

# Judaizers

## and the Party of the Circumcision

When someone reads the Bible they will **not** find the word Judaizer anywhere in most translations or versions of the Bible. It is also **not** found in the Greek text of the New Testament. However when it comes to the **PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION** many, if not most, Pastors, Teachers and Evangelists, will refer to them as being Judaizers!

### **Galatians 2:11-15** (NASB)

(11) But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

(12) For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the **PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION**.

(13) And rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.

(14) But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas (Peter) in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

(15) "We are Jews by nature, and not sinners from among the Gentiles;

Then Paul goes on to explain that even though they are obligated to obey God that they are justified by the death of JESUS CHRIST (Yeshua HaMashiac) as the Passover Lamb, that takes away the sins of the world, as John the Baptist declared (John 1:29 and John 1:35).

Yet, most Christians have been conditioned, through Church indoctrination, to believe that what is going on in the events in Galatians 2:11-15 is actually the opposite of what is really happening. They have been indoctrinated to believe that Paul is condemning the **PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION** as being Judaizers. And the adverse effect that they were having on Peter and the others was because of the Judaizing Heresy being spread by the **PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION**. When in truth, just the opposite is true!

Paul is condemning Cephas (Peter) Barnabas and the others for drifting off into a Hellenized, non-OBSERVANT life style; and then hypocritically trying to give the false impression to others that they were still being OBSERVANT. Paul goes on to explain that; even though JESUS had died for them on the Cross, it did not remove them from their obligation to obey God!

The problem was, instead of Cephas (Peter) and the others drawing the Gentiles closer to God and enhancing the Gentiles desire to obey God. Peter and the others had allowed the Hellenized Culture of the Gentiles to begin drawing them into the early stages of becoming a Hellenized expression of the BELIEVERS IN JESUS. This is why Paul says, "If you, being a Jew,

live like the Gentiles (Pagans) and not like (God-Fearing) Jews, how is it that you compel the (Pagan) Gentiles to live like (God-Fearing) Jews?"

When the PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION came to town they tried to hide their newfound Hellenism, with its disregard for certain aspects of God's Laws as well as for some Jewish Traditions.

When JESUS had been in the company of various individuals who were known for being non-OBSERVANT in varying degrees, JESUS pointed out that it was not the healthy who need a physician but rather it was the sick. Showing that He (JESUS) was there for the purpose of aiding these individuals in their development toward a more righteous and Godly way of life. This was **not** the case with Cephas (Peter) and the others. It was the other way around with the Hellenism of the Gentiles that was adversely effecting Cephas (Peter) and the others, way of life.

Cephas (Peter) and the others did-not proudly take the PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION around to the homes of these Gentiles to show how these Gentiles were being drawn closer to God, growing in righteousness and devotion toward Almighty God. Even though they (the Gentiles) had not yet chosen to be circumcised. If this had been the case Cephas (Peter) and the others would have reminded the PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION how Abraham had grown and developed in his relationship to The Almighty for many years before he chose to be circumcised. It was during this time when he was still un-circumcised that God had made most of the promises to Abraham. They would have also reminded the PARTY OF THE CIRCUMCISION that it was at this time in his life, when Abraham and many Gentiles throughout history had learned to seek God with all their heart. It was this growth that over time, eventually led them to desire to become circumcised.

No, Cephes (Peter) and the others did not do this, because this was not what was going on! These Gentiles were hybridizing some of the things of God with their own (Paganized) Hellenism and in the process drawing Cephas (Peter) and the others into a blend of both Godly and un-Godly OBSERVANCE. These Gentiles were in the process of developing what some might refer to as a Hybrid-Religion or Hybrid-Christianity.

It turns out that this was one of many instances, which eventually led to the Hellenized Believers in JESUS developing a **NEW, DIFFERENT AND SEPARATE RELIGION**. This New Gentile Christianity has developed over the centuries into a number of different forms of expressions (Denominations).

