

Ready Answers Unit I: God's Law of Liberty Part 3



I105.jpg

Welcome, Opening prayer, and Introduction.

1

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Introduction

In this study, we want to continue answering the question, “What laws are important for Christians today?” In the earlier lessons we saw that Jesus confirmed and strengthened the covenant with Abraham and the children of Israel at Sinai. As we continue, we will examine the rulings from the Jerusalem Council and how Jesus confirmed them. We will then see what God says about the Everlasting Covenant and the New Covenant.

The Jerusalem Council



I115.jpg

Since Jesus' death replaced laws for sacrifices and oblations, the early Christians wondered which of the other laws in the Old Testament had been changed. Paul wanted to know if it was important for Gentiles to be circumcised. To answer this question, he called a council in Jerusalem with the other apostles and church leaders. The decision from the council is recorded for us in Acts.

The Ruling from the Jerusalem Council



I125.jpg

But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. Acts 15:20-21



I135.jpg

It is interesting to note that this list does not say that we should love each other, or even that we should love God, or do any of the other things Jesus confirmed, as recorded in the Gospels. In fact by pointing out that Christians would hear the books of Moses read every sabbath, they recognized this was not a complete list of rules for Christians to follow.

Let's take a close look at what each of these rules mean, then we will be able to compare them to the rules in the covenants.

Pollutions of Idols

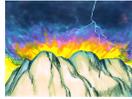
6



I165.jpg

The Council said we should stay free from the pollutions of idols. What does this mean? If something is polluted it is contaminated or dirty. So “pollutions of idols” means all the dirtiness related to idolatry.¹ God told the Israelites that they, too, should stay free from idols and things related to worshipping them.

Pollutions of Idols



I175.jpg

Before the Israelites entered the promised land, God told them that He would drive out the heathen people because of their false gods and how they worshiped them. He told the Israelites not to act in the same ways, and said if they did, the land would throw them out, too.² If we want to please God, we will want to avoid the things he hates. So let’s make sure we understand what God considers to be false worship, or pollutions of idols.

Pollutions of Idols: Abortion



I185.jpg

God associates the killing of babies, similar to abortion today, with idol worship.³ **Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.** Deuteronomy 12:31
So anything God describes as an abomination is a pollution of idols. This would include more than what we might normally think of as idol worship. Let’s take a look at some of them.

Pollutions of Idols: Unclean Meat



I190.jpg

God indicates that the eating of unclean animals is an abomination unto Him and is also related to idol worship. **They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine’s flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD.** Isaiah 66:17

A complete list of the unclean or abominable animals is listed in both Leviticus chapter 11 and Deuteronomy chapter 14.

Pollutions of Idols: Jewelry

10



I195.jpg

God told the Israelites to remove their jewelry immediately after they had made the golden calf and worshiped it.⁴ **For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.** Exodus 33:5-6

God’s People Did not Wear Jewelry

11



I205.jpg

This was not just a momentary removal, because many years later, around the time of Gideon, Judges 8:24 tells us that God’s people still didn’t wear jewelry.

Other Pollutions of Idols

12



I215.jpg

Some of the other things God describes as being related to idol worship or as being abominable unto Him are:⁵ drunkenness, witchcraft, cross-dressers, paying a vow by using the pay from prostitution, remarriage to a previous spouse after marrying someone else, inexact units of measure for buying or selling, pride, and making people angry with each other.

God Hears Those Who Obey

13



I225.jpg

One other abomination that we must notice is...

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

Proverbs 28:9

This shows how important it is for us to learn and obey God's law. If we love God, and want to choose the things that please Him, and obey Jesus' instruction to be perfect, we will want to avoid all pollutions of idols.

Fornication

14



I227.jpg

The Council also said we should not commit fornication. This word in the New Testament is used to describe improper sexual behavior.⁶

Fornication

15



I228.jpg

The Book of Leviticus teaches that we should not have sexual relations with someone else's spouse,⁷ with close relatives,⁸ with someone of the same gender,⁹ with an animal,¹⁰ or during a woman's monthly period.¹¹ It explains in Leviticus 18:26-30 that all these are an abomination to God.

The Book of the Covenant covers some of these rules but also adds two more.¹² It tells us not to lust, because that is a type of coveting; and it explains what the punishment should be for people who have sexual relations before marriage.

