



---

Pastor Scott Velain

## **Numbers Chapter 15a**

### **The New Meets The Old!**

During our study into the book of Numbers Chapters 13 and 14 we've already seen the beginning of the journey of the house of Israel as it left Mount Sinai getting off to a rather rocky start to say the least.

In Numbers chapter 13 Yehovah God sends the house of Israel into the land of Canaan in order to take it over and to possess it. But the leaders of the house of Israel after spying on the land of Canaan returned with a bad report complaining that the land was full of giants that made them look like grasshoppers. And these giants that were in the land of Canaan had struck fear in the hearts of the leaders of the house of Israel to the point that they were afraid to enter into the land and to take possession of it as Yehovah God had commanded them. And as we get into Numbers Chapter 14, we find the house of Israel grumbling against Moses wanting to go back into the land of Egypt to worship the Pharaoh of Egypt instead of doing what God had told them to do and continuing to worship Yehovah their Elohim.

And because of this Yehovah had cursed that generation of the house of Israel by telling them that none of them would see the promised land that he was giving them and that their generation would die before he allowed their descendants to enter into the land of milk and honey that he had promised them through Abraham. And as we move on into Numbers chapter 15, we are going to see a short break from this rebellion as Yehovah once again lays out his commandments in order to test the obedience of the house of Israel and to once again remind them not to follow after their own hearts but to follow after his heart. But as we will soon see in Numbers chapter 16, once again the house of Israel rebels and we will once again see the wrath of God upon the disobedient and how he quickly removes the wicked from among his chosen set apart people for obvious reasons.

And this is basically just a flyover of what we're going to see as we venture into Numbers Chapter 15 here this evening. But as we are reading through Numbers chapter 15, we are going to once again learn some very important things that have everything to do with the very nature and the very character of Yehovah God himself. But before we get too far ahead of ourselves let's go ahead and read Numbers Chapter 15 so that we can know exactly what it says and just as importantly what it does not say. **Numbers chapter 15 E1:**

### **Laws About Sacrifices**

**Num 15:1** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

**Num 15:2** "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land you are to inhabit, which I am giving you,

**Num 15:3** and you offer to the LORD from the herd or from the flock **a food offering** or **a burnt offering** or **a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow** or as **a freewill offering** or at your appointed feasts, **to make a pleasing aroma to the LORD,**

**Num 15:4** then he who brings his offering shall offer to the LORD **a grain offering** of a tenth of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil;

**Num 15:5** and you shall offer with **the burnt offering,** or for the sacrifice, a quarter of a hin of wine for the drink offering for each lamb.

**Num 15:6** Or for a ram, you shall offer **for a grain offering** two tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a third of a hin of oil.

**Num 15:7** And **for the drink offering** you shall offer a third **of a hin of wine,** a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

**Num 15:8** And when you offer a bull **as a burnt offering or sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or for peace offerings** to the LORD,

**Num 15:9** then one shall offer with the bull **a grain offering** of three tenths of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with half a hin of oil.

**Num 15:10** And you shall offer for **the drink offering** half **a hin of wine,** **as a food offering, a pleasing aroma to the LORD.**

**Num 15:11** "Thus it shall be done for each bull or ram, or for each lamb or young goat.

**Num 15:12** As many as you offer, so shall you do with each one, as many as there are.

**Num 15:13** Every native Israelite shall do these things in this way, in offering a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

**Num 15:14** And if a stranger is sojourning with you, or anyone is living permanently among you, and he wishes to offer a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the LORD, he shall do as you do.

**Num 15:15** For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you, a statute forever throughout your generations. You and the sojourner shall be alike before the LORD.

**Num 15:16** One law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns

with you.”

Num 15:17 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 15:18 “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land to which I bring you

Num 15:19 and when you eat of the bread of the land, you shall present a contribution to the LORD.

Num 15:20 Of the first of your dough you shall present a loaf as a contribution; like a contribution from the threshing floor, so shall you present it.

Num 15:21 Some of the first of your dough you shall give to the LORD as a contribution throughout your generations.

