ARE BELIEVERS ALLOWED TO TATTOO AND CUT THE FLESH?

WE INFORM – YOU CHOOSE

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ARE BELIEVERS ALLOWED TO TATTOO AND CUT THE FLESH?

By

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Preface

YHWH “God” has called us to do two things. First, we are to never give up studying and seeking the correct interpretation of any given Bible passage. Second, such opportunities are golden moments for us to learn to show grace and love to others whose understanding of a given passage may differ from ours.

Throughout the HRTI’s teachings, we use a slightly different vocabulary to that which some might be accustomed. We have chosen to use what many refer to as a Messianic vocabulary. The reasons being: firstly, using Hebraic-sounding words is another way to help you associate with the Hebraic Roots of your faith. Secondly, these words are not merely an outward show for us, they are truly an expression of who we are as Messianic Jews and spiritual Israelites who have "taken hold" of our inheritance with Israel.

Instead of saying "Jesus", we call our Saviour "Y’shua" – the way His parents would have addressed Him in Hebrew. In addition, rather than referring to Y’shua as "Christ", we use the word "Messiah" which is an Anglicized version of the Hebrew word, Moshiach.

"YaHoVaH" is the name of God in Hebrew, where it is written as four consonants (YHWH or YHVH, as the W and V is derived from the same Hebrew letter ‘Vaw’). These four letters are called the Tetragrammaton (Greek for "[a word] having four letters). Jews ceased to use the name in the Greco-Roman period, replacing it with the common noun Elohim (“God”) to demonstrate the universal sovereignty of Israel’s God over all others. At the same time, the divine name was increasingly regarded as too sacred to be uttered and was replaced in spoken ritual by the word Adonai (“My Lord”). From about the 6th to the 10th century, the Masoretes (Jewish scholars who were the first to add vowels to the text of the Hebrew Bible) used the vowel signs of the Hebrew words Adonai or Elohim as the vowels for YHWH; and later on the artificial name Jehovah was produced. Christian scholars and translators after the Renaissance and Reformation periods replaced the sacred name YHWH with GOD and LORD (all in capital letters in the Bible); which was a strategic move of Satan for not using the Name. The Sacred Name occurs 6,828 times in the Hebrew text of the Bible, demonstrating YHWH wants us to use it.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, biblical scholars again began to use the form Yahweh and it is now the conventional usage in biblical scholarship; but leading Hebrew Scholars suggest YHWH should be pronounced as Yah-oo-VaH (Y’shua is derived from YaH-shuvah which means YaH saves. Yah (נַח) is an abbreviation of God’s name YHWH, as seen in Psalm 68:4. The Name is also found in the word hallelu-YaH, which means “you praise the LORD”).

2
I can affix a tattoo, can’t I?

Introduction

This is a question many Believers struggle with. Many Believers argue that tattooing falls into the category of "disputable matters" because the Bible is not clear about it. Then immediately, 'Main Stream Church Leaders' argue that Lev 19:28 clearly says, "Do not cut your bodies for the dead, and do not mark your skin with tattoos. I am the Lord." They immediately say how much clearer can that be? These 'Main stream Church Leaders', who in the same breath also argue that we are not under the Law (Torah) anymore, conveniently take this one verse in the Bible out of context to justify their answer.

Let us read verse 28 and a couple verses after verse 28, which the same 'Church Leaders' say we do not have to apply anymore—isn’t this picking and choosing from YHWH’s Word?

28 And you shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead; and you shall not put on yourself any etched mark; I am YHWH. (Church Leaders argue we have to adhere to this)

29 You shall not pollute your daughter, to cause her to be a prostitute, that the land may not go whoring, and the land become full of wickedness. (Church Leaders argue we must also adhere to this)

30 You shall keep My sabbaths; and you shall revere My sanctuary. I am YHWH. (But Church Leaders argue that we do not have to adhere to this anymore)

31 You shall not turn to mediums, and you shall not seek to spirit-knowers to be defiled by them; I am YHWH your God. (But Church Leaders again argue we have to adhere to this)

32 You shall rise up in the face of gray hair; and you shall honor the face of an old man; and be afraid of your God. I am YHWH. (Church Leaders do not even know or talk about this)

With this in mind, and the dilemma the church is in with their various 'man-made' doctrines, may you now affix a tattoo to your body or not?

