

Religious Myths vs. Bible Truths

We are all guilty of following them, like the blind following the blind and ending up in a ditch. But as we search the Word and hear the Spirit, we uncover the real truths. It is then that we can distinguish truth from religious myth, as we do here.

The following religious myths are in no particular order of importance, but rather as the Lord has brought them to mind, with the most current on top.

7. Religious Myth: The Bible is the “Old Testament” and the “New Testament”.

Truth: There are two issues here.

One issue is that the Bible consists of the “Old Covenant” and the “New/Renewed Covenant”, not “testaments”. They mean different things. A “covenant” is a binding contract between two parties. A “testament” is predominantly one person’s will.

The other issue is that both covenants have something fundamentally in common. To understand their differences clearly, we must also grasp what they have in common.

The “Old Covenant” was a marriage agreement between God & Israel at Mount Sinai. The agreement was that Israel must keep the ways of God, as outlined in His commandments & laws. Then they would be His people and He would be their God; however, the people did not keep this Covenant agreement.

But God has not changed His ways or His standards. What is now different is that He has changed the terms of how the covenant is to be kept. And how is that?

Because of the atoning work of Jesus/(Yeshua), His Spirit could dwell in us so that the Covenant could be written in our minds & hearts. With His Spirit within, we can know what He wants us to do, and we can desire to do it. This is all a work of His grace, which we walk out by faith. Faith without works is dead. If we love Him, then we will keep His ways, as it says in **1John 5:3**. Since we love Him it is not too difficult to walk in His Spirit. The Covenant would be impossible to keep in our own strength apart from the Holy Spirit.

So the terms of the covenant have changed. The standard is the same, but the terms of how to meet that standard are new. In that way it is “New”, but in another sense it is “Renewed”. Think of it this way. If a building contract is broken, such as by not keeping to a certain schedule, then the contract is replaced by another which has a different schedule; but they both relate to building the same building.

The law was never put away, although parts were prophetic types which have been fulfilled in Jesus/Yeshua. Jeremiah & Ezekiel both prophesied of this “New/Renewed Covenant” as shown here:

31. *“The day will come,” says the LORD, “when I will make a NEW COVENANT with the people of Israel and Judah. 32. This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife,” says the LORD.*

33. *But this is the NEW COVENANT I will make with the people of Israel on that day...I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”* **Jeremiah 31:31-33 New Living Translation**

“19. And I will give them singleness of heart and put a new spirit within them. I will take away their hearts of stone and give them tender hearts instead, 20. so they will obey my laws and regulations. Then they will truly be my people and I will be their God.”
Ezekiel 11:19,20 New Living Translation

“26. And I will give you a new heart with new and right desires, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony heart of sin and give you a new, obedient heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so you will obey my laws and do whatever I command.”
Ezekiel 36:26,27 New Living Translation

The **Jeremiah 31** text is quoted by Paul in **Hebrews 8:8-10**, where he also gives further explanation. Note that in all of these verses on the New Covenant that obedience to the laws of God is still required. What has changed is our spirits; so that now we can know the laws, want to keep the laws, and are well able to keep them by His Spirit. ***The laws & commandments were never discarded!*** We have the written Word which explains what is pleasing to God, but better yet, we have His Spirit to understand His Word. We flow in both the Word & in the Spirit to guide us daily. As we walk by His Spirit we begin a new adventure as the ways of our Adamic flesh nature become forgotten & no longer fulfilled. In time, by grace through faith we see the Life of Jesus/Yeshua take charge within our thoughts, words, & actions that flow out of a changed heart to heal a hurting world.

Another thing to note is that the Hebrew word for “new” in the verses above is Strong’s #2319, from the root word #2318, which means “renewed” as well as to make new...***like a failed marriage that gets RENEWED to make a NEW beginning.*** The Aramaic word also means “renewed”.

And you should also know that the terms “Old Testament” & “New Testament” were

first used by Marcion. Marcion built the first all-Gentile church to promote a blend of Christianity & paganism. They met on Sunday to honor the sun-god and blend with Zeus (“Ye-Zeus”). Polycarp, a disciple of John the apostle, called Marcion “the firstborn of the devil”. The reason Marcion replaced the term “covenant” with “testament” was part of his effort to divert people away from the Word, from an understanding of the Covenant, and from the Jews who knew the Word, (who would not be easily duped by the infiltrated paganism).

But if the law has not been done away with, then certain questions arise about other verses that seem to indicate otherwise. Let’s examine those.

7.(a) What about circumcision?...hasn’t that requirement ended?

