

THE LAW, THE GOSPEL AND THE SABBATH

Home Bible Study Series

"Be thou faithful and I will give thee a
crown of life" (Revelation 2:10)



Thirteen Lessons for Home Study

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

Although these lessons were prepared primarily for use with The Bible Sabbath Association "Echoes From Eden" radio ministry conducted by the author a few years back, they have proven a blessing to many hundreds of our friends to whom the radio broadcasts were not available. In fact we know of no comparable series on the law, the gospel and the Sabbath, which is more popular and plainly written in easy-to-understand language for home Bible study than this thirteen lesson book. It is our sincere desire that the Creator will use this humble work to help honest people find the truth about the Ten Commandments and the gospel of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is dedicated to the task of calling men and women back to full obedience to God's perfect law, the Ten Commandments, including the true Christian Sabbath.

It should be noted that one of the purposes of the General Council of the Churches of God-7th day is to promote the knowledge and observance of the Ten Commandments, the Fourth Commandment in particular. However, statements in this book about other doctrinal matters do not necessarily represent the teachings of the Council, its Board, or Members.

THE LAW, THE GOSPEL AND THE SABBATH

HOME BIBLE STUDY SERIES

Lesson No. 1. The Gospel and Ten Commandments Work Together Why do you teach Christians to obey the *Ten Commandments*? Why not teach Christ instead of the Law?

Answer: These are important questions and we are happy to give them first place in our message at this time.

In the first place we teach Christians to obey the Ten Commandments because the *Gospel of Jesus Christ* itself enforces obedience to *all* the Ten Commandments. In the second place the law that defines sin in *all* the *New Testament* Scriptures is the Ten Commandments. In the third place we cannot teach Christ without teaching *obedience* to God's Law.

Now let us consider the Bible proof for these statements. We quote Paul: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Timothy 1:15). An angel of God said, "He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Again we quote Paul, "Christ died for our sins . . ." (1 Corinthians 15:1-3), ". . . that He [Jesus] by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). "The wages of sin is death . . ." (Romans 6:23). (Italics are sometimes used.) ". . . sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Note that *sin* is the *transgression of the law* that defines sin. Sin is the transgression of God's law. We shall find out shortly what law that is, but first let us look into the *Gospel of Jesus Christ*.

Why did Jesus come to earth? It was to die for our sins. Sin is the transgression of the law. Therefore we see according to the Gospel that Jesus died for our transgression of God's law. No one can deny that fact. The *Ten Commandments* before, and at the time of Christ's death, was the law that defined sin. All Bible Students must admit that fact. Therefore, according to these facts, Jesus died for our transgression of the Ten Commandments—our disobeying God's holy law.

We find, according to Matthew 1:21, that *He* came to save His people from their sins, or transgressions of God's Law. That Law being the *Ten Commandments*, as well as all the other of God's Words of Life, we must conclude that in saving us from our transgressions Jesus does require obedience to the Law that we have been transgressing. He did not come to take away the law that defined sin, but He was manifested to take away our sins (1 John 3:5). He came to take away our transgressions of the Law and not the Law that defined sin.

Sin, or transgression, disobedience of God's Law, brought death into the world (Romans 5:12). In the New Testament the wages of transgressing God's Law has not changed. It is death (Romans 6:23). Christ is our Saviour from sin. Through faith in Christ and obedience to the terms of the Gospel

we are forgiven our sins and at the time *made free from sin, dead to sin*, and become *servants of righteousness* (Romans 6:1,2,6,17,18). When *made free from sin by the power of Christ*, the righteousness of God's *Law is fulfilled in all true children of God*. I quote Romans 8:4, "That the righteousness of the *Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*"

What *law* is Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, talking about in the text above? Let us look into the context in Romans chapter 7 and Paul will answer that question for us. From verse 7 I quote, "What shall we say then? Is the *Law sin, God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet.*" From 3:20 I quote, ". . . for by the *Law is the knowledge of sin.*" Put these two statements together and we see that Paul is definitely teaching that *by the law is the knowledge of sin* in this age. He said that he would not have known *sin but by the Law*. He explains further in Romans 7:8, "For without the *law sin was dead.*" Also, in Romans 4:15 ". . . for where no *law is there is no transgression.*"

In other words Paul is saying that without the Law there is no sin. Sin is the transgression of the law, and if God's Law is abolished then there is no sin. If there is no sin the preaching of the Gospel is in vain.

The fact that *all have sinned* (Romans 3:23) is *proof* in itself that God *does have a law that men are transgressing*. Paul, in Romans 7:7, makes it very plain that he would not have *known sin but by the Law*. He also *identified that Law by quoting from the Law*. The *Law had said, "Thou shalt not covet."* Was this a quotation from a *new law* given to Christians? No, it is a quotation from the Ten Commandments. See Exodus 20:1-17. The *Tenth Commandment* says, "Thou shalt not covet." What *Law* gave Paul and the people of that time a *knowledge of sin*? It was the Ten Commandments according to Paul's own words.

Paul continues about this same *Law* in Romans 7:12, "Wherefore the *law is holy, and the Commandment holy, and just and good.*" Please note that the *Law is holy, not was holy*. It is *just and good* in this dispensation of *Grace*. Paul himself was a Christian and he was writing to Christians in this chapter. Please keep that fact in mind. If the Ten Commandments were *holy, just and good* for Christians in Paul's day, *why don't we teach them today?* Surely people need to be shown their sins so that they will repent and turn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

No wonder people are confused. Even many professing Christians do not know what sin is. Now we look at Romans 7:13,14, "For *we know that the law is spiritual . . .*" He is still speaking of the *same Law*. It is *spiritual and only those who are led by the Holy Spirit can fulfill its requirements* (Romans 8:4). If we have been cleansed from sin and are led by the Holy Spirit, the righteousness of God's *holy, just and good Law* will be *fulfilled in us*. This same *Law* is called "the *Law of God*" in Romans 7:22. Remember, Paul is

speaking of the Ten Commandments. That is the *Law* that defines sin, that is the *Law* that is holy and *must be fulfilled in the lives of all true Christians*.

Perhaps you can see by now why we *must teach God's Laws* when we preach the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel calls them to *repent* of their sins and then accept Jesus as their Saviour *from* sin. How can men repent of their sins when they do not know what sin is? By the *Law* is the knowledge of sin. To know sin they must be taught God's *Law*.

Sin is the *cause of all man's troubles* today. God's *Law* is a *perfect Law*. Read Psalm 19:1-7. The Holy Spirit inspired David to write, "The *law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul . . .*" When God says a law is perfect, it is perfect and can't be made better even by His own Son. James calls it the *perfect law of liberty* in James 1:23-25. It is God's *perfect rule of conduct for all mankind*. If *all* would obey this *perfect law from the heart* as Jesus taught it, there would be perfect *peace* and harmony. The *life of Jesus Christ Himself*, while on this earth, is positive proof of this fact. He kept His Father's *Law* without sin (John 5:10). And Peter said (of Jesus), ". . . leaving us an example, that we should *follow His steps: Who did no sin . . .*" (1 Peter 2:21,22). John says that *we Christians* ought, "also to *walk, even as He walked*" (1 John 2:6). If *all* who claim to be Christians really *followed the example of Jesus in full obedience to the Ten Commandments*, what a different picture we would see today!

