son and firstborn. It’s important to note that this adoption began with Israel in the Old Testament and was then extended through Messiah to the gentiles in the New Testament (that is not to state that non-Israelites could not be grafted also in the Old Testament). As Paul confirms in Ephesians 2:15, through Yahshua’s death and resurrection He made Jew and gentile into “one new man.”

The second characteristic mentioned is “glory.” This is from the Greek *doxa*, which offers a very broad definition. One of the definitions provided by *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon* states, “the glorious condition of blessedness into which is appointed and promised that true [believers] shall enter after their Savior’s return from heaven.” This refers to the reward or splendor that those in the Messiah will receive when Yahshua returns to establish His Kingdom.

The third attribute is “covenants.” This word comes from the Greek *diatheke* and means, “a disposition, i.e. (specially) a contract,” (Strong’s). Notice that this word is used in the plural, which confirms that the faith of the Messiah and the apostles was based not only on the wirings of the New Testament, but also on those covenants that preceded it, namely the Old Testament.

Even though the Old and New testaments are the two main covenants, there are several minor covenants also mentioned, including: the Adamic (Gen. 1:26-30, 2:16-17), the Noahic (Gen. 9:11), the Abrahamic (Gen. 12:1-3), and the Davidic (2Sam. 7:8-16). While each of these covenants contains different assurances, each of them required obedience and faith in Yahweh.

The fourth characteristic is the “giving of the law.” This phrase derives from the Greek *nomothesia* and refers to “legislation (specifically, the institution of the Mosaic code)” (Strong’s). Paul says that part of being a believer includes keeping the law given to Moses. Considering today’s aversion to the Torah, it’s surprising that Paul provides this attribute. Even more remarkable is the fact that so many ministers miss it.

The fifth attribute is the “service of Elohim.” This refers to the ministration or method of worship, including the rights and
ordinances in the Old Testament. Even though many of these rites have changed through Yahshua’s sacrifice, as believers we continue to offer spiritual sacrifices. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Elohim by Yahshua Messiah,” 1Peter 2:5.

The final characteristic is the “promises.” This word comes from the Greek *epaggelia* and denotes “an announcement (for information, assent or pledge; especially a divine assurance of good)” (Strong’s). The good news in the New Testament is twofold: 1) Salvation through Yahshua and 2) the promise of the coming Kingdom.

Some will contend that these six attributes are not speaking about believers today, but are a summary of Old Testament Israel. Paul lays this theory to rest in verse six where he states, “…For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.”

This statement by Paul might seem confusing, however, his point is quite simple. He’s confirming that not all native-born Israelites are true Israelites. In other words, he’s making a distinction between nationality and religious practice. As Revelation 12:17 and 14:12 verify, an Israelite (representing a New Testament believer) is one who keeps the commandments of Yahweh and holds to the faith of Yahshua. If we neglect either one we disqualify ourselves as believers. This includes natural born Israelite and gentiles.
**Parable of the Olive Tree**

Paul also speaks to this Israelite connection in Romans 11. He describes there the process by which believers are grafted into the promise. This is one of the most important New Testament principles. While many churches teach that the church has replaced Israel, Paul teaches that the assembly is grafted into the promise given to Israel.

To ensure that we understand Paul’s message in its entirety, we will review verses 13-22: “For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if Elohim spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of Elohim: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”

Even though Paul was an apostle to the gentiles, he still had a concern for his people. It was his hope that some of his fellow Israelite brethren would come to know and accept Yahshua as the one true Messiah. The fact that many Jews refused to accept Yahshua allowed gentiles to enter the fold through the process of being grafted in.

This same message is also found in Yahshua’s parable of
the wedding banquet in Matthew 22:1-14. Because His first guests (Israel) refused to come (symbolizing their rejection of Yahshua), the king (Yahweh) sent His servants (the apostles) into the highways to find those who would come (the gentiles).

