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The Noahide laws

Scriptus Papers

⑦

Noahide laws

1. Do Not Worship Idols
2. Do Not Blaspheme God
3. Do Not Murder
4. Do Not Commit Sexual Immorality
5. Do Not Steal
6. Do Not Eat a Limb from a Living Animal
7. Establish Courts of Justice

Biblical perspectives on various topics

Were they designed by Jews to draw Gentiles away from Jesus?

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Introduction

Scriptus means 'having been written', and this *Scriptus Paper* concerns the Noahide laws. Why bother? In September 2025, I, my wife and brother were in Jerusalem walking Hezekiah's tunnel, shown here at right. As we exited into the Siloam Pool (bottom photo) we met two young, orthodox Jews who engaged us in conversation about who we were, country of origin, and religious identity.

I told him that we were from Australia, and evangelical Christians, and his response was that if we knew the Noahide Laws we would have no need of Jesus. We were pleasant to him and having completed his physical regime for the day he went on his way to live by the Noahide Laws.

I know that many Jews have no room for or need for Jesus, but what hope would this young man have of getting me to ditch Jesus in favour of Noahide laws? Well, let's see.

Meaning of Noahide

'Noahide' literally means "sons of Noah." The Bible shows that all people descended from Noah, and the Noahide Laws enunciate responsibilities for all people.

Origin of Noahide thought

The first explicit presentation of the Noahide laws is found in the Tosefta, a supplementary work to the Mishnah dated to the late second century AD. Thus, Noahide is a *rabbinic creation* some 2500 years after Noah, and 200 years after Jesus Christ. The stimulus for this creation was the Second Temple's destruction in 70 AD, socially, demographically, and religiously too, just as Jesus Christ predicted (Matthew 24-25).

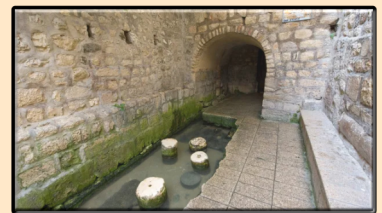
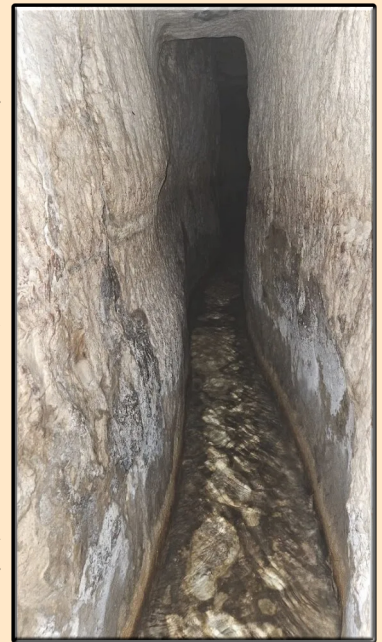
Call me cynical but the rabbis had destroyed Jesus physically by engineering His crucifixion, and 200 years later they sought to destroy Him theologically by the Noahide laws which were designed to erase His significance.

For the rabbis, these laws originated prior to the Sinaitic revelation; they were the moral standard for the entire world, including the ancestors of those who would later accept the covenant at Sinai. Israelites before Sinai, then, were Noahides. The Noahide laws were also considered obligatory for all time, and would be the measure by which Gentiles too would be judged. However, the full 613 divine commandments of the Torah were incumbent on Jews alone ([Novak](#), [Van Zile](#), [Rothstein 2006](#)).

This model of the world saw Jews as focused on their special relationship with God, to be living representatives of the God Who hoped to bring all humanity to recognising Him. The rest of that non-Jewish world, were supposed to recognise Jews' special role in the world and treat them appropriately, but without the expectation that they would convert to Judaism. Rather, they would serve God as they were born to do, by maintaining His world, improving it, and passing it on whole and sound to the generations after them ([Rothstein 2006](#)).

