



JESUS DID NOT ABOLISH THE LAW OR THE PROPHETS—JESUS FULFILLED THEM

During the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew chapter five, Jesus said: *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”* Some have wondered did Jesus teach that we are still under the law despite his sacrifice at the cross? It is especially important to note how the words are used in Matthew. In this context, **“abolish”** is set in opposition to **“fulfill.”** Jesus, the perfect Son of God, did not come to earth as an opponent of the law. Jesus came to complete all law, and fulfill all prophecy concerning God’s promise of redemption.



Jesus fulfilled all prophecy concerning God’s plan of redemption given by the Old Testament prophets and by doing so he fulfilled the law for us--something no man or woman can do for themselves. What Jesus also taught was that we are still all under the law if we do not accept that Jesus was the Son of God, died on the cross, and rose to life on the third day. Yet no one can keep the law. His perfect sacrifice atones for a believer’s sins and gives the only path to our Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:17-20 (NIV)

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The word "abolish" (Greek: *kataluo*) means to "destroy, demolish, overthrow, throw down." The word "fulfill" (Greek: *pleroo*) means to "to fill, fill up, complete."

Jesus said, "not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished." The King James version translates these as "a jot or tittle." In Hebrew a jot or tittle refer to the smallest strokes of the Hebrew alphabet, indicating that the Old Testament is completely trustworthy, even to the smallest detail. So, according to our Savior's words, not even the smallest Commandment which God uttered can be abolished.

But neither the law nor the prophets were ever the means to salvation in themselves. Jesus is saying that if you really want to follow the Law and the Prophets, you need to follow him. In fact, later in Matthew's gospel he will portray representatives of the law and the prophets (Moses and Elijah) meeting with Jesus in the Transfiguration, and what does the voice of the Father in heaven say? "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matthew 17:5).

Consider how the Sermon on the Mount ends. Jesus does not say following the law gives life. Jesus closes the sermon not with an exhortation about the importance of the Law of Moses, but with a parable about the importance of hearing Jesus' words and doing them: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock." (Matthew 7:24-25)



JESUS SAYS WE HAVE THE LAWS WRITTEN ON OUR HEARTS

Jesus is saying that we are not under an external law, because we now have the law within—written on our minds and hearts by the Holy Spirit. Jesus goes even further in Matthew 5:21-22. He calls us to go even beyond the written Law (i.e., do not even commit adultery or murder in your heart).



Mathew 5:21-22 (NIV)

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

Do not be like the Pharisees who claimed to follow God’s Commandments in a rigid form to the letter, but rather do it with one’s heart and spirit with love. Therefore Jesus said: *“But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”* (Matthew 9:13) God cares more about our heart’s love for Him than the things that we do in His name. We must not substitute religious traditions for a relationship with God. Jesus is that relationship.

JESUS IS THE BREAD OF LIFE

“I am the Bread of Life” (John 6:35) is one of the seven “I Am” statements of Jesus. Jesus used the same phrase “I AM” in seven declarations about Himself. In all seven, He combines I AM with tremendous metaphors which express His saving relationship toward the world. All appear in the book of John.

In John chapter 6 the Jews tell Jesus that God gave them manna during the desert wandering. Jesus responds by telling them that they need to ask for the true bread from heaven that gives life. When they ask Jesus for this bread, Jesus startles them by saying, *“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”*

John 6:35-40 (NIV)

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”

This is a phenomenal statement! First, by equating Himself with bread, Jesus is saying he is essential for life. Second, the life Jesus is referring to is not physical life, but eternal life. Jesus is trying to get the Jews’ thinking away from the physical realm and into the spiritual realm. He is contrasting what He brings as their Messiah with the bread He miraculously created the day before. That was physical bread that perishes. He is spiritual bread that brings eternal life. All people need the salvation that only comes from Jesus. The prophet Isaiah makes clear no one can do the works that God requires. Out of his love for us, God gave us the gift of grace while we were still sinners.

Isaiah 53:6 (NIV)

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

John 3:17-18 (NIV)

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.

CHRIST IS THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT

In many places in the Book of Hebrews the writer refers to the regulations of the Levitical priesthood, as part of a discussion of the priesthood of Jesus. While the regulations served a purpose, ordinary Levite priests could not atone for sin once for all as Jesus did, and in that sense the regulations were "weak and useless." The requirements of atoning for sin through sacrifice that the Levite priests attempted to meet were not abolished but fulfilled through Jesus.

Hebrews 9:11-15 (NIV)

But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

A mediator, like an intercessor, is a go-between. However, there is a difference in what the mediator does as a go-between. Whereas the intercessor represents a lowly person to a high authority, the mediator works in the opposite direction. The mediator represents the high authority to the lowly person.

Therefore, Christ (who was both God and man at the same time) acts the part of a mediator by proposing to his Father to make satisfaction for the offense committed, and so appease injured justice. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation in a way of satisfaction. Reconciliation in this way is Christ's great work as mediator. Since Jesus was God, his sacrifice was perfect in the eyes of God. This is what was proposed as a New Covenant and what he agreed to do, and therefore Jesus is called the mediator of the covenant.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 (NIV)

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

WHY DID GOD GIVE THE NEW COVENANT WITH JESUS?

“FOR I WILL FORGIVE THEIR WICKEDNESS AND WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE.”

The prophet Jeremiah wrote that God would provide a new covenant and *“remember their sins no more.”* This was the work of Jesus on the cross. There was need of a better covenant because the first covenant was not "faultless" (Hebrews 8:7). It lacked "perfection" (Hebrews 7:11). Therefore there had to come "a time of reformation" (Hebrews 9:8-10).

