

COLOSSIANS

2:16

by
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Question: Doesn't Colossians 2:16 indicate that we need no longer keep the dietary laws of the Bible, nor keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days of Leviticus 23? A reading of this passage will prove you wrong in your teachings.

Colossians 2:16 apparently presents an obstacle so serious that many people will not keep the Law of Yahweh because of it. They usually read the passage superficially, and out of context, consequently they assume that the passage declares the Law of Yahweh to have been annulled when the Messiah died. Nothing could be further from the Truth!

Let us examine the entire passage of Scripture by going right back to the beginning of chapter 2. Paul expresses his

concern for the Colossian brethren and for those who are living in Laodicea. Since we are living in the Laodicean age today this passage could have been addressed to the people of our time! Please review briefly the passage dealing with the Laodicean assembly in Revelation 3:14-22. The Laodiceans were lukewarm and not very zealous for Bible Truth. We may observe this identical trait in many people today as they drift into religious organizations with nebulous doctrines and a lukewarm spirit. Paul declared that he was teaching the Truth of Elohim, in whom is hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Paul warned the people of the Colossian assembly to beware of anyone deceiving them with persuasive speech, or as the **KJV** renders, "enticing words." Isn't this the manner in which we should be reading the Bible today? We must read it for ourselves and take a literal interpretation from it whenever possible. We must believe that the authors of the

Bible were not seeking to confuse people as they delivered the Words of Yahweh. Many books have been written about the Bible and everyone seems to be reading them. How many people are reading the Bible itself? The warning of Paul stands just as applicable today as when he wrote this book.

Paul continues in verses 6-7, by urging the Colossian brethren to remain steadfast in the Messiah just as they have received Him. He tells them to become rooted and grounded in Messiah as they have been taught. Obviously we must not neglect to recall that Yahshua taught His people to obey the Law of Yahweh, Matt. 5:17-20. Yahshua was the sacrifice for sin (which is defined in the Bible as the transgression of the Law, 1 John 3:4). He was not sent to do away with the Law of Yahweh but to offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice so that we would not need to die for any transgression we have committed. Meditate on this fact for just a

moment. It will be a turning point in your life if you can grasp this momentous Truth! Yahshua the Messiah came to CONDEMN SIN in the flesh (remember that sin is the transgression of the Law), Romans 8:3-4. Therefore the message of the Messiah is to obey Yahweh and keep His commandments, while offering Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of those who seek to live for the Heavenly Father. Almighty Yahweh has sent His Holy Spirit in the Name of Yahshua the Messiah to raise the True Worshipers to a higher life and to give them the mind of Elohim. This was the teaching of Paul. It was not that the Law of Yahweh was done away with when the Messiah died.

Now we come to verse 8. "Take care that no one make a prey of you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Messiah," **B. Wilson Translation**. It should be obvious when we read this verse that it is speaking about worldliness, doing that which is motivated by the spirit of the world as opposed to the way of Yahweh that is in the keeping of His Law. Philosophy is defined in the dictionary as, "A study of the processes governing thought and conduct; investigation of the principles that regulate the universe and underlie all reality." Empty deceit is translated in the **KJV** as "vain deceit." Deceit is defined in the dictionary as "the act of deceiving or lying, a lie; dishonest action or trick." Therefore what Paul meant was empty lies or shrewd tricks to deceive the people of Yahweh, related again to the spirit of the world. The final point in the triad of worldly things mentioned in this verse is the traditions of men. Traditions of men can be defined as "the handing down of customs

or beliefs orally from generation to generation over a long period of time." They are the customs of **MEN** that have **NO** foundation in the Bible, the Word of Yahweh. Each one of these items will lead people away from Yahweh and His Way of life. Paul urges the Colossian brethren to avoid being influenced by the spirit of the world after they have been baptized into the Messiah and have received the Holy Spirit.