Under the authoritative Jewish law embodied in the Talmud (meaning 'study', 'teaching'), the central rabbinic text of Judaism, which emerged between the 3rd and 8th centuries AD, the Jews were bound by the commandments of the Torah, while all the non-Jews were bound by the laws of the sons of Noah (Noahide laws). While it was universal, classical Jewish sources also saw Noahide law as a kind of immigration law, in that the Talmud set agreement to adhere to Noahide laws and standards as a fundamental requirement in order to be allowed to live in a Jewish Commonwealth ([Rothstein 2004](#), [Foley](#), [Sacks](#), [Yosef](#)).

In essence, it's claimed, these seven Noahide laws establish a stable, humane and just society, which accomplishes God's command of "inhabiting the world." They are obligatory for all time, a way for non-Jews to become 'Righteous Gentiles', and by which Gentiles would be judged. These laws will make a "dwelling place for God in this world" (noahide.info, Chabad.org). The Noahide laws are next.



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The seven Noahide laws

1. Do Not Worship Idols

This commandment includes the belief in God, that He is the creator of everything and He is constantly creating everything anew.

2. Do Not Blaspheme God

This commandment forbids cursing God in any way.

3. Do Not Murder

This commandment includes prohibitions of murder, abortion, and suicide.

4. Do Not Commit Sexual Immorality

This commandment prohibits six immoral acts: with your mother, with your father's wife, with a friend's wife, with your sister from your mother, with an animal, and sodomy.

5. Do Not Steal

This commandment prohibits stealing money, a person (kidnapping), or even stealing time from your employer.

6. Do Not Eat a Limb from a Living Animal

This commandment prohibits eating a limb or any meat from a living animal while it is still alive. Although we may make use of animals, we cannot cause them undue suffering.

7. Establish Courts of Justice

The children of Noah are obligated to create a judicial system to enforce the other six laws.

Biblical Sources for the seven Noahide laws can be found at the Jews for Judaism website where you will see the resemblance to the ten commandments in Exodus 20. Some of them are the foundation of our judicial system in the West, such as prohibitions of murder, stealing, animal cruelty, and courts of justice. Undoubtedly, these laws are helpful in establishing stable, humane and just societies, but, were they given to Noah, or Noah's sons, do they do away with Jesus, and do they make a "dwelling place for God in this world" as asserted? Let's find out.

God's commands to Noah

I can find six commands from God to Noah given before the flood. They are:

1. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood (Genesis 6:14).
2. Bring two of every sort of living flesh (of animals and birds, creeping thing male and female) that are unclean and seven pairs of the clean into the ark to keep them alive with you (6:19-7:2-3).
3. Take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up (6:21).
4. Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation (7:1).
5. God said to Noah, 'Go out from the ark' (8:15).
6. Be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it (8:17).

Noah was a man who did all that God commanded him (6:22, 7:5, 9, 16). However, the above six don't resemble the Noahide laws, but what about laws given post-flood to Noah and his sons? They are:

1. Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth (Genesis 9:1).
2. You may eat any moving thing that lives (9:3).
3. Flesh with its life, its blood, you shall not eat (9:4).
4. For your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every animal I will require it and from human beings... Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed (9:5-6)



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Noah before men

When compared with the Noahide, items three and four of the post-flood laws above are Noahides, the others are not. So, what was Noah like before God gave him any laws?

*Noah was a **righteous** (sadeq) man, blameless (tamim) in his generation...(Genesis 6:9, 7:1).*

Noah was both righteous and blameless in front of his peers. *Sadeq* means doing what is correct and just. Weights that are calibrated correctly are called *moznei tzedek*. The judge says, "Tzedek, tzedek you shall pursue", wronged should be righted, the stolen should be returned, the innocent should not suffer. Tzedek is making everything the way it should be ([Freeman](#)).

