

Your Choice .. Law or Grace

Text : **Exodus 19: 1-13**



INTRODUCTION :

A. Few Christians have put forth the effort to study the Law of Moses for themselves.

1. Most Christian's know little more than it contains the 10 commandments.
2. A few can even name all 10 commands.
3. Consequently, there are many misconceptions about the Law of Moses.

B. Any misconception (or falsehood) will be accepted if repeated often enough.

1. Politicians use this technique in every campaign.
 - a. When a false accusation is reported as truth, many believe it.
 - b. When a correction or retraction is published, many do not believe the retraction.
 - c. If a politician admits he lied, many will endorse him because he "came clean."
2. Well-meaning Christians have come to believe and to teach many incorrect things about the Law of Moses.
 - a. These misconceptions are perpetuated by those who have been improperly taught.
 - b. Some of the errors are of no significant consequence, but others affect men's souls.

C. Certain basic facts are necessary to be able to understand the Law of Moses.

1. One must eliminate the misconceptions before he can come to a true understanding of the Law of Moses / The Ten Commandments. (**prelude to upcoming lessons**)
2. Eliminating the misconceptions will enable one to better understand God.

TRANSITION :

- By this lesson we wish to :
- 1) **correct some common misconceptions**
 - 2) **see the true purpose for the Law**
 - 3) **compare the system of law to the system of grace.**

I. Some common misconceptions about the Law given by God through Moses.

A. **1st Error :** “When God gave the His Law to Moses, it was for the whole world.”

1. This is clearly not true. Notice to whom the Law was spoken :

a. **Read ... Exodus 19: 1-6**

b. Only Israel was assembled at the foot of the mountain.

* It is interesting that God called them out “to myself.” Vs. 4

2. Notice God’s instructions to Moses :

a. He was to speak His (God’s) words to “**The sons of Israel.**” Vs. 6

b. The Law constituted a covenant between God and the nation of Israel. Vs. 5

3. The promises of the Law were only for Israel.

a. **Read ... Deut. 5: 27-33 (Compare : Deut. 28:1-14)**

b. The promises were relevant to staying in the Promised Land and prospering.

4. The gentiles were specifically **EXCLUDED** from the Law.

a. The covenant was made **ONLY** with Israel.

Read ... Heb. 8: 6-13

b. **Eph. 2: 11- Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands— 12- remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.**

5. **THEREFORE :** Those who seek to bind the Law today, do not understand that it was never given to anyone other than the Jews.

Note : **The nation of Israel which exists today is**

NOT the same nation that existed then.

B. **2nd Error :** “The Law of Moses was given as a plan of salvation for the Jews.”

(i.e., **It was never given to save people from their sins.**)

1. Have you ever heard anyone say they expect to go to Heaven because they keep the Ten Commandments? Such is common.
2. God never promised Heaven to those who kept the Law of Moses (any law) :

Read ... Deut. 28: 1-8 (& ff)

3. God did not warn that violation would result in Hell :

Read ... Deut. 28: 15-20 (& ff)

4. The Law and the nation of Israel were shadows of Christ’s calling people out of sin.

Heb. 10: 1- For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

Compare : **Heb. 8:5** ... Sacrifices according to the Law were shadows.

C. **3rd Error :** “The Law of Moses was meant to last forever.”

1. The Law was given only to Israel so when the nation ended, it’s law ended.
2. God foretold of the day when His covenant with Israel would be replaced.

Jer. 31: 31- Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, **32-** not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. **33-** But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. **34-** They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” (Compare : **Heb. 10: 1-18**)

3. When Christ sacrificed Himself on the cross, He nailed the Law to the cross.

Col. 2: 13 - When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, **14-** having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (**completed God's covenant with Israel**)

II. Does this mean that the Law means nothing to us today? **Not at all.**

A. The law was and still is a tutor (*kjv = schoolmaster*) to lead us to Christ.

1. **Gal. 3: 23-** But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. **24-** Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. **25-** But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

- a. (*epitropos*) a guardian of minors ; one who has the care and tutelage of children,
- b. The Law teaches people what God expects from them. (**God's code of conduct.**)

2. There is one God.

- a. The God of the Old Testament is the same God we see in the New Testament.
- b. God never changes. (**infinite in all His attributes**)

Heb. 13: 8- Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

3. If God were to become the ruler of the United States, what law would He give ?

- a. What would be His attitude toward our “modern” society ?
- b. Would God give a different law to us than He gave to Israel ?
- c. He is the same God with the same values. (**Unchangeable ... Totally Consistent**)

4. The law was given by God so it gives us insight into the way **He** thinks.

- a. God hates sin and cannot be in fellowship or in contact with it. (**infinite holiness**)
- b. God wants our fellowship so much He would suffer death to get it. (**infinite love**)
- c. However, the justice of God requires that He punish sin. (**infinite justice**)

* **Man cannot relate to one who is infinite in all His attributes. We are inconsistent.**

B. The law makes people long for grace.

1. It makes man realize he has never been able to keep any law without some violation.
 - a. Jesus is the only one in history who ever kept law perfectly. (**ALL law.**)
 - b. We cannot even keep the laws we make for ourselves individually.