As seen in both Paul’s metaphor of the olive tree and Yahshua’s parable of the wedding banquet, Yahweh is now calling gentiles into the promise. This is because of Israel’s rejection of the Messiah. In Paul’s analogy of the olive tree he states that the root and branches are holy. The root symbolizes the Hebraic promise given to Abraham and the branches represent natural Israel. He also mentions wild olive branches. These symbolize the gentile believers who are grafted into this Hebraic promise.

Through this analogy, Paul attests to the following: The root of the New Testament is grounded in the Old Testament; not all natural-born Israelites were cast aside or rejected by the Messiah; and instead of replacing Israel, the gentiles are spliced into the promise given to Abraham.

**Heirs of Abraham**

Interestingly, the patriarch Abraham is a pivotal figure in both Old and New testaments. Paul in the third chapter of Galatians explains his connection to the New Testament: “For as many of you as have been baptized into Messiah have put on Messiah. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Messiah Yahshua. And if ye be Messiah’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise,” verses 27-29.

Paul begins by saying that baptism represents the death of our old man and the birth of a new creature. Through this symbolic process of death and rebirth, we also share in the likeness of His resurrection at His Second Coming. Within the context of salvation, Paul also says that there’s no discrimination within the body of Messiah. This includes nationality, social status, and gender.

He closes here by focusing on Abraham. He confirms those immersed into Yahshua’s Name are also heirs of Abraham. The word “heirs” comes from the Greek kleronomos. According to the *Vine’s*
Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, this word “denotes one who obtains a lot or portion (kleros, ‘a lot,’ nemomai, ‘to possess’), especially of an inheritance.”

Even though the adoption occurs through baptism into Yahshua’s Name, the inheritance refers to the promise given to Abraham. Scripture states that all the families of the earth would be blessed through this man, Genesis 28:14. This occurs in two ways: to Abraham was given the covenant; and through his seed was born Yahshua the Messiah, the Savior of mankind.

This tie to Abraham shows unequivocally a connection and continuity between the Old and New testaments. The belief that the Old Testament was only for Israel and the New Testament only for the church could not be further from the truth. The Messiah and the apostles viewed the Old Testament as inspired and authoritative.

Benefits of Being of Judah
In addition to the blessings provided by Abraham, the New Testament provides a similar benefit for the Jews. In the third chapter of Romans, Paul gives one major reason why today’s believers should respect the Jews, “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of Elohim,” verses 1-2.

Even though Paul mentions only the Jews, it’s important to acknowledge that Yahweh’s law was given to all twelve tribes and not just to Judah, the Jewish people. However, what is special about the Jews is that they preserved Yahweh’s Word throughout the ages.

Unlike the northern kingdom, which broke away during the reign of Rehoboam, Judah (representing the tribes of Judah and Benjamin) continued to uphold the Scriptures. In fact, this is why the New Testament focuses on the Jews instead of Israel collectively. Because they were the only ones observing Yahweh’s Word, by proxy they represented all twelve tribes.

The word “oracles” here comes from the Greek logion and means, “an utterance of Yahweh.” This refers to the Old Testament commandments given by Yahweh to Moses. If the law is no longer
necessary in the New Testament, why is Paul even mentioning these commandments in the Book of Romans? Obviously, he understood that the commandments were still relevant in the New Testament.

The Messiah too confirms a special connection to the Jews. He states, “…for salvation is of the Jews,” John 4:22.

Prior to this statement Yahshua had gone to Sychar, a city in the land of Samaria. While there, he met a Samaritan woman near a well. This woman explained to Yahshua that while the Jews worshiped in Jerusalem that her people worshiped in this mountain. She was referring to Mount Gerizim, near this Samaritan city.

Yahshua replied by explaining that there was coming a day when believers would not exclusively worship in Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem, but would worship Yahweh in spirit and truth. He prophesied that this saying would be fulfilled in that day. This statement by Yahshua is prophetic and confirms that worship is no longer isolated to one location.

So what did Yahshua mean when He said, “…salvation is of the Jews?” Often Scripture provides for more than one application. This passage is an example of this usage. Yahshua confirmed the authority of the Old Testament and the entrustment of the law to
the Jews (again, representing Israel collectively). In addition, He also spoke of His own position as the Savior of mankind. Both of these truths are central to the faith of the New Testament.

