

# 119

## MINISTRIES

*“The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below.”*

### **Parashah Points: Emor – “Jewish Holidays”**

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Emor, which is Hebrew for “Speak,” and it goes from Leviticus 21:1 to Leviticus 24:23.

This Torah portion gives purity instructions for priests, lists each of God’s holy days that He commanded His people to observe, and then describes the preparations for the lamps and bread in the Tabernacle. The parashah concludes with a story of a blasphemer and his punishment.

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re going to talk about the so-called “Jewish” holidays.

Have you ever had a Christian friend dismiss the importance of the Sabbath and feast days on the basis that they are “Jewish holidays” and therefore don’t apply to Christians? While it’s understandable that people think of these holy days that way—after all, most of the people who observe these days today are Jewish—the fact is that God never called them Jewish holidays. He said that they are *His* holidays. This is what it says in Leviticus 23:1-2.

#### **Leviticus 23:1-2**

The Lord (YHWH) spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the Lord (YHWH) that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are **my appointed feasts**.”

Now, someone might say, “But God gave these commandments specifically to Israel! Therefore they were never intended for non-Israelites!”

However, most of the people who say that haven’t really thought it through. For instance, among God’s feast days in Leviticus 23 is the Sabbath, which is the fourth of the Ten Commandments. These Ten Commandments were also given to Israel. But nobody says that the first or fifth or seventh commandment applies only to Jews. Why then do we make a distinction when it comes to the fourth

commandment, the Sabbath?

Indeed, every Christian—whether Jew or Gentile—agrees that we ought to keep at least nine of the Ten Commandments, despite the fact that those commandments were given to Israel. And there are lots of other laws in the Torah given to Israel that most Christians believe we should be keeping—laws against homosexual and incestual practices, for example. So the fact that the Torah was given to Israel really doesn't give us a basis for ignoring certain commandments.

As you can see, this kind of thinking can lead to some pretty absurd places. That's why we say that most Christians who make this argument haven't thought it through. The fact of the matter is that the God of Israel is not the God of Jews only, but also anyone who has drawn near to Him through Messiah:

**Romans 3:29**

*Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also.*

You see, nowhere in the Bible does God give Gentile believers different holidays to keep. In the New Testament, both Jewish and Gentile believers can be seen keeping the Sabbath and feast days together. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, Paul explicitly told his readers at the Church of Corinth to keep Passover and Unleavened Bread, and the church of Corinth was primarily made up of Gentile believers.

There's nothing in Scripture indicating that these days are only for Jews. God desires that people from *all* nations would come near to Him in worship and celebration in accordance with His Word.

To learn more about why Gentile believers in Messiah should keep the Torah and to hear answers to common objections, see our teaching, "[The 7 Laws of Noah](#)" and the "[What Was the Mixed Multitude?](#)", and "[Acts 15, Obedience or Legalism?](#)".

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

*We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at [www.testeverything.net](http://www.testeverything.net)*

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

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