Pollutions of Idols and Fornication are Abominations

16



I231.jpg

We have seen that the first two things the Jerusalem Council talked about, "Pollutions of Idols" and "Fornication", are both things that God hates and considers to be abominations. Does Jesus agree with this?

17



I234.jpg

While in vision, John received specific messages from Jesus to the seven churches that were in Asia Minor. Jesus warned the Pergamos church that they would be destroyed if they didn't stop committing fornication, eating foods offered to idols, and doing other things He hates.

18



I237.jpg

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. Revelation 2:14-16

Jesus says - No Abominations

19



I240.jpg

Jesus gave this strong warning to the church at Pergamos and a similar warning to the church at Thyatira.¹³ These show that Jesus agrees with the Jerusalem Council.

Not Eating Strangled Animals and Blood

20



I242.jpg

The last item on the list from the Jerusalem Council is not to eat blood or strangled animals. God explained to Moses that clean animals were to be eaten only if the blood was drained and thrown away.¹⁴ Anyone who eats an animal that was strangled would be eating its blood.

Not Eating Strangled Animals and Blood

21



I243.jpg

By giving this instruction, the Jerusalem Council confirmed that the rules in the everlasting covenant made at Ararat are still important for Gentiles.

Jerusalem Council Clarifies Important Older Laws

22



I244.jpg

This completed chart shows what we have learned about the covenants and what rules are important for Christians today.

Jerusalem Council Clarifies Important Older Laws

23



I245.jpg

We see that Jesus confirmed the covenant with Abraham, and the one at Sinai.

24



I246.jpg

We have described how the Sinai covenant repeated the judgments part of the Ararat covenant, and the Jerusalem council confirmed the rest of it.

25



I247.jpg

Both Jesus and the Council said that we should choose the things that please God by avoiding pollutions of idols and abominations.

26



I248.jpg

What is required of Gentile Christians today is the same as what was required of Gentiles who joined the Sinai covenant. God told the Gentiles, in Isaiah 56, he would save those who “keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant”. The Jerusalem Council tells us to choose the things that please God. Jesus confirmed the covenant, which includes keeping the Sabbaths, and then in Revelation he tells us also to avoid doing what He hates.

God's Everlasting Covenant

27



I249.jpg

The Bible describes these three covenants as everlasting covenants.¹⁵ Since the teachings of Jesus and the ruling from the Jerusalem Council confirm them, we can consider that together they give us a better picture of God's complete Everlasting Covenant.

Have Earth's Inhabitants Been Faithful to God's Covenant?

28



I255.jpg

God says that the earth's inhabitants have broken the Everlasting Covenant. [The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.](#) [Isaiah 24 : 5](#)
God says the people not only have broken the laws, but they have changed them, too, without His permission or agreement.

Are There Consequences for Breaking the Everlasting Covenant?

29



I265.jpg

A few verses later, God says what will happen to the earth as a result. **The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.** Isaiah 24:20

This agrees with the prophesy in Daniel 9:27 that the Messiah will make things desolate because of abominations.¹⁶ Since the earth is still here, we know that God still cares if we keep His covenant.¹⁷

We Deserve to Die

30



I275.jpg

Since we have broken this covenant, we deserve to die, like Adam and Eve did when they disobeyed.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Romans 3:23

Is There Any Hope of a New Covenant with God?

31



I285.jpg

God can forgive us, and He will make a new covenant with earth's inhabitants. This new covenant is described in Jeremiah 31, and is quoted in Hebrews 8. As we look at this description, notice two promises of this covenant: (1) God will write His law on their hearts, and (2) God will forgive their iniquity, or sins.

Jeremiah Prophesies the New Covenant

32



I295.jpg

In Jeremiah chapter 31, God reminds the Israelites that He has been faithful to the Sinai Covenant, but that since they broke it, a new agreement needed to be made.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: Jeremiah 31:31-32

The Terms of the New Covenant

33



I305.jpg

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Jeremiah 31:33-34

Explaining the New Covenant

34



I315.jpg

We see that the New Covenant would be started with the Israelites, but that it would also extend to their neighbors, and to all the people of the earth, regardless of social status.

God will write His laws in their hearts, and when the promises are completely fulfilled, they will no longer need missionaries or preachers, because all people will know the LORD and be His people. This covenant also includes a provision for forgiveness of sins.

Has The New Covenant Started Yet?