As for trying to obey God and keep His Laws, Commandments, Statues and Precepts today, more often than not, this **NEW RELIGION**, now known as the Christian Church, recoils at the very thought of doing so. One example of this Hellenism occurring, even today, is when it comes to the dietary restrictions found in the Old Testament; most Church Pastors will tell their congregants and everyone else who will listen: "That was only for the **Jews!** It does not apply to the Christians or **THE CHURCH!**"

At the very heart and core of this statement is the belief that God Created a **NEW RELIGION** for the Gentiles. One that is different than the one He created for the Jews, or more accurately for the Israelites. Their belief is that the Church and Christianity have now replaced

the Jews and Judaism, as the focus of God's interaction with mankind. This belief is commonly referred to as Replacement Theology.

When one looks in the New Testament, instead of Replacement Theology, we find something else. We see that Paul addresses this concept, which was already trying to emerge among the Gentiles, even in his time. He does so by using as an analogy of two Olive Trees, one Wild and one Cultivated. The Wild Olive tree represents the Gentiles and the Cultivated Olive Tree represents the Children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

**Romans 11:17-24** (NASB)

(17) But if **some** of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree,

(18) do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who support the root, but the root supports you.

(19) You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

(20) Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited. But **fear**; (*be afraid!*)

(21) for if God did not spare the natural branches, **neither will He spare you.**

(22) Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise **you** also **will be cut off.**

(23) And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again.

(24) For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

**Notice:** that in verse 17 it says "**if some of the branches were broken off**". It does **not** say that **all** of the branches were broken off! Notice also, it does **not** even say most, but only some. Yet even those, which had been broken off after going into non-OBSERVANT Judaism, paganism (or had just become secular agnostics), or any other type of enticing religions, when they repent and return back to God, they can be brought back into the Olive Tree and regain their rightful place.

A fact that still passes right over the heads of most individuals is that Paul is **not** talking to people who have become converts to some NEW ENTITY called The Church. He is talking to Gentiles who have converted (or at least were in the process of converting) to the original form of Messianic Judaism. The problem, which Paul is addressing, is that some of the Gentiles were acting as though they should become a NEW AND SEPARATE RELIGION. Paul is declaring to the Gentiles in **Rome**, that they can **not** be a SEPARATE RELIGION and still be a **true** follower of Yeshua (JESUS). You need to remember JESUS (Yeshua) was Jewish and He preached mainstream pre-Talmudic Jewish Theology and was called "**Rabbi**" in the New Testament.

JESUS was not developing a NEW GENTILE RELIGION. You need to remember what JESUS told the woman at the well: “...salvation is of the Jews”. So it appears that Paul is telling them, if they try to separate themselves from God’s cultivated Olive Tree (Judaism) that they will be broken off. Once broken off they will be separate and dis-associated from the DOMESTIC OLIVE TREE, which had been the source from which they had originally received their THEOLOGICAL NOURISHMENT, SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, and once broken off they would drift off into a Hellenized Hybridized-Perversion. That is why Paul told them: “Do not be conceited. But **fear**; (*be afraid!*) for if God did not spare the natural branches, **neither will He spare you!**”

Even so, many in the Church desperately try to justify their assertion that The Church is separate, distinct and different from The Jewish Religion! From time to time, some Christians in their desperate effort to justify their doctrine of a NEW and DIFFERENT CHURCH (being different and apart from Judaism) have demanded from those whom they consider to be modern day Judaizers (those in Messianic-Christianity or Messianic-Judaism) to just show them anywhere in the New Testament where Paul as an Apostle ever made an Animal Sacrifice!?! As they then sit back and smugly grin. Certain, in their own mind, that they have just shot down these so-called Messianic Believers (whom they consider to be modern day Judaizers).

So, let’s take a look and see if they have, or have not, been able to prove their point?

Most people in The Church believe that after JESUS’s Death, Burial and Resurrection that the Animal Sacrifices stopped. At least they think, the Disciples and the other followers of JESUS quit engaging in them. By the day of Pentecost (when most believed The Church began) the practice of offering Animal Sacrifices were no longer being practiced by the followers of JESUS. At least that is what most Christians believe. These individuals believe, Animal Sacrifices were now finished and they are sure that for any of the True Believers in JESUS to continue engaging in Animal Sacrifice, would be improper at best and heresy at the worst.