Circumcision was made as an **outward sign** that the person was in covenant with God, (**Genesis 17:11**). Ishmael was conceived before Abraham was circumcised. Isaac was conceived after Abraham was circumcised. The true son of the inheritance cannot come forth until after circumcision. Circumcision was a token or sign that there was covenant with God, which would bring forth His life in His people. Under the new/renewed covenant circumcision is just as important, but it has been raised to a higher standard. Circumcision has not been put away, but rather made more challenging.

How? Well, now circumcision must be an **inward sign** that the person is in covenant with God. It must be a circumcision of the flesh-nature/carnal-nature/Adamic-nature of the heart. In the first covenant one had to keep the law outwardly. That was the Word. But in the new/renewed covenant the law must still be kept according to the Word **AND** the Spirit. The Word is now raised up into the greater level (more mature realm), of the Spirit. The Spirit gives understanding to the Law. The Word without the Spirit lacks life. As we grow up we have more responsibility. Yet with that increased demand comes increased ability and increased liberty. The Law/Word now requires **more not less!** But in His strength it is easier to keep.

“25. The Jewish ceremony of circumcision is worth something only if you obey God’s law. But if you don’t obey God’s law, you are no better off than an uncircumcised Gentile. 26. And if the Gentiles obey God’s law, won’t God give them all the rights and honors of being his own people? 27. In fact, uncircumcised Gentiles who keep God’s law will be much better off than you Jews who are circumcised and know so much about God’s law but don’t obey it.

For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the Jewish ceremony of circumcision. 29. No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not a cutting of the body but a change of heart produced by God’s Spirit. Whoever has that kind of change seeks praise from God, not from people.” **Romans 2:25-29 New Living Translation**

For the Apostles, this was a hotly debated issue. Their mind-set was under a paradigm shift from obeying the letter of the “Word” to obeying the “Word-According-To-The-Spirit”. A nice parallel is a marriage contract. The marriage that is one in spirit as well as in legal contract is far superior to a marriage that has just a legal contract but lacks the union of spirit.

When the Spirit seems to contradict the Word, then we look closer. The Spirit never contradicts the Word, but rather illuminates it for greater understanding. The same debate continues today. Many Bible teachers want to keep the Spirit out of the Word. When this happens, then the interpretation of the Word is typically according to the natural mind, and misses the point. When Bible teachers want to go by just the Spirit and keep the Word out, then they fly off into error on the other side of the road. The Word and the Spirit are the two witnesses of His Life. Both Moses (representing the Law/Word), & Elijah (representing the Spirit), pointed to Jesus/Yeshua on the Mount of Transfiguration.

A remaining question is whether or not the heart circumcision negates the requirement for the physical circumcision. The parents of the boy may have their baby circumcised in faith that the child will later establish a covenant relationship with God; much in the same reasoning that infants are baptized in water. (Also medically there is plenty of evidence for benefits of physical circumcision. There are reduced incidences of infections & cancers for the boys later in life. And there is a reduced incidence of infections & cervical cancer for their wives as well.) But in terms of relationship with God, circumcision of the flesh is irrelevant compared to circumcision of the heart.

“And if you belong to Christ (are in [Covenant with] Him, Who is Abraham’s Seed), then you are Abraham’s offspring and (spiritual) heirs according to promise.”

Galatians 3:29 The Amplified Bible

“21. Not every one who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father... 22. Many will say to Me on that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, and driven out demons in Your name and done many mighty works in Your name? 23. And then I will say to them,... I never knew you; depart from Me, you who act wickedly —disregarding My commands.”

Matthew 7:21-23 The Amplified Bible

7.(b) What about dietary laws?...haven’t those “restrictions” ended?

No. We will look at the verses used to incorrectly justify their demise. But first the big picture. The dietary laws are found in **Leviticus 11**. All food was divided into two

groups, “clean” & “unclean”. They were given by the Creator out of His love for mankind, His creation. This is akin to a car manufacturer designating what type of fuel the vehicle was designed to run on to get the most life out of the engine.

Some unclean foods may look appealing, but for some reason they are “unclean”. Something is wrong with unclean food that makes it detrimental to those who eat them. Unclean things include things like mice, bats, caterpillars, and more obvious things that we would be horrified to put into our mouths. As a toddler we may be upset by a parent telling us to not put a certain thing into our mouths, but the parent has our best interest at heart. It is the same with us and God. We understand how much He loves us as we mature in our relationship with Him; just as a child appreciates the parents love as the youngster matures.