Jesus preached the Gospel, the *same Gospel* that we are commanded to *preach today* (Mark 1:14,15; Matthew 24:14; 28:19,20). The Sermon on the Mount is part of His Gospel. In that sermon Jesus taught full obedience to the Ten Commandments. He commanded us to *do and teach all* of them (Matthew 5:19). He did *not* teach a substitute *law*, but He magnified His Father's *Law* (Isaiah 42:21). Examples: Matthew 5:21,22. The Sixth Commandment is magnified to include *hatred*. John says, "He that *hateth* his brother is a *murderer*" (1 John 3:15). We must now *obey from the heart*. If we hate we are guilty of violating the Sixth Precept of God's holy *Law*. In Matthew 5:27,28, Jesus magnified the Seventh Commandment. Lust in the heart is *now* a violation of this Precept that forbids adultery. The adulteress in John chapter 8 was told to go and *sin no more*. Jesus came to save us from sin, and to write God's *Law* in our *hearts*, by the *power of the Holy Spirit* (Matthew 1:21; 2 Corinthians 3:2,3). Our hearts are cleansed by *faith* and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Lust and hatred are thus removed, and the *love of God* moves us to *full and willing obedience* to God's holy *Law*, the *Ten Commandments*. This is part of the Gospel of the New Testament. We cannot preach the Gospel without teaching *obedience to the Ten Commandments*. Sin is the *transgression of the Ten Commandments* and the Gospel is the *remedy*.

Paul taught that both *Jews and Gentiles* are *all under sin* (Romans 3:9). They are all condemned by one and the same *Law* (verses 19 and 20). The

idea that Christ gave a new and different Law to define sin for the Gentiles in this Gospel Age has led to a lot of serious misunderstanding. You can search the New Testament Scriptures from beginning to end and you will not find any such new Law given.

Let us look into the teachings of Christ further, to see what He did teach relative to the Ten Commandments. Turn back to Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Let us read Matthew 5:17-22. Verse 17 reads, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Please note that Jesus plainly said that we are not to think even that He came to destroy the Law or the prophets. Then He says, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." This is positive. He did not come to destroy, or abolish, the Law of His Father. Verse 18 says, ". . . til heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled." Jesus goes so far as to say that not a jot (that is the smallest letter in the Hebrew), would pass from the Law until all be fulfilled. These words "all be fulfilled" referred to more than the Law, because Jesus spoke of both the Law and the prophets in verse 17. The things to be fulfilled, in verse 18, would refer to all that is written in the Prophetic Writings of the so-called Old Testament. These are prophecies in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Micah, and Zechariah, as well as in other writings of the Old Scriptures, that are yet to be fulfilled. This is a well-known fact. This being true, we must conclude that not one letter, or jot, has passed from God's Law, and won't until all is fulfilled in the writings of those holy prophets. The Law referred to here is the Ten Commandments, as the context clearly shows. Jesus was teaching that there would be no change at all in that perfect Law until God's great plan is fulfilled as recorded by His holy prophets.

This fact is further proven by reading verse 19 where Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven." Notice the first word of that verse, "Whosoever." That very word shows that all peoples are included in the things He is about to say. That "whosoever" includes you and me, my dear friends. Now place the second word with it, "Whosoever therefore." This word "therefore" means "for a reason previously stated." That reason is found in verse 18 where Jesus said that not a letter would pass from God's Law. Therefore, or because not one letter is to pass from God's Law, whosoever breaks one of these Commandments shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but whosoever shall do and teach them shall be called great. Here is a command plain and simple from the Lord Jesus to both do and teach the whole Law of God. James says that if we break one precept we are guilty of all (James 2:10-12). Jesus adds to that by stating that our righteousness must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees or we will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven

(Matthew 5:20). The Pharisees kept God's Law in the letter but we must do better than that. Let Jesus tell us how, ". . . it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the Judgment: *But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment . . .*" (Matthew 5:21,22). Hatred is now counted as murder (1 John 3:15). Does this sound like Jesus was *abolishing* God's Law? No, indeed. Instead of abolishing the Commandment against murder Jesus *magnified* that Precept to take in hatred in the heart. The same is true of the Commandment against Adultery. That Precept, instead of being abolished, now *condemns* the lust of the heart: "Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:27,28). Jesus taught *obedience* to God's Laws from the *heart*. Please read this entire chapter (Matthew 5) and notice the places where Jesus uses the words, "But I say unto you." In every place He emphasizes love and obedience to God's Law from the heart, and not once does He set aside one precept of God's Ten Commandment Law. His instructions on divorce and remarriage have to do with obedience to the Seventh Commandment (Matthew 19:1-10).

Now turn with me to Matthew 19:16-23. A rich young man asked Jesus, ". . . Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Jesus' answer was, "If thou wilt enter into life *keep the Commandments.*" The young man wanted to know, "Which?", and Jesus quoted from the Ten Commandments to identify the Law He must keep. This young man was a Jew and knew very well what Jesus quoted from. Please note that Jesus had been asked definitely, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life"? Eternal life is a New Testament promise, only possible through Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:15; Romans 6:23). The conditions that Jesus gave were New Testament conditions. "Keep the Commandments" is just as much a command to us today as it was to that young man. That young man thought he was keeping God's Laws, but found out differently when Jesus told him to sell what he had and to follow Him.

Why did Jesus command this young man to keep the Commandments? Because sin is the transgression of the Law. Why are we, too, as Christians to keep the Law after we receive forgiveness of sins through Christ Jesus? Answer: the Gospel makes us *free* from sin—we become *dead* to sin—*free* from sin and servants of righteousness (Romans 6:16,17,18). God *forbids* us to continue in sin (Romans 6:1,2).

I know that many questions have come to the minds of you dear friends, and you will want a Bible answer. some of you will want to ask, "What about John 1:17 and Colossians 2:14-17? Didn't Jesus abolish the law of Moses? If so, how do you harmonize this with the lesson just given?" That will be our question for Lesson No. 3.

God's holy Law, the Ten Commandments, is in the very center of the

Gospel of the Grace of God that Paul and the other New Testament preachers taught (Acts 20:24). He is the one who wrote, "By the Law is the knowledge of sin" for both Jews and Gentiles in this Gospel Age (Romans 3:9,19,20). He also identified that Law as the Ten Commandments (Romans 7:7-13). "Without the Law, Sin was dead" (verse 8, Romans 4:13; 1 John 3:4).

Repentance is the first step of faith required in the Gospel throughout the New Testament Record. Jesus taught it (Mark 1:14,15; Luke 13:3; 24:47); Peter taught it on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37,38); and Paul taught it "Repentance toward God **and faith toward** our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). God now commands all men "everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30,31). Repentance and faith in Christ are required before baptism. When Paul and Silas preached the Gospel to the jailer at Philippi, did they neglect to require repentance with faith in Christ (Acts 16:30,34)?

Repentance of our sins means not only to be sorry for them and ask forgiveness but also to turn away from all our sins, or transgressions, of God's Law and become obedient (Ezekiel 33:14,15,16; 18:30-32). The Gospel of Grace requires that we become dead to sin: "that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:1-10). We must deny all ungodliness and worldly lust and live righteous, godly lives in this world (Titus 2:11-14). The Gospel has no way of showing men their sins except by the Law. When men repent, they quit transgressing the Ten Commandment Law of God. They become obedient to it in true repentance and that same Gospel commands them to remain dead to sin—living obedient thereafter (Phil. 2:12-16). Grace saves from sin, not in sin, and reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, but sin reigns unto death (Matthew 1:21; Romans 5:21).

In repentance we die to a life of transgressions of the Law and in baptism by faith that past life of sins are forever buried with Christ (Romans 6:1-6; Colossians 2:11-13). This should be very plain to you, my dear friends, that in repentance and in baptism, the Gospel of Grace teaches that we must completely crucify and bury our life of transgressions and then live obedient to God's holy Law (Revelation 22:14).

Jesus, by the grace of God, died for our transgressions of that holy Law according to the Gospel (Hebrews 2:9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5). He was manifested to take away our sins (1 John 3:4,5-8). When we believe the Gospel and obey the terms, we are made free from sin by the power of the Gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16; 6:17). If free from sin, we obey God's Law. This is how the Gospel enforces obedience to this holy Law.

HOME BIBLE STUDY SERIES

Lesson No. 2. God's Perfect Law of Liberty for All Mankind

Our questions are 1. Why do you speak of the Ten Commandments as a perfect Law for all men? 2. Do you have Bible proof for that statement? 3. Do you really believe that God's Law is perfect and that man's disobedience to that Law is the cause of our troubles on earth today?

