

Word of God vs Traditions of Men I

Man rejects the commandments of God so they can observe their own traditions

Fred R. Coulter—December 3, 2016

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. Today we're going to talk about religion secondarily, and primarily Judaism.

When a lot of people first start coming to understand that Sunday isn't right, Christmas isn't right, they start going to Messianic Jews, especially if they're a Protestant. Let's see something that is no longer applicable in the way that Paul wrote it.

The only ones to whom God gave His Law and words and commandments were to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the children of Israel after the Flood. He gave it to everybody before, right at the creation of Adam and Eve. So, they all had it.

With the rebellion after the Flood, we find in Gen. 11 that God scattered all the nations across the face of the earth. They took with them all of their pagan religion, different names but the same three gods and same practices. Then God called Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and it's said of Abraham that Isaac got the promises that were given to Abraham because *'Abraham obeyed My voice, kept My charge, kept My statutes and My commandments.'*

Then it comes down to the children of Israel, coming out of Egypt, and God gives the Ten Commandments, plus the judgments and statutes that we find in the Old Testament. No other nation on earth had anything to do with the commandments and things of God unless they came in contact with Israel. Of course they didn't have the means of travel like we have today, so that would be an entirely different situation.

Today you can get on a plane and there you go. You can actually get on a plane, like I did in Australia on a Tuesday at 5 o'clock, and land in Los Angeles on Tuesday at 2 o'clock. So, I got here before I left. They didn't have that kind of thing back then. The only way that Gentiles could come into the community of the children of Israel was circumcision and keeping the Law. Later, because of sins, the ten tribes of Israel were sent into captivity. Over a hundred years later then the Jews were sent into captivity to Babylon.

When they came back, there was a great revival through Ezra the priest. That's when they canonized the Old Testament and put it in the block form of the Hebrew that we have today. All of these scrolls went out to all the synagogues in the Persian Empire, which also included Babylon because they conquered it.

The synagogues had their services and they would read from the Law, they would read from the Prophets, they would read from the Writings, and then they would have a little homily for today and some special music and things like this.

Basically the church services that people have today, even Protestant and the Church of God, go clear back to that time when the Law was sent out to all of the synagogues in the empire.

The Jews were the only ones that had the Law of God. You couldn't go to any of these other nations and say, 'How do I find God?' They would show you Baal, or they would show you Ashtoreth, or they would show you Tammuz, or all of these other pagan gods.

The Jews, having in writing the Old Testament, had an advantage over all the other heathen nations. They also had the advantage that when they were doing well, and not being punished by God, they received the blessings of God. Plus they had the advantage that the Messiah came through the house of David and Judah and that was Christ.

Go to Chronology V in *The Original Bible in Its Original Order*. The book of Romans was not written until the late 50s at the earliest. You read in the first part, Rom. 1, that Paul said he wanted to come and establish them because they hadn't heard the Gospel.

What does that automatically eliminate, just that one phrase itself? If Peter had been there in 42_{A.D.} they would have known all about it. At the end of the book of the Acts when he called the Jewish leaders from Rome, when he was in prison in Rome, they said, 'We've heard of this, but we know nothing about it.' Either those statements are true, and the Catholics are liars, *Peter was never in Rome!* As a matter of fact, if you want a detailed study on that, go to churchathome.org and we have 21 half-hour segments on *Was Peter Ever in Rome?*

If they hadn't heard the Gospel, and Peter was supposed to be there, then Peter utterly failed.

- Where did he go?
- What did he do?

You find the first epistle that Peter wrote, he says, 'Greetings from Babylon.' He was in Babylon.

Sidebar: Scholars say that was a euphemism for Rome. If that was a euphemism for Rome, what does that tell you? *Rome was practicing the*

Babylonian mysteries. No! Peter was the apostle to the circumcision and the Jews were in Babylon and that's where they went. We find no record of mass circumcision in Italy because he went there.

Romans 3:1: "What then *is* the advantage of the Jew... [that is over the Gentiles, at the time he was writing in about 58_{A.D.}] ...or what *is* the profit of circumcision?" You can go back to Rom. 2 and read it that circumcision in the flesh didn't mean anything now after the coming of Christ because it was the circumcision of the heart.

Sidebar: When God makes a law, who can change it? *Only God!* When He changes it, what does He do? He raises it from the level of the physical letter of law fulfillment to the spiritual level. Only God can modify His laws and when He does He raises it to a higher level.

Instead of circumcision, it is baptism. Baptism is greater than circumcision, because that happens on the 8th day of the infant boy's life and he doesn't know a thing about it and it has no meaning to him. But baptism is greater because that is your symbolic death, a higher requirement.