Like the Apostle Paul, it was never Yahshua’s intent to begin a new faith from what He learned as a child. He came to strengthen the Word, not demolish it. Yahshua embraced His Hebraic roots, as should all believers today. As disciples of the Messiah it’s important to understand that when we deviate from the promise that Yahweh gave to Israel we also deviate from the faith of our Savior and the apostles.

**Becoming a Jew Inwardly**

In Romans 2:25-29, Paul explains that there are two types of Jews. “For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of Elohim,” verses 25-29. This circumcision is not a surgical procedure, but a way of life.

Paul is making an important distinction between Jews by birth and Jews by faith. When he speaks about the circumcision, he’s referring to natural Jews or Israelites. Conversely, when he speaks about the uncircumcision, he’s referring to non-Jews or gentiles.

He says that when the uncircumcision (gentiles) obey the commandments that their uncircumcision becomes circumcision and that they are now inward Jews. What an amazing revelation! Specifically, what’s the difference between an outward Jew and an inward Jew? An outward Jew is a native-born Israelite. An inward Jew is a believer (whether Jew or gentile) who accepts both the commandments and the faith of Yahshua the Messiah.
Dominion of the Law
As mentioned earlier, Paul was not against the commandments. He understood the need for the influence of the law within society. He explains in Romans 7:1, “Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?”

The word “dominion” comes from the Greek kurieuo and according to Strong’s means “to rule.” Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words expands upon this definition. It reads, “to be lord over, rule over, have dominion over (akin to A, No. 2), is used of (a) divine authority over men, Rom 14:9, ‘might be Lord’; (b) human authority over men, Luke 22:25, ‘lordship,’ I Tim 6:15, ‘lords’ (RV, marg., ‘them that rule as lords’); (c) the permanent immunity of Christ from the ‘dominion’ of death, Rom 6:9; (d) the deliverance of the believer from the ‘dominion’ of sin, Rom 6:14; (e) the ‘dominion’ of law over men, Rom 7:1; (f) the ‘dominion’ of a person over the faith of other believers, 2 Cor 1:24 (RV, ‘lordship’).”

Based on the above definitions, how is it possible for the law both to have dominion and to be obsolete? These contradictory notions cannot both be right. From the evidence the truth regarding the commandments should be obvious. Not only are they relevant, but they also have authority over us.

Paul illustrates this point in verse seven, “…I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou Shalt Not Covet.” The same question could be asked of any number of laws in the Old Testament, including commandments pertaining to theft, adultery, and murder.

The point that he understood and so many miss today is that Yahweh’s commandments are for the well-being of mankind and are not to our detriment.

In verse 12, he continues, “…the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Surely, Paul not only expresses the significance of the commandments here, but also its benefits. He understood that the law was a reflection of our Heavenly Father’s own ethics and values. When we embrace and obey them, we will prosper and be blessed.
Yahshua the Messiah Observed the Sabbath

Along with those commandments dealing with morality, Scripture teaches that Yahshua and His apostles, including Paul, also observed laws pertaining to proper worship, including the Sabbath and Feasts.

Even though most in the church today see these days as obsolete and accept replacing them with pagan holidays such as Easter and Christmas, they are incredibly important to our Creator Yahweh and to His Son, Yahshua the Messiah.

Based on the New Testament, the Messiah and His apostles observed the Sabbath and Feasts. Consider the following examples showing Sabbath observance:

“And he said unto them, the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Master also of the sabbath,” Mark 2:27-28. Prior to His stating this, the Pharisees reprimanded Yahshua for allowing His apostles to pick ears of grain as they walked through a grain field on the Sabbath. The Pharisees were guilty of adding many man-made laws to Yahweh’s Word through their Talmud, which was a record of their traditions.

In fact, this rabbinic reference adds 39 additional laws to the Sabbath alone, including specific laws regarding sowing, plowing, reaping, binding, weaving, tying, untying, tearing, etc. It’s important
to realize that all these rabbinic traditions are nowhere to be found in Scripture. Similar to some Christian denominations, many Jews believe they have the authority to add to the Bible.