ANSWER NO. 1: We believe that the Ten Commandments is a perfect Law for all mankind because it condemns sin for both Jews and Gentiles and the Lord God calls it a perfect Law.

Answer No. 2: We have abundant proof that the Ten Commandments is a perfect Law and that it is as good for the Gentiles as it is for the Jews. There is Bible proof which we will give in this lesson.

Answer No. 3: I do believe that the Ten Commandments is a perfect set of laws to regulate man's conduct and that our troubles in this old world come as a result of man's wholesale disobedience of that perfect Law as taught by Jesus Christ. It follows, therefore, that the cure for our world-wide national, social and economic ills is a return to whole-hearted obedience to that perfect Law. Sin is destructive. "Sin is the transgression of the Law" (1 John 3:4). By the Law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). The Ten Commandments were given to give a knowledge of sin. Paul reveals that fact in Romans 7:7.

The Law of God is not sin, but it gives a knowledge of sin, because sin is the transgression of that Law. Every disobedience is sin and condemned by the Law. This same Law, Paul says, is "holy" and it is just and good (Romans 7:12). By it sin becomes exceeding sinful (verse 13).

John says, "All unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17). There is no unrighteousness but which in some way transgresses this perfect Law of God.

God gives a beautiful word picture of how perfect God's Law is in Psalm 19:1-7. David uses six verses to describe the glories of the heavens and how they declare the glory of God in that everything in the heavens is orderly, regulated by God's law of nature, for those heavenly bodies all stay in their places as God ordained. There is a time and a place for each and all in the heavens. David gives a vivid picture in those first six verses. "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." In short, David is saying in these seven verses, that God has a perfect law in the heavens to regulate the heavenly bodies and that He has just as perfect a Law to regulate man's conduct here on this earth. That is only reasonable, my dear friends. If God gave a perfect law to keep the heavenly bodies in order, He most certainly did not neglect to

give man a perfect Law to regulate our conduct so that we can have peace and harmony here on this earth.

The heavenly bodies have no power of choice since they are inanimate, but we human beings *do* have the power of choice. We can either choose to obey or to disobey the Law of God. To obey means life, but to disobey means death (Deuteronomy 30:15,19).

Father Adam disobeyed God, and death entered this world because of sin (Romans 5:12; Genesis 3). Sin not only brings eternal death, but it also places man out of harmony with his Creator and brings *discord and trouble among men*, because peace and harmony among men can only be had by *obedience to God's perfect Law* of conduct.

James calls the Ten Commandments (James 2:10-12), "*the perfect Law of Liberty*" (James 1:23-25). If all men would *obey from the heart* this perfect Law, *all* would have liberty—all would be secure—there would be *peace* on earth.

God's Law hangs upon two Great Commandments of Love. This was *true* in the so-called Old Testament (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18). It is *also true* in the Gospel Age (see Matthew 22:36-40). These two Great Commandments are to love God with all our heart and to love our neighbor as ourselves, and on *these two Commandments hang all the Law* and the prophets. Paul says that love works no ill to his neighbor, "therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law" (Romans 13:8-10). Now, these two Great Commandments do not annul, or make void, God's Law, but love is the *fulfilling* of God's perfect Law.

One of the holy precepts in God's perfect Law says, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13). Jesus taught obedience to that Law from the heart (Matthew 5:20-23). John said, "Whosoever *hateth* his brother is a *murderer*" (1 John 3:15). From this we see that God's perfect Law now condemns hatred as sin. Before God, hatred is now the same as murder and condemned as sin, and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Here is an example of how God's Law is indeed a perfect Law to regulate the conduct of all men (Isaiah 42:21).

To obey the Sixth Commandment we must remove hatred in all of its forms from our minds. Suppose that all hatred were removed from all peoples of the earth today. What would be the results among the nations, in the churches and in the homes? Take all national, political, religious and racial hatred and prejudice out of men's hearts and then remove grudges from each person and there would be *perfect harmony in so many, many places today*. Much of earth's sorrow would be removed for the very cause of it would be removed by a *return to full obedience* to that *one holy Precept of God's Law*. Hatred must be replaced by *love* in order to fully obey God's will. This love is given by God's Holy Spirit after we obey the Gospel of Christ (Romans 5:5; 6:17,18).

Is this Law against murder, including hatred, given only to the Jews, or is

it for the Gentiles too? You know that it is just as much a sin for the Gentile to hate as it is for the Jew. This Law is a just rule of conduct for *all* men.

The Ten Commandments were never intended to be just a national Law for Israel. They were God's Law for man *long before Moses' day*, and through Israel God planned to *teach the Gentile nations* to love the only true God and to *keep His perfect Law* which condemns sin in the Gentiles as well as the Jews (Romans 3:9,19,20).

First, I want to give proof that although the Ten Commandments were first written at Mt. Sinai in the days of Moses, those Ten Precepts had been God's Law from the days of the Garden of Eden, and condemned sin and sinners.

First, we will let Paul speak on this topic. "Where *no Law* is, there is *no transgression*" (Romans 4:15). "Sin is the transgression of the Law" (1 John 3:4). From this testimony from Paul and John, we must conclude that where there is sin, there must be a Law of God that is being transgressed, for where no Law is, there is no transgression. Sin entered this world in the days of Father Adam (Romans 5:12).

The flood was sent to destroy a wicked race in the days of Noah (Genesis 6:5-12). Man had corrupted his way. Noah was a just man and was saved with his family because he was righteous. This is proof that God had a Law at that time, else there would have been no sin to condemn."

In the days of Abraham God destroyed Sodom because their "sin" was very grievous (Genesis 18:20-23,19).

We are told that Abraham did keep God's Statutes, "Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My Commandments, My Statutes, and My Laws" (Genesis 26:5). Yes, God did have Statutes to regulate man's conduct in the days of Abraham, who was born 292 years after the flood and 58 years before Noah died. Noah lives 350 years after the flood and died. Peter says that Noah was a *preacher* of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). Where did Abraham and the people this side of the flood learn of God's Law? It was evidently from the teachings of Noah.

What Law did Abraham obey? That is a good question. Paul says, "We have before proved both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that they are *all under sin*" (Romans 3:9). "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 become guilty before God*" (verse 19). Here Paul makes it plain that the whole world is guilty before God, condemned by one and the same Law. That being true, Noah and Abraham obeyed the Ten Commandments, the same Law that *now* condemns sin.

We have further proof that Abraham obeyed the same perfect Law that Israel was commanded to keep in John 8:39-41. Jesus told certain Jews, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth . . . this did not

Abraham." No one can help seeing that the same Law must rule both Abraham and his children, according to these words of Jesus Christ, and all who accept Christ are now children of Abraham (Galatians 3:28,29). In order to be children of Abraham, we must "walk in the steps of that faith of our Father Abraham, which he had being yet *uncircumcised*" (Romans 4:11,12). If we are to walk in the steps of Father Abraham and we are told that Abraham obeyed God's Laws, it is evident that there is one perfect Law for all to obey.

God did not give Israel a new Law when He declared the Ten Commandments. All of those holy Precepts were recognized as God's Statutes to regulate man's conduct from the days of Adam in the Garden of Eden. A study of the Book of Genesis and the first 16 chapters of Exodus will reveal that fact.

Cain slew his brother, Abel—a plain case of murder. Was it wrong at that time? Did God condemn Cain for this? Was it a sin? It was a sin. God placed a curse upon Cain because of that very thing. Why did He rebuke Cain if there were no Law against taking human life? Read Genesis chapter 4. This shows that from the beginning the command of God, "Thou shalt not kill," was in force to safeguard human life. It has always been wrong to take human life.

Marriage is a divine institution from the beginning, and the Precept "Thou shalt not commit adultery" was given to safeguard this institution. This is recognized throughout the Book of Genesis. Read chapter 20. Another example is found in chapter 34. Jesus also (Matthew 19:1-10).

Lying was also recognized as sin (see Genesis 29:21-25).