Verse 2: "Much in every way. Primarily, in that they were entrusted with the oracles of God." That was true at that time. ***It is no longer true today!*** The Jews have no advantage at all until God starts dealing directly with them. In my experience, in my life as a minister, and going through all of these things, only know of one Jew who does not rely on any traditions of the Jews and that is Michael Heiss. Then he goes through and shows what if some didn't believe.

Be sure and read: *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?* by Philip Neal Why is that a question on the title? *Because they claim that Moses, after giving the written Law, gave to the elders an oral law that was passed down to every generation!*

I want you to think about something. Go through all of the Book of the Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Everything there that Moses wrote is, 'And God spoke to Moses saying, speak to the children of Israel and say to them...' Is not something written more valid and important than something oral? *Yes, indeed!* So, there is no advantage there.

In the back of the book on Judaism we have an appendix going through a good number of the traditions of the Jews (from *Code of Jewish Law*). God inspired those who wrote the Bible to write His words. Yes, He did use them and they used their own vocabulary and things like that. ***God did not inspire the traditions of the Jews!***

What can you think of that would exclude Moses, even the smallest possibility of giving them an oral tradition that supersedes the words of God? What do you think would do it? There are two examples:

First one has to do with Aaron. They already received the commandment for the Sabbath. Then Moses went up on the mountain and he was with God for 40-days and 40-nights. The children of Israel said, 'We don't know what happened to him. Maybe he fell into the volcanic lava up on top of the mountain and he's no longer here. Aaron, make us gods.' What did God say second commandment? *'You shall not make...'*

Remember Aaron's excuse? He said, 'Moses, I threw the gold in the fire and out leapt this calf.' What did he do? After it was built, he gathered them all around and said, 'This is a feast to the Lord,' when God had already given the Feasts that He wanted to Moses *written down*.

What happened when Moses came down? He was so angry he broke the two tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written. What did Moses say? 'All of those who are on God's side get over here.' The earth opened up and killed all the rest of them.

What does God think then of the commandments of men? Here you have Aaron, chosen for high priest. He only continued to do that because God had mercy on him and because Moses intervened for him. God was ready to destroy Aaron as well and all the children of Israel. We're only here because Moses pleaded with God, 'Don't destroy them.' God said, 'Moses, these people have done so evil. I'll kill them all and I'll raise up my plan through you.' Moses said, 'Lord, don't. Think of what all the heathen are going to say; that You brought them out into the wilderness to kill them.' God said, 'All right, I'll be merciful.' God will be merciful if we ask Him, but no one can tell God what to do.

What is the second example? There are some others, but what is the second example involving Moses directly? There were two times that God commanded that water would come out of the rock. How God did that, we don't know. That would be nice to have during the drought. You'd have people lined up with containers around the block.

The first time God said to *strike* the rock and it would bring forth water. The second time God said to *speak* to the rock. The people were so agitated against them, 'Who is going to bring us water? What are we going to drink?' Moses got mad and struck and rock and beat it. God sent the water, but how did God view that?

God said, ‘Moses, I’m going to take you up on this mountain and you will see the *promised land*, but because you didn’t believe Me when I said to *speak to the rock*, and you struck it, you’re not going into the *promised land*.’

I bring all of these up for this reason: Does any man, anywhere, at any time, have the ability to write religious laws and replace the Word of God?

What does it say in Isa. 8? *If anyone comes and says, ‘Let us worship other gods, get in contact with the dead,’ he said, ‘Don’t believe them! If they speak not according to this word—the Word of God—there is no light in them.’*

Let’s look at a couple of Scriptures now in light of that. Today, especially in the end-time, the Jews have absolutely no advantage. God has spread His Word, caused it to be distributed in the world—Old Testament, New Testament—all of that. So, the advantage is not with the Jews, the advantage is with the Churches of God who are faithful.

The comment was made you look down through history and there was no advantage to be a Jew. Look at how they were treated and who said they would be treated that way for rejecting God? Think about it; that tells you a lot about the Word of God.

Isa. 9—here’s the state of the world with religion today and in some degrees parts of the Churches of God. If you read Rev. 2 & 3 you have seven churches. When you read it carefully five were not faithful, two were: Smyrna and Philadelphia. Everyone wants to claim they’re Philadelphia. I haven’t heard anyone claim they’re Smyrna because you’d be martyred. There are a lot of those from Ephesians because they have left off their love of God. You have Pergamos, they’re ruled by man. If you don’t have our new booklet, *Is the Ministry God’s Government?* You write for it.

If you were in the Church of God where the ministers ruled with a rod of iron, that’s not from God. That’s a sin within that organization.

Then you have Thyatira, that was so bad. Sardis was so weak. He said, ‘Strengthen the things that remain. I know you’re almost dead, but you strengthen the things that remain and I won’t blot your name out of the Book of Life.’ That’s quite a statement when you think about that. Then you have the Philadelphians; then Laodiceans. We covered that recently.