Similarly, 'blameless' is (*tamim*), meaning "finished," or "complete," or "thoroughly made", or "entire," or "sound". It can also mean "innocent," "unimpaired," or "having integrity". For example, *tamim* is used to describe completed years (Genesis 47:18); healthy animal sacrifices (Leviticus 22:21-22); nourishing vines (Ezekiel 15:5); truthful speech (Amos 5:10) ([Parsons](#)). So, before men, Noah's generation could find nothing in his character or conduct that was deficient.

Noah before God

Noah walked with God (Genesis 6:9).

*Then the Lord said to Noah, "...I have seen that you alone are **righteous** before me...(Genesis 7:1).*

*Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job, these three, were in it, they would save only their own lives by their **righteousness**, says the Lord God (Ezekiel 14:14, 20).*

Noah walked with God; it seems like he took the initiative. Contrast this with God who said to Israel 'I will walk among you' (Leviticus 26:12). There, God took the initiative. So, what does it require for two to walk together? They must agree (*ya'ad*) (Amos 3:3).

Ya'ad is a word used to describe the engagement for marriage (Exodus 21:8-9), or a meeting together in the house of God (Nehemiah 6:1, Exodus 29:42), or an appointed gathering of people for some kind of purpose (Joshua 11:5) ([Abarim Publications](#)). So, *Ya'ad* is a meeting of the minds, of purpose.

Noah synchronised his heart and life with God before God gave him any commands about the ark, and his post-flood life. He was a righteous man walking with God and before God's face through his faith, not through any laws. It is the NT that records *without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him, and by faith Noah...(Hebrews 11:6-7)*. Similarly, *Enoch walked with God* (Genesis 5:24), and *pleased God*, and *by faith Enoch*. Hebrews 11:5). In brief, walking with God, and pleasing God, and having faith in God are all synonyms, true of Noah before he was given any commands, or laws.

Additionally, according to Ezekiel, Israel's ways were not right but deeply-rooted in idolatry, social injustice, and violence. Indeed, if Noah was transplanted into his generation some 1750 years later, his righteousness (*tsdaqah*), his doing what is right, fair, and compassionate, embodying justice in everyday of his life, would save Noah himself but no-one else.

Summary 1

So, if Noah walked with God, pleased God, and had faith in God, why did God consider it necessary to introduce laws? Firstly, some definitions.

Law in the Hebrew Bible

'Law' in the Hebrew Bible is (*torah*), and English word "law," creates the impression that it has to do only with commandments. Not so. The Torah was given by God as a guideline for a whole way of life. A better translation would be "God's instructions" ([Bivin](#), [Abarim Publications](#)).

"Torah" is a general term that refers to instruction or guidance, and should be carefully distinguished from other Hebrew words such as "commandment" (*mitzvah*), "statutes" (*chukkim*), "judgments" (*mishpatim*), and so on ([Parsons](#)).



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Law in the NT

In the New Testament, "law" is (*nomos*), but where our English word "law" comes from an ancient verb that means "to lay down" — comparable to the word "statute," which is related to "statue," meaning something artificial put up for public display, this Greek noun comes from the verb (*nemo*), which isn't used in the NT but is common in the classics. It means to give or deal out: to divide something into parts and dispense them among the recipients. And although this verb itself is not used in the New Testament, this specific action is demonstrated in Jesus' famous miraculous feedings of the multitudes (5,000 in Matthew 14:16-21 and 4,000 in 15:32-38). The verb was also associated with pastoral activity such as to shepherd or drive or graze a herd (Abarim Publications).

The following table lists the main descriptors of God’s laws in the Hebrew Bible and in the NT.