35



I325.jpg

Can we find in the Bible a place when God started a new covenant that has these terms? Yes. Before He died, Jesus gathered His disciples, who were Israelites, together in the Upper Room for the Last Supper, and made a covenant with them. He told them that His body and blood were being given to establish the new testament, or covenant, and also for the forgiveness of sins.¹⁸

Jesus Starts the New Covenant

36



I335.jpg

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. Matthew 26 :28-29

Jesus Starts the New Covenant

37



I345.jpg

So Jesus started a new covenant with the children of Israel, and He offers His death as a means for forgiving our sins, but He is still waiting for us to join Him in God's kingdom.

Has This New Covenant Been Offered to All People?

38



I355.jpg

The New Covenant described by Jeremiah would start with the children of Israel, but it would extend to all the people of the earth. Did Jesus invite everyone to be a part of the covenant He started? Yes. After Jesus died, rose again, and was ready to go back to heaven, He clearly instructed his followers to be missionaries and teach all of earth's inhabitants everything they had learned from Him.¹⁹

Has This New Covenant Been Offered to All People?

39



I365.jpg

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark 16 :15-16

Have All the Promises of the New Covenant Been Fulfilled?

40



I375.jpg

Jesus started to fulfill the promises of the New Covenant by offering the forgiveness of sins, through His blood, but we still need to teach each other to know the LORD. So, this is like a wedding engagement. There is an agreement, but it isn't the complete wedding covenant. Jesus is still waiting for the great wedding supper of the Lamb and the consummation when he will once again drink of the fruit of the vine with his followers.

The Wedding Supper of the Lamb

41



I385.jpg

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. Revelation 19 :7-9

One day, God's people will join him in a great wedding supper.

Is the New Covenant Part of God's Everlasting Covenant?

42



I395.jpg

Much of this prophesy is repeated using different words in Ezekiel 37 :24-27, but here it is called the Everlasting Covenant. It also says that all people will know the Lord and do His laws and judgments.

All People will Know the Lord and Do His Laws

43



I405.jpg

And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Ezekiel 37 :24-25

God will be Their God, and They will be His People

44



I415.jpg

Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Ezekiel 37 : 26–27

God will be their God, and they will be His people.

New Covenant is the Everlasting Covenant

45



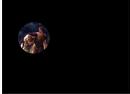
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So the New Covenant can be considered part of the Everlasting Covenant. The new part of the covenant agreement is that God has given us a way to be forgiven for breaking His covenant, and given us a promise that we will eventually keep his laws and judgments, like He wanted us to do back in The Garden of Eden.

Each of the Covenants we have examined contain promises that have not yet been completely fulfilled.

The Blessed Hope

46



I435.jpg

With Adam and Eve, we look for a restored, perfect world.

47



I445.jpg

With Noah, we look for a complete cleansing of sin from the earth.

48



I455.jpg

With Abraham, we look for every family of the earth being blessed through Jesus' completed ministry.

49



I465.jpg

With Moses, we look forward to being out of the bondage of sin, and into the Promised Land of the New Earth.

50



I475.jpg

With the apostles, we look forward to Jesus' second coming, and having Him write His laws completely on our hearts,

51



I485.jpg

so that we do not desire to sin any more, but can walk in liberty.

Picture Sources

p.0 Photo of rainbow is from <http://www.christianpost.com/news/the-everlasting-covenant-44431/>