Isaiah 29:9: “Be stunned and amazed! Blind your eyes and be blind! They are drunk, but not with wine; they stagger, but not *with* strong drink.” All nations are drunk with the wine of her fornication and all of the merchants have become rich with the abundance of her delicacies (Rev. 17 & 18).

Sidebar: Why did we just have Black Friday? Because the sun didn’t shine? *No!* That’s for many companies the first day of the year they show a good profit, because of all of the Christmas sales and goodies. Who makes the money off all of those things? The merchants of the world (Rev. 18).

What happens when you leave God? Verse 10: “For the LORD has poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes; He has covered the prophets and your rulers, *and* the seers.” *They don’t know!*

I talked to a man recently who has received some of our material and he was astonished we didn’t believe in the trinity. He just left the Presbyterian Church after they ordained a homosexual minister. He needs to understand he’s been blinded for all the years he’s been there and he’s well past the 70s. I don’t know exactly how old he is. He was so staunch on the trinity. I told him we’d send him some material.

Sidebar on the trinity: I’m going to do a complete—set up an extra camera over here, so I can point out all the things that we need to understand concerning the basic Greek.

Within those seven churches, tie in Matt. 13, you have tares, you have those who get all excited and they want to do things, but they quit right away. So, you have all of that going on. Then within the churches, and in every one of them what does Jesus say? *Repent!* That’s why repentance is important, every day.

Verse 11: “And the vision of all has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed...” Isn’t that what they say? ‘Oh, we can’t understand it.’ If you try and read it, you have to have a priest if you’re a Catholic. Protestants just throw it all away. I need to bring my evangelical Bible—two verses:

1. believe and you pass from death to life
2. hallelujah you’re saved

Those are false!

Anyone that’s really serious, when they see all of this stuff going on, and especially in the Catholic church, men running around in women’s clothes and robes and things like this, and doing all of these silly rituals. Anybody in their right mind would look at that and say, ‘How can they do that?’

It’s sealed. “...which they give to one who is learned... [the educated, they know, but do they really know? *No, they don’t really know*] ...saying, ‘Please read this,’ and he says, ‘I cannot, for it is sealed.’... [now let me tell you about *our* traditions] ...And the book is delivered to him who is not learned, saying, ‘Please read this,’ and he says, ‘I am not learned.’ And the LORD said, ‘Because this

people draw near *Me* with their mouth, and with their lips honor Me, but **their worship of Me is made up of the traditions of men learned by rote...**” (vs 11-13).

You find a lot of them here, traditions. Catholics—traditions. Isn’t it interesting, the Protestants want to do away with the Law, *which God says is perfect!* Think on that!

“...and their fear toward me is *taught* by the commandments of men; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do again a marvelous work among this people, *even* a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise ones shall perish, and the wisdom of their intelligent ones shall vanish.’ Woe to those who go deep to hide *their* purpose from the LORD! And their works are in the dark, and they say, ‘Who sees us? And who knows us?’ Surely, you have turned things upside down! Shall the potter be regarded as the potter’s clay; for shall the work say of him who made it, ‘He did not make me?’ Or shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, ‘He had no understanding?’” (vs 13-16).

Do you really want to teach God? We’ll look at what happened in the book of Job. Do you really want to teach God? If you do, if you want to put your traditions ahead of the Word of God, if you want to put your Sunday-keeping ahead of the Word of God, which is perfect... The Word of God is perfect and *Sunday is a teaching of men*. They do it every Sunday. That’s amazing!

Is that a law of the Catholic Church and the Protestant Church? If they go to church on Sunday, especially in the phrase of the Greek, ‘works of law,’ is that not a work of human law and tradition? So, think on that! That’s something!

You want to put your traditions before God, Isaiah 40:12: “Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand... [do a little study on oceans, lakes and rivers] ...and meted out the heavens with a span?....”

Just last night I was watching the National Geographic Channel. They were showing all of these great things that they have discovered in the heavens. After they put the new set of glasses on the Hubble Telescope they saw incredible things.

When we sing the hymn *The Almighty God*, you see those three pillars go up. Those pillars are called the pillars of creation. Out of it buds a little new star that’s bigger than our galaxy. This is so tall and there are three of them.

I’m sitting there watching this and I thought, that is fantastic that God has given this witness to us as human beings to show His great power. Look at what He’s done and what He’s made. Then look at

the things that we have done and made. No comparison!

“...And who has comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, and who was His counselor that he might instruct Him?” (vs 12-13).

Like this: ‘Lord, we know those Jews have been so nasty. We know that You have cursed them and You gave them the Sabbath to curse them. So, what we are doing, we are going to modify Your Sabbath Law and we’re going to keep Sunday. What do you think of that?’ If He reacted right away, they wouldn’t be here. But God gives free moral agency.