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1 NLT
2 All verses from now on taken from the LITV, unless otherwise mentioned. God’s Names are replaced with original Names no matter what the translation is
**Background**

Imagine only having one shirt to wear for the rest of your life, it would be kind of weird, wouldn’t it? Well, that’s what tattoos are like—ink scarred into your flesh for the rest of your life. Tattoos on animals are most commonly used for *identification or branding*, but on humans tattoos are a type of decorative body modification—or at least that is what people think.

The term "tattoo" or from Tahiti, "Tatau" is first referred to by Joseph Banks, the naturalist aboard Cook’s ship the "Endeavour" in 1769 where he mentions it in his journal. A tattoo is a marking made by inserting dark, indelible ink into the dermis layer of the skin to change the pigment for *decorative or other reasons*. In this Booklet, I will explain the many negative effects that come with getting tattoos, both physically and spiritually.

It is clear that we are living in the end times, right before the return of our Messiah Y’shua. The Bible is clear that the last days will be perilous times. The current trend that more and more Christians seem to be picking up is tattooing. There are even "Christian" tattoo shops opening up, and *deceived Christians* are flocking to them more and more. They justify this activity by saying they are "tattooing for Jesus" and it’s fun to sport their new, colourful images or statements. Therefore, tattooing is *no more* an activity that the Bible expressly forbids, but it’s become the latest, cool, fun thing to do; and tattooing is popularly regarded as simply "body art". Well, let’s explore what tattooing *really* is and what YHWH has to say about it. Let’s start by reading Lev 19:28 again:

1. **The Context of the Verse:**

   *And you shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead; and you shall not put on yourself any etched mark; I am YHWH.* It’s of utmost importance to look at the verse in context. This specific passage in Leviticus, and especially the surrounding text, is specifically dealing with the pagan religious rituals of the people living around the Israelites. YHWH’s desire is to set His people apart from other cultures. The focus here, in context, is prohibiting worldly, heathen worship and witchcraft. YHWH forbids His holy people, even today, to engage in idolatrous, pagan worship and sorcery which imitates the heathens. He does this out of

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4 2 Tim 3:1
5 Most of the information in this Booklet were taken from the article “*Should Christians Wear Tattoos?*” by Lynette Schaefer
protection, because He knows this will lead them away from the one true God.

It's interesting to observe verse 26, "Do not eat meat that has not been drained of its blood," and verse 27, "Do not trim off the hair on your temples or trim your beards." Well, certainly many Christians today eat non-kosher meats (red meat that has not been drained of its blood) and get haircuts without participating in the forbidden worship of pagans. But be reminded, back then these customs were associated with pagan rites and rituals which YHWH forbid, and somewhere in the world these practices still exist.

2. The Mark of Blood:

The tattooing procedure involves cutting the flesh with a sharp needle or instrument in order to carve out or make designs. The result is something called ‘blood-letting’. Blood-letting has both occultic and demonic origins as it is considered a power source that is supernaturally unleashed. Many pro-tattoo sources describe tattooing as having a magical, occultic connection with blood and blood-letting as being normal. Several pro-tattoo historians indicate the connection with scarification and blood-letting associated with religious practices. Another source indicates “the importance of licking the blood that was released during tattoo operations.”

We read in 1 Kings 18:25-28 the account of the prophets of Baal who met with Elijah to find out who was the true God. These were satanists who were attempting to unleash supernatural power by cutting themselves:

And they called with a loud voice, and cut themselves, according to their way, with swords and with spears until blood gushed out on them. (Verse 28).

