



# The Law of Moses and The Grace of God

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A CHRISTIAN JEW PUBLICATION

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*“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree . . . Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.” Gal. 3:13, 19.*

The distinction which God’s Word makes between Law and Grace is vitally important whether to the lost soul seeking to be saved, to the Christian seeking to live a happy Christian life or to the Bible student delving into the great truths of the Word.

I am sure that 95% of all difficulty in local churches would end if God’s people would recognize the difference between law and grace, and if they would see the difference between God’s program for national Israel and God’s program for the church (the bride of Christ). It was for the purpose of correcting this error in the church that Paul wrote his Epistle to the Galatians. And we need it today just as badly as they needed it then.

The law is the one constant theme in many churches. There are some churches that preach law ten times more than they preach grace. They preach do and don’t, try and trust, give and get. They tell people that if they don’t live up to the Commandments they will lose their salvation. As a

result, many church members serve the Lord through fear instead of by love.

## Meaning of Law

Most people when they think of the law immediately think of the Ten Commandments. It is true that the Ten Commandments are a part of the law, but the law consisted of many more commandments and precepts besides the Ten Commandments. So when you read the word "law" in the Bible, it doesn't necessarily mean the Ten Commandments. When you read the expression "the law," it means the entire law that God gave to Israel through Moses — ceremonial laws, judicial laws, moral laws, etc.

Never once do we read in the Bible of "moral law" and "ceremonial law." The Seventh Day Adventists, the Armstrongites and other legalizers make a lot of to-do over the terms "moral law" and "ceremonial law." They contend that the ceremonial law was abolished at the cross while the moral law still remains. But the Word of God teaches nothing of the kind.

Take a few examples of the use of the term "the law." In I Corinthians 14:34, women "*are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.*" Where does the law say this? In Genesis 3:16. So Genesis is in the law. Again: "*The law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*" Rom. 7:7. Where does the law say this? In Exodus 20:17. So Exodus, also, is in the law. Once more: "*Master, which is the great commandment of the law?*" Matt. 22:36. Jesus then makes two quotations from the law: First, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.*" This is taken from Deuteronomy 6:5. So Deuteronomy, too, is in the law. Second, He said, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" This is from Leviticus 19:18. So Leviticus, likewise, is a part of the law. And then again: "*Have ye not read in the law, how that on*

*the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?"* Matt. 12:5. This is from Numbers 28:9. So it is plain to see that "the law" simply means all of the commandments that God gave to Israel through Moses.

Don't pay any attention to these false cults who try to pigeonhole the law. James 2:10 says: "*Whosoever shall keep the WHOLE LAW, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*" There is no such thing as part of the law of Moses being abolished while a part remains. Either it is all done away or it is all in force.

### **Beginning of The Law**

When did the law have its beginning? The answer is found in John 1:17. Notice:

*"For the law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."*

Could anything be more plainly stated? Could anything be more understandable? The Law — all of the law — was given to a specific people, Israel, at a specific time. The law was given to Israel by Moses exactly as he received it from Almighty God.

Does that mean that there was no law before Moses? Indeed it does not. God commanded Adam to eat freely of every tree in the Garden of Eden except one . . . the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Gen. 2:17. God's command to Adam was law — not the law of Moses — but a command from God is Law! And if broken, judgment must follow.

However, there was no written law prior to the time of Moses. It is true that people sinned and their consciences convicted them. Rom 2:15. But the written law of God did not come until the time of Moses.

**The Law Was Never Given to  
Any Other Nation or People  
But the Children of Israel**

This is the statement of the Apostle Paul. He says:

*“When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves.”* Rom. 2:14.

This language admits of no misunderstanding nor quibbling. Speaking by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle authoritatively says:

*“The Gentiles, which have not the law.”*

*“The Gentiles, these having not the law.”*

This is the Holy Spirit’s definite, dynamic declaration that in Paul’s day the Gentiles did not have the law.

If they did not have it in Paul’s day, they did not have it before his day, because there is no account of it having been taken away from them at any time previous to his day. If they neither had it in his day, nor before his day, they have never had it at any time since his day. If they did not have it before his day, in his day, nor since his day, they do not have it in this day.

**The Law Was Given to the Children of Israel,  
Not to Keep But to Break**

Now I am going to make a statement which no doubt will be a shock to many of you. Did you know that the law was given to the children of Israel, not to keep but to break?

Listen:

*“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” Gal. 3:19.*

Please notice — the law was added *“because of transgressions.”* In other words, the law was added to reveal the true nature of unregenerate man. There is no place in all the Word of God where the purpose of the law is more clearly set forth than in this verse.

