

COLOSSIANS 2:16-17 *Explained*

COLOSSIANS 2:16-17 EXPLAINED

By George Lujack

COLOSSIANS 2:16-17:

So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Messiah (Christ).

Mainstream Christians often cite Colossians 2:16-17 in proclaiming that they should not be judged (rebuked) for consuming unclean creatures and for not observing the seventh-day Sabbath. Many Christians also state that it is legalistic for anyone to try to use God's 'abolished' dietary laws to restrain them from eating whatever 'food' they desire and that they can choose to observe the Sabbath on any day of the week of their choosing, or not at all. Modern-day mainstream Christians lack a fundamental understanding of who Paul was addressing in his Colossian epistles, the era in which he wrote them, and they believe that Paul's writings were addressed to non-law-abiding Christians. Colossians 2:16-17, when understood from its proper historical context and perspective, has a completely different meaning than what many modern-day mainstream Christians understand it to be.

Paul was addressing new Messianic (Christian) Colossian converts who lived among the heavy influence of Babylonian and Roman culture (Colossians 1:1-2). The Babylonian and Roman culture of the time, which the new Colossian converts came out of, consumed all manner of unclean creatures, celebrated pagan festivals, and observed the first-day as the Sabbath day. Paul was instructing the Colossian converts to not be concerned with those who judged (mocked / ridiculed) them in eating food and drink according to God's dietary laws (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14), or regarding God's festivals (Leviticus 23), or new moon celebrations (Numbers 29:6), or the seventh-day Sabbath (Exodus 31:16).

Christianity later adopted Babylonian and Roman culture (including their diet and first-day Sabbath) unto itself. The Colossian believers whom Paul wrote to observed new moon celebrations in accordance with Scripture. Christians do not observe new moons, so Paul was NOT addressing modern-day mainstream Christianity in Colossians 2:16-17.

Colossians 2:16-17 are applicable verses to Messianic and Christian believers who often receive judgment (mocking / ridicule) from their non-law-abiding Christian brethren for observing God's dietary commandments found in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, and for observing God's seventh-day Sabbath.

THE SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME...

Many Christians misunderstand Colossians 2:16-17 to mean that God's Sabbath and dietary laws were merely a shadow of things to come and now that Christ has come we no longer need to observe the Sabbath day or obey His dietary commands. Many people twist Paul's words to do away with God's perpetual laws (2 Peter 3:16).

Yeshua (Jesus) *had already come and gone* when the Apostle Paul wrote Colossians. Colossians was not a Tanakh (Old Testament) prophecy concerning the Messiah (Christ) who was still yet to come. Consuming proper food and drink, and observing God's festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths *are still things that are yet to come* for the majority of people living in the world.

Yeshua (Jesus) plainly said He did not come to abolish the law (Matthew 5:17-19), and the law is proclaimed to be perpetual throughout Scripture, so Colossians 2:16-17 should be understood with the precept understanding that God's laws are eternal.

REVELATION 19:15:

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron.

Believers who obey God's seventh-day Sabbath and dietary commands, which are not commonly followed in this world, are like a shadow of things to come... a shadow of how things *will be done* when Messiah (Christ) returns. When Yeshua (Jesus) returns, He is going to rule the world with a rod of iron. Then *everyone* will be obeying the seventh-day Sabbath and His dietary laws. Right now, those who observe the seventh-day Sabbath and eat according to His dietary commands do so like a shadow of things that are yet to come. When His kingdom comes, believers who observe the seventh-day Sabbath and obey His food and drink laws will no longer be the shadow; they will be the substance of Messiah (Christ), they will be the norm.

LUKE 11:2-4:

Yeshua (Jesus) said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

IT IS GOD'S WILL that we observe the Sabbath and rest from our labors on the seventh-day, which He sanctified at creation when He rested on the seventh-day after forming the Earth during the 6-days of creation week (Genesis 2:3).

IT IS GOD'S WILL that we consume sanctified creatures for food and abstain from eating unclean creatures according to His dietary commands (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14), to keep ourselves fit and healthy, and to prevent us from acquiring various bodily cancers, diseases, and plagues, so as to not be consumed by them (Isaiah 66:17).

God's will is not currently being done on Earth, even by most professing Christians. God's will *will be* done when Yeshua (Jesus) returns. When Yeshua (Jesus) returns to Earth, He will impose His laws and rule over man with a rod of iron. Those who willingly obey Him now, in matters of diet, festivals, and Sabbaths, are a shadow of things to come, the obedient first-fruits of His coming kingdom (James 1:18).