In the New Covenant, there was a man named Legion who was possessed by demons in Mark 5:1-9 who went about cutting himself with stones:

And continually night and day in the hills, and in the tombs, he was crying and cutting himself with stones. (Verse 5)

In Lev 19:28 YHWH clearly says “Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am YHWH.” (KJV)

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6 NLT
7 Steve Gilbert, Tattoo History: A Source Book, pg. 181
3. The Cup of Devils:

Historically, the origin of the tattoo is associated with paganism, demonism, Baal worship, shamanism, mysticism, heathenism, cannibalism and many other pagan beliefs. The tattoo has NEVER been connected with Bible-believing Christians. But today in the 21st century, the trends are reverting from pagan practices to include the modern Christian and the new "Christian" tattoo shop. This is an occultic invasion into the church. Satan is the god of this world and his agenda is to deceive many Christians, especially in the last days. But the fact remains that the tattoo has its roots in beliefs and practices that are demonic and pagan. Many pro-tattoo books indicate that tattooing is a magical rite and the tattooist is respected as a priest or shaman; it is connected to a religious ceremony and performed by priests or priestesses; it is intended to put the human soul in harmony with supernatural forces; at other times dancing accompanies the tattooing ritual to exorcise demons. In other words, it is connected with the spirit world and a tattoo is really much more than simply a body decoration.

Today's popular tattooing craze is "tribal tattoos", which are pure paganism. These designs bear serious symbolic mystical and occult meanings. They are strongly connected with channels into spiritual and demonic possession. Many pro-tattoo artists and historians can attest to this by saying things like, "tattoos have a power and magic all their own", "there is in addition to the opening of numerous inlets for evil to enter", "allowing his clients’ demons to help guide the needle".

Ronald Scutt, in his exhaustive book, *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, covers a lot about the history and culture of tattoos. He documents that most of the time tattoos are associated with spiritual, religious and mystical purposes; linking it to mystical significance, sun-worship, serpent worship, and the sun-god Baal. Author Steve Gilbert, of *Tattoo History: A Source Book*, p. 99, records, "The Spaniards, who had never heard of tattooing, recognized it at once as the work of Satan." Yet today’s gullible Christians are out there in droves "marking themselves for Jesus"!

Pagan tattooing is not just from the dark ages: many body artists perform ritual tattoos today as the quotes from tattoo authors above bear witness. Some will burn incense or light candles. 1 Cor 10:21 says, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils." (KJV)
4. The Mark of Death:

Lev 19:28 says, "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am YHWH." (KJV) Yet DEATH is the number one theme of tattoos! References from tattoo books again reveal this as a fact: "Death and darkness have always been a classic tattoo theme – skulls, snakes, demons."\(^8\) Henry Ferguson in The Art of the Tattoo, states "probably the most popular tattooed image of today, the all-pervasive grinning skull!"; "Skulls imprinted on skin abound, and depictions of the Grim Reaper are commonly seen"; "Possibly, at the same time, to wear a death’s figure on one’s body may be an invocation of whatever indefinable forces of nature….in an attempt to protect the wearer from such a fate".

Tattoo shops mostly display morbid scenes of death, demons, serpents, and hell. Grim reapers, flaming skulls, snakes crawling through skulls, demons, Satan, pornography, blasphemy, naked flames of hell—every satanic scene of hell is glorified. Who really is the Master Tattooist? Satan, of course!\(^9\) He is the author of Death; and the representative of Hell;\(^10\) also of the Serpent;\(^11\) whereas Y’shua is Life.\(^12\)

Many tattoo artists embody satanic symbols of death and hell while they display demonic scenes in their shops, calling it "art". They are often people who demonstrate their allegiance to Satan with vile and filthy depictions of the underworld.

5. The Mark of Rebellion:

The Bible condemns all rebellion throughout its pages and declares that rebellion is as bad as witchcraft: "For the sin of divination is rebellion; insolence is both iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the Word of YHWH, so He has rejected you from being king."\(^13\) It is clear that the tattoo has always been an indication of a spirit of rebellion and deviancy on its wearers. All the tattoo books make comments about tattooing being rebellious.