‘Oh, and by the way, we don’t like that Passover and Your Holy Days. We’re going to have Christmas and Easter, Halloween. All of those good things.’

Verse 14: “With whom did He take counsel... [Where is it ever recorded that God asked the man, ‘What do you think?’] ...and *who* instructed Him and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and made known the way of understanding to Him?” ***The heavens declare the glory of God!***

Verse 15: “Behold, the nations *are* like a drop in a bucket...” What did Satan offer Jesus? Because of the sins of mankind, all the nations have been given unto the control of Satan the devil, with the exception of those whom God calls. Satan said, ‘You bow down and worship me, and I’ll give you all this authority.’ What was he really in reality giving Christ? *Nothing!* God does not view things the way men do.

“...and are counted as the small dust of the scales; behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing”(v 15).

Verse 17: “**All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted by Him as less than nothing, and vanity.**” What was it that Solomon wrote about human life and human experience? ‘*Vanity of vanities. All is vanity!*’

God lives forever. Can something vain instruct Him? *No way!* God is merciful and kind and in His plan He’s going to work it all out. Because people take His name into what they do, notice how He views it:

Isaiah 43:24: “...but you have made Me serve with your sins; you have wearied Me with your iniquities.”

Every time a Protestant minister stands up there and says of Sunday: this is the day that the Lord has made. He didn’t do it. He made all days and He said Sabbath Day.

I want to show you something really important. We've covered part of this before: In seven days God renewed the surface of the earth (Gen. 1 & 2). I've given a sermon recently on the appointed times (Gen. 1:14).

After God made man, what was the first thing He did? Had a Sabbath meeting with His creation. How important is the Sabbath? *Remember, the Law of God is perfect!* Right in the beginning. What happened when they sinned and decided for themselves they knew better than God? Then you have the promise of a Savior (Gen. 3:14-15).

Stop and think for just a minute. What are the two most important things for people in coming to God? that they need to do? that they need to change?

1. Sabbath
2. Passover, the Messiah

Right from the beginning! Isn't that amazing? That's why when you go to the Church at Sardis, it said 'you have a name that you lived, but your works are not complete; strengthen what remains and I won't blot your name out of the Book of Life.'

Most of those Churches of God keep the Sabbath and the Passover. Those two. Those who keep the Holy Days, according to the Word of God with the Scriptures, then God opens the door to understanding of what His plan is.

Everything that God has done that's complicated, comes down to a simple premise. Then it's stated out in the Ten Commandments.

(go to the next track)

Before we get into Job, this becomes a real key as we go through and understand the other things. If you have a first edition of the *Faithful Version Bible*, you do not have Appendix Z. Appendix Z is very important for you to have. So if you have the first edition of the Bible, you write me, we'll send you a replacement that has Appendix Z.

In the first edition of the *Faithful Version Bible*, Chronology V it's on page 1372. In the second edition it's on page 1480. What that chronology does, that takes you through a summary through the Scriptures and chapters of the New Testament showing the flow of how things were and what happened and when the various books were written.

This is why when people say, 'Why don't you put all the commentaries and appendices in a different volume?' *Because you need it with the Bible!* You don't have to go get another book. What happens if you just get used to the Bible and never study the appendices or whatever, then you miss the important things that are necessary to understand the

basic problems with Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism. They are all there.

- Appendix A is the *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*
- Appendix E: When was Jesus Christ Born?
- Appendix J: Jesus' Three Days and Three Nights of Entombment and His Resurrection

One other thing I want to mention here, it's like this gentlemen that I was talking to concerning the trinity. He says, 'Three in one; the trinity is God; the Holy Spirit is God.' I said, 'Here's a simple question: can you show me from the New Testament where it says God the Holy Spirit or the Holy Spirit, which is God?' Then I left him two little clues:

John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Holy Spirit was the third one. *NO, doesn't say it!*

Then I said to please read the introduction of all the epistles of Paul, Peter, John and Jude. I'm sure it does in James, too, but James was the first of the General Epistles written.

'And tell me why Paul affronted the Holy Spirit as God, because he said, 'Grace and peace be to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,' in every opening. That's the most important part of every epistle. It has God's blessing at the top of it, but it never says: 'And from the Holy Spirit.' So, I just left him with that. He was very new and didn't want to talk about it, so I just left him with a few clues.

Here is a big clue, Job 40. You start out at the beginning of Job, we'll summarize it, Job was blameless. He kept the commandments of God in the letter of the Law, maybe even some of them in the spirit of the Law. The trial came upon Job and Satan didn't really understand the heart of Job, but God let Satan go ahead and do to him what he did to him as we find in the first couple chapters of Job.