* **When man feels guilty, it means he could not obey his own law. ... conscience.**
2. Law is essential; w/o it there is anarchy, but even when we approve of it we violate it.
3. **Rom. 6: 23** ... The wages of sin is death.
 - a. That death is physical as well as spiritual.
 - b. Driving man out of the garden condemned him to physical death.

Gen. 3: 22- Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— **23-** therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.

- c. All through the O.T. the “tutor” (*schoolmaster*) demonstrated the result of law to be death and destruction ... alienation from God. (**consequence of violation**)
 - 1) The universal flood
 - 2) Sodom and Gamorrah
 - 3) Rebellious descendants of Jacob in the wilderness and in the Promised Land
 - 4) The modern world :

II Pet. 3:11- Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **12-** looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

C. Rational thinking God-believers longed for a way to have their sins removed.

1. Fearful pagans offered their children in sacrifice attempting to appease their gods.

2. The Jews tried to turn the law God gave their nation into a plan of salvation.
 - a. They offered vast herds of animals in an attempt to atone for their sins, but each year when the Day of Atonement arrived, they were reminded that guilt remained.
 - b. They understood “**without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.**” **Heb. 9: 20**
 - c. **BUT, “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.” Heb 10: 4**
3. Law could only condemn ... never save.
 - a. Law served to make man’s defects clear and readily apparent.
 - b. It clearly demonstrated a need, but couldn’t supply a remedy for sin’s consequences.
 - c. The stronger one’s desire to comply, the greater his frustration at his failure.

D. When the Christ came He brought a solution and relief from frustration, GRACE.

*** HOWEVER ..One cannot appreciate the solution until he knows the problem.
He cannot appreciate grace until he understands law.**

III. Grace is the exact opposite to law .. the solution to both God’s and man’s problems.

A. Grace provides the solution to God’s problem.

1. God wants fellowship with man, **but** can’t defile His holiness being in contact with sin.
2. God creates man holy, but man is incapable of maintaining his purity. **Ezek. 28:15**
3. Once defiled, man has no way to return himself to purity, i.e., to holiness.

B. Grace provides a solution to man’s problem.

1. Man wants to be able to approach God, **but** he cannot consistently keep God’s law.
2. The first time man makes the wrong choice, he is cut off from God. **Rom. 6: 23**
3. Even if a man repents of his bad choice, he remains defiled, thus, separated from God.

C. SOLUTION : Grace provides a way for God to impute His righteousness to man.

1. **Eph. 2: 8-9**
2. **Rom. 4: 4** - Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. **5** - But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, **6** - just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:
3. **Rom. 5: 1** - having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our L. J. C.

D. Therefore, man has a choice. He may be judged by law or by grace. (not both)

1. **Read ... Rom. 2: 12-16** ... All men from Adam to you have lived under law.
2. **Read ... Rom. 8: 1-4** ... The only way one can get out of the law system is by faith.

CONCLUSION :

A. God so strongly desires fellowship with man that he was willing to suffer death to make that fellowship possible.

1. No man will ever stop sinning.
 - a. To sin is within man's nature.
 - b. Even when the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. **Rom. 7: 14f**
2. **Read ... Gal. 3: 23-27**
 - a. We can choose to have our sins covered, concealed by Jesus Christ.
 - b. Clothing covers. **The body is not seen .. just the clothing.**
3. When God looks at a Christian, He does not see the sinful creature. (**clothed**)
 - a. **HE SEES JESUS.** (**To be clothed with Jesus is to be clothed in His righteousness.**)
 - b. That is the meaning of "propitiation." **I John 4: 10** - In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

B. When one's sins are covered over by Christ, judgment is a happy day.

1. **I Cor. 1: 7b** - awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, **8-** who will also confirm you to the end, **blameless** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. **Col. 1: 21** - And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds, **22-** yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— **23-** if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard,
3. **Jude 24** - Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory **blameless with great joy,**

C. No one may choose if or when he will stand before God, but while yet alive, each can choose the standard by which he will be judged .. his own merits, or Jesus'.

LAW - or - GRACE

INVITATION :