How God describes His laws

No.	Law descriptors	References
The Hebrew Bible		
1	The Law of the Lord	Exodus 13:9, 2 Kings 10:31
2	The Law of Moses	Joshua 8:31-32
3	The Law of God	Joshua 24:26
The New Testament		
1	The Law of Moses (also the Law of the Lord)	Luke 2:22-24, 39
2	The Law of our fathers	Acts 22:3
3	The Law of the Jews	Acts 25:8
4	The Law of works	Romans 3:27
5	The Law of faith	Romans 3:27
6	The Law of God	Romans 7:22, 25, 8:7
7	The Law of sin	Romans 7:25
8	The Law of sin and death	Romans 8:2
9	The Law of the Spirit of life	Romans 8:2
10	The Law of righteousness	Romans 9:30-32
11	The Law of Christ	1 Corinthians 9:21, Galatians 6:2
12	The Law of Commandments	Ephesians 2:11-15
13	The Law of a Fleshly Commandment	Hebrews 7:15–16
14	The perfect law of freedom (also The royal Law)	James 1:25, 2:8, 2:12

Interestingly, the three descriptors used in the Hebrew Bible (law “of the Lord”, “of God”, and “of Moses”) are also used in the New Testament. When it is a law “of the Lord”, or “of God”, or “of Christ”, or “of the Spirit”, God is clearly its originator. Similarly, when, it is “of Moses”, it is a reference to him who mediated God’s law to the people (Galatians 3:19). Also, when it is a law “of our fathers’, or “of the Jews’, “of works”, or “of faith” it is likely a reference to those who are subjects of the law, and when it is a law “of sin”, or “of death”, or “of life” or “of righteousness”, it is likely a reference to the outcome of the law for its subjects. Finally, when it is a law “of commandments”, it is likely a reference to its content, particularly how the commandments are expressed in instructions.

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Why God introduced His laws

1. ...*sin is not being subject to law* (1John 3:4).

2. ...*where there is no law there is no violations* (Romans 4:15).

3. Before **the law** was given, sin was in the world, but sin is not taken into consideration when there is no **law** (Romans 5:13).

4. Why then was **the law** given? It was joyfully added because of violations, until the arrival of the seed to whom the promise had been made (Galatians 3:19).

5. Now **the law** came in so that deviations may abound, but where sin abounds, grace super-overflows (Romans 5:20).

6. ...**the one** whom God raised up did not experience decay. Therefore let it be known to you, brothers, that through **this one** forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and in **this one** all who believe are justified from everything from which you could not be justified in **the law of Moses** (Acts 13:37-39).

The contradiction between texts 1 (Romans 4:15) and 2 (1John 3:4) above is more apparent than real. 'Where there is no law' probably means that transgression can only be defined relative to a stated law. Without a stated law, Paul argues, there could be no violation or stepping to the side of it. Similarly, John asserts that sin is violation of law, that is, not being subject to a stated law.

In essence, God could not overlook sin but had to take it into consideration, so the law was introduced. But, it was a temporary phase until the arrival of the promised seed. 'Seed' (*sperma*), refers to the physical seed which is sown, and takes root and produces fruit. A seed is a living molecule of an entire plant: the smallest possible instance of the whole thing that still possesses all the qualities of the whole thing. God's kingdom is like a complete mustard seed, which has the whole adult tree within it, including all the tree's future seeds, and thus forests upon forests of living, photosynthesising and fruit-bearing trees ([Abarim Publications](#)).

God promised seed was the Savior, Jesus (Acts 13:23). With the coming of this supernatural Being, abundant sin was met head on by super-overflowing grace, Who in His death took away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Through Him forgiveness (*aphesis*) of sins is available to all who believe in Him, an action that does not demand rightful retribution for a fault suffered. But more, not only is rightful retribution for sin not demanded, those forgiven are brought to righteousness, they are found in the right, free of all charges against them.

Summary 2

The law was given to show what sin was, to show that no one was able to keep God's law entirely, so getting free of all charges of a broken law was not possible, and to demonstrate God's abundant grace through the advent of His son Who would forgive and declare righteous those who believed in Him.

Laws in the NT

The Law of works

*Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what **law**? By that of works?* (Romans 3:27).

The law of works is also mentioned in Romans 9:32, Galatians 2:16, 3:2, 5, 10). So, what law did Paul have in mind? In Romans 9 Paul addressed his fellow countrymen, the Israelites who were given the law, and the promises. He makes 10 quotations from the complete Hebrew Bible (vs 6, 9, 12, 14, 17, 20, 25, 26, 29, 33) - from the Torah, the Psalms and the prophets. Every one of them is about what God did, and will do. Israel's history and future is all a work of God, not a human work.

