

# Hebrew Roots Movement Fact Sheet

## WHAT IS THE HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT?

The Hebrew Roots Movement is a group of *former Christians who now place an unhealthy emphasis on the Hebraic roots of the Christian faith*. The majority of those in the Hebrew Roots Movement were previously evangelical Christians. Very few individuals in this growing movement are converts from atheism or any other religion. This movement goes by many names such as Return to Torah, Torah Observant, 119 Ministries, Sabbath Fellowships, etc. They do not have a unified doctrinal statement, so their beliefs are quite diverse. Some still believe in Christ – while others are so enamored with the Torah that they deny the very deity of Jesus.

The Hebraic roots of our Christian faith are wonderful and should be studied and cherished by all believers. There is a significant amount of symbolism and meaning contained in the Jewish origins of our faith; however, to place more emphasis on those roots than the Bible does is an unhealthy emphasis. The Hebrew Roots Movement places significant emphasis on the Mosaic law, the feasts of Israel, and the old covenant. None of these things are bad things - they were clearly part of God's plan of salvation. However, we are no longer under obligation to the specific commands God gave to Israel, including the Mosaic law, the feasts, and the old covenant.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH THE HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT?

The problem with the Hebrew Roots Movement is threefold: (1) they focus on proselytizing to the Christian church to gain more followers instead of reaching out to the lost with the hope of Christ, (2) they put a stumbling block (the Mosaic law) in the way of those who would turn from their sin and accept Christ, and finally (3) they rob the glory that is due Christ for His work on the cross and instead glorify their own law-keeping.

## FALSE DOCTRINES OF THE HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT:

○ THE LAW OF MOSES IS GOD'S STANDARD OF HOLINESS FOR ALL PEOPLE AT ALL TIMES.  
We know that the Mosaic law is not God's ultimate standard because Jesus references a higher standard in the sermon on the mount (Matt 5:21:48) and, when questioned about divorce, Jesus said that divorce was allowed during the time of Moses, "but from the beginning it is not so" (Matt 19:8). The Mosaic law was given solely to the people of Israel and it reflects God's absolutely perfect standard, but it is not *synonymous with* nor is it *equal to* God's standard.

○ BELIEVERS ARE SANCTIFIED BY THE LAW OF MOSES.  
We know this doctrine is untrue since Scripture tells us that we are sanctified *by Christ* – not by the law of Moses (1 Cor 6:11). Christians are never told that we are justified through Christ and then sanctified through the law – this doctrine is absent from the Bible. Sanctification is becoming freer and freer from sin and more like Christ in our everyday lives; the Bible says that the law reveals and even *increases* our sinfulness – it does not free us from sin. (Rom 5:20)

○ CHRISTIANS ARE UNDER BOTH THE OLD COVENANT AND THE NEW COVENANT.

This is a false doctrine because Scripture tells us that the New Covenant, mediated by Christ, is much more excellent than the Old Covenant and the Mosaic law (Heb 8:6-7). God's Word also tells us that the Mosaic law has been *set aside* and we now have a *better hope* (Heb 7:18-19), the New Covenant is *not like* the Old Covenant (Jer 31:32), and the Old Covenant is obsolete (Heb 8:13). Scripture places the believer in Christ under no obligation to the Old Covenant.

○ BELIEVERS ARE REQUIRED BY GOD TO KEEP THE SABBATH.

The Bible clearly teaches that the sabbath was a shadow pointing to our sabbath rest in Christ (Col 2:16-17; Heb 4:9) and that we should not judge one another when it comes to which days we consider as special (Rom 14:5-6). The sabbath was the sign of the Old Covenant between Israel and Jehovah; those who believe in Christ are never commanded to keep the sabbath.

○ CHRISTIANS ARE REQUIRED TO OBEY THE DIETARY RESTRICTIONS OF THE MOSAIC LAW.

Scripture plainly states that nothing we eat can defile us (Mark 7:15), everything is indeed clean (Rom 14:20), food will not commend us to God – whether we eat or do not eat certain foods (1 Cor 8:8), and everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected (1 Tim 4:1-5). The New Testament clearly and repeatedly teaches that Christians have the freedom to eat whatever they want.

○ IT IS SINFUL FOR A CHRISTIAN TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AND EASTER.

The Bible never commands believers to celebrate Christmas or Easter; however, the Bible also never commands believers to *not* celebrate Christmas or Easter. We have freedom in Christ to do as we are personally convicted (Col 2:16-17; Rom 14:5-6). While some cultural traditions may have pagan origins, Christmas and Easter are not celebrations of a pagan god – but are a celebration and remembrance of what Jesus Christ did for us. Christmas and Easter are the antitheses of pagan worship.

○ GOD EXPECTS PRESENT-DAY BELIEVERS TO FOLLOW THE LAW OF MOSES.

This doctrine is entirely unbiblical. Scripture makes it clear that we are not under law but under grace (Rom 6:14), we have died to the law (Rom 7:4), we are released from the law (Rom 7:6), Christ is the end of the law (Rom 10:4), love is the fulfillment of the law (Rom 13:8; Gal 5:14), the law has been abolished by Christ (Eph 2:14-15), and the law has been set aside because of its uselessness and a better hope has been introduced through which we draw near to God (Heb 7:18-19). We have freedom from the Mosaic legal code and we can now serve Christ by loving God and loving others (John 13:34; Rom 7:6).

○ THE TORAH IS THE FOUNDATION OF SCRIPTURE.

The Torah (Genesis – Deuteronomy) is obviously the beginning of the Bible; however, it is not any more important than any other portion of God's Word. *All* of Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for us today (2 Tim 3:16-17). The entirety of Scripture is free of any contradictions or errors and was inspired by the Holy Spirit – no portion of God's Word is of higher importance than any other portion of Scripture.

For more information and resources that refute the false claims of the Hebrew Roots Movement, check us out on the web:

[www.HebrewRootsRefuted.com](http://www.HebrewRootsRefuted.com)

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