### Laws About Unintentional Sins

Num 15:22 “But if you sin unintentionally, and do not observe all these commandments that the LORD has spoken to Moses,

Num 15:23 all that the LORD has commanded you by Moses, from the day that the LORD gave commandment, and onward throughout your generations,

Num 15:24 then if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation, all the congregation shall offer one bull from the herd for a burnt offering, a pleasing aroma to the LORD, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the rule, and one male goat for a sin offering.

Num 15:25 And the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the people of Israel, and they shall be forgiven, because it was a mistake, and they have brought their offering, a food offering to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD for their mistake.

Num 15:26 And all the congregation of the people of Israel shall be forgiven, and the stranger who sojourns among them, because the whole population was involved in the mistake.

Num 15:27 “If one person sins unintentionally, he shall offer a female goat a year old for a sin offering.

Num 15:28 And the priest shall make atonement before the LORD for the person who makes a mistake, when he sins unintentionally, to make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven.

Num 15:29 You shall have one law for him who does anything unintentionally, for him who is native among the people of Israel and for the stranger who sojourns among them.

Num 15:30 But the person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is native or a sojourner, reviles the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from among his people.

Num 15:31 Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken his commandment, that person shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be on him.”

### A Sabbathbreaker Executed

Num 15:32 While the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day.

Num 15:33 And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation.

Num 15:34 They put him in custody, because it had not been made clear what should be done to him.

Num 15:35 And the LORD said to Moses, "The man shall be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp."

Num 15:36 And all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death with stones, as the LORD commanded Moses.

### **Tassels on Garments**

Num 15:37 The LORD said to Moses,

Num 15:38 "Speak to the people of Israel, and tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner.

Num 15:39 And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after.

Num 15:40 So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God.

Num 15:41 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD your God."

So, here we are in the book of Numbers chapter 15 after just seeing the house of Israel rebelling against God in chapter 14 being given more instruction from God on how to honor him and how to worship him and to love him the way that he wants to be honored and worshiped and loved. Once again, it is crucial that as we walk through our Father's Torah, that we understand what the biblical definition of the love of God is.

Today in our time many of our modern-day Pharisees who are standing behind many of our modern-day pulpits have completely forgotten what the biblical definition of God actually is according to Yehvoah God himself. And I would submit to you that the biblical definition of the love of God is not that we do away with the law of God... or that we call his spoken word a curse... or that we ignore his Torah... but that we understand his Torah, his law, his spoken word and abide in it. And this is not just a biblical principle found in the Old Testament. It's a biblical principle that is found and woven tightly all throughout our God breathed Scripture from the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation. Not says I, but says our God breathed Scripture and yes... even within the confines of the New Testament itself.

**First John 5:2-3 (scrn 1)**

# The Biblical Definition of The Love of God:

**1Jn 5:2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

**1Jn 5:3** **For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.** And his commandments are not burdensome.

**Is this what your Pastor is teaching?**



As we journey through our Father's Torah here in the book of Numbers it is tectonically important to understand and remember that when we see the English word "law" in our English translated Bibles here in the Old Testament, we are actually looking at the Hebrew word "Torah". And it would greatly behoove us as we read through these Old Testament Scriptures to ignore the English word "law" and to replace it with the original Hebrew word "Torah". And I would submit to you that it would also behoove us to also ignore the English word "law" in the New Testament as well and to replace it with the original Hebrew word "Torah" so that we might better understand exactly what it is that we are talking about when our English translated Bible speaks of Yehovah's "law".

It's crucial for us as modern-day Christians to make the distinction between the law of God and the spoken word of God and his Torah because they are indeed one in the same. Yehovah God gave Moses his Torah to give to us. There is no such thing as "the law of Moses". There is only the Torah of Yehovah God our Creator. And if we are ever going to truly understand the Bible as our Father's God breathed Scripture... We must have the ability to keep these things in proper context.

What we see our Father in heaven doing here in Numbers chapter 15 is once again repeating his Torah... His spoken word... His law... To the house of Israel because



they had rebelled against him and apparently had forgotten the commandments that he had already given them. But what is interesting about these commandments in Numbers chapter 15 is that even more detail is given, and we also see a new commandment given in verse seven that we have not seen before.

