

The WildBranch Ministry

...*thou bearest not the root, but the root
thee. Romans 11:18*

The Moral Law and the Ceremonial Law

Part 3

I suppose I should begin by coveting your prayers that I am even able to address the original subject that I intended. The focus of the last few teachings is to address the popular doctrine that the Torah and/or the commandments of YHVH are divided up into moral, civil and ceremonial laws. This view goes on to conclude that we, the people of the Creator of the universe, are obligated to obey the moral laws, but not the civil or particularly the ceremonial laws. As you can probably guess from the ring of this teaching that it is in perfect harmony with Paul's teaching in Ephesians that there is one body, one spirit, one hope of your calling et cetera et cetera et cetera. Hmmm. Once again, our Father ends up splayed out on a table as the proverbial theological frog waiting to be sliced and diced. This kind of theology reminds me of a playground full of toddlers declaring 'my dad is better than your dad'.

It seems, from most of what I have read, that the words *ordinances and statutes* are what scare these people. Clearly they can see the need for the Ten Commandments, except for the equally scary SABBATH! However, ordinances and statutes, although English words, seem to sound really Jewish. Sounds like something Jews should do. The TEN COMMANDMENTS! Sounds like something we should do. Of course one of the best ways to shuffle these ordinances and precepts off into the corner is to spiritualize them. Yeah, that's the ticket, for us they mean something other than what they say. Like separating wool and linen means not to marry a Hindu or a Jehovah's Witness. Keeping the feasts means that because Jesus kept them I do not have to. Deep down inside I think that many of us believe that *spiritualized things* have no rules. Only the natural has rules, so turn it into a *spirit thing*. Okay I digress.

The question, based upon an obedient heart, should be "What are the differences between a commandment, an ordinance, a statute and a precept?" We discussed the details of a commandment in our first part. Most of the time in scripture, the English word *ordinance* and *statute* are actually the same Hebrew word. The Hebrew background of these words is generally *chuqqah*. This word comes from the root *choq*. The ancient pictographic meaning is of a wall and the sun rising. It draws a picture of something that is separated and then brought back together, being revealed or illuminated by light. The two *qofs* in

chuqqah indicate a repetition or pattern. This is why it is also translated as to engrave, as to make a mark to distinguish i.e., a distinguishing mark that illuminates. It is translated into the English as imitate, custom, statute, ordinance, decree, appoint and lawgiver. One of its closest cognates is *chuqar*, which means to search out. The idea is that there are certain commandments that are hard to be understood until further information shines a light on it. It seems to me that someone once said that Paul's words were hard to be understood.

Let's talk about this word. These ordinances and statutes that allegedly are only for the Jews actually began long before there was any such thing as Judah, Israel or the Ten Commandments. The very first occurrence in English is in Sh^emot (Exodus) 12:14:

"And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to YHVH throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an **ordinance** [*chuqqah*] forever."

Obviously, according to modern exegesis, we keep it as an ordinance forever, or until the Christ comes, whichever comes first. The first occurrence in Hebrew is in B^ere'shiyt (Genesis) 26:5:

"Because that Abraham obeyed my voide, and kept my charge, my commandments, my **statutes** [*chuqqah*] and my laws.

Hmmmm. Commandments and the Torah five hundreds years or more before Charleton Heston even comes on the scene. There are two primary Greek words behind this word that we will take into our New Testament. The first word is *dikaionata*, which means an ordained judgment or righteous decree. Here is how this word is used in our New Testament. Wait a minute, New Testament? I thought this was a Jewish thing.

Luke 1:6

"And they were both righteous before 'Elohiym, walking in all the commandments and **ordinances** [*dikaionata*] of YHVH, blameless."

Romans 1:32

"Who, knowing the **judgment** [*dikaionata*] of 'Elohiym, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but have pleasure in them that do them."

Now that is just a little scary. You mean there are people who, knowing HE has ordinances, not only do the things worthy of death but have pleasure doing them?

Romans 2:26

"Therefore, if the uncircumcision, keep the **righteousness** [*dikaionata*] of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?"

Romans 5:18

"Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the **righteousness** [*dikaionata*] of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

So the one who chose not to obey the commandments of 'Elohiym brought judgment and the one who did chose to obey His Father, and told us to take up our tree and follow Him, brought life. Let's check out a couple more.

Romans 8:4

"That the **righteousness** [*dikaionata*] of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Is it possible that walking after the flesh is doing what I want and walking after the Spirit is doing what HE wants? This is not rocket science.

Hitgalut (Revelation) 15:4

"Who shall not fear you, O YHVH, and glorify your name? For you only are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before you; for your **judgments** [*dikaionata*] are made manifest."

So, we have His ordinances and statutes in the beginning, in the middle, in the New Testament, and in the end. You see, built within the faithful keeping of His ordinances are the blessings, and built within the thumbing of noses at His ordinances are the curses. Now, historically speaking, how does man thumb his nose at the commandments of YHVH? You see no civilization lives without ordinances and statutes. Every culture has it's customs, traditions and even decrees that are hard to be understood. What is prophesied that man will habitually do is to replace our Master's ordinances and statutes with his own.

Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 10:1

"Woe, unto them who **decree** [*chaqaq*] unrighteous **decrees** [*chaqaq*], and who write grievousness which **they** have prescribed,"

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 10:2-3

"Thus saith YHVH, Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the nations are dismayed at them. For the **customs** [*chuqqiyim*] of the peoples are vain; for one cuts a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe."

Malakhi 3:6-7

"For I am YHVH, I change not; therefore ye sons of Ya'aqov are not consumed. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine **ordinances** [*chuqqiyim*], and have

not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith YHVH of hosts. But ye said, In what way shall we return?"

This statement is followed by one of the most oft quoted verses by 'church' leaders in all the Tanakh. "If you sow a hundred dollars in my ministry, God will return unto your bosom ..." As if the Master already knows what religious men will do to His ways, He concludes with this:

Malakhi 4:4-6

"Remember the Torah of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the **statutes** [*choq*] and ordinances. Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of YHVH; And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

And what do you think Elijah's ministry was according to Yeshua' Himself...YES! to restore all things. If you are reading this teaching then I am pleading with you that the Father, right now, as we speak, is turning the heart of the fathers to the children. There is a remnant that is hearing and turning their heart back to the fathers of old. More on the ordinances and statutes next time.

Shalom Alecheim!

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