Stealing was a sin in those days and so was idolatry. In fact, it has always been wrong to do anything forbidden in the Ten Commandments, which was God's Law even before it was written on tables of stone.

In Exodus chapter 16, before Israel had reached Mt. Sinai, God said, "Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my Law or no" (verse 4). God had a Law at the time He said these words, and this was before the Law was declared from Mt. Sinai. The same Law that was afterward declared to Israel from Sinai was the law that *already existed*, and God calls it, "My Law" in this sixteenth chapter.

God tested Israel to see if they would obey His Law and the test was made on *one Precept*. God rained bread from heaven each day for six days but on the seventh, which was and is the *Sabbath day*, there was none. Israel was told to gather twice as much on the sixth day because no manna would be rained on the Sabbath day. However, some did go out on the Sabbath to gather and they found none. God rebuked them saying, "How long refuse ye to keep my Commandments and my Laws?" (verse 28).

Here we have positive proof that God's Law was in force *before* it was

declared from Mt. Sinai, and that the seventh-day Sabbath was a part of it. Israel was tested on that very Precept.

Most people will agree that the other nine Precepts were probably in force before the Law was declared from Mt. Sinai, but there is strong opposition to the Sabbath Commandment. People have been taught that it was given to Israel only, and it was not for other peoples to keep before the covenant at Mt. Sinai, nor after the coming of Christ.

It is strange indeed that men will overlook the fact that the *Sabbath was sanctified*, or set apart, as a holy day in the beginning as a memorial of God as the Creator. Read Genesis 2:1-3. In Exodus 16:26, the seventh day is called, "the Sabbath." The very Fourth Commandment itself shows that the seventh-day was blessed and sanctified at the end of Creation Week (Exodus 20:8-11).

Jesus Himself said, "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27). Man needs the Sabbath as well as the other nine Precepts. It was made for man and one Precept in God's perfect Law of Liberty commands us to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. *The Sabbath stands or falls with the Ten Commandments*. If nine of those Precepts are binding upon men, then all ten are binding. If the Sabbath were abolished, so were the other nine Commandments in the same Law. God's Law is a perfect Law and man cannot cut one Precept out of that perfect Law. The Law could not be perfect with one Commandment gone.

The Oracles of God were committed into the hands of Israel (Romans 3:1,2) that they might be a light to the Gentiles and teach them God's Laws. Solomon understood this fact, and it is revealed in his prayer of dedication in 1 Kings chapter 8. Solomon dedicated the Temple at Jerusalem. He prayed for the strangers, or Gentiles, thus, "Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake; (For they shall hear of Thy great name . . .) when he shall come and pray toward this House; Hear Thou in Heaven . . .: that all people of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as do Thy people Israel . . ." (1 Kings 8:41-43).

This is plain. Solomon knew that in God's plan for Israel other nations—yes, all peoples of the earth—were to know the true God and serve Him as did Israel. Israel had one Law for Israelites and Gentiles that sojourned with them (Numbers 15:16).

In closing, I would like to say that Jesus is the perfect example of holy living. He kept His Father's Commandments (John 15:10). He did no sin (1 Peter 2:22), and He left us an example that we should follow His steps (1 Peter 2:21). Even Pilate said, "I find no fault in Him." Jesus kept God's perfect Law and His life and teachings give us the remedy for all of earth's sorrows. Read Matthew 19:1-9 where Jesus taught about marriage and the sin of adultery. Jesus taught that marriage is a sacred bond and that lust itself is sin

(Matthew 5:27,28). Oh how much sorrow and trouble would be removed if all men would obey that Precept, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," in the way that Jesus taught! I cite this as another example of how God's Law is a perfect Rule of Conduct for all men.

"Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not covet" are two Precepts in God's perfect Law that cover a lot of our business and social activities. While protecting the *right* to private property, selfishness is strictly condemned. Selfishness is at the bottom of most of man's troubles. Instead of coveting what our neighbor has, we are commanded to *love* him as ourselves. Paul says this love works no ill to his neighbor (Romans 13:8-10). Can we love our neighbors as ourselves and seek to profit from their misfortunes?

God doesn't have a double standard. The rich and the poor are measured by the *same perfect Law of Liberty*. If a man's business practices bring hardships upon his neighbors, while laying up wealth for himself, he is guilty of violating that perfect Law of God. *Every Precept of God's Law must be obeyed* if we are to have God's blessing here and hereafter.

When dealing with marriage, Jesus went beyond Moses' day—He went back to the original Law given at "the beginning" (Matthew 19:1-10). Marriage is a sacred institution given at Creation, and God's divine Laws concerning marriage and the home originated then. A perfect Law was given then to regulate man's conduct. The Sabbath originated at Creation too, and God's Law concerning the Sabbath was given then. Jesus referred to this when He said, "The Sabbath *was made for man . . .*" (Mark 2:27).

To Israel God only gave in written form His perfect Law that had been in force since the creation of man. It has *always* been wrong for man to violate any of these Ten Commandments: marriage, the home and the holy Sabbath day all originated at Creation—before sin entered this world. The Laws concerning *all* these sacred institutions were given man at that time. Man did not spend 2,500 years on earth without a divine Moral Code.

HOME BIBLE STUDY SERIES

Lesson No. 3. The Law of Moses—Abolished—Why?

Two Laws Given at Mt. Sinai

Does Paul contradict himself concerning the Law? If there were only one law referred to, then he most certainly contradicts himself. For proof let us compare some quotations from his letters to the churches. To the Romans he wrote, "Wherefore the *Law* is holy, and the Commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). To the Colossians: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross" (Colossians 2:14). Can the same Code of Law be "holy, just and good" and at the same time be "against us" and "contrary to us?" That is not possible. In Ephesians 2:15 we quote, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of *commandments* contained in *ordinances*;" And in Romans 3:31, "Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid: Yea, We establish the Law." Can the same Law be abolished by Christ and at the same time be established by *faith* in Christ? Other quotations could be given from the New Scriptures which show that there were at least *two laws* recognized back there—the one having fulfilled its purpose ended at the death of Christ, while the other one is still holy, just and good—to give a knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20). The one is a perfect Law by which we are to be *judged* (James 2:10-12), "the Law of Liberty" (James 1:23-25), while the other was called a "yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1-5). Write for our other literature on God's Law.

Paul does not contradict himself but recognized that there were two laws given at Mt. Sinai: the one "by Moses" and the other (the Perfect Law), the Ten Commandments by God. It is a dangerous error to teach that Jesus abolished the Ten Commandments. Many honest souls have been taught this error. The purpose of this booklet is to show that it was the "law of commandments, contained in ordinances" found in the book of the law of Moses, and *not* the Ten Commandments, that was abolished by Jesus.

Two Laws Given

First let us establish the fact from the Bible that there were *two* separate laws given at Mt. Sinai in the days of Moses. Let us deal with the Ten Commandments first. Note the following facts about the Ten Commandments.

1. God declared these Precepts with a great voice and all the assembly of *Israel* heard them. "And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words . . . And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even Ten

Commandments; . . ." (Deuteronomy 4:12,13). "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the Mount out of the midst of the fire . . . with a great voice: and He *added no more*" (Deuteronomy 5:22).

2. God wrote this Law on two tables of stone with His own finger. "And He wrote them upon *two tables of stone*" (Deuteronomy 4:13). "And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God . . ." (Deuteronomy 9:10). "And He wrote on the table, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments which the Lord spake unto you in the Mount . . ." (Deuteronomy 10:1-4; Exodus 31:18).

3. These Ten Precepts were a complete Law. God "added no more" (Deuteronomy 5:22), and God calls them, "A Law which I have written . . ." (Exodus 24:12).

4. Moses himself placed this Law, written on *two tables* of stone by the finger of God, "in the Ark" (Deuteronomy 10:1-5). "And I turned myself and came down from the Mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be as the Lord commanded me."