In the book of Numbers Yehovah tells the house of Israel that for the drink offering they shall offer a third of a hin of wine. The commandment to include wine in an offering was not found previously within Yehovah's Torah. And for those who are not well studied I want to make sure that we expound upon the fact that this wine did indeed have fermented alcohol in it. This wine is the exact same wine that people make today from grapes that are fermented. This is the exact same wine that our Messiah created in his very first miracle at the wedding in the New Testament. This is the same wine that Noah drank when he fell asleep drunk in his tent from. This is the same wine that Lot had when he fell asleep drunk in his tent. And yes, it was fermented with yeast. Our own Messiah even uses wine as a parable in the New Testament as he talks about putting new wine in old wineskins which you cannot do because the yeast (also known as leaven) expands the wine and will burst an old wineskin. And you can find that in the book of Mark chapter 2 verse 22 if you have never read those red letter words before.

Some people will wrongly teach that the offerings that were made to our Father in heaven had no yeast or leaven in them. But this once again is a false teaching according to our God breathed Scripture. **(scrn 2)**

## The Offerings of Leavened Bread...

### **Feast of Weeks:**

Lev 23:17 You shall bring from your dwelling places two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour, and they shall be baked with leaven, as firstfruits to the LORD.

### **The Peace Offering:**

Lev 7:13 With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving he shall bring his offering with loaves of leavened bread.



Once again, not only did the bread offering of the feast of weeks and the peace offerings have leaven in them, but so too did the wine because wine without leaven which is yeast, is not wine. Grape juice without yeast is simply grape juice. And Noah nor Lot could've become drunk by drinking grape juice as some ignorantly teach. Nor is grape juice served at a wedding my friends.

And so, here in the book of Numbers chapter 15 we are seeing for the first time, wine being introduced as a drink offering. And this is once again important because our Messiah correlates wine with his very blood in Mark chapter 14 when he tells his disciples that he will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when he drinks it new in the kingdom of God. **Mark 14:22-25 E2**

Mar 14:22 And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body."

Mar 14:23 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.

Mar 14:24 And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."

Mar 14:25 Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

And so, once again we see a direct parallel between the wine being offered to Yehovah God our Father in heaven and the sacrificial blood of his only begotten Son that was also a sacrificial offering that was made specifically to him. And this once again is a very important parallel that we need to make note of as modern-day Christians today because once again, everything that our Father in heaven did in the days of Moses pointed directly to our Messiah who was indeed the only begotten Son of Yehovah God. Which brings us down to Numbers chapter 15 verses 14 through 16 which once again is a commandment that comes directly from the very lips of our Father in heaven himself once again proving that the house of Israel did not only include those who were by blood related to Abraham... but the house of Israel also included the Gentiles who chose to worship Yehvoah as well. Both Jew and Gentile, and all of the other 11 tribes of Israel were all known as the “Assembly” which is the Hebrew word “kaw-hawl” (qahal) which does not mean “church” my friends... it means “assembly”. The “assembly of Yehovah” which is what Yehvoah called them in Numbers chapter 15 verse 15 is what is important to Yehovah not our elaborate man-made basilicas and synagogues. A “church” is a man-made brick and mortar building that has been pre-manufactured by the hands of men and their denominational empires. The “Assembly” that we see here in Numbers chapter 15 is the body that our Messiah makes very clear... is the house of Israel that he came forth from according to 2<sup>nd</sup> Sammual chapter 7. And this is the very same body or “Olive Tree” that the Apostle Paul speaks of in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Romans. And this alone is another topic that we could do a whole study on, but for time’s sake here today we need to stay on track and move forward.

Today’s modern-day Christian by in large is completely ignorant and dumbfounded when it comes to the fact that our Father in heaven had always included the Gentiles as his chosen set apart people from the very beginning of the Bible. The Gentile during the days of Moses was grafted into the house of Israel exactly the same way that the Gentile today is grafted into the house of Israel. **E3 Num 15:14**

Just as we read here in Numbers chapter 15 verse 14 if a Gentile is traveling with the house of Israel or anyone is living permanently among the house of Israel and he wishes to offer a food offering with a pleasing aroma to Yehovah, he shall do as the Israelites were commanded to do. For the assembly, (Kaw-Hal) there shall be one statute for the natural born Israelite and for the Gentile who travels with them, a statute forever throughout their generations. The house of Israel and the Gentile traveler shall be alike before Yehovah. One law and one rule shall be for the natural born Israelite and for the Gentile stranger who travels with them. And I would like



to stop right here for just a moment so that we can think about what this means in the face of what many Christians today are taught within many of our modern-day denominational empires.