- p. 3 visualbiblealive.com 110.04.0263.BiblePaintings
- p. 4 freebibleimages.org 11_Paul.Jerusalem_1024
- p. 5 Scroll with the list, Scroll from *Your Bible and You*, page 266. (YBaYp266 - Scroll.tif)
- p. 6 Scroll with the list with “pollutions of idols” emphasized, Scroll from *Your Bible and You*, page 266. (YBaYp266 - Scroll.tif)
- p. 7 freebibleimages.org 11_Moses_Sinai_JPEG_1024
- p. 8 Fetus in Womb: *New Beginnings*, Sermon 10, slide 7.
- p. 9 Picture of Unclean Animals: Also used for unit A.
- p. 10 freebibleimages.org 03_Moses_Golden_Calf_JPEG_1024 and freebibleimages.org 17_Moses_Golden_Calf_JPEG_1024
- p. 11 Gideon: *Evangelism Media Library*, slide 0609032.jpg
- p. 12 Scroll with the list
- p. 13 file talk_to_the_hand_by_ftpaddict.jpg from <https://intentionalwarriors.com/2012/03/10/rejecting-god/>
- p. 14 Scroll with the list with “fornication” emphasized
- p. 15 Our own slide listing fornications.
- p. 16 Our own chart comparing covenants with Council / No Abominations marked. (03q03Laws.xcf)
- p. 17 Jesus Among Candles: www-St-Takla-orgNew-Church-Architecture-Paintings-32
- p. 18 Map of Asia Minor with light at Pergamos, our own creation
- p. 19 Our own chart comparing covenants with Jesus / No Abominations marked. (03q03Laws.xcf)
- p. 20 Scroll with the list with “Blood” emphasized
- p. 21 Our own chart comparing covenants with Council / No Blood marked. (03q03Laws.xcf)
- p. 22 Our own chart comparing covenants with no circles. (03q03Laws.xcf)
- p. 23 Our own chart comparing covenants with Be Perfect and Ten Commandments circled. (03q03Laws.xcf)
- p. 24 Our own chart comparing covenants with Eat no Blood circled. (03q03Laws.xcf)
- p. 25 Our own chart comparing covenants with No Abominations circled. (03q03Laws.xcf)
- p. 26 Conglomerate of pictures used for Isa 56:4–7, Sermon on the Mount cover picture, Acts 15:20–21, Rev 2:14–16
- p. 27 Conglomerate of pictures used for Gen 9:16 (unit G&H), Gen 17:1 (unit D, G&H) and Exodus 24:7–8 (unit G&H).
- p. 28 Cracked earth near Salton Sea: <http://abandonedplaces.livejournal.com/1809120.html>
- p. 29 Salton Sea: http://photoblog.nbcnews.com/_news/2011/03/22/6320297-erosion-and-toxins-from-farm-runoff-leaves-the-salton-sea-in-california-contaminated-and-abandoned?lite and Salted cottage: <http://abandonedplaces.livejournal.com/1809120.html>
- p. 30 Adam&Eve 52c from Ultimate Bible Picture Collection
- p. 31 Slide 0614123.jpg from <http://media.ldscdn.org/images/media-library/easter/resurrected-christ-wilson-ong-212048-print.jpg>.
- p. 32 10 Comm fruit C-867 from Moses after Egypt section Ultimate Bible Picture Collection.
- p. 33 Jeremiah heart: <http://www.paxchristimetrodc.org/2015/03/lent-2015-reflection-for-the-fifth-sunday-of-lent-mar-22/>

- p. 34 Our New Covenant chart. (03q04NewCovenant.xcf)
- p. 35 Jesus Washing Feet: jesus-washing-apostles-feet-39588-print from <http://media.ldscdn.org/images/media-library/gospel-art/new-testament/jesus-washing-apostles-feet-39588-print.jpg>
- p. 36 The Last Supper: from visualbiblealive.com 110_04_0371_BiblePaintings
- p. 37 Our New Covenant chart with Last Supper. (03q04NewCovenant.xcf)
- p. 38 Our New Covenant chart with Great Commission. (03q04NewCovenant.xcf)
- p. 39 visualbiblealive.org 110_04_0234_BiblePaintings and World from <http://eoimages.gsfc.nasa.gov/images/imagerecords/73000/73751/world.topo.bathy.200407.3x5400x2700.jpg> credit must be at bottom of picture: Reto Stckli, NASA Earth Observatory
- p. 40 Our New Covenant chart.
- p. 41 <http://img.wikinut.com/img/41coddu06u8976rv/jpeg/0/The-Bride-and-Groom.jpeg>
- p. 42 from www.St-Takla-org-Jesus-with-Children-29
- p. 43 new-earth-family-jesus-lion-lamb1 from <http://www.hellhadesafterlife.com/epilogue-nature-eternal-life>
- p. 44 New Tabernacle: from www.st.takla.org
- p. 45 Adam and Eve: Adam & Eve w Light From Heav from Ultimate Bible Picture Collection. Also used for unit G&H.
- p. 46 Collage of previously used pictures.

End Notes

Page numbers are listed in parentheses to help you find where each end note is referenced.