Later Job said, 'I wish there were an umpire—the *King James Version* says betwixtmen—between me and God that we could debate, it was actually go to court, and God would have to admit that my righteousness was right.' But Job failed to remember something that Jesus says in the New Testament. The apostles came to Jesus and said, 'Lord, increase our faith.'

So, He said, 'When you have done everything that you have been commanded—and remember Job did everything that God commanded him—you shall say you're unprofitable servants,' because you can do what is commanded and really

not love God. You can believe God to a certain point, but not really believe Him the way He wants.

All of the righteousness of Job could never replace the righteousness of God. Even Elihu said, ‘Job, do you think this is right that you say that you are more righteous than God or your righteousness is more than God.’ He didn’t understand it.

Job said, ‘I wish God would come down and talk to me.’ *Well, God did!* He showed up in a whirlwind. ‘Job, where were you when I made the heavens and the earth and everything?’

Here we come to the conclusion of the matter in Job 40:1: “And the LORD answered Job and said, ‘Shall he who contends with the Almighty instruct *Him*?’” (vs 1-2)

When people come along and *invent their own traditions* or they replace the Word of God with the *teachings of men*, what you are doing, you are contending against God. You are saying, if you keep Sunday, I don’t like the Sabbath. Who made that holy? *God did!*

- Are those who created Sunday Holy?
- Can a man make anything Holy?
- *No!*

The proof of that is you get old and die. You can’t change anything except with God’s Spirit be converted.

Verse 2: “Shall he who contends with the Almighty instruct *Him*?....” Of course not! Isn’t that what they do with Sunday-keeping, holiday-keeping, etc? *Yes!* Regardless!

He says, “...He who reproves God, let him answer it” (v 2). That’s what they do when they have their own traditions. There are many, many traditions; the Jews have many.

Sidebar: When a Jew says Torah, that means the Old Testament and all the traditions combined. What does God say about His Word? *You shall not add to it or take away from it!* We already saw the impossibility of the declaration that the oral tradition was given by Moses. He could not have given it. But they call the whole thing Torah.

When they talk about the Torah, they’re excluding all the things of Scripture that they don’t want to keep. The things they want to keep then they say it’s in the Torah, being the Torah of God rather than the Torah of men.

Confronted face-to-face with God through the whirlwind, v 3: “And Job answered the LORD and said, ‘Behold, I am vile!... [rather than righteous, that’s sure true] ...What shall I answer You? I will lay my hand on my mouth. Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will

proceed no further.’ And the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said” (vs 3-6).

Here’s God’s answer. Anyone who wants to replace the Word of God with something else or change what is in the Bible, the Word of God, or as we have seen, make the homosexual Bible, trying to replace the Bible with the Koran, any of these things.

If you’re going to talk to talk with Me, v 7: “Gird up your loins now like a man. I will demand of you, and you declare unto Me. Will you even annul My judgment?...” (vs 7-8). Think of that! Isn’t that what they do with the holidays? *Yes, indeed!* They say, ‘Oh, we don’t want that; that’s for the Jews.

“...Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous?” (v 8). That’s something! He was accused of claiming his righteousness was more than God, he said, ‘God didn’t understand me. Oh, that I could talk to God.’ Here you are.

Verse 9: “And *have* you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?... [try that] ...Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency... [that is become a spirit being] ...and array yourself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him. Look on everyone *who is* proud, *and* bring him low...” (vs 9-12). That’s exactly what God was doing to Job.

“...and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in darkness. Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you” (vs 12-14)—or this doctrine will save you.

What was the first thing that Jesus said when He came into Galilee? He said, ‘Repent and believe the Gospel; for the Kingdom of God is at hand.’ How do the Protestants get away with—and we’ll add baptism to that—or how do they think that they’re little simple formula or ‘believe Jesus and you’re saved’ and it’s all done? You’ve started and finished in the same breath. They hold that up as the will of God and the work of God and what God is going to do with that person.

We’re going to talk about *traditions*. When you get the book and read the book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?*—and by the way, we have the whole book read so you get a CD with it being read.

This applies to all the traditions of the Jews, the Protestants, the Catholics, and any other religion. The Protestants go here and say, and even the *NIV* said, ‘Thus He declared all flesh clean.’ Blatant mistranslation, because they want to eat their pork and all of their seafood and things.

I was watching the cooking channel and you know I have a very fast thumb. There was this fellow who had this pure pork restaurant down in Florida. He had everything pork. Doing the interview, put the microphone up there, 'Why did you decide on all of this pork? Ham, bacon, pulled pork, spareribs. Why did you do this?' He said, 'I'm a Jew and when I was growing up I couldn't eat any pork. One day I tasted it and I said, 'Hallelujah, this is so good!'