God did not give the law to save men. The law has never saved a man and the law never will save men. Why? Simply because Jesus Christ is the only person who ever lived upon the face of this earth who kept God’s law. And He kept it for us and died for us because we couldn’t keep it.

If people want to know the truth concerning Christianity and the law, they could learn the truth by reading Romans 10:4 and believing it:

*“For Christ is the END OF THE LAW for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”*

When Christ died at the cross, He fulfilled the entire law. Matt. 5:17. He said, *“Not one jot or one tittle shall pass TILL all be fulfilled.”* Matt. 5:18. Yes, Jesus came to fulfill the law, and He did exactly that. He fulfilled every jot and every tittle of the law. He satisfied the demands of God’s holiness and God’s purity. In the closing hours of His earthly ministry He said, *“I have glorified Thee on the earth: I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK WHICH THOU GAVEST ME TO DO.”* John 17:4. Again, just before He bowed His head on His pulseless breast, He cried out from the cross, *“IT IS FINISHED!”* John 19:30.

Jesus did for us what we could never have done for

ourselves. Jesus came to fulfill all the law because sinful man could not keep it.

### **Why Then Was the Law Given?**

Perhaps you are asking the question, "If the law does not save us or help to save us, what is the purpose of the law?" The only place to find the right answer is in the Word of God. Notice:

*" . . . By the law is the knowledge of sin."* Rom. 3:20.

There it is, just as plain and clear as can be. It says, "*By the law is the knowledge of sin.*" It doesn't say, "By the law is the knowledge of God." It does not say, "By the law is the knowledge of grace." It does not say, "By the law is the knowledge of salvation." Rather, it says, "*By the law is the knowledge of sin.*"

The law, therefore, is a revealer of sin. Sin was in the world before the coming of the law (Rom. 5:13), but when the law came it drove sin out into the open.

The law is like a mirror. When we look in the mirror, we see the dirt on our face. The mirror cannot cleanse your face. It takes soap and water to do that. The same thing is true of the law. The law shows us that we are covered with the rottenness and filth of sin, but it cannot cleanse from sin. It takes the blood of Jesus Christ to do that.

Here is a verse that sums up the whole purpose of the law.

*"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."* Rom. 3:19.

Paul tells us here that the law was given to Israel to stop the mouth of every person who would teach salvation by

the law. The only nation who has ever had the law was Israel. See Romans 9:4, Nehemiah 9:13-14 and Exodus 20. The law was given to one nation to prove that no one could be saved by the law. God tried it out on the Jewish nation for 1,500 years and proved that not a single, solitary person on the face of the earth is able to keep the law.

Yet, there are great religious denominations that are built on the idea that man can live according to the law and keep the law. In spite of this, Jesus said to the Jews in John 7:19: “. . . *NONE OF YOU KEEPETH THE LAW . . .*” What Jesus said to that group of religious leaders at the Feast of Tabernacles is just as true today. No one really keeps the law.

Notice — the Scripture refers to the law as a mouth stopper, not a heart opener. The law of God is the best mouth stopper on earth. When a man reads the law, it will immediately shut his mouth.

The law says: “*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*” James 2:8. How many of you would say that you love your neighbor like you love yourself? When you buy a new suit for yourself, do you buy a new suit for your neighbor? When you buy a new hat for yourself, do you buy a new hat for your neighbor? When you bake a cake for yourself, do you bake a cake for your neighbor? Do you see how the law tells you to shut your mouth — that you are not nearly as good as you think you are. This is God’s mouth stopper.

Remember the rich young ruler who came to Jesus inquiring about eternal life? He had the popular idea that somehow he could be saved by keeping the law. But notice how quickly the law stopped his mouth. When he told Jesus that he had kept all the law from his youth up, he seemed to overlook what the law required. It demanded that he love the Lord with all his heart, soul, strength and mind. So Christ put him to the acid test. He told him to go sell all he

had, give to the poor and come follow Him. And the young man broke under the test because the Scripture says, "*When the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.*" Matt. 19:22. You see how the law stopped his mouth. It showed him where his treasure was. It showed him that he loved his gold more than his God. He came to Jesus confident; he went away condemned. He came speaking; but he went away silent. The law had done its work. It proved itself to be God's mouth stopper.

### **The End of The Law**

How long was the law to continue? This question is very plainly answered in God's Word. Notice:

*"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, TILL THE SEED SHOULD COME to whom the promise was made."* Gal. 3:19.

Now we know that the law was given to the nation of Israel. The Jews asked for it and they got it. Ex. 19:8. For 2,000 years God had been dealing with the human race on a grace basis. Adam lived under grace. Noah lived under grace. Abraham lived under grace. But like so many people today, the Jews preferred law to grace so God let them have it.