In addition, the tattoo is considered a mark of disgrace or reproach by the same tattoo books. Throughout history, the tattoo was used to mark the

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\(^8\) The Body Art Book, pg. 56
\(^9\) Rev 6:8; Heb 2:14
\(^10\) Rev 6:8; Mat 25:41
\(^11\) Gen 3:1; Rev 12:9; Rev 20:1-2
\(^12\) John 1:3; John 6:48; John 11:25; John 14:6; Acts 3:15; Rom 6:23; 1 John 1:1-2; 1 John 5:12
\(^13\) 1 Sam 15:23
criminal, adulterers, traitors, deserters, the deviant and outcast. Thirdly, it has been the mark of the sideshow freak throughout history. Also, it is the mark of indecency. They were associated with barbarians in barbaric, immoral Greece and Rome. The tattoo book, *Art, Sex and Symbol*,¹⁴ says "In a society that considers nudity as dirty, indecent, and subversive or morality...it is not surprising that decorations to the body are allocated to the same category."

The tattoo is also considered the mark of depravity by many tattoo books. Studies have been done that indicate a high percentage of deviant behaviours and troubled persons that were tattooed. Studies have also been done that link tattoos to homosexuality, lesbianism, and gross sexual perversion. Statements made in many of the tattoo books bear this out. Recent studies on today’s tattooed young people indicate 1) they are nearly four times more likely to engage in sexual intercourse; 2) Over two times more likely to experience alcohol related problems; 3) Nearly two times more likely to use illegal drugs; 4) Over two times more likely to express violent behaviour; and 5) Over two times more likely to drop out of high school.

What about Y’shua, would He have fixed a tattoo? Wasn’t He a rebel? NO WAY! To the contrary: Y’shua was 100 percent OBEDIENT unto death—even the death of the Cross!¹⁵ If Y’shua violated any one of His Father’s instructions in the Old Covenant, then He would be a sinner, and we know He was not. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed, "not my will, but thine, be done."¹⁶ If there was the slightest chance that Y’shua was a rebel, then He would have sinned against YHWH, and we would all be lost!

6. The Tattooed will battle to find a "Real Job":

Society frowns upon many things today in age, one of the biggest and most common being tattoos. In a recent studies it was found that the average person described body art as dirty, and gross. The damage tattoos can bring to someone in today’s society can be a lot worse than one would think. Many employers will not hire someone with tattoos when they come in for an interview; and some employers will fire their staff if they find out they have tattoos.

Over half of the families in Canada would not let their children get tattoos. A lot of parents kick their kids out of the house for getting body art, which

¹⁴ *Art, Sex and Symbol*, 1974, by Ronald Scutt, pg. 179
¹⁵ Phil 2:8
¹⁶ Luke 22:42-44
leaves them, in most cases, with nowhere to go. Some families even disown children. A large number of Restaurants and stores will not allow entrance with body art showing, must have them covered up or no entry.

7. Tattoo’s Deadly Little Secret:

It is a well-known fact that tattooing runs a risk of acquiring any number of deadly diseases, including Hepatitis C and AIDS. The reason is because the needle that is used to tattoo punctures the skin 3,000 times a minute. In an hour, that would be 180,000 times that puncture wounds provide a potential path to a deadly disease. Not only that, but it is also well documented that tattoo shops are not regulated by the government to uphold medical standards. Also, many tattoo artists do not inform their clients of possible infection from the needle or the ink.

The Mayo Clinic sounds a warning about commercial tattooing: "Few states have hygienic regulations to ensure safe tattooing practices in commercial tattoo parlors, and even fewer monitor and enforce standards." Tattoos can cause many chronic skin disorders such as sarcoid, keloid scarring, allergic dermatitis, photosensitivity reactions, psoriasis, and tumors. Tattoo inks are made of dyes created from a range of metals, which are mostly toxic. The most common effects of tattoos are hypersensitivity to the red dyes (cinnabar), and photosensitivity to the yellow pigments (cadmium, which is another toxic metal). There has never been a documentation of anyone getting cancer from tattoos; but dark inks can make melanoma (skin cancer) harder to detect. Another well-known infection from tattoos is Hepatitis as already mentioned. In one study, tattooing accounted for 41% of Hepatitis C infections. Well-known signs of an infection after getting a tattoo are high fever, puss leaking from the wound, and red streaks extending from the tattoo. "Infection that is not properly tended to can result in serious health consequences and even death."