Even though intentions may have been honorable, through their man-made laws they made the Sabbath a burden and missed the entire point. Yahshua said that the Sabbath was made for man. In other words, the Sabbath was created as a blessing to man by allowing one day of rest. This statement is certainly not expressing the abolition of the Sabbath. A similar account is also found in the twelfth chapter of Matthew.

In Mark 6:2 Yahshua again shows His commitment to the Sabbath, “And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?”

The argument has been made that the Messiah worshiped in the synagogue on the Sabbath because He was Jewish and He was trying to reach His Jewish kinsmen. While both of these points are true, it’s untrue that this was His main motivation. His reason for worshiping on the Sabbath was quite simple, it was a command by His Heavenly Father and He kept all of Yahweh’s commands, John 14:31.

If more people would only acknowledge Yahweh’s Word and ignore the millennia of tradition that the church has wrongly established, we would see a transformation to proper worship surpassing even the Great Awakening. It’s time that we as believers wake up and realize the Hebraic roots of our faith. It is time to understand that the tenets delivered in the Old Testament are the same as found in the New Testament. Everything about the Old and New testaments is Israelite based, because the covenant was given to Israel, and to have a part in it means to be grafted into Israel.

**Paul Also Observed the Sabbath**

What’s more striking and convincing than the Messiah observing the Sabbath is the fact that Paul also observed this day long after
Yahshua’s death and ascension to heaven. We find three key examples in the book of Acts, also known as Acts of the Apostles. It’s called this because within this mountain of a book we find how the apostles understood and observed their New Testament faith.

The first example is in Acts 13, “Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem. But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down,” verses 13-14.

Now why would Paul and his company observe the Sabbath? The answer should be obvious, they believed in the Sabbath. If the Sabbath was not important, then what would be the reason for Paul’s continued commitment to this day?

A second instance is found in Acts 17:2: “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.”

It states here that it was Paul’s “manner” to worship on the seventh-day Sabbath. This word derives from the Greek word *ethos* and refers to a habit or custom that is either of a personal conviction or by command. Strong’s defines *ethos* as, “a usage (prescribed by habit or law).” In this case, while it was Paul’s custom, his conformance to the Sabbath was based on biblical law. Paul obeyed the Sabbath because it was a command from his Creator!

Another important fact is the timeframe from Yahshua’s resurrection. This account took place some 20 after Yahshua’s death and resurrection. Did Paul miss the memo that the Sabbath was no longer necessary? Of course not, he understood the Sabbath was still obligatory for him and other believers. This shows beyond all uncertainty that the Sabbath never changed for the apostles.

It also confirms that he reasoned in the synagogue for “three Sabbath days.” This phrase refers to three consecutive Sabbaths. From this example there should be no question as to Paul’s continued commitment to the seventh-day Sabbath.

A final witness is found in Acts 18:4. “And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.”

The Apostle Paul observed *every* Sabbath. Perhaps if Paul only
kept the Sabbath occasionally a person could argue that it wasn’t that crucial to him. However, we see here something entirely different. He kept every Sabbath holy.

It’s also significant to understand what he was doing on the Sabbath. Besides worshiping his Father in Heaven, he persuaded both Jews and Greeks. His persuading the Jews should be obvious, but what about Greeks? If the Sabbath were strictly for the Jews and the Hebrews why are Greeks in attendance?

So that there’s no confusion regarding the word “Greeks,” this word comes from the Greek *hellen*. Strong’s defines the Greek as “an inhabitant of Hellas; by extension a Greek-speaking person, especially a non-Jew.”

The reason they were worshipping on the Sabbath is simple: the Sabbath day never changed.

Based on the above passages, there is no doubt as to which day Paul worshiped. Perhaps even more remarkable, not once does Acts or any other New Testament book show him or the other apostles worshipping on Sunday.

Many will argue that Paul was doing this only because he was a Jew or Israelite. However, the biblical record shows otherwise. This is certainly more than a habit he learned as a child. It was a full-fledged conviction based on his understanding of Scripture.

