

The Law as Given by Herman L. Hoeh (1954)

Rom. 2:12. Mr. Apartian asked me, "How long was the old covenant in effect?" I think sometimes we get the idea mistakenly that the old covenant was automatically abolished when Christ died. The answer is NO, it was not. The old covenant was probably broken on the very day it was made, The Israelites broke it from the very start...by disobeying it. But God said He would keep His part and since the original was that God would bless the children of Israel of the generation of Moses and their seed, so in turn the Israelites said that they would obey and their children, and that covenant was actually bound, let's say, on the descendants throughout all time. And we read in Hebrews concerning the old covenant. In one sense it says that he takes away the first that may establish the second in Hebrews 10:9, but in another place he says in Hebrews 8:13, "In that he says a New covenant he has made the first old." "But what becomes old yea aged is nigh vanishing away". It hasn't vanished away yet, and to this very day the old Covenant is actually as far as an agreement that God made with the house of Israel, as a whole, has not vanished away. In other words, Jesus died to take the penalty of all those who have sinned as members of the house or nation of Israel as well as Judah.

And He came to institute a second, and to all those accepting the death of Christ, their penalty was suspended as far as their having to pay for this life, and forgiveness of sins was made possible, and God said, "For you I will make a new covenant, You acknowledge yourself dead to the law, to the old covenant, and you've paid the penalty of death to that covenant through Christ."

And so we have no relationship whatsoever to the old covenant, but to a new. Not that the new has been completed, but that the new is opened up to us and we can finally inherit by the terms of the new covenant, when we have proved ourselves in this life. But the fact is, most of those who are in Israel are still suffering the penalty that they are bringing upon themselves by violating the old covenant. Even in the letter. Now you will have to examine the whole thing to really see what is meant.

In other words, as far as Christ's death was concerned His death does not apply to a man who doesn't believe it. But as for taking

away the old covenant is concerned, all those laws in the letter mean nothing for the one who acknowledges himself as dead to that covenant by the death of Christ. That is, we are still alive, but Christ died to take upon himself the curse of the law. Not the curse of the law having been in existence, but the curse of the law.

In other words, the curse came upon those who broke the law. Therefore, in order that we might gain eternal life, someone had to take upon himself the penalty that we incurred by breaking that law in the letter. So that actually those who know the law, in the letter, for instance, the Jews and our neighbors around here that don't know God and whose life has not been surrendered to God and the death of Jesus Christ doesn't cover their lives, that those individuals at this very day and this very hour are bringing upon themselves the curses that you find written in the book of Leviticus and the book of Deuteronomy. That's what they're doing.

In 1948 Mr. Armstrong had an article "World Situation Worst Since 1940" published in the Plain Truth at that time, and he mentioned how that as the book of Deuteronomy was repeated. You know, it was really a reconfirmation of the covenant yet even with new things added to amplify God's law that don't realize that this nation is actually bringing upon itself the curse of disobeying that very law that's there. That's what it's doing. So that for those, in other words, who know the law, and this in a sense even excludes most of Israel who have been in ignorance, but the few Jews who do know it (the law) -- they're going to receive the very penalty of the law and God's going to bring the very curses that are written in that law upon them, because they have not had Jesus Christ pay the penalty in their stead.

And for the Gentiles and most of our neighbors who know not the law, they're going to perish even without a knowledge of that law, because they're breaking the spiritual principles on which that law, the old covenant, was after all -- only the law in the letter.

So in other words, whether or not you know God's law, if you break it -- the spiritual law, you're going to reap the curse of breaking it. It's just an automatic law, the same as God's physical laws bring penalties when you break them. If you're careless and slip on a banana peel and land where you shouldn't, you might break a bone.

Well, God isn't going to suspend that, unless you ask Him to protect and preserve you and He sends an angel to see that you don't break a bone. Otherwise, you will, that's an automatic result of breaking God's law, whether or not you knew that there was a law in operation.

But as far as those who did know and those who have come under the commonwealth of Israel at that time, and who should have known of the law; the very curses written for breaking law are going to be required for breaking that law and they have been required of the Jews throughout every generation when they rejected Christ.

What we do not really grasp and understand is what Paul mentioned here, the old covenant is near to vanishing away. There is a time of rest for our nation and yet we find that the commandments contained in ordinances which were against us -- I want you to notice -- that all those were nailed to the cross. Now the commandments which were contained in ordinances had nothing whatsoever to do with the old covenant but with those laws which were added as a result of the old covenant and God's spiritual law as such being broken. We read in Galatians that this law which the Jews were dealing with was added because of transgression because of even breaking the old covenant in the letter.