Finally, the Bible gives a real warning about this sort of procedure: "My wounds have putrefied and rotted because of my foolishness. I am bent down, I am bowed down exceedingly; I went mourning all the day. For my loins are filled with a burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am exceedingly benumbed and crushed. I howl from the groanings of my heart."

19 Body Anthology - http://www.bodyanthology.net/?page_id=56
20 Psalm 38:5-8
Tattoos have served as rites of passage, marks of status and rank, symbols of religious and spiritual devotion, decorations for bravery, sexual lures and marks of fertility, pledges of love, punishment, amulets and talismans, protection; and as the marks of outcasts, slaves and convicts. The symbolism and impact of tattoos varies in different places and cultures, but the root is the same – identification and belonging!

Today, people choose to be tattooed for cosmetic, sentimental/memorial, religious, and magical reasons; and to symbolize their belonging to or identification with particular groups, including criminal gangs or a particular ethnic group, etc. Some Māori still choose to wear intricate moko on their faces. In Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand, the yantra tattoo is used for protection against evil and to increase luck. In the Philippines certain tribal groups believe that tattoos have magical qualities, and help to protect their bearers.

People have also been forcibly tattooed. A well-known example is the identification system for inmates in Nazi concentration camps during the Holocaust. Tattoos have also been used for identification in other ways. For example, in the period of early contact between the Māori and Europeans, Māori chiefs sometimes drew their moko (facial tattoo) on documents in place of a signature. Whatever the excuse or reason is, it is Satan's onslaught to condition the human race to accept a tattoo "mark" as the norm. Satan is busy conditioning the human race to accept some sort of mark on your body.

The Bible informs us that there is an "ultimate tattoo" coming. This tattoo will be the "Identification System" of the Antichrist:

And he (the False Prophet who promotes the Antichrist) causeth all (all those here during the seven year Tribulation period), both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: (some Bibles say on, both are correct as that is what a tattoo is—it is 'in' and 'on') And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark (for identification), or the name of the beast (the name of the Antichrist also for identification—showing that you belong to Satan), or the number of his name (for surveillance tracking—could be some sort of microchip implant or improved system). Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six
hundred threescore and six.\textsuperscript{21} (For the details on this mark, please order the Book \textit{Verse by Verse Explanation of the Revelation of Y’shua HaMashiach})

You will not be able to buy or sell unless you comply with the above, if you do not want to accept the "tattoo mark" you will be beheaded according to Rev 20:4. You will be forced to accept the following, and if you accept this you immediately sell your soul to Satan; which means you will belong to him and be enslaved by him:

\textit{For identification purposes:}
- The \textbf{mark} of the Antichrist.
- The \textbf{name} of the Antichrist.

\textit{For controlling or enslavement purposes:}
- The \textbf{number} of the Antichrist.

The Bible clearly says "666", and this in Greek is “Cxß” (khee = 600, xee = 60, sigma = 6) which is the alphabetical representation of the numerical value of the mark. The "mark" in Greek is "stigma" and means "to stick or prick, a mark incised or punched for the recognition of ownership as seen with slaves and soldiers."\textsuperscript{22} Three 6's: one for the Devil, one for the Antichrist, and one for the False Prophet.

9. Tattoos and the Bible:

We know already what Lev 19:28 says. But people use that to say, "\textit{But that's in the OLD Testament! What about the New?}" Well, do you know that Lev 19:29 says not to prostitute your daughter; yet it says nothing in the New Testament about that, making it okay to prostitute your child? I think not! These Moral Laws, the Mitzvot instructions of YHWH, are \textit{timeless} and are as applicable now as then. (Please order the Booklet \textit{The True Doctrine of the Law (Torah) and Grace}) Lev 19:28 indicates that we are to not print ANY marks on us, period! As said at point 1, Lev 19:26-28 in context is a condemnation of assorted pagan, witchcraft and heathen practices, of which tattooing is clearly one of them. Every commentary written on Lev 19:28 says that tattooing comes from pagan origins.