Notice that Paul says the law was "*added because of transgressions TILL the seed should come to whom the promise was made.*" Now Paul makes it crystal clear that the law had an end just as it had a beginning. "*IT WAS ADDED . . . TILL THE SEED SHOULD COME.*" When the seed came (the Lord Jesus Christ), the law came to an end.

*"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* Rom. 10:4.

## What The Law Cannot Do, Jesus Christ Does

In Romans 8:3 we have this enlightening truth. Please notice:

*“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Rom. 8:3.*

Now let us notice that God’s saving grace goes further than the law ever did or ever could! Here it is expressly said that there were some things *“the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh.”* What were some of the things the law could not do?

FIRST, THE LAW COULD NOT GIVE LIFE. Galatians 3:21 says:

*“If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”*

The law could not give life because it could not be kept. If you think you can keep the law, then you are better than the Jews who tried to keep it for 1,500 years and failed. They broke every law God ever gave them. In fact, Peter said at the church council at Jerusalem when discussing the Christian’s relation to the law: *“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which NEITHER OUR FATHERS NOR WE WERE ABLE TO BEAR (keep)?”* Acts 15:10.

No, the law cannot give life, but Jesus came to give us His life. He said, *“I am come that you might have life, and have it more abundantly.”* John 10:10.

SECONDLY, THE LAW COULD NOT GIVE RIGHTEOUSNESS. It could not give righteousness for the same reason it could not give life — because it could not be kept. And so Paul says:

*“If righteousness comes by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”* Gal. 2:21.

If keeping the law could make us righteous before God, then the death of the Cross was the most criminal blunder ever committed, the most useless shedding of blood God ever permitted.

No, the law could not give righteousness, but what the law could not do, Christ did. Christ is the righteousness of God; and when we are saved, His righteousness is imputed to us so that God no longer sees us as the sinners we are by nature — but He sees us through the righteousness of His Son. Rom. 3:21.

THIRDLY, THE LAW COULD NOT GRANT REMISSION OF SINS. Under the law the only blood ever shed was that of animals. But listen to what Paul says regarding such sacrifices: *“For it is NOT POSSIBLE that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”* Heb. 10:4. In verse 11 we have this further statement, *“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, WHICH CAN NEVER take away sins.”*

Perhaps you are asking the question, “Are all those who died under the law of Moses lost?” No, because when Jesus shed His blood on the cross, it reached in both directions. It reached back to the creation of man and forward to the last man who shall ever be saved within this world. See Hebrews 9:15, Galatians 4:4-5 and Romans 3:25.

## Grace Is Our Teacher

Since we are not under law, how does God expect us to live today? The Word of God is very clear on this point. Notice:

*“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Gal. 5:16.*

*“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Rom. 8:14.*

According to the New Testament, born again believers are to be led by the Holy Spirit. We are not to be led by the law or by the preacher in the pulpit or by a denominational machine. We now have the Spirit of God indwelling us to convict us of things that are wrong and to comfort us when we are walking in the steps of our Lord and Master.

In Romans 8:2 we are told that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. We are now under a higher law, a better law, a greater law — the law of the Spirit.

When we believe on Christ, we receive a new teacher — one who not only can teach us what to do, but one who can give us the strength to do it as well. Listen to these Scriptures:

*“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, TEACHING US that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” Titus 2:11-12.*

Here we are told very plainly that God’s grace is now our teacher. It says, *“For the grace of God that brings salvation*

*teaches us.*” It doesn’t say, “The law of Moses that brings salvation teaches us.” No! No! It says, “*THE GRACE OF GOD . . . TEACHES US.*”

The law is not the rule of life for the Christian. The law served until the coming of Christ. When Christ came and was made a curse for us, He redeemed us from the law; so today we have a new teacher — GRACE!

It is the grace of God that teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. It is the grace of God that teaches us to live soberly and righteously and godly. The law was Israel’s school master, but “Grace” has become our teacher. Oh, how I praise God for that day when He delivered me from the thunderings of the law and put me under His marvelous, matchless grace.

Beloved, if you want to be saved, do not trust in yourself to keep the law. The Lord Jesus Christ has already kept it to the letter and fulfilled it for you. He cried out at Calvary, “*IT IS FINISHED!*” — and the work of redemption was finished. There is absolutely nothing that you can do, except acknowledge your lost condition and ask Him to save you. In His marvelous grace He will save you, for He has said, “*Whosoever will may come.*” Won’t you come to Him right now?

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