Seldom is a modern-day Christian ever taught that God was already grafting the Gentiles into the house of Israel back in the Old Testament. It is often times thought that the Gentiles were never included into the house of Israel until Peter sees the sheet full of unclean animals in Acts chapter 10, or until the Apostle Paul has this great epiphany about being the Apostle to the Gentiles. And this my friends is not only a shame for us as modern-day Christians, but it is a shame for those who neglect to teach those who are young in the faith about their history and what God has always commanded of the Gentile. Keeping this in mind, I'd like to go way back to the **12<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Exodus. E4**

Exo 12:48 If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.

Exo 12:49 There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you."

Exo 12:50 All the people of Israel did just as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron.

Exo 12:51 And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

Once again, it was always commanded from the very beginning that the Gentile must be circumcised before he could partake in Yehovah's Passover. This was always part of Yehovah's Torah from the very beginning and should not be overlooked by today's ignorant and understudied modern-day Christians who choose to sit within the pews of any one of over 50,000 different denominational empires listening to a wolf in sheep's clothing teach them that the law of God is a curse and that Gentiles should not be circumcised.

Many denominational empires will wrongfully and shamefully teach that the Gentile should not be circumcised and we have whole teachings on this very topic that are packed full of God breathed Scripture that clearly refutes this ignorant and shameful teaching.

Many will wrongfully point to Acts chapter 15 where Paul once again goes to Jerusalem to seek instruction concerning whether or not to teach the Gentiles to become circumcised. But before we ever even get into Acts chapter 15, I want us to

remember what we just read in Exodus chapter 12 about the Gentile being required to be circumcised before they could partake of Yehovah's Passover. It was always required from the very beginning that the Gentiles were to be circumcised just like the Jews and the rest of the 11 tribes of Israel if they were to be grafted into the house of Israel and seen as a native of the land.

Here in Numbers chapter 15 we see no mention of circumcision in the text directly... but we do see mention of circumcision indirectly. Notice that it says in the book of Numbers chapter 15, that if a Gentile is traveling with you or anyone is living permanently among you and he wishes to offer a food offering with a pleasing aroma to Yehovah he shall do as you do. **E3**

It is clearly written right here in the book of Numbers chapter 15 that Yehovah's Torah... His statute... is a statute forever throughout our generations. The house of Israel and the Gentile traveler shall be alike before Yehovah and that there will be one Torah and one rule for both the Gentile stranger and the native Israelite. And we have already seen earlier in Exodus chapter 12 that the Gentile can only partake of Yehovah's Passover and bring offerings to him if he himself and all of the males in his family are circumcised. Keeping this in mind let's now turn to **Acts chapter 15:4-21 E5**

**Act 15:4** When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.

**Act 15:5** But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses."

**Act 15:6** The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.

**Act 15:7** And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe."

**Act 15:8** And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us,

**Act 15:9** and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

**Act 15:10** Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?

**Act 15:11** But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."

**Act 15:12** And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

**Act 15:13** After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me."

Act 15:14 Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name.

Act 15:15 And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written,

Act 15:16 "After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it,

Act 15:17 that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things

Act 15:18 known from of old.'

Act 15:19 Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God,

Act 15:20 but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.

Act 15:21 For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues."

I want us to notice here in Acts chapter 15 verse five that it is written that some believers who belong to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said "it is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses". I would like to emphasize the fact that according to verse five these people who used to belong to the party of the Pharisees were indeed believers. And so, this is not some outer sect or the Gnostics or some other religious cult that is saying that the Gentiles should be circumcised. These are clearly believers who are zealous for the Torah and who are fully aware of what is commanded within the Torah not just for the Jew, but also for the Gentile as well. Keeping that in mind... I also want to draw your attention to verse seven where we are told that there had been "much debate". The very idea that there had to be, and I quote "much debate" tells us very clearly that James and the elders there in Jerusalem were not sure about how to handle this argument of whether or not the Gentiles should be circumcised right away.