We have commonly heard that Peter’s vision of God telling him to eat unclean as well as clean food was that the work of the cross did away with those limitations. But Peter himself knew that was not what the vision meant, which is why he was trying to figure out what it really meant in **Acts 10:17,19**. For context, read all of **Acts 10 & 11**, where it becomes clear that the purpose of the vision was to let Peter know that God is no respecter of *people*, (not food).

“34. Then Peter replied, ‘I see very clearly that God doesn’t show partiality. 35. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right.’”

Acts 10: 34,35 New Living Translation

1Corinthians 8 is another verse falsely used to incorrectly justify eating unclean food. The trouble with that premise is that the food being talked about is never mentioned as being “unclean meat”. The food discussed is meat for sure, but what kind of meat? This is meat that has been sacrificed to idols. Pagans sacrificed both clean & unclean meat. It goes without saying that the meat being discussed is “clean” meat that has been sacrificed to idols. How do we know that? Because the audience to whom this is addressed were all well aware of the cultural Jewish concept of eating just clean meat. That was not the issue.

Sacrificing meat to idols is a foreign concept in most modern Christianity. What was often done then is that when an animal was killed for food, it was dedicated to whatever the god or gods were of the person doing the slaughtering. This is a distortion among pagans from the common Biblical concept of presenting an offering to God. Such Biblical offerings include sin offerings, guilt offerings, peace offerings, burnt offerings, trespass offerings, thank offerings, etc., most of which were then eaten by the people and/or the Levitical Priests. Eating meat was often associated with worship to God. Today in similar fashion we acknowledge God’s provision by giving thanks before eating.

Who the meat was sacrificed to was a legitimate concern to many. Some believers felt it would be acknowledging false gods to eat meat that had been dedicated to these idols by the butcher shop where they bought it. Others, fully realizing that idols are fake and not really gods at all, had no problem with it. The bottom line was don't ask whether or not the meat was offered to an idol, and enjoy it, giving thanks to God. However if your fellow believers felt it was wrong to eat it, then don't eat it in front of them. Let love rule by honoring others by respecting their views on such matters.

When we stick to the context of the topic in this chapter, there is nothing in this passage saying that people who eat unclean meat have more faith. And there is nothing here to say to eat unclean meat so as to please others. His Spirit may ask us, are we seeking to please man, God, or our bellies? And we keep in perspective that our true meat is take in Jesus/Yeshua as our spiritual nourishment, knowing that His meat is to do the Father's will.

There are more questions on other aspects of comparing the Old Covenant with the New/Renewed Covenant. We hope to examine those passages in future writings. But for now we'll look at some other Religious Myths.

6. Religious Myth: Jesus was made sin for us.

Truth: Jesus was a *SIN OFFERING* for us.

The myth has its roots in a mistranslation of **2Corinthians 5:21** shown here:

"21. For he hath MADE HIM TO BE SIN for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." King James Version & many others

This mistranslation is explained in detail in our section "Bible Mistranslations". Until you read that, know for now that the Word plainly states elsewhere in the King James Version that Jesus was a "sin offering", as we see here in **Ephesians 5:2**:

*"2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an OFFERING AND A SACRIFICE to God for a sweet-smelling savour [aroma]."
KJV & many others*

He could not be made both, for the sin offering had to be without sin. The difference between being made sin and being made a sin offering is dramatic! The contradiction between these two verses in the same translation is a red flag of a possible mistranslation in one of the two verses. So which is correct? How do we find out?

Well, which is in greater harmony with the rest of the Word? The contradiction is a prompt to those who are seeking more truth to see how more accurate translations read, and of course to look at the meaning of the Greek word used for “sin”. Jesus was the sinless Lamb offering to atone for our sins. (This is all laid out for quick reference in the explanation under our “Bible Mistranslations”.) When we do that research we find that it is **Ephesians 5:2** that is correct. And when we do our further exploration into this we discover that some modern translations get it right for **2Corinthians 5:21**, and most get it correct for **Ephesian 5:2**.

This sinless offering was pleasing to the Father and always will be. Sin however never was and never will be acceptable. This myth of Jesus being made sin goes hand-in-hand with “Religious Myth No. 5” shown next.

5. Religious Myth: The Father forsook Jesus on the cross.

Truth: The Father did not forsake the Son on the cross.

The Father’s plan from the foundation of the world was to have His son be made a sin offering to bring man back to God. It was part of His plan before Adam & Eve sinned and had to leave the garden. Jesus was well aware of this plan. Jesus explained this plan several times to His disciples. Jesus was also in full agreement with this plan. This was made plain in His garden test. He would follow the Father’s plan to the cross. So where does this myth of the Father forsaking Jesus on the cross come from?