Now get the above facts in your mind before we consider the other law that was given at that time. *Two Laws were given at that time*. The facts concerning the Ten Commandments are (1) God declared and all Israel heard the voice declaring this Law. (2) God wrote this Law with His own finger on two tables of stone. (3) The Ten Precepts were a complete Law, for God "added no more" and calls them "a Law." (4) Moses broke the first tables, but God wrote the same words on the second tables of stone and Moses placed the second tables of stone in the ark as God commanded. There we have one Law, the Ten Commandments, placed in the Ark by the hand of Moses after being written by God Himself on two tables of stone.

The Added Law Given by Moses

Having established the fact that the Ten Commandments were given by God without a mediator—that is, He declared them with His own voice and wrote them with His own finger on tables of stone—we are ready to give Bible proof that "the law of Moses" is a separate and distinct law "added because of transgression" (or sin) of the Ten Commandments (Galatians 3:10,19). "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). What law was given by Moses? "Hilkiah the priest found a book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses" (2 Chronicles 34:14). This is positive proof that it was the "book of the law," and not the Ten Commandments, that was given by Moses. The "added" law in Galatians 3:19 is called "the book of the Law" in verse 10. This "book of the law" which was "given by Moses" is referred to throughout Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia. Remember it was this "book of the law," and not the Ten Commandments, that Paul was speaking of in his rebuke for going back to the "works of the law" (Galatians 3:2,10). This added law, called "the book of the law," was

called "a schoolmaster" (Galatians 3:25).

Did God give a law by the hand of Moses? Yes, He did. After telling us that God declared and wrote the Ten Commandments, Moses said, "And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it" (Deuteronomy 4:14). "On this side of Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying . . ." (Deuteronomy 1:5). Before this, Moses had told the people, "All the words of the Lord, and all the judgments" (Exodus 24:3). Moses, "Wrote all the words of the Lord," in "the book of the covenant" (verses 4 to 8). It was also called "the book of the law." "And Moses wrote this law" (Deuteronomy 31:9-11). "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bear the Ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee" (Deuteronomy 31:24-26). This "book of the law" containing "precepts, statutes, and laws" was "given by the hand of Moses" (Nehemiah 9:14), "The law was given by Moses" (John 1:17). The "book of the law of the Lord, given by Moses" (2 Chronicles 34:14).

Now let us sum up what we have found concerning this book of the law: (1) It was declared or spoken to Israel by Moses himself as mediator (Exodus 24:3, Deuteronomy 4:14, Galatians 3:19). (2) It was written by Moses himself in a book called "the book of the covenant" and "the book of the law" (Exodus 24:4-7, Deuteronomy 31:9,24-26). (3) At the command of Moses, the Levites placed the book of the law in the side of the ark of the covenant (Deuteronomy 31:25,26).

Let us sum up the facts that we have found thus far about these two laws in contrast: Israel was required to obey *two* laws, the Ten Commandments, "Do according to all that I [God] have commanded them," and the book of the law, "According to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them" (2 Kings 21:8). In short, they were to obey the Ten Commandment Law of God and the law given by their mediator Moses—*two laws*.

The Book of the Law—Added—Why?

Moses placed the two tables of stone containing the Ten Commandments inside the Ark of the covenant (Deuteronomy 10:1-5) and the Levites placed the book of the law in the side of the Ark of the covenant. Two tables of stone were to be kept within that Ark always, but the book of the law was to be read to "all Israel" every seventh year at the Feast of Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 31:10-13). Moses was mediator of the Old Covenant (Exodus 24:1-12) and Israel was commanded to keep the Ten Commandments *and the law of their mediator (the book of the law), but we*

are under the New Covenant, and we no longer have to obey the law of Moses, but we do have to obey the Law of our Mediator Jesus Christ. We obey two laws—the Commandments of God and testimony or teachings of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17).

The questions that need to be answered at this time are (1) What about the book of the law? (2) For what purpose was it given and why did it end at the Cross of Christ? The Bible gives the answers.

Paul asks the question, "Wherefore then serveth the law?" (Galatians 3:19). This is what we want to know too—what was the purpose of the law? Paul is speaking of "the book of the law" (verse 10). The purpose of the Ten Commandment Law is clearly given in the New Scriptures: "By the Law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20), "Sin is the transgression of the Law" (1 John 3:4). "I had not known sin, but by the Law: for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Romans 7:7,12). Now we want to know the purpose of this book of the law. Why was it given? Paul answers his own and our question in Galatians 3:19, "It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

Here we have the key to the whole matter in this one verse of Scripture. First note that this book of the law was *added because of transgression*. In Romans 4:15 Paul says, "Where no Law is, there is no transgression" and John says, "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Transgression of God's Law, the Ten Commandments, is sin and Paul says that *this book of the law was added because the people were transgressing God's Law, or because of sin*. Remember too that there could be no transgression if there were no Law. The fact that this law was added because of transgression is proof that God's Law was already in existence and this book of the law was added because of that transgression. This is another proof of two laws. Were they really transgressing the Ten Commandments? Yes. In Exodus chapter 16 they violated the Sabbath Law and were rebuked by God. They made and worshipped an idol while Moses was up on the Mountain with God (Ezekiel 20:24,25; Deuteronomy 9:12).

This added law was given, or added, "until the Seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Galatians 3:19). That Promised Seed of Abraham was Christ (verse 16). This book of the law was only to serve until Jesus came. Its purpose would be ended then. However, the Ten Commandments continue on because they are still needed to define sin.

That book of the law contained "precepts, statutes, and laws" (Nehemiah 9:14). One series or code of laws in that book of the law regulated the priesthood and the offering of animal sacrifices for sin and other offerings under the Old Covenant. Paul makes that clear by the following quotations: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of a necessity a change also of the law" (Hebrews 7:12). "Who needeth not daily, as those high

priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's" "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity" (Hebrews 10:11,12). "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" "But in those sacrifices there is remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offering for—*for sin*—, which are *offered* by the law." This *law* and *system* of animal sacrifices for sin could not take away sin but was a schoolmaster to bring us to *Christ* that we might be justified by faith. That law, with the sacrifices was a *type* and *shadow* of the *one* Sacrifice, or death, of Jesus that *does* take away sin. When Jesus died, that system of animal sacrifices had to *end*, or was *abolished*, at the Cross (Colossians 2:14; Ephesians 2:15).

This *abolished* code of law found in the book of the *Law* (Galatians 3:10,19) is clearly described by the Apostle Paul so that none need confuse it with the Ten Commandments. Note what he says about this law that was abolished: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us" (Colossians 2:14). (Could this refer to the Ten Commandments? Are they *contrary* to Christians?) "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Ephesians 2:15). ". . . the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service . . ." (Hebrews 9:1-10).

"Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices . . . Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and *carnal ordinances* [margin: rites or ceremonies] . . ." These rites and ceremonies were regulated by the law of Moses (Ephesians 2:15; Leviticus 4; Hebrews 9:1-10).

This book of the law also contained the governmental laws of Israel and the promises under the Old Covenant. They were the *administrative laws enforcing obedience* to the great *constitution* or basic Law, the *Ten Commandments*, under a *death penalty*. Murder, adultery, idolatry, dishonor of parents, Sabbath desecration and other willful violations were punished by death under two or more witnesses. Read Hebrews 10:28; Deuteronomy 17:1-17; 19:11,12; Leviticus 10:9,10. That is why Paul speaks of Moses' ministration as the "ministration of death, *written* and engraved in stones" (2 Corinthians 3:7-9). A copy of this book of the law containing these administrative laws was written on a *large altar* made of unhewn stones. Read Deuteronomy 27:1-8; Joshua 8:30-35. Moses' ministration came to an end and Christ's ministration takes its place. *The change of ministrations did not however change God's perfect Law, the Ten Commandments, which serves as the great constitutional law of both old and New Testaments.* Moses enforced obedience in the letter under a national

penalty law of death. Jesus enforces obedience from the heart under penalty of death, but execution is at the Judgment of God (Romans 6:23; 1 John 3:15; Revelation 20:12-14; 22:14).

For an example of the two ministrations in comparison, read John 8:1-11.