After this debate between the apostles Peter stands up and makes the proclamation that God has made no distinction between the Gentiles and the Jews. And he says and I quote, "why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? And I want to stop right here for just a moment, and I want us to think about what Peter is saying here. Is Peter saying that the Gentiles should not be circumcised or that they do not have to be circumcised? Does Peter anywhere in Acts chapter 15 or anywhere else tell us that the Gentiles do not have to be circumcised? Does Peter ever override the Torah of Yehovah God and proclaim anything different than what the Torah proclaims? The intellectually honest answer to that question is a resounding no he does not!

The apostle Peter never tells anyone in Acts chapter 15 or anywhere else not to be circumcised. You see, the argument was that the believers who used to belong to the party of the Pharisees were always taught that being circumcised was what saved them and this is why they thought that these new Gentile converts must immediately be circumcised in order to be saved. They were always taught that if they were obedient to the law of God that they could earn their way into the gates of his kingdom. What they did not understand is that it is impossible to earn your way into Yehovah's kingdom by being circumcised or even baptized for that matter. No one can enter into Yehovah's kingdom but by the grace of Yehovah. It is through his good pleasure that is also known as his "grace"... that anyone is able to enter into his kingdom.

And this is exactly why the apostle Paul had such contention with these believers who used to belong to the party of the Pharisees just as he himself used to belong to the party of the Pharisees. Paul did not want the new Gentile converts to think that by being circumcised they were earning their way into the gates of heaven. Paul knew full well that circumcision was exactly the same as baptism. You cannot earn your way into the gates of heaven by being baptized or by being circumcised even though both baptism and circumcision are indeed commanded. They both represent two very different things. The watery grave of baptism represents our willful and intentional commitment to follow our Messiah even unto death. Circumcision although like baptism represents our being grafted into the covenant seed of Abraham who is our Messiah and our willful and intentional commitment and allegiance to the one true Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Both baptism and circumcision are indeed commandments that come directly from our Father in heaven and should be done not in order to earn someone's entrance into God's kingdom... But they should be done in order to show our love and respect and honor for Yehovah God and his only begotten Son. There is a tectonically huge difference between the two and yet... they both have to do with the heart transplant that Yehovah God promises those who have faith and believe in him. We would do well to remember what we just read in **first John chapter 5 verses two and three (scrn 3)**

# The Biblical Definition of The Love of God:

**1Jn 5:2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

**1Jn 5:3** **For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.** And his commandments are not burdensome.

**Is this what your Pastor is teaching?**



It is clearly written that the biblical definition of the love of God is that we keep his commandments and that his commandments are not burdensome to us. Nowhere is it written that the love of God is throwing his Torah in the trashcan and turning his spoken word into a curse and a new “do as thou wilt is the whole of the law” religion. You will not find that modern day blasphemy found anywhere within the confines of our God breathed Scripture. **E6 (show)**

**Mat 7:21** “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

**Mat 7:22** On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’

**Mat 7:23** And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

In Matthew chapter 7 verses 21 through 23 our Messiah is extremely clear about who is getting into his Father’s kingdom and who is not. And according to our Messiah, he says that you can call him “Lord” all day long every day, but that does not mean that you are getting into his Father’s kingdom. He goes on to tell us that the only one who is getting into his Father’s kingdom is the one who does the will of his Father who is in heaven. In other words, if you are not doing the will of his Father who is in heaven... You are not getting into his kingdom. Not says I, but says



our God breathed Scripture and the very red-letter words of our Messiah that he told us with his very own lips, his very own tongue and his very own breath.

Furthermore, he also warns us that on that day many will say to him “Lord Lord didn’t we prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name?” Upon which time he will look them in the face and tell them that he never knew them and to depart from him because they are workers of and I quote “lawlessness” which is the Greek word “anomia”... Which does indeed mean “lawless”.