Because our bodies are the Temple of the Living God,\textsuperscript{23} YHWH wants them pure for His glory. Defiling the Temple of God, him will YHWH destroy: "\textit{Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of...}

\textsuperscript{21} Rev 13:16-18
\textsuperscript{22} Strong's Concordance
\textsuperscript{23} 1 Cor 6:19-20
God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. God meant what He said, as clearly seen in Num 23:19 and Gal 6:7-8! 2 Cor 6:16 says, in part, “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God.”

Closing Thoughts

Those who get tattoos while in a backslidden state will forever have to live with them. Even those who flock to get laser surgery in an attempt to remove the tattoos will have to go through a lot of expensive and painful procedures, and yet the tattoo will never be totally removed and will just look ugly. Many who are foolish enough to get tattoos later regret them and hate looking at them. There are many consequences of getting "marked": spiritual, health, social. Once a person has that mark put on them, they are then in a different category: one of the gang, cool, and spiritually defiled against YHWH who shakes their fist at His law. Not to mention that after getting the tattoo, some serious medical problems could start to germinate. Getting a tattoo can also damage relationships with friends, family, teachers or employers. According to Bonnie B. Graves, Tattooing and Body Piercing, p. 43, many jobs are not available to those who have visible body art. So, then, is getting a tattoo really worth all the consequences?

If you have tattoos and are still unconvinced that any of the above applies to you, then consider this: tattooing, in addition to being disobedient, is idolatrous because it displays an image. If someone is "tattooing for Jesus" and thinks that's acceptable, it isn't because the "Jesus" (or any symbol) you are marking yourself with is an image. God says very clearly and explicitly that we are to have no other gods before Him, and that it is He and He alone who is supreme. The Bible expressly tells us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, to abstain from the appearance of evil, and that friendship with the world is enmity with God. We are instructed to come out from among them and be separate from the world. Christians, therefore, have the responsibility to obey YHWH’s commands and abstain from worldly associations,
pastimes, or habits; not just out of duty but because we love YHWH and have a living relationship with Him. Therefore, be aware that ALL tattooing is wrong, not just the graphic stuff described above. It all has the same origin in paganism and is expressly commanded by YHWH that we are to avoid this practice at all costs!

If you received tattoos before conversion to Messiah Y’shua, then you have already been forgiven for that. On the other hand, if you have received tattoos after giving your life to Y’shua, you need to repent of this sin and not repeat it, under any circumstances, because it is considered abominable according to what the Word very clearly says.

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Something mind-boggling is happening right now before our eyes! What can only be seen as a sovereign work of the Ruach HaKodesh is breaking forth as Christians around the world are working to restore the Hebrew foundations of Christianity. After being stained for more than eighteen centuries by Judaeophobia, anti-Judaism, and anti-Semitism, Christianity is being impacted by an unprecedented revolution of restoration. Scholars, clergy, and laity from virtually every nationality, ethnicity, and denomination are reconnecting their faith in Messiah Y’shua with its historical Hebraic roots. HalleluYAH

We inform – You choose

Never be guilty of: “By your traditions you make the Word of God of non effect”

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Prov 25:25
Thank you that we may minister to you from the Southern point of Africa – population ratio-wise the largest group of Messianic Judaism followers in the world.

30 John 14:15
31 The truth of the Torah makes you see the mistranslations in the New Covenant. It's amazing how you can look at the epistles of Rabbi Paul one way and it looks like he's leading the body of Messiah away from Torah; when in reality, he's leading them to Torah. A paradox of vantage point. Let us remember, the intent of the law maker constitutes the law. We need to walk a mile or two in our Hebrew Messiah's shoes
32 Matt 15:3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Matt 15:6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition
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