Now let us briefly contrast the two laws, the Ten Commandments and the book of the law, in the New Testament Scriptures.

Two Laws—Side by Side—2 Kings 21:8

Ten Commandments	Book of the Law
1. Declared by God (Deuteronomy 4:12,13)	1. Declared by Moses (Exodus 24:3; Deuteronomy 4:14; 1:5)
2. Written by God's own finger (Deuteronomy 9:10)	2. Written by Moses (Deuteronomy 31:9)
3. Written on two tables of stone (Deuteronomy 4:12,13)	3. Written in a book (Deuteronomy 31:24-26)
4. A complete Law—nothing added (Exodus 24:12, Deuteronomy 5:22)	4. A separate law (2 Kings 21:8; 2 Chronicles 34:14)
5. Placed in the Ark—by Moses—at God's command (Deuteronomy 10:1-5)	5. Placed in the side of the Ark—at Moses' command—by the Levites (Deuteronomy 31:24-26)
6. God Says: "A law . . . which I have written" (Exodus 24:12)	6. The law that my servant Moses commanded them" (2 Kings 21:8)
7. Defines sin (Romans 3:20)	7. Added because of sin or transgression (Galatians 3:19)
8. Holy—good (Romans 7:12)	8. Contrary to us (Colossians 2:14)
9. Must obey to have eternal life (Revelation 22:14; Matthew 19:16-23)	9. Could not give life because Christ is true sin offering (Galatians 3:10,21-26). Can't take away sin (Hebrews 10:1-4)
10. Perfect (James 1:23-25)	10. Made nothing perfect (Hebrews 7:19)
11. Established by faith through obedience (Romans 3:31; 8:4)	11. Abolished (Ephesians 2:15)
12. Spiritual (Romans 7:7,14; 8:4,14)	12. Carnal (Hebrews 9:9,10)
13. The Law of Liberty (James 2:10-12)	13. A yoke of bondage (Acts 15:1-11; Galatians 5:1-5)

HOME BIBLE STUDY SERIES

Lesson No. 4, Part 1. The Ten Commandments, the Great Constitution of the Bible Under Moses and Under Christ

A MISUNDERSTOOD TEXT MADE PLAIN!

TEXT: 2 Corinthians 3:3-7.

Our Bible study today is a very important one: the great Constitution of the Bible under two ministrations. Yes, God has one great *law* which holds the same place in the Bible that the U.S. national Constitution holds in our national, state, and local laws. The Constitution of the Bible is the Ten Commandments. It is the *one* God-given *rule* of conduct for *all* mankind in *all* ages, from Adam to Christ's Second Coming. Moses enforced obedience to the Ten Commandments and so did our Lord Jesus Christ. Before we enter into a Bible study on this topic, we have another question to which we will give a brief answer.

QUESTION: "How do you explain Luke 1:74,75? Does this teach that we should keep every day holy?"

ANSWER: Open your Bibles and read these verses for yourselves. They teach that we should serve God, "without fear, in holiness and righteousness . . . all the days of our life." This says nothing about keeping every day holy, but that we must serve God in *holiness every day*. There is a difference between living in holiness all of our days and in keeping every day holy. We are to serve Him without fear, in holiness, seven days in the week, but there is only *one day* in the week that is *holy*. This is "*the Seventh Day*." This day was *blessed* and *sanctified* by God Himself at the end of Creation Week (Genesis 2:1-3). It is now called the *Sabbath*. God calls the *Sabbath* "*My Holy Day*" (Isaiah 58:13). There is no other day of the week that was ever sanctified and made holy. God's *Law* says "Remember the *Sabbath* day to *keep it holy*" (Exodus 20:8-11). If we are to live "in holiness" every day we must remember that the *seventh* day is God's holy *Sabbath* day. If we fail to remember and keep this day, we thereby transgress the Law of God and *fail* in holy living on this day. The *Sabbath* day was made for *man* (Mark 2:27). It is *commanded* in God's Law (Exodus 20:8-11, James 2:10-12, 1 John 3:4).

God's Constitution

To introduce this topic we will answer a question that is often asked, "What is the *ministration* of death written in stones (2 Corinthians 3:7)? Is this the Ten Commandments?"

ANSWER: This ministration of death spoken of in 2 Corinthians 3:7 is *not* the Ten Commandments, but it is *Moses' ministration*, or *administrative laws*. There are *two ministrations* spoken of in this one

chapter. *Both ministrations enforce obedience to one great law* that can well be compared to the Constitution of the U.S.A. The Ten Commandments hold the same place in the Bible that the Constitution holds in our nation. This will become evident as we proceed with our study. Shall we open our Bibles to 2 Corinthians 3:7? "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away . . ." Since this verse deals with the ministration of death, we had better look at the definition of the word "ministration." Webster gives the following: "The act of performing service as a subordinate agent; or ministry." Now look again at 2 Corinthians 3:7. Whose service, as a subordinate agent, was Paul discussing in this verse? Whose ministration or ministry was so glorious that his face shown with the glory of God? Moses is the one that Paul is speaking of. His ministration ended; hence "the glory of his countenance" was done away. It was Moses' *ministration* that ended and Christ's ministration took its place. Read verses 6-11 please. The *two ministrations* are clearly contrasted in these verses. They are spoken of as the ministry of the letter and of the Spirit, the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of righteousness. The ministration of death under Moses was glorious, but the *ministration of the Spirit exceeds it in glory under Jesus Christ*.

Moses was given his glorious ministration while upon Mt. Sinai with the Lord (Exodus 21:1; Deuteronomy 4:12-14). After being up in the Mount with the Lord forty days, Moses came down with the two tables of stone in his hand, and his face shown so that the children of Israel were afraid to come nigh him (Exodus 34:28-35). This is what Paul referred to in 2 Corinthians 3:7. No, the *two tables of stone* did not have the ministration of death on them.

The Constitution of the Bible, the Ten Commandments

This was written upon those two tables of stone, "written with the finger of God" (Deuteronomy 10:1-5; 9:10). God declared this Law audibly to all Israel (Deuteronomy 4:12,13). God wrote this Law on the two tables of stone (v. 13; Exodus 24:12). Moses placed this Law in the Ark himself (Deuteronomy 10:1-5). This Law is a perfect Law in both Old and New Scriptures (Psalm 19:7,8; James 1:23-25; 2:10-12). By it is the knowledge of sin for both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 3:9,19,20). *Sin* is the transgression of the Ten Commandments (1 John 3:4; Romans 7:7,12,13).

The Ministration of Death Written in Stones (2 Corinthians 3:7)

What was this ministration of death written in stones if it were not the Ten Commandments? We have already shown that this ministration of death was *Moses' ministration*. The Ten Commandments are *not* Moses' ministration in any sense of the word. Neither are the Ten Commandments a ministration of death. There is nothing in the Ten Commandments that says

anything about enforcing obedience under penalty of death. This perfect Law of God simply states what is right and what is not right before God. This same thing is true of the Constitution of the U.S. The Constitution simply states certain fundamental principles for which we stand as a nation. We have also a lot of *administrative* laws, all of which are designed to *enforce obedience* to that *great code of law*, the *Constitution*. We change administrations but that does not change the Constitution. Each administration is sworn in to uphold the Constitution of the U.S.A.

Likewise with God's *Constitutional Law*, the *Ten Commandments*, Moses was given an *administrative code of laws* to *enforce* obedience to the Ten Commandments under *penalty of death* in the nation of Israel. Willful violators were punished by the death penalty with few exceptions (Hebrews 10:28; Deuteronomy 17:2-7). Moses' ministration, or administrative law, was written in a book. Let us note a few Bible facts about that *book of the law* "given by Moses" (2 Chronicles 34:14). In Deuteronomy 4:12,13, we read that God declared and wrote the Ten Commandments. In verse 14 Moses said, "And the Lord commanded me at that time to *teach you statutes and judgments*, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it." Some of those judgments that Moses was to teach Israel were found in Exodus chapter 21,22, and 23. Read them for yourself.