- ¹ The Greek word translated as “pollutions” here is *ἀλίσγημα* (pronounced *al-is-ghem-ah*). Strong assigned the number 234 to this word. The entry for this word in the Greek dictionary provided in *The New Strong’s Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible / James Strong—Red letter ed.* published by Thomas Nelson Publishers, ISBN 0-7852-4539-1, is “This word denotes a pollution, contamination (Acts 15:20—‘pollutions of idols,’ i.e., all the contaminating associations connected with idolatry including meats from sacrifices offered to idols. See: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Christian Literature*—37d; *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Baker, 1977)—27d.” (p. 6)
- ² Leviticus 18 talks about sexual sins and verse 21 shows that these are related to idol worship. Verses 24–28 say this is why the heathen were being destroyed and that if the Israelites do the same, they, too, will be destroyed. Deut 7:4 also talks about idol worshipers being destroyed by God. (p. 7)
- ³ Additional verses showing that killing babies is related to idol worship: Deuteronomy 18:9–10, Leviticus 18:21. (p. 8)
- ⁴ Genesis 35:1–4 shows that Jacob’s family also removed their jewelry when they renewed their commitment to God. (p. 10)
- ⁵ Here are some things God describes as being related to idol worship or as being something he hates:

Reference	Description
Deut 29:19-20	Drunkenness
Deut 18:9-13	Witchcraft
Deut 22:5	Wearing clothing of the opposite gender
Deut 23:18	Using money from prostitution to pay a vow

Deut 24:4 Remarrying a previous spouse after marrying someone else

Deut 25:15–16 Inexact units of measure for buying or selling

Micah 6:11

Prov 6:16–19 pride and making people angry with each other

(p. 12)

⁶ The Greek word that is most frequently translated as **fornication** in the New Testament and used in Acts 15 is *πορνεία* (pronounced *por-ní-ah*). Strong’s definition for this word (number 4202 and the related word 4203) includes a wide variety of improper sexual behavior. (p. 14)

⁷ Sexual relations with someone else’s spouse is wrong: Leviticus 18:20, Leviticus 20:10 (p. 15)

⁸ Sexual relations with close relatives is wrong: Leviticus 18:6–18, Leviticus 20:11, 12, 14, 17, 19–21 (p. 15)

⁹ Sexual relations with someone of the same gender is wrong: Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13. These commands are given to men, telling them what they should not do. Although these rules don’t directly indicate that it is wrong for women to commit homosexual acts, this New Testament verses make it clear: Romans 1:26–27. (p. 15)

¹⁰ Sexual relations with animals is wrong: Leviticus 18:23, Leviticus 20:15–16 (p. 15)

¹¹ Sexual relations during a woman’s monthly period is wrong: Leviticus 18:19, Leviticus 20:18 (p. 15)

¹² Sexual sins listed in the Book of the Covenant:

Exodus	Description
20:14	With someone else’s spouse
20:17	Don’t Covet (Lust)
21:7–8	Rules about divorce
22:16–17	Premarital sexual relations
22:19	Sexual relations with an animal

(p. 15)

¹³ Revelation 2:18–29 is the message to the church at Thyatira. The similar warning is verse 20. (p. 19)

¹⁴ Leviticus 17:10–14 tells us not to eat blood. It also tells hunters to make sure that the blood does not stay in the animal when it is killed. (p. 20)

¹⁵ We know the least about the covenant God made with Adam and Eve, and don’t know a Bible verse that indicates whether or not it is an everlasting covenant. The Ararat covenant is described as everlasting in Genesis 9:17. The covenants with Abraham and the Israelites at Sinai are described as everlasting in Genesis 17:7 (p. 27)

¹⁶ Daniel 9:27 describes the Messiah’s mission.

Parallel Passage	Daniel 9:27
Matt. 5:16–17	And he shall confirm the covenant, with many for one week:
Zech. 13:1	and in the midst
Heb. 10:10	of the week he shall
Heb. 10:18	cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,
Rev. 19:11–21	and for the overspreading

Is. 24:5–20 of abominations he shall
make it desolate,

Rev. 20:7–11 even until the consummation,

Rev. 20:12–15 and that determined shall
be poured upon the desolate.

(p. 29)

¹⁷ The prophecies in Psalm 97 and 2 Peter 3 also show us that God still cares if we keep His covenant.
(p. 29)

¹⁸ Matthew 26:26–29 describes Jesus starting the new testament, or new covenant. (p. 35)

¹⁹ Here is another verse that shows Jesus offered the New Covenant to all people
Matthew 28:19–20. (p. 38)