Now the question is, are they correct? After Pentecost did the followers of JESUS quit keeping the Laws of God? Did they believe that JESUS, by fulfilling the Law, had somehow abolished God’s Laws or at least had done away with their obligations to keep them? Did they sincerely believe, that because of the Death of JESUS on the Cross, the need for Animal Sacrifice was abolished and/or done away with?

If so, wouldn’t the New Testament show this? Or does it indicate something very different? As strange as it may sound to most Christians it actually does not assert this. On the contrary, it shows that the New Testament Believers in JESUS (Yeshua) were still offering Animal Sacrifices and keeping the rest of the Laws of God (sometimes called the Law of Moses, because God transmitted them through him). Some 18 to 20 years after the Crucifixion of JESUS, those who had been taught by JESUS in person for years during JESUS’s ministry, were still keeping the Laws of God and offering Animal Sacrifices, which are part of the Laws of God. JESUS had appeared to many of these people after His Resurrection to teach and instruct them how to proceed. Following His guidance, they were still keeping the Laws of God and offering Animal Sacrifices! However, some others had been spreading lies about Paul, saying that Paul was telling the Children of Israel who were living among the Gentiles, to no longer keep God’s Laws!

**Acts 21:23-24** (NASB)

(23) “Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow;

(24) take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses in order that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.

We see that Paul had earlier also taken a similar vow, as these four men had.

**Acts 18:18**

(NIV)

(18) ... Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken.

(NASB)

(18) ... In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow.

Paul is either starting the vow or he has accidentally been defiled and is renewing or restarting the vow! In Numbers 6:2-21 you will see the Nazirite vow is set forth and it required the person taking the vow to shave one's hair in order to start the renewal processes of the vow. As we see in the latter portion of this quote, Animal Sacrifices are required to complete the vow; along with once again shaving their head. Paul is there to offer the appropriate Animal Sacrifices for himself, to fulfill his vow. And he is encouraged to also pay for, four others to complete their vows as well (apparently by purchasing the needed Animals for the Sacrifices, that the others needed to complete their vows).

So here we have Paul along with the four others, who he is helping financially, and they are all in the Temple and in the process of offering the appropriate Animal Sacrifices. In the middle of all of this, Paul is arrested and eventually shipped off to Rome.

If you will combine this with what was pointed out earlier; that many, if not most, of the Believers in Jerusalem had the privilege of being taught by JESUS, face to face, during His earthly ministry; as well as having had the advantage and the blessing of having JESUS appear to them after His Resurrection, to explain what all of this meant and how to proceed in The Faith. These Believers in Yeshua (JESUS) never stopped keeping the Laws of God. Nor did they refrain from offering Animal Sacrifices; which is a small part of God's Law!

Yet, many, if not most of the Pastors, Preachers, Teachers and Evangelist in the Church today believe that to Preach or Teach that anyone needs to keep the Old Testament Law has slipped into a Judaizing form of Heresy, as well as the Heresy of Works!

**Acts 21:20** (NASB)

(20) ... “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are **ALL zealous for the Law**; ...”

*To impress on you an important point, you need to remember and keep in mind something that was stated once or twice before.* Many, if not most, of these Believers in

Jerusalem, mentioned in the BOOK OF ACTS, had the privilege of being taught by THE MESSIAH, face to face, during His earthly ministry. As well as having had the advantage, and the blessing, of having JESUS (Yeshua) appear to them after His Resurrection, to explain what all of this meant and how to proceed in The Faith. These Believers in the book of Acts **never** refrained from offering Animal Sacrifices, while there was still a Temple, nor did they stopped adhering to any of the other LAWS OF GOD!

The question is: “Were these **so-called** Judaizing-Christians of the New Testament mentioned in the Book of Acts, **wrong** to follow JESUS and worship in the manner that He, JESUS, (Yeshua) had taught them to worship?

Or, **NOT**?