In Galatians, Paul admitted that he had been extremely zealous for the traditions of his ancestors (1:14), a reference to both Pharisaic and popular teachings of his time which eventually were codified in Jewish literature such as the Mishnah, Midrashim, and Targums (Net Bible Notes). Nevertheless, no one is justified by the works of the law (2:15-16, 3:10).

So, where can the Jews and Gentiles go from here to be free of all charges against them?

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The Law of faith

*Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what **law**? By that of works? No, but by the **law of faith** (Romans 3:27).*

The law of faith is the antidote to the law of works. Faith (*pistis*) is the 'mental substance that results from intelligent and reasonable inquiry or instruction; the mind's response to valuable information. It described sureness in every way, from sureness about salvation to sureness about how to make a club sandwich. Someone's *pistis* did not denote one's religious or political leanings but comprised everything a person was certain of, on whatever level and whatever field, without distinction between scientific, artistic and religious certainties or even little practical certainties to help with daily chores' ([Abarim Publications](#)).

So, how does Paul explain the law of faith? This is his thread.

What then? Are we better off? Certainly not, for we have already charged that Jews and Greeks alike are all under sin, just as it is written (Romans 3:9-10):

Following this statement, verses 10-12 are taken from Psalm 14:1-3, verse 13 is taken from Psalms 5:9, and 140:3, verse 14 is taken from Psalm 10:7, verses 15-17 are taken from Isaiah 59:7-8, and verse 18 is taken from Psalm 36:1. So then, Paul can conclude from these Psalms and the Prophets:

*...that whatever the law says (the law of the Psalms and the Prophets), it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and **the whole world** may be held accountable to God.*

This leads Paul to continue:

*20 For no one is declared righteous before him by the works of the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin. 21 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God (although it is attested by the law and the prophets) has been disclosed— 22 namely, the righteousness of God through the **faithfulness of Jesus Christ** for all who believe. For there is no distinction, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. 24 But they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. 25 God publicly displayed him at his death as the mercy seat accessible through faith. This was to demonstrate his righteousness, because God in his forbearance had passed over the sins previously committed. 26 This was also to demonstrate his righteousness in the present time, so that he would be just and the justifier of the one who lives because of the **faithfulness of Jesus** (Romans 3:19-26).*

The faithfulness of Jesus Christ

The *faithfulness of Jesus Christ* is often translated as 'faith in Jesus'. However, there is no preposition (i.e. 'in') between the nouns "faith" and "Jesus" in verse 22, which are connected by genitives of origin or of identification. Accordingly, the righteousness of God becomes available to all who believe through **the faithfulness of Jesus Christ** (see Net Bible notes). One can have the righteousness of God only through one source; the person of Jesus. So, "the law of faith" is human faith in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. In contrast, the law of works refers to the works of human beings.

The *faithfulness of Jesus Christ* is an expression found in other texts as well:

*...yet we know that no one is justified by the works of the law but by **the faithfulness of Jesus Christ**. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by **the faithfulness of Christ** and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified (Galatians 2:16).*

*I live because of **the faithfulness of the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me (2:20).*

*But the scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise could be given—because of **the faithfulness of Jesus Christ**—to those who believe (3:22).*

*...in whom (Christ Jesus our Lord) we have boldness and confident access to God by way of **the faithfulness of Him** (Ephesians 3:12).*

*and be found in him, not because I have my own righteousness derived from the law, but that through **the faithfulness of Christ**—the righteousness of God out of faith (Philippians 3:9).*

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The faithfulness of Jesus Christ continued

The faithfulness of Jesus Christ implies that the object of our faith is reliable and worthy, for He himself is faithful (see Net Bible notes). Nevertheless, Paul made the astonishing assertion that Jews have recognised and understood that no one is justified by the works of the law:

*15 We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16 having seen that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through **the faithfulness of Jesus Christ**. And we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified out of **the faithfulness of Christ**, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law (Galatians 2:15-16).*

All of this is destructive of the seven Noahide laws as the sole means of getting right with God without the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, and our faith in Him.