It comes from a very common & popular mistranslation as shown here:

“46. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?”

Matthew 27:46 New King James Version & most other versions

To learn more about this mistranslation, see this verse under our section called “Bible Mistranslations.” But for here realize that there is one translation that reads otherwise. It is the George Lamsa Translation. In that one it is made plain that Jesus was letting it be known that this was a time when the Father’s plan to redeem mankind through the Son was being fulfilled. It was why Jesus was spared from accident, fatal disease, or murder so that He could live to see the day of being on the cross.

Some may argue that the verse above is quoting **Psalm 22**, which clearly is prophetic of Jesus’ death on the cross. That is a great insight and we heartily agree!...except for the first verse of **Psalm 22**, which is also a mistranslation. We go into greater detail on that

point in our “Bible Mistranslations”.

Religious myths are often founded upon mistranslations. Sometimes the mistranslations resulted from translators that were swayed by religious myths. To make it even more challenging, we often find that various mistranslations throughout the Word are used to lend support for each other and its resulting religious myth. What we’ve shown here is a classic example of that very thing.

4. Religious Myth: There are 7 Major Feast Days of the Lord.

Truth: There are 8 Major Feast Days of the Lord, and one of the ones typically mentioned is not one of the eight!

There are many “appointed Feast Days”, and there are many associated Feast Days, but only *EIGHT* of them are distinguished in the Word as distinct from all others.

They are distinguished as “*HOLY convocations*”. The others may be times of convocation or gathering together, but they are not labeled in the Word as “*HOLY convocations*”. “*HOLY*” means “set apart”, as in set apart from all the others by being extra special. One of the traditional 7-Feast Days is *NOT* included in the true list, and two are missing! Much of accurately understanding the Word requires a proper Biblical foundation of the 8-Feast Days. Missing this truth will result in missing the many patterns & prophetic types found here. See Lesson No. 4, “The Eight Feasts” for a list of them with full explanation from the Word.

3. Religious Myth: The crossing of the Red Sea was in the shallow part.

Truth: The crossing was in the deep part.

The Red Sea has two arms at the top end, with one on each side of the Sinai Peninsula. To cross the Western arm at any point would land the people in the Sinai, but the Word is clear that they came to Arabia on the other side, (**Galatians 4:25**). Both scripture & archaeological evidence show that they crossed in the middle of the Eastern arm, and at the deepest area. That is the only place to fit so many Israelites on a plain between the mountains and the sea. The late Ron Wyatt uncovered much evidence to confirm that, (www.wyattmuseum.com). I have avidly read all of his works. The Lord has used him to shift many people from religious traditions to Bible truths.

2. Religious Myth: There were 3-wise men who visited baby Jesus in the manger.

Truth: This is wrong on two points.

The Bible does not say how many wise men came, only that there were 3-types of gifts. Josephus and other sources tell us that there were many wise men, called “Magi”, and that they were accompanied by a very large number of people. And the Bible does not say that they came to a manger. They visited Mary & Joseph & Jesus at a house, not a manger. By the time they got there Jesus was a toddler up to 2-years old.

1. Religious Myth: Jesus was born on Christmas.

Truth: Perhaps he was conceived at that time or close to it, but his birth was in the fall of the year.

Stephen Jones lays it out from the word in his booklet “When was Jesus Really Born?”. Bonnie Gaunt does the same in the Appendix 1 of her book, “Time and the Bible’s Number Code”. They come up with the same date for His birth as September 29 in the year 2 B.C.

This date is highly significant for it was the 1st day of Tishri, the beginning of the 7th month of the religious year and the 1st month of the civil or agricultural year. So it was highly significant on both calendars.

It was the Feast of Trumpets for both calendars. This ushered in a new beginning in time. It was the day of the first of the four major Feasts of Tabernacles in the month of Tabernacles, the time of the final ingathering of the fruits of the harvest...the oil, wine & corn in particular. And it ushered in the New Year for the new Hebrew calendar year. It was symbolic of the ending of one time and the beginning of another. For a broad understanding of the big picture here, read Lesson 10, “The Two Works of Christ”.

This review may be copied/distributed (in print or electronically), when not for sale or profit.

Eric & Mary Elizabeth Ellis
PO Box 400
Easton, ME 04740
ericandmaryellis@gmail.com
<https://www.bibleconcepts.com>