"...According to the Messiah." Here we find another great Truth! The spirit of the world is opposed to the Messiah and His doctrine. Verse 9 reads, "Because in Him dwells all the fulness of the Majesty on High bodily." Ask yourself the question, "What was the Messiah's teaching and what did He stand for in His ministry?" It has been expressed for us so perfectly by the Apostle Cepha (Peter) when he wrote in 1 Peter 2:21-23. "For to this you were called; because even Messiah suffered on your behalf, leaving you a copy, so that you may follow in His footsteps; who committed no sin; neither was deceit found in His mouth; who being reviled, did not revile in return; suffering, he did not threaten; but delivered Himself up to Him who judges righteously." [**Wilson**] Now reread this passage slowly and notice how it harmonizes with what we are studying here in Colossians 2. Yahshua Himself said in John 14:23-24. "Yahshua answered and said unto him, 'If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's Which sent Me,'" **KJV**. Notice how John 14 explains that Yahshua is the fleshly manifestation of the Father so that He revealed the Will of

Almighty Yahweh who is invisible to the human eye. It should be very obvious now what the Messiah taught in His earthly ministry and what He stood for in His sojourn with men. Yahshua the Messiah taught a return to keeping the commandments of Yahweh and this was His message to His disciples and to the world. Nowhere can we ever find that He called for rejecting the Way of life found in the keeping of the commandments. Consequently, we can only conclude that if we follow after the Messiah we will wish to keep His Words. Paul urged the Colossian brethren to follow the Messiah and to turn from the spirit of the world which leads one to follow the ways of the flesh. Yahshua condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. 8:3) by showing how a human being can live righteously.

We shall continue to quote from this passage using the **Benjamin Wilson Translation** as before. "And you are replenished by Him who is the Head of all government and authority; by whom also you were circumcised with a circumcision not done by hand, in the putting off of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of the Messiah; having been buried with Him by immersion; in which also you were raised with Him, through the belief of the energy of that Mighty One who raised Him from the dead," verses 10-12. Obviously, this passage is meant to enlarge upon the foundation that Paul wishes to erect in teaching the Colossians a great lesson. He shows that those who have accepted the Messiah and His shed blood will be circumcised in heart when they throw off the body (sins) of the flesh at the burial in water baptism. When we are raised from the water of baptism we have been begotten again by a new life through the Holy Spirit of Yahweh. This

should cause us to set our affections upon things in the Heavens, changing our goals from an earthly orientation to the Spiritual. Since Yahshua is the head of the Body and the leader of His people we must obey Him and follow His example in life. He revealed how a human being could live a Spiritual life while still in the flesh. Therefore He is our pattern or example.

“And you, being dead by the trespasses, even by the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive together with Him, having freely pardoned all our offenses; having blotted out what was written by hand in ordinances which was against us, and has removed it from the midst, having nailed it to the tree; having stripped the governments and authorities, he made a public exhibition of them triumphing over them by it,” verses 13-15. Paul emphasized the fact that the people who have trusted in the Messiah have been forgiven their sins by His death. We have been given new life through the Holy Spirit of Yahweh that was given to us at baptism into Yahshua’s Name. He has blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us. People have assumed that this meant the Law of Yahweh but such a conclusion is incorrect as we shall see. Yahweh’s Law was not against us! It was given to us for our own good! Deuteronomy 6:24, “And Yahweh commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our Elohim, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is at this day.” Deut. 10:13, “To keep the commandments of Yahweh and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” (note context here). Obviously then, from reading these passages we must conclude that Paul could not have been referring to the com-

mandments of Yahweh when he was writing this passage of Scripture. Remember also that this book was being written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit which will only be given to those who obey Yahweh, Acts 5:32.

Paul was speaking about the sacrificial law in this passage and this is obvious when you read and meditate on what is being said. Yahshua nailed these ordinances to His tree. What was nailed on the tree of Messiah? Not the Law of Yahweh which will stand forever! It was the sacrifice for sin that was nailed to the tree of Calvary. Sin is the transgression of the Law, 1 John 3:4. The word ordinances is No. 1378 in the **Strong’s Concordance Lexicon**. It is defined there as “a law (civil, ceremonial or ecclesiastical).” Did Yahshua come to destroy the moral Law of Yahweh? Matthew 5:17-20 shows that He did not come to destroy the Law. He came to save men from their sins, Matt. 1:21. He came as the Passover Lamb that took away the sins of the world, John 1:36. What was nailed to the tree of Yahshua? It was the SACRIFICE FOR SIN and this sacrifice was legislated in the ceremonial law. How truly obvious to us when we read this passage and meditate upon it, harmonizing it with other Scriptures. Do you see this wonderful Truth for yourself? It was actually the sacrificial law that was a burden to the people because they had to bring offerings annually to atone for their sins, Hebrews 9:9-10. The ceremonial, sacrificial law, stood against the best interests of the people since now the Messiah has come and perfected a sacrifice, once for all, Hebrews 9:28. The animal sacrifices were acceptable to Yahweh as a substitute for the person who sinned, only until the Son of Yahweh could come to this earth

and die for us as our sin offering.