The Law of God, of Christ, & of sin

*For I delight in **the law of God** by means of the inward man (Romans 7:22).*

*So then, with the mind I myself serve **the law of God**, but with my flesh I serve **the law of sin** (7:25).*

*Because the mind of the flesh is hostile to God; for it is not subject to **the law of God** (Romans 8:7).*

*19 For since I am free from all I can make myself a slave to all, in order to gain even more people. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew to gain the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) to gain those under the law. 21 To those who are without law, as without law, though not being without **the law of God** but under **the law of Christ**, so that I might win those who are without law (1 Corinthians 9:19-21).*

There are three laws here (of God, of Christ, of sin), and two minds (inward man and carnal mind). As we have already noted, 'law' in the Hebrew Bible is rarely used in a legal sense but as "God's instructions", and in the NT it has a pastoral focus of handling out food and caring for the flock.

In the Hebrew Bible, the Law of God is synonymous with the Book of Law of Moses (Nehemiah 8:1, 8:8,18), so here we can assume it means all the word of God. Similarly, the "law of Christ" would consist of all the good things Christ dispenses to His people including the "Law of the Spirit", the "Law of Faith", "the law of righteousness" and the "Law of freedom".

On the other hand, the "law of sin" is what directs the life of the flesh, the bodily members (Romans 7:23, 25, 8:2). Calling it *the law of sin and death* (Romans 8:2) describes it in terms of cause and effect: you sin, you die.

Further there are two mindsets. The 'mind of the flesh' is clearly identified as is its hostility towards God and His law (8:7). The mind of the flesh is focused on the concerns of the body's members, and it is appropriate to describe these impulses as having a "mind". Perhaps James had this in mind when writing of a "double-minded man". The other undefined mind (7:25) delights in the law of God and operates by means of the inward man (7:22). Further, this inward or 'new man' has been created in God's likeness (Ephesians 4:24), and is being renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16) into a recognition of God's image (Colossians 3:10) by the firmly held grip of God's Spirit (Ephesians 3:16).

So, the inward man is a description of the regenerate man who experiences the work of the Spirit so as to delight in the law of God. In brief, 'the law of my mind' concerns the illuminated, the regenerated mind. On the other hand the mind of the unregenerate man, the mind of the flesh, colludes with the law of sin (Ephesians 2:3).

Finally, The Law of Christ is carrying out the command of Christ through Paul, whenever we have an opportunity, do good to all people (Galatians 6:10). *Carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill **the law of Christ** (Galatians 6:2).* This is carrying out the command of Christ to love one another (John 13:34).

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The Law of the Spirit

Moreover, it's *the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death* (Romans 8:2). The Spirit which brings to the believer the life which is in Christ Jesus at conversion, brings with it also the Divine law for the believer's life.

The Law of righteousness

*Gentiles, who did not strive for righteousness, have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith; but Israel even though pursuing a **law of righteousness** did not attain it. Why not? Because they did not strive for it on the basis of faith, but as if it were based on works* (Romans 9:30-32).

In this 9th chapter of Romans, Paul refers to the law given at Sinai (9:3), but quotes extensively from the Torah (Genesis 21:2, 18:10, 14, 25:23, Exodus 33:19, 9:16), and the prophets (Malachi 1:2-3, Hosea 1:10, Isaiah 1:9, 28:16, 8:14). So, a 'law of righteousness' here is akin to the law of Moses and the prophets. 'Righteousness' (*dikaioisune*) means lawfulness.

The Law of Commandments

*Remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision"...without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ. For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us by nullifying in his flesh **the law of commandments** mediated by ordinances. He did this to create in himself one new man out of two, thus making peace* (Ephesians 2:11-15).