"Moses wrote all the words of the Lord" (Exodus 24:3,4). "And Moses wrote this law . . ." (Deuteronomy 31:9). "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing this *law* in a *book*, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites . . . saying, Take this *book of the law*, and put it in the *side of the ark* . . ." (verses 24-26). Paul speaks of this book of the law in Galatians 3:10 and in verse 19. Of this same law he says, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was *added* because of transgression . . ." But was this book of the law also *written on stones*? Yes, it was written upon an altar made of whole or unhewn stones. For proof, turn first to Deuteronomy 27:1-8. Read all eight verses. Here we have one of the commands of Moses that was written in the book of the law. The command in brief was that Israel, after crossing the Jordan, was to build an altar in Mt. Ebal. That altar was to be made of "whole stones." No iron tools were to be used in arranging these stones for the altar. They were unhewn stones. This was to be a *large altar* made of *great stones* and plastered over with plaster. What then? "And thou shalt write upon the *stones* all the words of this law very plainly" (verse 8). This is a plain command that needs no explanation. Did Israel obey this command? Yes, they did. Turn to Joshua 8:30-35 and read: "Then Joshua *built an altar unto* the Lord God of Israel in Mt. Ebal, as Moses . . . commanded . . . as it is *written in the book of the law of Moses*, an altar of *whole stones* . . . and he wrote there upon the stones a *copy of the law of Moses* . . ." Now look at 2 Corinthians 3:7 and read it carefully. Moses' ministration of death was written upon stones,

an altar of whole stones. The Ten Commandments were not written upon stones. They were written upon two tables of S-T-O-N-E, hewn stone.

Moses' Ministration of Death

Moses' law was an *administrative law enforcing obedience to the Ten Commandments in Israel*. This law also regulated the *Levitical Priesthood with all the sacrifices and rites* (Hebrews 9:1-12; 10:1-10). The sin of ignorance was atoned for by certain animal sacrifices. Read Leviticus 4.

Willful transgressions of the Ten Commandments brought the death penalty, with few exceptions. Moses' law was the *national administrative law in Israel*. Paul says, "He that despised Moses' law died *without mercy under two or three witnesses*" (Hebrews 10:28). Under Moses' ministration, the death penalty was executed without mercy under two or more witnesses. That is why it is called "the ministration of death." This will become clearer as we look at a few more texts of Scripture. The real purpose of the ministration of death is given in Deuteronomy 17:2-7: "If there be found among you . . . man or woman, that hath wrought *wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods . . . thou . . . shalt stone them with stones, till they die*. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he . . . be put to death . . . So thou shalt put evil away from among you." The nation of Israel was to be a righteous nation and the strict execution of those who willfully violated the Ten Commandments was the means by which they were to put evil away from themselves as a nation.

The great Constitutional Law that was being enforced by this ministration was the Ten Commandments. In Deuteronomy 17:2-7 the death penalty was required for violation of the *first Commandment* "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 13:1-10). Violation of the *Seventh Commandment* against adultery also carried the death penalty (Leviticus 20:10). Children who cursed father or mother in violation of the *Fifth Commandment*, were stoned to death (Leviticus 20:9). Jesus refers to that very Commandment in Mark 7:9,10: "For Moses said Honour thy father and thy mother; and whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death . . ." This should make it clear to all that Moses' law was merely an administrative law enforcing obedience to the *great law of God* that commands children to honor their parents (Exodus 20:12). The other Precepts in the Ten Commandments were enforced under the same penalty. Examples: Murder—Numbers 35:30,31; Sabbath desecration—Numbers 15:32-36.

Christ's Ministration of the Spirit

Christ's ministration of the Spirit **now enforces obedience to the same Constitutional law** the Ten Commandments. Moses' ministration was a ministration of the "letter," and Christ's ministration is a ministration of the

“Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:6). Both ministrations enforce obedience to the one perfect Law of God. The *change of ministrations did not change one word of the Ten Commandments* (Matthew 5:17-22). The ministration of death ended. We do not stone people to death for violations of the Law of God, but the eternal *penalty* has not changed. “The wages of sin is death . . .” (Romans 6:23). Under Christ’s ministration, the *Holy Spirit reproveth for sin* and the penalty is left until the Day of Judgment (Romans 12:19; Matthew 5:38-40; John 16:8-10).

Moses enforced obedience in the letter but Jesus enforces obedience from the *heart* to the same perfect Law of God, the Ten Commandments. For proof read the Sermon on the Mount *starting with The Fifth Precept in God’s Law*, and He also tells us that our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees. The Pharisees obeyed in the letter, but Christians must exceed that in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. In verses 21 and 22 we see the ministration of Moses in contrast to the ministration of Jesus in regards to one Precept of God’s Law, “Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13). Jesus refers to murder and its penalty under Moses’ ministration in verse 21 and then in verse 22 says, “But I say unto you, that whosoever is *angry* with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment” It is made plain in 1 John 3:15, “Whosoever *hateth* his brother is a *murderer*” This includes our enemies, too (Matthew 4:43,44). Under Moses a person had to commit the act to be a murderer, but under Christ a person with hatred in his heart is guilty of violating the Commandment that says, “Thou shalt not kill.”

We must now *obey from the heart* the Ten Commandments. Lust in the heart makes a person guilty of violating the Seventh Commandment (Matthew 5:27,28). Under Moses, God’s Law was written on tables of stone, but *under Christ’s ministration that same law is written in the heart by the Spirit*. (Jeremiah 31:31-33; 2 Corinthians 3:2,3; Hebrews 8:8-13). God’s love is shed abroad in our hearts by the *Holy Spirit* (Romans 5:5). That *love* moves us to obey God’s Law from the heart (1 John 5:3; Psalm 40:7,8). The great Constitutional Law of God remains unchanged under Christ, but we must now obey it from the heart. Jesus set aside Jewish tradition and taught how to *keep the Sabbath* under His ministration in Matthew 12:1-12. Read it please. He said “The Sabbath was made for *man*” (Mark 2:27,28). He kept it (Luke 4:16). His words are “the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Do you believe it? If so, do you *obey His Word*?

In conclusion, let us look at John 8:3-11. Here the Pharisees and scribes brought an adulteress to Christ. She was guilty of violating the Seventh Commandment, and under Moses’ ministration she would have been stoned without mercy. The Pharisees referred to that in verses 4 and 5 and asked Christ, “But what sayest Thou?” After rebuking her accusers, what did Jesus say to the woman? “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and *sin no more*” (verse

11).

Under Moses' ministration of death this woman would have died without mercy (Hebrews 10:28). In contrast, under Christ's ministration of the Spirit, she received mercy and pardon for the past, *but she was strictly commanded to "sin no more."* While extending mercy and pardon to this woman who had sinned by violating one of the Ten Commandments, Jesus commanded obedience to *all ten* precepts when He said, "Sin no more." No one can deny that it was the Ten Commandments that she had violated. Her sins that were forgiven were violations of the Ten Commandments. The command to "sin no more" was a command to *cease violating* this same *law*. Sin is still the transgression of *this Law* (Romans 7:7; 1 John 3:4,5; James 2:10-12). We are commanded to *sin no more* after being forgiven and made *free* from sin (Ephesians 1:7; Romans 6:12-18; 6:1,2; 1 John 2:1). Dead to sin (Romans 6:1,2).

The Gospel of Christ delivers from sin and commands obedience to *all ten* precepts of God's Law (Matthew 19:16-23; 1 John 2:4-6; Matthew 1:21). One precept in that Law says, "Remember the *Sabbath* day to keep it holy. The *Seventh* day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God" (Exodus 20:8-11). Can we violate that Precept and be less guilty than the woman taken in adultery? It is the *same Law* that is being violated. The wages of *sin* is the same for adultery and for Sabbath desecration (Romans 6:23; James 2:10-12; Exodus 24:12).