The next two verses should be read together and if we do this we will find a great new understanding. Notice - - “Let no one, therefore, rule you in food, or in drink, or in respect of a festival, or of a new moon or of Sabbaths, which are shadows of the future things; but the Body of Messiah.” Let us analyze this passage so that we can obtain a much better understanding of it and that it will prove law keeping rather than a no-law doctrine.

Paul says, “Let no one rule you (or as the **KJV** reads, ‘judge you’). who on earth should be placed before the Heavenly Father Yahweh and His legislation? Who on earth, which man, would presume to impose his wishes above those of the written Law of Yahweh? There are plenty of men who would presume to do this. For example, the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church could be cited which admits to changing the weekly worship observance from the Scripturally established 7th day to the 1st day of the week and therefore they keep Sunday in opposition to the Word of Yahweh. We must serve and obey Yahweh rather than men. Acts 5:29. If the Roman Catholic Church, or any other religious organization for that matter, makes rules and regulations contrary to the Word of Yahweh, then we must uphold the Inspired Scriptures above all of the commandments of men. No one may rule the Body of the Messiah except the head and that is Yahshua. He has given us His Word and the organization that He wishes to see in His assembly. We are therefore in submission to Him and His Word. That is His message to the world, as found in Matt. 5:17-20. We allow NO MAN or NO ONE to rule us or judge us in anything. We shall judge

ourselves in accordance with the Word of Yahweh, 1 Cor. 11:31-32. We fear Yahweh and not men.

Notice also the future tense of the verb employed here to show that the keeping of the festivals, new moons and Sabbaths ARE (even now in our own time) still shadows of things to come. They depict some momentous event in the plan of salvation still future, even at the time Paul was writing. Therefore the shadow of things to come was not even then fulfilled in the Messiah. The fulfillment will be consummated when the Messiah returns and the Kingdom is established, which we can see from Hebrews 4:3-11, relative to the Sabbath. Contrary to popular belief, the meaning of the Sabbath has not been fulfilled but it will be fulfilled on the seventh day, the Millennium or thousand-year reign of Messiah on earth. The festivals, sabbaths, and new moons are still very much binding.

Notice in verse 17 the last clause, "...but the body is of the Messiah." The reason for joining the two verses together as they

should be here is to show that the entire passage comprises one complete thought. The word "is" does not appear in the text. The meaning of this phrase then is that we shall allow no one to judge us. No outsider who does not have the Holy Spirit of Yahweh shall rule our thoughts or conduct. Yahweh and His Word are supreme! The Body of Messiah will judge righteously and they will be keeping the Law of Yahweh, Rev. 12:17 and 14:12. Please read 1 Cor. 6 also. No one (no human being unbegotten by the Holy Spirit) shall be allowed to judge or rule in the Assembly of Yahweh, but the Body of the Messiah shall keep the Law of Yahweh and judge its members righteously. Do you realize what you have seen in this passage of Scripture that has been used to teach doing away with Yahweh's Law? You have seen the exact converse or opposite! Paul urges us to keep the Law of Yahweh even more perfectly now than previously because we have been circumcised in heart by Yahshua the Messiah

when we were baptized and raised to life through the Holy Spirit!

Just one further word on "ordinances." If you read the remainder of the chapter you will discover that the ordinances here are defined as those "according to the commandments and teachings of men, a worldly show of wisdom in self-devised worship..." verse 22-23. Obviously Paul is contrasting the commandments and teachings of men with the Spiritual worship that we offer in the Messiah. The commandments and teachings of men lead the people of the world to keep Christmas, Easter, and other worldly holidays that are not found in the Bible. The commandments and teachings of men declare that the Law of Yahweh has been done away with when the Messiah died! All of these commandments and teachings of men are CONTRARY to what Almighty Yahweh Himself has said in His Word. Whose teachings will you believe, Yahshua's or men's? The choice is up to you! "As for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh!" □

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