And therefore, once again we have the proclamation from our very own beloved Messiah that if we are not doing the will of his Father in heaven then we are not going to get into the kingdom of heaven. **E5 (show)**

**Act 15:4** When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.

**Act 15:5** But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses.”

**Act 15:6** The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.

**Act 15:7** And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

**Act 15:8** And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us,

**Act 15:9** and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

**Act 15:10** Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?

**Act 15:11** But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

**Act 15:12** And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

**Act 15:13** After they finished speaking, James replied, “Brothers, listen to me.

**Act 15:14** Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name.

**Act 15:15** And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written,

**Act 15:16** “After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it,

**Act 15:17** that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things

**Act 15:18** known from of old.’

**Act 15:19** Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God,

**Act 15:20** but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.

**Act 15:21** For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues."

Getting back to Acts chapter 15, it should now be clear to us that the apostle Peter was not telling the Gentiles not to be circumcised. The problem that Peter had was that these new believers (that used to belong to the party of the Pharisees) were putting the horse before the cart.

You cannot teach someone that if they are circumcised, they are saved. It simply doesn't work that way. Both baptism and circumcision are very much alike in the fact that they are both done with a humble and contrite heart. Neither the act of baptism or circumcision should be done thinking that you are able to earn your way into God's kingdom. If you are going to be baptized, you should be baptized because of your love for your Messiah and because he commanded you to do so. And if you are going to be circumcised, you should be circumcised because of your love for your creator who is your Father in heaven who has commanded you to do so. No one should ever go down into the watery grave of baptism or be circumcised because they think that they are going to earn a free ticket into the kingdom of heaven. And Paul and Peter and James and the elders there in Jerusalem were fully aware of this Torah based fact.

I'd like us to now turn our attention to Acts chapter 15 verse 19 and the proclamation that James made concerning this argument of circumcision. **E7**

**Act 15:19** Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God,

**Act 15:20** but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.

**Act 15:21** For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues."

It's important that we notice here that James never tells anyone not to be circumcised just as Peter never told anyone not to be circumcised. You simply do not see that language anywhere within the confines of Acts chapter 15 or any other chapter for that matter. It simply is not in the text.

Instead of burdening these new Gentile converts with circumcision... James simply returns to the Torah and gives these new Gentile converts four things to do that are commanded directly from the Torah. He commands them to abstain from things polluted by idols... He commands them to abstain from sexual immorality... And he commands them to abstain from what has been strangled... And he commands them to abstain from blood all of which are commanded within the confines of Yehvoah God's Torah. And then, what does James say? Does he say, "you don't have to be circumcised?" Does he say that it's okay to ignore Exodus chapter 12 and Numbers chapter 15 because God's Torah is now a curse and do as thou wilt is now the whole of the law? No!

James gives these new Gentile converts four easy things to do that come directly from the Torah and then he says in verse 21 and I quote, "for from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues".

Think about what the apostle James just got done saying here in Acts chapter 15.

James says that they should give these new Gentile converts four easy things to do directly from the Torah in order to get them started... and then they will hear Moses being read in the synagogues every Sabbath. What is so important about Moses being read every Sabbath in the synagogues if the law of Moses is dead and has become a curse? Think about that for just a moment.

Why is James concerned with these new Gentiles hearing the law of Moses read in the synagogues every Sabbath? Remember there really is no such thing as "the law of Moses". The "law" (better known as the Torah of Yehvoah God) is the spoken word of Yehvoah God. The very reason that James is making the point that these new Gentile converts would hear the writings of Moses every Sabbath in the Synagogues was that James knew full well that these new Gentile converts would eventually hear the commandment given in Exodus chapter 12 and in Numbers chapter 15 of the Torah (which is the law of Moses given to Moses to give to us)... And their hearts would then be convicted to be... Circumcised when the time was right. Not because someone had commanded them to do so, but because their hearts would lead them to do so. You see, there is a difference between doing something because some man commands you to do it... and doing something because God commanded you to do it and you want to please Jehovah God. If you are circumcised in order to please men... Then you are worshiping men. But if you are

circumcised in order to please God, then you are worshipping God.

Now how do we know that we are correct in our interpretation of the Scripture? We know that we are correct because in Acts chapter 16 in the very next chapter as Paul is delivering James's decision concerning circumcision for the Gentiles to the Assemblies... Paul himself circumcises Timothy whose father was a Greek Gentile.