Hebrews 8:5 tells us that the priests serve a copy and a shadow of heavenly things. The tabernacle and temple were a shadow; the official priesthood was a shadow; the animal sacrifices were a shadow; the feasts and dietary laws were a shadow. And when Christ came, the shadows began to fall away, because Christ himself is the Reality. He is our temple and tabernacle, our focus and place of worship. He is our High Priest and Mediator and Intercessor. He is our atoning sacrifice. He is our Passover feast and spiritual food. He is our purity and holiness that sets us off from other people.

Jeremiah 31: 31-34 (NIV)

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them, declares the Lord.

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Instead of destroying the purpose of the Law and the predictions made by the prophets, Jesus came to fulfill them. Jesus took the penalty of the law away *“having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.”* not by destruction, but rather by fulfillment (Colossians 2:14-17).

Colossians 2:13-17 (NIV)

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

“DO NOT THINK THAT I HAVE COME TO ABOLISH THE LAW”

ISLAM MISTAKENLY BELIEVES THAT SHARIA LAW IS THE PATH TO HEAVEN

Islam tries and fails to gain salvation by following the law. Islam teaches that the fundamental problem of mankind is ignorance and that man needs to be guided in order to live a good life. Once people learn what to believe through the teachings of the Koran, and how to live, sharia (“a law and method” in Koran 5:48), they might earn the pleasure of Allah.

Sharia law from the Koran is claimed to be the path to Allah and heaven. Allah is harsh and does not offer a New Covenant, nor does Allah offer a sacrifice to forgive the sins of the Muslim believer.

Koran 5:48

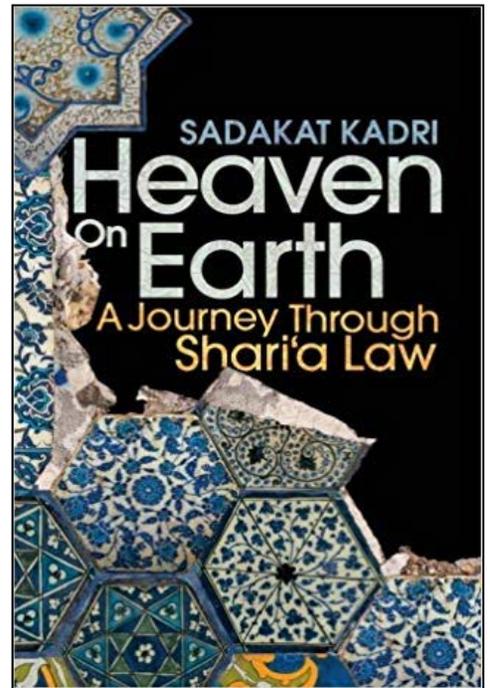
And we have revealed to you, O Mohammad, the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth. To each of you we prescribed a law and a method.

Muslims believe Jesus (Matthew 5:17-20) meant that everyone must follow the law in order to enter heaven. Yet the Bible repeatedly points out that no one can keep the law—everyone has fallen short. Only the sacrifice of Jesus will take away our sins. You cannot work your way into heaven. But the Koran fights against the fact that Jesus was God, died for our sins, and rose to life. The Koran has corrupted the most important parts of the Gospel.

There are five tenets or pillars a Muslim must follow on the road to heaven. They are:

1. Declare that Allah is the One and only God and Mohammad is his prophet. This is the Shahada—the Mark of the Beast (Revelation 13:16)
2. Pray five times a day to the Kaaba Blackstone in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. This is the Image of the Beast that dwells in the Kaaba (Revelation 13:14-15).
3. Fast at specified times, especially during Ramadan.
4. Pay the alms-tax.
5. Make a pilgrimage to Mecca, unless one is a cripple or very poor. In Mecca resides the Image of the Beast.

Finally, we are at a place to understand the message of Islam. Sharia is more than just Islamic law. It is the answer to mankind’s ignorance and, if followed, will result in a life of peace with Allah and an abundance of his blessings. Sharia is derived from the Koran, exemplified in Mohammad’s life, and explained by imams.



THE ISLAMIC PROBLEM IS THAT SHARIA LAW ALWAYS FAILS

Muslims are taught on the last day, if they have obeyed and done well, Allah may grant them mercy and allow them into heaven. So in sum, when it comes to salvation in Islam, sharia is literally “the way to life giving water,” and submission to Allah’s will is the primary expression of worship.

Now that we have considered the differences between the Islamic message and the Christian message, a fatal and unfixable problem arises in Islam. **No man can be saved by works.** This problem cannot be solved in the Koran. Allah of the Koran offers no solution! Only the Bible solves the problem. In the Bible the prophet Isaiah says we have all fallen short of what God requires. Then Isaiah tells us God has a redemptive plan through his suffering servant—Jesus. Following sharia law will never save a person. Following sharia law is a false message from the False Prophet Mohammad. Sharia law always leads to being cast out into the outer darkness on the Day of Judgment.

Isaiah 64: 5-6 (NIV)

How then can we be saved? All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

Jesus came to save (by taking our sins with his death and return to life) all those who will hear his words and keep them.

Isaiah 53:10-12 (NIV)

Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Our salvation is not the result of any of our efforts, abilities, intelligent choices, personal characteristics, or acts of service we may perform. However, as believers, we are “created in Christ Jesus for good works”—to help and serve others. While there is nothing we can do to earn our salvation, God’s intention is that our salvation will result in acts of service. We are saved not merely for our own benefit but to serve Christ and build up the church (Ephesians 4:12). This reconciles the seeming conflict between faith and works. Our righteous acts do not produce salvation but are, in fact, evidence of our salvation (James 1:22; 2:14–26).