So, with food it's not how it tastes, *it's what it is* before you cook it or eat it. Give that a go with some arsenic and see how that works. This in principle covers all the *traditions*. They had a tradition here and you can read it in the appendices that when they ate they washed their hands thoroughly, clear up to their elbows.

Mark 7:1: "Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes from Jerusalem came together to Him." They always come around because they want to catch Him in something that they can accuse Him of.

Verse 2: "And when they saw some of His disciples eating with defiled hands (that is, unwashed *hands*)... [notice it doesn't say when they came and found His disciples eating some spareribs and sliced ham and pulled pork shoulder] ...they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, holding fast to the tradition of the elders..." (vs 2-3).

Notice it has nothing to do with God, so puts it in the category that if you have a tradition that violates any part of the Word of God, you are going against God and you are by doing that saying that you know more than God and God is wrong.

"...do not eat unless they wash their hands thoroughly. Even *when coming* from the market, they do not eat unless they *first* wash themselves...." (vs 3-4). What if you bought some really good fruit down there at the stand and you were coming home, you couldn't eat it until you got home and washed your hands. I'd eat it!

"...And there are many other things that they have received to observe, *such as the* washing of cups and pots and brass utensils and tables" (v 4).

They also still have the law today. They have two sets of dishes in the finest Jewish homes: one for dairy products and one for other products. They fail to read, because they claim about being descended from Abraham, back there in Gen. 18 [transcriber's correction] when the Lord and two angels came to Abraham to tell him that very shortly he was going to have his son. So, they came, Abraham got up and said, 'Please stay and eat.'

He sent a servant out to kill a fatted calf and he had his wife make some unleavened bread. They

set the table with meat and butter. So, I don't know what the different is, why do they have two sets? Don't they wash them? I don't know what the answer is. That's a *tradition!*

Verse 5: "For this reason, the Pharisees and the scribes questioned Him, *saying*, 'Why don't Your disciples walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?'"—because they love the dirt with their food. *No!*

Verse 6: "And He answered *and* said to them, 'Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written...'" Notice when Jesus gave correction, He always gave what was written. How did He answer Satan? '*It is written.*' What's the first one? 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God.' Where does that place tradition?

"...“This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me”" (v 6). Meaning all of these things that they do, do not enhance your love of God. How are you to love God? *With all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, and with all your being!*

You have these things. People honor God. Isn't that what they do in church? What did God say? 'You made Me to serve with your sins' (Isa. 43).

Verse 7: "“But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men.” For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, *such as* the washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like *this*.... [this covers all of the traditions of men] ...Then He said to them, '**Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your own tradition**'" (vs 7-9).

Line up the Ten Commandments. You worship another god, *you reject them*. What do they have? *Traditions!* Shall not make any idols and bow down to them. If you reject that, you have a church full of idols. **You reject the commandment of God!**

Same way with the third commandment. Every Sunday the Catholic and Protestant ministers take the name of the Lord in vain by saying, 'He said,' when He didn't say, with the exception that if they read the Scripture, that part is true. That's not because of their doing, but *because of God's doing*.

Now let's see how all of this turned out. How were their lies? Remember the one back there (Luke 17) where the two men came to pray: One a publican and one a Pharisee. The Pharisee despised the publican. Who went home justified? *The publican or the tax collector because he repented!*

Matthew 23:1: “Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples...” Why would He say this? *Because at that time if there was a dispute that had to be settled you came to one of the scribes or a Levite!* They could be a Pharisee or Sadducee, didn’t make any difference. They would give you a judgment from the Word of God. They were sitting in the seat of Moses as judges. They set themselves down in it, *inappropriately*, because they kept all of their traditions. The one who is judging also has to let the law judge him.

Verse 2: “Saying, ‘The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on Moses’ seat *as judges*; Therefore, every judgment that they tell you to observe, observe and do....’” (vs 2-3). That’s a judgment out of the Word of God.

They come and say, ‘This man let his bull come into my pasture and he ate the pasture and tore down all the corn. Now my livelihood is ruined.’ Then they get some witnesses. They ask about it and what does it say in the Law of God: That you shall compensate him for what happened. That judgment they were to do. However, if they put in *their own tradition*, don’t have to do it.

“...But do not do according to their works; for they say and do not.... [their traditions. What do those traditions do?] ...For they bind heavy burdens and hard to bear, and lay *them* on the shoulders of men; but they will not move them with *one of their own fingers*. And they do all their works to be seen by men. They make broad their phylacteries...” (vs 3-5).

This covers a lot of things: special dress, badges, ribbons, like the military. There’s a little cloth button medal, they put it on. You’ve been in so many years, you’ve been a sharpshooter, you’ve gone to Korea, Vietnam, Europe, all of those, you were in this battle and they have all of them. Then they have all the stripes on the sleeves and stars on the shoulders.