#### **Acts 16:1-4 E8**

**Act 16:1** Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek.

**Act 16:2** He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium.

**Act 16:3** Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

**Act 16:4** As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem.

Notice the emphasis of Timothy's father being a Greek Gentile in verse 1. Paul knew that he and Timothy were going to run into more of the circumcision group who were going to be at the churches that they were going to be going to in order to deliver this decree from James about circumcision. And rather than having another argument with them, Paul obviously knew that Timothy's heart was ready to be circumcised because he was indeed a disciple and so Paul circumcised the Gentile Timothy whose father was indeed a Greek Gentile proving once again that circumcision was not just for the Jews but also for the Gentiles. But... once again... that circumcision needed to be done because of a contrite heart not in order to earn someone's entrance into the kingdom of God. We are saved by the grace of God and not our works. But this does not negate or do away with our good works that once again proves our love for God just as we see in first John chapter 5 verses two and three. From here I would like us to **Acts chapter 21 E9**

**Act 21:17** When we had come to Jerusalem, the brothers received us gladly.

**Act 21:18** On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

**Act 21:19** After greeting them, he related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

**Act 21:20** And when they heard it, they glorified God. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed. They are all zealous for the law,

Act 21:21 and they have been told about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or walk according to our customs.

Act 21:22 What then is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come.

Act 21:23 Do therefore what we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow;

Act 21:24 take these men and purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses, so that they may shave their heads. Thus all will know that there is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself also live in observance of the law.

Act 21:25 But as for the Gentiles who have believed, we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality."

Act 21:26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day he purified himself along with them and went into the temple, giving notice when the days of purification would be fulfilled and the offering presented for each one of them.

The teachings of the apostle Paul have always been difficult to understand and Paul was often times misunderstood in his time just like he is often times misunderstood in our time. Here in acts chapter 21 once again, we see Paul getting into some trouble because of his style of teaching. James once again tells the apostle Paul that there are thousands among the Jews who have believed. And these believing Jews are all zealous for the law... The Torah of God because they know that the Torah is indeed the spoken word of Yehovah God. And James once again proclaims to Paul that these believing Jews have been wrongly told... get that my friends... wrongly told... that the apostle Paul is teaching these new Gentile converts to forsake Moses telling them not to circumcise their children or to walk according to their customs. And you can hear the distress in the voice of James and the elders when James says "what then is to be done?".

And once again, James and the elders come up with a plan to save Paul by telling him to take four men who were under a Nazirite vow to the temple so that they could shave their heads and they told Paul to pay for their expenses, in other words... Paul was to pay out of his own pocket for their offerings that these men were commanded to make after they had completed a Nazirite vow according to the Torah. And once again... today's ignorant and unstudied modern day Christian is by in large completely and utterly dumbfounded when it comes to a Nazirite vow but we'll get to that in just a moment, but what's important to take note of here is what does Paul do with these instructions from James and the elders? Does Paul argue with James and the elders by telling them that the law of God is done away with and a so he doesn't have to make these sacrifices anymore? Absolutely not!... Paul does what he is told and he takes these four men to the temple and he pays for their



offerings that they are required to make according to the Torah. **E0 (show)**

**Act 21:24** take these men and purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses, so that they may shave their heads. Thus all will know that there is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself also live in observance of the law.

And what does James tell us right here in Acts chapter 21 verse 24? James tells Paul and I quote “take these men and purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads. This way all will know that there is nothing in what they have been told about you Paul, but that you yourself also live in observance of the law.”

And so, right here in Acts chapter 21 we have James and the elders in Jerusalem telling us that Paul always lived in observance of the law and we can clearly see that Paul never argues with James and the elders about paying for these expenses for the sacrifices that these men are going to make at the temple in fact... Paul himself immediately does what James and the elders tell him to do which means that Paul went to the temple and he paid for these expenses for these men to make their sacrifices and be able to shave their heads. Paul... after the death, burial, and resurrection of our Messiah was still keeping the Torah of God and making these offerings and sacrifices at the Temple. Not says I... but says our God breathed Scriptures. And if you don't know what a Nazirite vow is all about, we can read about exactly what it was that Paul had to pay for in **Numbers chapter 6.** (manually)

**Num 6:13** “And this is the law for the Nazirite, when the time of his separation has been completed: he shall be brought to the entrance of the tent of meeting,

**Num 6:14** and he shall bring his gift to the LORD, one male lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb a year old without blemish as a sin offering, and one ram without blemish as a peace offering,

**Num 6:15** and a basket of unleavened bread, loaves of fine flour mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil, and their grain offering and their drink offerings.

