

**Shayla:** How do you reconcile Ephesians 2:15 with your messianic view?

- **Ephesians 2:15 HCSB** He did away with the law of the commandments in regulations, so that He might create in Himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace.

**Midrash:**

Many cultural Christians point to Ephesians 2:15 as a “proof text” that any use of the Old Covenant law is prohibited, whether for salvation or lifestyle. As usual it’s important to consider the larger context of the verse.

- **Ephesians 2:11-20 HCSB** So then, remember that at one time you were Gentiles in the flesh--called "the uncircumcised" by those called "the circumcised," done by hand in the flesh. (12) At that time you were without the Messiah, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, with no hope and without God in the world. (13) But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah. (14) For He is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility. In His flesh, (15) He did away with the law of the commandments in regulations, so that He might create in Himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace. (16) *He did this so* that He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross and put the hostility to death by it. (17) When *Christ* came, He proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. (18) For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. (19) So then you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God's household, (20) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone.

The point Paul is making can be viewed as following:

<b><u>Before the cross</u></b>	<b><u>After the cross</u></b>
Gentiles	God's people
Uncircumcised	Circumcised
Without a Messiah	With a Messiah
Excluded from Israel	Included in Israel
Foreigners to the covenant	Partakers in the covenant
Without hope	Possessing hope
Without God	Owned by God
Far away	Near by

This is the amazing point that Paul is making. He is making an argument for the inclusion of all believers into the nation of royal priests that God has always intended. The Apostle Peter made precisely the same argument:

- **1 Peter 2:9-10 HCSB** But you are **a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the praises** of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. (10) Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Both Apostles make the mind blowing statement that Yeshua broke down the barrier that kept the Goyim out and through His sacrifice removed not only the barrier that kept them out of the inner court but even tore the veil that kept even most native-born Jews out of the Holy of Holies!

Some Messianists try to argue against Ephesians 2:15 by redefining the term translated in the HCSB by “did away with” and in the KJV by “abolished”. The term in Greek is *katargeo* (Strong's #2673) and though it is a Greek term, it is best reflected in the Hebrew concept of maleh. After all, though writing in Greek, Paul WAS a Jewish rabbi. I don't believe that attacking the term is actually useful. Maleh is close enough to katargeo that it's irrelevant.

I think the far rarer and thus more pertinent term to study is “entole en dogma” the “commands in the regulations”. There are only two other places where “dogma” is used in a similar way. The first is:

- **Colossians 2:20-23 HCSB** If you died with Christ to the elemental forces of this world, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world? Why do you submit to regulations: (21) "Don't handle, don't taste, don't touch"? (22) All these *regulations* refer to what is destroyed by being used up; they are human commands and doctrines. (23) Although these have a reputation of wisdom by promoting ascetic practices, humility, and severe treatment of the body, they are not of any value against fleshly indulgence.

Here dogma is used of worldly ascetic regulations. Paul specifies that they are “human commands and doctrines.” Clearly this does not refer to the Sinaitic Law that was given to us by Yahweh. Thus this passage is not relevant to our study.

On the other hand, the other passage that uses “dogma” in a similar way is dead on:

- **Hebrews 9:1-3 HCSB** Now the first *covenant* also had regulations for ministry and an earthly sanctuary. (2) For a tabernacle was set up; and in the first room, which is called "the holy place," were the lampstand, the table, and the presentation loaves. (3) Behind the second curtain, the tabernacle was called "the holy of holies."
- **Hebrews 9:7-10 HCSB** But the high priest alone enters the second room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. (8) The Holy Spirit was making it clear that the way into the holy of holies had not yet been disclosed while the first tabernacle was still standing. (9) This is a symbol for the present time, during which gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the worshiper's conscience. (10) They are physical regulations and only deal with food, drink, and various washings imposed until the time of restoration.

Here the regulations for ministry (and thus access to the tabernacle) limited access to the Levitical priesthood, and access to the Holy of Holies to the high priest and that only once a year!

In contrast, the Mashiach' entered the Holy of Holies one time and by His blood obtained our redemption.

- **Hebrews 9:12 HCSB** He entered the holy of holies once for all, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.

He mediated a new covenant which allowed those who were once proscribed to receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

- **Hebrews 9:15 HCSB** Therefore He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance, because a death has taken place for redemption from the transgressions *committed* under the first covenant.

He concludes:

- **Hebrews 10:19-22 HCSB** Therefore, brothers, since we have boldness to enter the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus, (20) by the new and living way that He has inaugurated for us, through the curtain (that is, His flesh); (21) and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, (22) let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.

The Mashiach's atoning work did not overthrow the entire Old Covenant; did not overthrow the moral code exemplified by the Decalogue; did not do away with the sound ethical principles that should govern every believer's life. I propose that what Ephesians 2:15 is stating is that by Hashem's grace He did away with the commands implied in the regulations regarding access to the Father and to the eternal inheritance. By His atoning death He made it possible for all men, regardless of their genetic background, to become part

of a nation of royal priests. Those who were formerly trapped outside the pale of Israel, now may become unified with them. This is not new law. This is the way it has ALWAYS been as argued elsewhere. The fundamental difference is that now the decision is a one-time acceptance of the Mashiach by faith through grace.