All of that means nothing if that were a religious thing. It means something in the military for command and control, and so forth, but they were putting on there, ‘I have gone to Jerusalem 5,000 times. I’ve read the Torah 4,000 times in my lifetime and I got a little badge up here for that.’ Kind of like the Boy Scouts and they get the merit badges. That’s what phylacteries were.

Verse 6: “And they love the first place at the suppers, and the chief seats in the synagogues.”

I remember one time Dolores and I went back to the church that we pastored up in Utah in Salt Lake. We went back there on Pentecost and the new minister was there and he’s one of these arrogant, boisterous ministers. Everybody waited on

him hand and foot. In the meeting hall we were in they had a stage. Up on the stage he had all the ministers and all the deacons up there. The line of food was down here and they were going through and picking out the best and bringing it up to them.

He kept calling out to me, ‘Fred, come up here.’ *No, I stayed in line with the brethren and talked with them.* I was not going to go up there in that self-exaltation. Needless to say, no one knows where he is, but he destroyed a lot of people’s lives.

Verse 7: “And the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called by men ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ But you are not to be called Rabbi; for one is your Master, the Christ, and all of you are brethren. Also, do not call *anyone* on the earth your Father; for one is your Father, Who *is* in heaven” (vs 7-9).

Sidebar: Since we’re talking about Messianic Judaism and Judaism, the sacred names of the New Testament are:

- God the Father
- Jesus Christ

That’s it! If you’re Hebrew, and know only the Hebrew language, and you have a Hebrew Bible translated, then you can use the sacred names there. Sacred names is not like a combination to open or close a door. When you pray:

- How is your heart is before God?
- Are you repentant?
- Are you believing?
- Are you loving God?

That’s what’s important!

Jehovah Witnesses always call in on radio programs and if there’s a Catholic priest, they always ask them this question: ‘Why are you priests called fathers? You aren’t even married.’

Verse 10: “Neither be called Master; for one is your Master, the Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant.... [you serve, help, teach] ...And whoever will exalt himself shall be humbled... [it’s much easier to humble yourself than be humbled—witness Job] ...and whoever will humble himself shall be exalted. But **woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!**....” (vs 10-13).

Most honorable people of all, no it says hypocrites. Remember, modern Jewry has come from the Pharisees. Remember that God destroyed the temple twice because of sin.

“...For you devour widows’ houses, and as a pretext you offer prayers of great length. Because of this, you shall receive *the* greater judgment. **Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven before men; for

neither do you yourselves enter, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter” (vs 13-14).

What does that say about gaining salvation through Judaism or Messianic Judaism? You keep them out by false doctrine.

Sidebar: What day of the first month did Jesus keep the Passover with His apostles? *14th day of the 1st month!* One-third of the Gospels is devoted to the Passover, His death and resurrection. You think that’s important? One-third?

Just before He ascended into heaven, what did Jesus tell His disciples? ‘Go into all the world teaching them all things I have commanded you.’ Very important to understand. Was not the Passover one of the things He said, ‘Take this in remembrance of Me’? On what night was that? *The 14th* Very important!

What day do the Jews keep their Passover? and today all Messianic Jews? They keep their Seder—they don’t keep Passover—on the 15th. That’s derived from the commandment of God (Num. 9) that you had to be *in the land* to take the 14th Passover. The Jews in the Diaspora can’t keep a 14th Passover because they’ve rejected Christ and the New Testament. They could keep it, but Messianic Jews, who say they’re following Jesus are not following Jesus concerning the most important thing of all, the Passover, the day that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world.

They keep the exiled Jewish 15th Passover, the 15th day of the 1st month. You find that in John 19. That’s important, because *if you do not keep the Passover on the 14th day, with the foot-washing, the bread, and the wine, Jesus said, ‘You have no part with Me.’* So, there are some dividing lines that are absolutely like a sword cutting a piece of Jello in two. There has to be.

Notice their attitude and notice why God destroyed, as He promised, Jerusalem and the temple. That becomes important.

Verse 15: **“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you travel the sea and the land to make one proselyte, and when he has become one, you make him twofold more a son of Gehenna than yourselves.”

Lots of times we read it “...twofold more a son of Gehenna...” and we forget “...than yourselves.” Which tells us if, when the second resurrection comes, they don’t repent, they are going to Gehenna.

Verse 16: **“Woe to you, blind guides,** who say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.’ *You* fools

and blind!....” (vs 16-17). What brings about blindness? *They won’t hear; they won’t obey.* Invisible veil.

