



A conversation: Steve, are you a Jew?

Friend: Hey, Steve.

Me: Hey! What's going on?

Friend: I've wanted to ask you this for a while now.

Me: What's that?

Friend: So, have you converted to Judaism?

Me: Not at all. Why do you ask?

Friend: Well, I see you wearing those white and blue strings on your pants. Isn't that a Jewish "thing?"

Me: Actually, it's a God "thing."

Friend: How's that?

Me: God, YHWH, instructs us to wear them in Numbers 15:37-41.

Friend: But aren't those commands for the Jews?

Me: Those commands were given to all the tribes of Israel. The Jews only represent the tribe of Judah. They lived in the land of Judea with the tribe of Benjamin. Those who lived in the land of Judea became knick-named "Jews" because of where they lived. But those commands were given to all the tribes of Israel.

Friend: So you believe you're from one of the other tribes then?

Me: Oh, I have no idea about that. However, Numbers 15:14-16 says that there is one law for both the foreigner and the Israelite. That's why Jesus, Yeshua, told his disciples to obey the law before His death in Matthew 23:1-3. Then later, in Matthew 28:19,20, Yeshua told them to make disciples of all nations, telling them to obey the same. So anyone who chooses to follow Yeshua and what His disciples taught will follow their example in pursuing the law. And the disciples gave the new Gentile converts some basics of the law to follow as they learn what Moses gave every Sabbath in Acts 15:19-21.

Friend: But Jesus fulfilled the law. It's done away with.

Me: I see you have a wedding ring. You're married.

Friend: Correct.

Me: Are you fulfilling your marriage vows?

Friend: Of course.

Me: So you're doing away with your marriage vows?

Friend: What?

Me: Well, you said that since Jesus fulfilled the law, He did away with the law. So I can only imagine that you are doing away with your marriage vows too since you're fulfilling them.

Friend: (Blank look)

Me: Just as you are keeping your marriage vows, Yeshua kept the law to be the example for us in keeping it too. God, YHWH, never said to anyone in the Old Testament, "If anyone keeps my law perfectly, I will do away with my law." He never said that. In fact, Psalms 119:160 says His law is eternal.

Friend: (Blank look)

Me: You see...

Friend: (interrupting) But Paul said...

Me: (interrupting) Wait a minute. Did Paul follow the law?

Friend: No.

Me: Actually, he did. Acts 21:24 says he did.

Friend: Yeah, but he was a Jew.

Me: He was a Jew who reached out to the Gentiles. Correct?

Friend: Absolutely.

Me: And he told the Gentile converts to follow his example in 1 Corinthians 11:1 and also in Philippians 4:9. You see, if you are saying the law is only for the Jews, then that opposes what Numbers 15:14-16 says. Plus, please remember that Peter gave a warning in how many people were distorting the words of Paul to mean lawlessness. That's in 2 Peter 3:16. Did you know that Paul said we are to uphold the law in Romans 3:31? He said it was holy, righteous, and good in Romans 7:12. He said it was Spiritual in Romans 7:14.

Friend: (Blank look growing frustrated)

Me: Look, I know that's a lot to take in when you've been told the exact opposite all your life.

Friend: But you're putting yourself under the curse of the law.

Me: Do you know what the curse of the law is?

Friend: Yeah. It's when someone tries to live according to the law.

Me: You sure about that?

Friend: Absolutely.

Me: May I give you one of my memory verses?

Friend: I'm listening.

Me: Deuteronomy 11:26 See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse — 27 the blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I am giving you today; 28 the curse if you disobey the commands of the LORD your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.

You see, the curse comes from breaking the law.

Friend: (Blank look)

Me: Do you know what sin is?

Friend: Of course.

Me: What is it? But give me a verse.

Friend: It's disobeying God.

Me: Verse?

Friend: I can't think of one right now.

Me: First, you're right. Sin is disobeying God. It's disobeying what He gave us to follow. 1 John 3:4 says, "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness." That's why Yeshua told His disciples to follow the law and teach the nations to do likewise.

Friend: (Blank look)

Me: Paul references several different laws throughout his writings. The problem is that many assume he's always discussing the law that Moses gave when he speaks negatively of a law. I have a teaching that discusses that if you are interested. It's called "The Writings of Paul."

Friend: (Blank look at first) Yeah. I'll check that out sometime.

Me: As I said, I know it's a lot. Just think about it.

Friend: You've got me thinking. That's for sure.