**Num 6:16** And the priest shall bring them before the LORD and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering,

**Num 6:17** and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of peace offering to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread. The priest shall offer also its grain offering and its drink offering.

**Num 6:18** And the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire that

is under the sacrifice of the peace offering.

And so, right here in the New Testament in Acts chapter 21 we have the apostle Paul going to the temple and paying for four male lambs a year old without blemish and four ewe lambs a year old without blemish, and four rams without blemish, and four baskets of unleavened bread, and four unleavened wafers smeared with oil and four grain offerings and four drink offerings so that these four men could shave their heads at the temple as required by the Torah and fulfill their Nazirite vow as commanded in the Torah. And yet... These geniuses standing behind today's modern-day pulpits will ever so proudly proclaim that the Torah is dead and done away with and a curse if you keep it. Which means... that James and the all of the elders in Jerusalem and the Apostle Paul himself are all cursed. Not according to Yehvoah of course... but according to these blasphemous godless imposters who just like the Scribes and the Pharisees of our Messiah's time are indeed worshiping our Messiah in vain, teaching as doctrines... the commandments of men.

I tell you the truth my friends the hypocrisy of today's modern-day Pharisees and scribes knows no bounds and just as it is written, and just as our Messiah had told the scribes and the Pharisees of his time... the prophecy of Isaiah is once again fulfilled that says, "you will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see... but never perceive."

My friends, there is nothing new under the sun. And for those of you who would like to argue that Paul taught that you do not have to be circumcised, you need to go back and you need to read and study Acts chapter 21 thoroughly so that you can better understand what we just read to you here today, and I would also suggest as your homework that you also read second Peter chapter 3 verses 15 through 17, and you also take the time to view our study concerning what Paul taught about circumcision exactly and why it was that Paul had gotten himself into trouble here in Acts chapter 21.

We must always remember that the law of the land was the law of the Pharisees. The Pharisees and the scribes had heaped all kinds of oral laws on top of God's Torah which is a sin according to the book of Deuteronomy chapters 4 and 12. It is forbidden to add to or to take away from the word of God which is exactly what they had done. The law of the land at that time was "pharisaical law" as prescribed by the Pharisees not God's law. We are told over, and over again that the apostle Paul always served the law of God with his mind and just as James and the elders

tell us right here in Acts chapter 21, the apostle Paul always lived in observance of the Torah (also known as the law of Moses).

The apostle Paul says many things about circumcision, and he even makes mention that if you were circumcised you should stay circumcised, and if you are not circumcised that you should stay uncircumcised, but Paul does not say that a Gentile is to stay uncircumcised forever. Once again, it was the decree of James who was the head of the Jerusalem Council that a new Gentile convert was to do four easy things from the Torah to get them started until these new Gentile converts could hear Moses being taught in the synagogues every Sabbath and was moved by his heart to be circumcised. **(2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:15:17 manually show)**

Peter warns us in second Peter chapter 3 verse 17 that because we know the writings of the apostle Paul are difficult to understand we should take care that we are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose our own stability, and every modern-day Christian should have second Peter chapter 3 verse 17 highlighted in their Bibles so that they are not carried away with the error of lawless people.

There is much to be said about circumcision and we will talk a little bit more about this commandment that has always been commanded for both Jew and Gentile next week as we continue our study into the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Numbers. But know this my friends. Even the Apostle Paul went to the Temple to preform sacrifices in his day because and I quote... Paul “always lived in observance of the law” (which is... the Torah of Yehvoah God).

Keeping all of this in mind... it is my devout prayer that we have given you some things to take to your prayer closet and to test through the fire of diligent prayer and supplication.

And with that... as we close the books for this evening I will do as I always do, and I will once again ask that everyone within the sound of my voice would please take what you have heard here this evening to your own prayer closet. Bow your head and bend your knee and face the holy promised land of Jerusalem and ask in the name of Yeshua Hamashiach if what you have heard here this evening be true or not.

Ask, seek, and knock on his door and on his door alone, and the proper door will be

opened to you. And if you will do that... and if you will stay the course to the end... you and I will surely walk through the gates of his soon coming kingdom together.