“...For which is greater, the gold or the temple which sanctifies the gold? And *you say,* ‘Whoever shall swear by the altar, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gift that *is* upon it, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.’ *You* fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift, or the altar, which sanctifies the gift? Therefore, the one who swears by the altar swears by it, and by all things that *are* upon it. And the one who swears by the temple swears by it, and by Him Who dwells in it. And the one who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God, and by Him Who sits upon it” (vs 17-22). He’s nullifying all of these claims of righteousness because you swear.

Verse 23: **“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, but you have abandoned the more important *matters* of the law—judgment and mercy and faith. These *you* were obligated to do, and not to leave the others undone.” He’s doing all of this to provoke them in coming against Him.

Verse 24: “Blind guides, who filter out a gnat, but swallow a camel!” Remember that whenever you try and do something, you’re after this little, teeny-weeny thing and you really can’t get it. It really doesn’t amount to anything, but you spend effort and time and money. Never works out. That was your camel.

Verse 25: **“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but within you are full of extortion and excess. Blind Pharisees! First cleanse the inside of the cup and the dish... [that’s your mind, heart, everything] ...so that the outside may also become clean. **Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful *on the* outside, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness” (vs 25-27).

I can’t help but thinking about St. Peter’s Basilica. What is it built on top of? *A pagan cemetery full of the bones of the dead!* They claim that they found one of the bones of Peter or Jesus; I forget which. They have made so many claims. When they were analyzed, the bone turned out to be from a woman and one of the bones was a chicken bone. I think God loved playing jokes like that on them. Let them find this; let them think it.

But think about what they do when they have their ceremonies. When they have all the new priests come to be ordained the first time, they are in startling white robes. They come before the pope and here is all this idolatrous big thing behind the

pope. Right at the top is a sunburst dedicated to Baal. They all prostrate themselves and take the vow. They lay flat on the floor and swear allegiance to the pope. Jesus said, *'Blind guides.'*

Verse 28: "Likewise, you also outwardly appear to men *to be* righteous, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. **Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you build the sepulchers of the prophets, and adorn the tombs of the righteous; and you say... [If it had been in our day... we're so good, or] ...'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets'" (vs 28-30).

Were all of them partakers of the blood of Christ in killing Him? *Yes, indeed.* The high priest, the other priests, everybody.

Verse 31: "So then, you are testifying against yourselves, that you are the sons of those who killed the prophets; and *as for* you, you are filling up the measure of your fathers. *You* serpents, *you* offspring of vipers, how shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna?" (vs 31-33). That's pretty powerful right there.

Verse 34: "Because of this, behold, I send to you prophets and wise *men* and scribes; and *some* of them you shall kill and crucify, and *some* of them you shall scourge in your synagogues, and *some of them* you shall persecute from city to city; so that upon you may come all *the* righteous blood poured out upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous, unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar" (vs 34-35). God stores it up and waits, and then it comes.

Verse 36: "Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *you* who kill the prophets and stone those who have been sent to you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her brood under *her* wings, but you refused! Behold, your house is left to you desolate" (vs 36-38). *That's what God did!*

Next time we'll pick it up and go on from here and see the confrontations that Paul had and some difficult Scriptures. If people try and study those difficult Scriptures and things, with the idea that Jesus did away with the Law, and with the idea that they didn't have to keep the things of God, then they don't understand these Scriptures.

We will see a pattern in Romans that is really quite astounding and then we will go to Galatians and see what it's really talking about. Galatians is one of the most difficult books in the whole New Testament. The one on which the lawless religions, called Christianity in this world,

rely upon his writings to substantiate, they think, the doing away with the laws of God. I think we'll get a lot out of it.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 3:1-2
- 2) Isaiah 29:9-16
- 3) Isaiah 40:12-15, 17
- 4) Isaiah 43:24
- 5) John 1:1
- 6) Job 40:1-14
- 7) Mark 7:1-9
- 8) Matthew 23:1-38

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 11
- Romans 1; 2
- Isaiah 8
- Revelation 2-3; 17-18
- Matthew 13
- Genesis 1:14; 2; 3:14-15; 18
- Luke 17
- Numbers 9
- John 19

Also referenced:

- From *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*:
 - ✓ Chronology V: Chronology from 30_{A.D.} to 70_{A.D.}
 - ✓ Appendix Z: Understanding Paul's Difficult Scriptures Concerning The Law and the Commandments of God
 - ✓ Appendix A: Fourteen Rules for Bible Study
 - ✓ Appendix E: When was Jesus Christ Born?
 - ✓ Appendix J: Jesus' Three Days and Three Nights of Entombment and His Resurrection
- Book:
 - ✓ *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?* by Philip Neal
 - ✓ *Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin
- Booklet: *Is the Ministry God's Government*
- Sermon Series:
 - ✓ *Was Peter Ever in Rome* (churchathome.org)
 - ✓ *The Appointed Times* (Michael Heiss)

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