The fact is, the word Sabbath is mentioned 60 times in the King James Version of the New Testament. Conversely, the “first day” is mentioned only 12 times and not once does it mean a Sunday observance.

**Scholarly Confessions**

Scholars in many different denominations freely acknowledge that the Sabbath was not changed in the Bible, but only through the dictates of the Roman Church. For example, consider the following sources directly from the Roman Church:

“It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and all other Christians, that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church, and those who observe the day observe a
commandment of the Catholic Church” (Priest Brady, in an address, reported in the Elizabeth, NJ News on March 18, 1903).

“Deny the authority of the Church and you have no adequate or reasonable explanation or justification for the substitution of Sunday for Saturday in the Third (Protestant Fourth) Commandment of G-d... The Church is above the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact” (Catholic Record, September 1, 1923).

“Of course these two old quotations are exactly correct. The Catholic Church designated Sunday as the day for corporate worship and gets full credit – or blame – for the change” (“This Rock,” The Magazine of Catholic Apologetics and Evangelization, p. 8, June 1997).

Here are additional statements from Lutheran sources:
•  “They [the Catholics] allege the Sabbath changed into Sunday, the Lord’s day, contrary to the Decalogue (10 commandments), as it appears, neither is there any example more boasted of than the changing of the Sabbath day. Great, say they, is the power and authority of the church, since it dispensed with one of the Ten Commandments” (Augsburg Confession of Faith, Art. 28, par. 9).
•  “The Christians in the ancient church very soon distinguished the first day of the week, Sunday; however, not as a Sabbath, but as an assembly day of the church, to study the Word of G-d together, and to celebrate the ordinances one with another: without a shadow of doubt, this took place as early as the first part of the second century” (Bishop Grimald, History of the Sabbath, p. 60).

Lastly, consider the following Baptist references:
•  “There was and is a command to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will however be readily said, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found: Not in the New Testament – absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the
Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week” (Dr. E. T. Hiscox, author of the Baptist Manual).

• “Of course I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of Paganism, and christened with the name of the sun-god, then adopted and sanctified by the Papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism” (Dr. E. T. Hiscox, report of his sermon at the Baptist Minister’s Convention, in New York Examiner, November 16, 1893).

All of these confessions are only the tip of the iceberg. There are also countless other quotations confirming that the Sabbath was altered not by the Bible but by man. The seven-day Sabbath remains the only true day established by our Creator. All other days are counterfeits.

The Bible Shows Complete Continuity

As the Bible reveals, the Messiah and His apostles never forsook the Sabbath or the faith of their forefathers. They continued upholding the same precepts that were delivered to Abraham. If more people understood this core truth, we would see a far different message coming from today’s pulpits. Instead of trying to divorce themselves from the Old Testament, they would embrace it! They would see the value in the commandments as Yahweh’s moral code.

Understanding that the New Testament is rooted in the same Hebraic faith given to Abraham is pivotal and life changing. When we ignore this fact we lose perspective of who our Savior was and
what He really taught. Sadly, the majority of Bible teachers today continue with this fantasy that the Messiah ushered in a new religion based on faith alone with no resemblance to the Hebraic covenant given to the patriarchs of old.

As seen from both scholarship and the Bible, this simply is not the case. As Malachi 3:6 states, Yahweh doesn’t change. He’s the same in both the Old and New testaments. He will also be the same in the coming Kingdom, when His Son reigns over this earth.

At this time, Scripture declares that worship, including the commandments, will go out from Jerusalem. “But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, and to the house of the Elohim of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem,” Micah 4:1-2.

In this coming Kingdom, all of mankind will be governed by Yahweh’s commandments, including the Sabbaths and Feasts, Isaiah 66:23; Ezekiel 45-46; Zechariah 14:16-19.

The more things change, the more they remain the same. This applies to the Hebraic roots of our faith. A Hebraic continuity can be found from Old Testament to New and from New on into our Father’s Kingdom. The same Hebrew roots that Abraham embraced were also embraced by Yahshua the Messiah and His apostles.

Isn’t it time that we, too, consider our Hebrew roots and return to the proper foundation of Yahweh’s Word and its promises?
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