The Jews were the insiders, exclusive, and the Gentile were the inferior outsiders - those who were without the Law, without Christ, without hope, and without God. Hostility indeed. The law of commandments expressed in ordinances was a barrier of hostility between Gentiles and Jews. It took the death of Christ to abolish this barrier uniting Jews and Gentiles into one people of God in peace.

The Law of a Fleshly Commandment

*And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to **the law of a fleshly commandment**, but according to the power of an endless life* (Hebrews 7:15-16).

'Fleshly' (*sarkikos*), means in the way of the flesh, and corresponds to our modern idea of consciousness, the mental part of us rather than our muscular physique. We feel and sense the world with our flesh, which means that we absorb and store information with our flesh ([Abarim Publications](#)). The way of the flesh is that natural quality that we humans possess, but by way of contrast, our High Priest in His priesthood is supernatural rather than natural. His ministry toward us is not dealing with fleshly commandments and sacrifices, but with the power of an endless life.

Moreover, no other religious faith can claim a living founder who has died and has risen to a triumphant position at God's right hand, there to be continually available as a sympathetic high priest to all who trust Him.

The Royal Law and law of freedom

*The one who peers into the perfect **law of freedom** and fixes his attention there, and does not become a forgetful listener but one who lives it out will be blessed in what he does* (James 1:25).

*But if you fulfill **the royal law** as expressed in this scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself," you are doing well* (James 2:8).

*So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the **law of freedom*** (James 2:12)

Squashed in between the two references to the law of freedom is the 'royal law' (*basilikos*), belonging to a king (Acts 12:20), or in the service of a king (John 4:46), their proximity suggesting that they are synonyms. There is freedom in loving your neighbour as yourself.

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Summary 3

We have reviewed 12 laws of the NT - of works, law, *faith, God, Christ*, sin and death, *the Spirit, righteousness*, commandments, fleshly commandment, of *freedom, and royalty*. The seven italicised laws are God's guideline for the Christian life. All of this is destructive of the seven Noahide laws as the sole means of getting right with God without the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, and our faith in Him.

Implied NT laws

The law of Moses

"Law" (*nomos*) in the NT occurs most frequently on its own without any explanatory addition, like, 'the law of Moses'. However, the law of Moses is implied in Romans 2:14-15, Galatians. 5:14,18, 23 (referring to Leviticus 19:18), Hebrews 7:5, 7:11; 7:12; 7:19; 7:28, 8:4, 9:19; 9:22 and 10:1 (referring to Numbers 18:21-32). James 2:9-11 (refers to Exodus 20:13-14), and James 4:11 refers to the Torah generally.

The law' of the Psalms

When it says 'your law' and 'their law' in John 10:34, and 15:25 respectively, it refers to the Psalms 82:6, 35:19, and 69:4. The law of the Psalms is implied in Hebrews 10:8 (referring to Psalm 40:6).

The law' of the total Hebrew Bible

For example, where there is reference to 'the Law', (John 12:34, Galatians 4:4), all of the Hebrew Bible seems to be in view.

The 'law' of the Prophets

The 'law' of the Prophets is implied in 1 Corinthians 14:21 (referring to Isaiah 28:11).

The 'law' and the Prophets

Where there is reference to 'the Law and Prophets', (Matthew 7:12; 11:13; 22:40; Luke 16:16; John 1:45; Acts 13:15; 24:14), all of the Hebrew Bible could be in view or just the law of Moses and the prophets. In Romans 3:21, however, 'the Law and Prophets' (3:21) refers mainly to the Psalms (51:4, 14:1-3, 5:9, 140:3, 10:7, 36:1, 143:2), and one reference is to Isaiah 59:7-8). So, 'law' in this case 'the Law' would be 'the Psalms and the Prophets'.

Christ and law in the NT

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish these things but to fulfill them fill (Matthew 5:17).

Gentiles, who did not strive for righteousness, have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith; but Israel, who did strive for the righteousness that is based on the law, did not succeed in fulfilling that law (Romans 9:30).