An added thought: Under Moses' ministration he was to teach, or enforce obedience to, the Ten Commandments. Under that Old Covenant ministration *both* the Ten Commandments and the administrative law of Moses were written upon stone: two Tables of Stone and an *altar of whole stone* as shown above. In contrast now, the *Spirit of God changes the hearts of repentant believers and writes God's holy Law in their hearts as was promised under the New Covenant*. Christ through the agency of the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of the Christians enabling them to maintain a life of obedience to both God's Law and the Gospel (Galatians 2:20; Revelation 12:17; 2 Corinthians 3:2,3; Jeremiah 31:31-34).

We obey as Jesus taught us under His ministration.

Part 2. A Transition Period from Moses to Christ . . . Three and one half years. Moses' Law of Ordinances and the Gospel of Christ

Jesus preached the Gospel for three and one half years before that *law* of ordinances ended at His death on Calvary. This was a great *transition period* and some questions need to be answered in this study. Let us begin with a question that has come to our attention on this matter.

QUESTION: It is clear that the law regulating the Levitical priesthood and the many sacrifices ended when Jesus died and paid the penalty for sin; but what about Jesus' setting aside certain parts of

the book of the law in His sermon in Matthew 5:38,39—also in John 8:1-11? This was done before His death. Is it true that these parts of that law of Moses ended before Calvary?

ANSWER: In answering this important question, we urge the reader first to study carefully *all* of Lessons No. 3 and 4 prayerfully because the Bible truths presented there will *help* one understand the *added* points of Truth given here. This is an important question and may God give us wisdom as we look for the Bible answer (see James 1:5; 2 Timothy 2:15).

It is true that the “law of commandments *contained in ordinances*” that is *part* of that book of the Law given by Moses was “*abolished*” and nailed to the Cross of Jesus (Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14). This law of *ordinances* is further explained in Hebrews 9:1-10; 10:1-8; and 7:11,12-28 as the law that regulated the Old Testament priesthood and the many sacrifices and rites that foreshadowed the *sacrifice and redemption* through Jesus, “the Lamb of God” that takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). *This is the part* of that “book of the law” that had to do with *justification*. And yet those sacrifices could *not* take away sin, but as an act of faith in Old Testament times they carried them forward from year to year to *Jesus who died for all* those Old Testament sins (Hebrews 9:15). This is what Paul refers to in Acts 13:38,39: “And by *Him all that believe are justified* from all things, from which ye could *not be justified* by the Law of Moses.” Paul and others sometimes refer to “the book of the law,” or “the *law of Moses*,” but as we study more fully, and as we have already shown in Lessons No. 3 and 4, this law of ordinances that foreshadowed the death of Christ and was abolished at the Cross was *not* the *whole* book of the law. So Paul uses the term in a limited degree in such cases.

The Gospel and the Law of Moses

As we have shown abundantly in Lesson No. 4 that book of the *law* given by Moses contained *many* laws in the civil code that God gave to Israel. These were mainly *administrative* laws defining and enforcing *obedience* of Israel to God’s basic *moral* Laws, the *Ten Commandments*, the *two great commandments of love*, tithing, etc. These were God’s Laws *before* the days of Moses as we show in other lessons in this series of studies.

The Ten Commandments did *not* originate with Moses. Neither did the *two great commandments of love* that Jesus quotes in Matthew 22:36-40. That *civil code* enforced *obedience* to these Laws. Israel could not look upon those two tables of *stone* to read the Ten Commandments. The book of the law taught them. Also those *Two Commandments of Love* are in the *center* of that *civil code*. (Read Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18). Yes, they are in that book of the law but are *not* part of that law of ordinances that was nailed to the cross, for Jesus taught *obedience* to both these Laws. They are *in* the Gospel of Christ. Study Lesson No. 4 again prayerfully. Moses *commanded* to obey the *fifth* commandment as Jesus said (Mark 7:9,10-13). Moses’

administrative laws enforced *obedience* to *all* the Ten Commandments and also to those *two* Great Commandments of *love* as we enforce *obedience* to those great *moral* laws of God. No change in those *basic* laws was made in the Gospel of Christ.

Change of Administrative Laws . . . From Moses to Christ

Now we come to the *answer* to our question. Did Jesus *change* and annul some of Moses' *administrative* laws *before* He died, during His three and one half years of *ministry* on earth? Yes, He did as Mediator of the New Covenant. He *magnified* God's basic Laws to their *original* intent and in *doing* so He *set aside* some *temporary* administrative civil laws given by Moses. Moses was mediator of the Old Covenant, and as mediator between God and Israel, he gave to Israel the laws they were to obey and sealed the covenant with animal *blood* (read Exodus 24:1-8). Jesus is Mediator of the New Covenant, or Testament (Hebrews 9:15-28).

The New Covenant and the New Testament are one and the same. During His three and one half years of *ministry* *before* He sealed this New Testament with His death, Jesus was *giving* the *Laws* and *conditions* for eternal life under the New Testament. Nothing could be added *after* His death. All had to be *in* that Testament *before* His death (Galatians 3:15). When Jesus started preaching the Gospel in Mark 1:14,15 He was giving New Testament Laws. In the Sermon in Matthew chapter 5 He set aside some of Moses' administrative laws, but He still enforced *obedience* to God's basic Moral Laws. Now obedience must be from the *heart*. Those *two* Commandments of *love* take in our enemies (verse 43,44). Verses 38,39 give an outstanding example of cancelling one precept in Moses' civil code. In Israel Moses' law dealt severely with willful transgression of the Ten Commandments, but that *ministration of death* ended with the *better ministry* of the Spirit under the Lord Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:6-11). John 8:1-11 is an example of the Two ministrations in *contrast*.

We are not under Moses' ministration but under *Christ's* ministration. Moses foretold this change. He knew that a greater Prophet would come to take his place.

Peter quotes from Moses' prophecy (Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19) in Acts 3:22,23: "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto **me**; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will *not* hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." This clearly foretold the coming of Jesus as that greater Prophet to Whom the people should listen, and to the *end* of Moses' administrative laws.

This did not mean that Jesus abolished all those laws. Many are fully endorsed by the Lord Jesus. Jesus did *not* abolish one righteous principle that Moses taught. One temporary law about divorce was permitted under

Moses' law, but Jesus set that aside saying, "From the beginning it was not so" (Matthew 19:3-10). He was giving the original Law of God on the matter. It was a change in administrative laws but *no change* in the *basic moral* Laws of God. Those *needed* changes were *made* during the three-and-one-half year *transition* period when Jesus preached the Gospel before His death and Resurrection. This was *all sealed* in the New Testament by Christ's blood, His death on Calvary.

Conclusion

The reason that we call the three and one half years of Jesus' ministry before His death a *transition* period is because during this period we have both the law of Moses and the Gospel, or Law of Christ Jesus. The *Law* of ordinances with *all* those sacrifices, rites and ceremonies that foreshadowed the death of Christ for the sins of the world were abolished at the Cross (Ephesians 2:15, Colossians 2:14). This law continued on until the death of Christ, but the great civil code given by Moses, and also *written* in the book of the law was being set aside when it conflicted or was not in accord with the Gospel of Christ during Jesus' ministry before His death. Christ's Laws, or the Gospel of Christ, were taking the place of Moses' administrative laws. Those who accepted Jesus as Saviour *obeyed* His teachings, and we today are under Christ's ministration, *not* Moses'. The official *end* of *all* those typical laws and ordinances in Moses' law *ended* when Jesus sealed the New Covenant with His blood (Hebrews 8:10-12; 9:1-16). This was also the end of Moses' ministration. We obey the great moral Laws of God as Jesus taught them in the *magnified* state as recorded in the Gospel of the New Scriptures (see Isaiah 42:21). The Gospel and the laws of Moses are in accord on *many* points, but we look to the Gospel for *our* directions. It will be remembered that the Gospel teaches that in the Old Scriptures we can find *instruction* in righteousness to furnish us unto *all* good works (2 Timothy 3:15-17). This shows that Jesus made *no basic change* in any moral code that Moses taught—except to *magnify* it and place it in our hearts.