

The WildBranch Ministry

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

The Moral Law and the Ceremonial Law

Part 4 - the side of the Ark

Near the end of the last book of the weekly Torah portions there is a very provocative statement that leads many to believe that the law of Moses is not only inferior to the laws of God, but done away with in Christ.

D^evariym 31:26

"Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of YHVH your 'Elohiym, that it may be there for a witness against thee."

I have mentioned in times past my opinion about the most imperative and relevant title or name of our Creator. I do not believe it is YHVH, 'Elohiym, El Shaddai, Master, the Holy One or the man upstairs. I believe it is Abba, Papa, Father. This is something that I can relate to. This is something I believe all of us can relate to. Sometimes it is difficult to establish or maintain a close relationship with the Supreme Judge, Lord of Hosts, or even Wonderful Counselor. But Father is something I can get my arms around, for not only have I had a father for over fifty years but I have been a father for over thirty of those years. Therefore it is not difficult for me to imagine my children deciding for themselves which laws of their father are for them and which are not. I have found a clear consistency in all religious systems. They all find a need to establish which laws of God they will promote and which ones they will shuffle off to someone else. Then they pour through the scriptures to find enough loopholes to validate their doctrinal positions. As a father I know how I would feel about that. I wonder what He thinks of us.

Apparently D^evariym 31:26 presents another opportunity to whack some more commandments. Before I address this subject I will say once again, those of you who are out there running around trying to find as many excuses as you can to support a lawless theology and stick your finger in the face of God, you will indeed give an account for that soon and very soon. The very reason our country continues to lead the world in all the immoral issues you can think of is because of lawless, feel good, let's make some money, free in Jesus, religious leadership. You WILL answer for all the clueless masses you led down the wide path to hell, and you WILL stand before a righteous God to explain why you

taught that a New Testament Jesus came to free us from an Old Testament God whose commandments were designed to bless us and keep us safe. I will make it as plain as I can. The current immoral and perilous condition of our nation lies squarely in your lap.

Okay, relax Brad. Take a deep breath. I will now attempt to stay on topic. I sure am glad that our Creator chose not to throw the governing laws of the universe in with the ceremonial laws of Moses. As I travel in and out of this land I am also happy to report that there are still a few people left who believe that YHVH was smart enough in the beginning to be able to transcend the one dimensional pea-brain humans He created. So let's talk about this verse. What did Moses mean when he commanded that this book of the Torah be set from or out of the side of the ark? The word in Hebrew for side is *mitztzad* from the root *tzad*. You can probably see that this is actually where the English word 'side' comes from. This word does literally say 'out of the side' of the ark. Virtually all Rabbinic opinions fall into two possibilities. Either the phrase is meant to express that this book of the Torah was placed next to the tablets in the ark, or that they actually constructed a small ledge near where the ark and the mercy seat met and literally hung a Torah scroll there. I agree with the latter, but either way, no Hebraic view of this statement concludes that the Torah that Moses placed there was any less than the tablets inside. It was the entire ark that was placed inside the Most Holy Place. The position of the Torahless ones, however, is that the Ten Commandments of God were placed in the ark, and the ceremonial and ritual laws of Moses specifically for Israel were placed outside of the ark. Conclusion! Jesus died to free us from the law of Moses outside the ark, but not the law of God inside the ark. Alllllllrighty then!

Assuming we are correct in translating out of the side correctly, what would lead us to conclude that they are inferior or less than important? I submit to you that there is a specific reason why this Torah, which is in the feminine, is placed at the side of the ark which is in the masculine. The key letter in the word for side, which actually is the reason why it is translated side, is the first letter, the *tzadi*. The Hebrew letter *tzadi* is represented by a man on his side or the side of a man. The first model of this is when Eve is taken from the rib or *tzala'* of Adam. This word is a *tzadi*, a lamad and an aleph. It means the ability to follow/lead by his side. The woman is not inferior to the man, but rather to walk at his side. This same word is used to describe the branches coming out of the menorah.

Sh'mot 25:31-32

*"And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come **out of the sides** of it; three branches of the candlestick **out of the one side**, and three branches of the candlestick **out of the other side**:"*

Are the branches out of the side of the menorah any less important than the menorah itself? Let's also consider the continuing words of Moses concerning this Torah placed out of the side of the ark.

Devariym 31:27-29

"For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against YHVH; and how much more after my death? Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of YHVH, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands."

So, are we to conclude that the words of this Torah out of the side of the ark are only for rebellious stiff-necked Israelites in the wilderness but are done away with for stiff-necked and rebellious Christians? And could it be possible that because Christianity has indeed done away with these commandments that we have today stiff-necked and rebellious Christians? I don't know, perhaps I just think weird. Maybe I just need to cooperate, check my brains in at the door and learn to nod agreeably, raise my hands, yell amen!, and make that check payable to.....

Could it be possible? Could it just be possible that there really was a small ledge placed near the mercy seat out of the side of the ark where this Torah was hung containing the commandments written on a scroll rather than stone? This places some interesting light on a conversation that Yeshua' had with a Pharisee well versed in the law.

Mattityahu 22:36-49

*"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Yeshua' said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments **hang all the law and the prophets.**"*

Since the giving of the commandments on Mt. Sinai these well known ten have been summarized by two familiar phrases in scripture and in Hebrew tradition. The first four commandments focused on our relationship with our Creator and were summed up by the saying 'to love YHVH your 'Elohiym with all your heart'. The last six commandments focused on man's relationship with his fellow man and was summed up in the saying 'to love your neighbor as yourself'. The two commandments represented the ten and the ten represented all of the Torah. Yeshua' confirms this Hebraic understanding by stating that all the law and the prophets hung on these ten commandments placed in the ark. Could it

be that he was speaking literally? That all the law and the prophets were literally hanging on the ark containing the ten? Could Paul also be referring to this in his letter to the Romans.

Romans 13:8-10

*"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be **any other commandment**, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."*

Next time I would like to address the claim that the laws of God are not the same as the law of Moses which is not the same as the law of Christ. Gee whiz, what a mess. Can't imagine why there would be any confusion about the Bible.

Shalom Alecheim!

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