*Christ is the **end of the law** so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes (Romans 10:4).*

The Lord had not come to earth to dismantle the law but to do what no-one else before had managed to do. That is, to complete all the requirements of the law and the prophets. For Moses had written 'concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that the person who does these things will live by them' (Romans 10:5).

Fulfil is (*pleroo*), meaning to make full or complete: to substantiate a prophecy, to fill a hollow thing with something, to inflate something that came into the world flat and empty; wholly there but not yet endowed with volume and structure — like the universe or any organism that grows from a genetically complete seed ([Abarim Publications](#)).

In Romans 10:4, 'end' is (*telos*), which is not not the sudden termination of a process, but rather the first step of a whole new cyclic process, and represents a threshold of transition between two progressive realms. This process is emphasised by the stated purpose of the law, namely that it was *added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made* (Galatians 3:19, Romans 7:7-14).

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Conclusion

Are the Noahide laws biblical?

The Noahide laws are biblical in the sense that they are drawn as individual laws from various parts of the Hebrew Bible. As a body of seven laws, they were cobbled together by the rabbis, a rabbinic creation 2500 years after Noah, and 200 years after Jesus Christ. Moreover, the Hebrew Bible does not reveal that the complete list of seven were given to Noah, or his sons, so, the rabbinic claim that these laws originated prior to the Sinaitic revelation are plainly false.

Could they establish a humane society?

In essence, it's claimed, that these seven Noahide laws establish a stable, humane and just society. That's possible but does it make anyone righteous before God?

Do the Noahide laws do away with Jesus?

On the contrary, the law was a means to an end, and the end was Christ. Not that there was anything wrong with the law for it's *holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good* (Romans 7:12), but the problem was humanity. No human being could keep the law without failing at some point. However minor the misstep, the offender was still guilty. The consequences of that have been clearly enunciated by Paul: *For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse... 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law* (Galatians 3:10).

The Hebrew sense of cursing imposed a real hindrance on someone, a denial of freedom, bondage even ([Abarim Publications](#)). But we have already noted that the law came in so that sin may abound, and that God may show His super-overflowing grace with the arrival of His promised One, Christ (Romans 3:20, 5:20, Galatians 3:19), and the promise is given to those who believe (Galatians 3:22). The promised One Himself asserted:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish these things but to fulfill them (Matthew 5:17).

That meant that Christ was not under the curse of the law in that sense because He never broke it, but rather fulfilled it. Therefore, He was the only candidate who could make the guilty free again:

Christ redeemed (exagorazo) us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us because it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" (Galatians 3:13).

For freedom Christ has set us free...and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery...you were called to freedom (Galatians 5:1, 13).

"Redeemed" (*exagorazo*) literally means to out-buy — it's the verb that describes the freeing of a slave by purchasing him or her. That means that if someone wanted to "buy" someone "out", he wouldn't simply pay the slave's price, but wholly extract that person from slavery. The redeemer would thus give that person enough to stay free without having to go back into slavery to make ends meet. 'Exagorazo' describes the complete release from bondage by paying a price that is far more than the market value of the person ([Abarim Publications](#)).

'Freedom' (*eleutheroo*), means to make lawfully free ([Abarim Publications](#)). Indeed, an apparent paradox! On the one hand the law breaker had freedom denied; on the other, the law fulfiller made the law breaker 'righteous' meaning lawful, and lawfully free. Do the Noahide laws do away with Jesus? Certainly not.

Do the Noahide laws make a dwelling place for God in this world?

God will create a new heaven and earth and the throne of God and the Lamb will be in it, and God will dwell with His people (Revelation 21-22). The Lamb of course is Christ and the Noahide laws without Christ cannot make a dwelling place for God in this world.

One final word

Candidly, the Noahide laws were designed to eliminate Christ, and put the Gentiles under law, as much as Israel was under law. For me, they just make the need for Jesus Christ more compelling.

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