Now, what we need to realize is that the law of offering sacrifices and of all the other rituals to teach them the need of someone to pay the penalty, that all of those laws which ^{were} added afterward -- the law of sacrifices and rituals and physical ordinances which ordained the priesthood, which told us what to offer when committed a sin in ignorance -- was actually nailed to the cross through or in the body of Christ. That is, that it had no more force and effect whenever a sacrifice should come that would take away sin. But as far as the Old Covenant was concerned, that was not nailed to the cross. You know that? Where do you find in the Bible that the old covenant was ever nailed to the cross? Do you?

? (changed?)

Now the Gentiles were never under the old covenant. They automatically received the curse of breaking God's spiritual law in ignorance, because the law is something living. God's spiritual law is, (living), and Christ died to redeem the Gentiles from the curse of

of breaking God's spiritual law the same as He died to redeem Israelites and Jews from the curse of breaking God's spiritual law, but He did something more, He died also to relieve Jews and Israelites -- to deliver them from the curse that resulted in their breaking of even the physical old covenant God gave. And so for those who want Christ to take upon Himself the penalty that we incurred, Paul tells us that we therefore reckon ourselves dead to the law. Now if the law were already finished by the ~~the~~ time Christ died, we do not have to reckon ourselves dead to the law, do we? Because there would not be any law to reckon ourselves dead to. Would there? Of course not!

So you see for those who want to gain eternal life, Christ died and whatever penalty we inherit because we broke the old covenant, generation by generation because God said that He would keep His part of that old covenant to all generations, that until we reckon ourselves dead in the sense that we believe that Christ paid the penalty in our stead, that whole nation and we ourselves are going to reap the reward of breaking that law. And we're going to have the very letter of the law -- curses written in the last chapters of Deuteronomy and also in Leviticus at the close of that book. Now that's what people don't really understand. I think it has never been made fully clear.

We have received often the concept that the old covenant as such was nailed to the cross, and that every law involved in it was. Well now, how could it be? No book was nailed to the cross, the two tables of stone never were, were they? Now the only reason the sacrifices were nailed there is that Christ completed, or let's say, was the reality of which the sacrifices were a shadow as I have explained the meaning of a shadow, but once the light comes there is no shadow. Christ is that light, who also offered Himself as a sacrifice and we are told that those commandments concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices were nailed to the cross through the body of Christ. That is, Christ once and for all paid the penalty and therefore there is no need to continue those. But Christ's death did not fulfill the sabbath. It didn't fulfill the holy days. It didn't fulfill our obligations to honor our parents. It didn't fulfill our obligations to let the land lie idle once in seven years for itself. You see, Christ's death did not fulfill

any of those laws which constituted a direct part of the old covenant, did He? Of course not!

So, actually Christ's death on the cross did not nail the old covenant there, but specifically the handwriting of commandments contained in ordinances. A commandment is a requirement. In other words a handwriting of requirements contained in ordinances and Paul tells us those were carnal, that is physical relating to flesh, matter and not spiritual principles, reduced to the letter of the alphabet.

The explanation in Romans is whether or not we know that you're going to receive it. You may receive the spiritual penalty, that is the curses in this life for breaking the spiritual laws as everyone does, even Israelites, and Jews are going to receive the curses of breaking it in the letter. God means what He says when He says, "I'll keep this covenant for all generations, to a thousand generations," and as Mr. Armstrong mentioned, there have been only about three hundred and a quarter generations at the maximum from the time of Adam. That's all. You count them up.

That is what is bring^{ing} the curse on our people. He is faithful in His part of that covenant and God said that if you would even keep the letter of the law without even the spiritual principles, "I would bless you in this world." That is what He said. He said, "I'll do my part for a thousand generations," and He meant it. He didn't nail it to the cross when Christ came. What He did was take the penalty that we bring on ourselves for violating it in the spirit or in the letter. That is, He became the cursed of the law as it is written, "Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree," when He was suspended and nailed to the tree cut out as a Roman crucifix or cross. He therefore was cursed, but He didn't deserve it. He volunteered.

Anyone who is so hanged has upon himself a curse, but he volunteered to take the curse. In that sense He also volunteered to ^{take the} rest of the penalty. In so doing, He fulfilled the requirement or the need for the physical sacrifices which were only temporary and were meant to be kept not only in the letter but in the spirit of the law and God told the judges, "You judge after heart and not after the sight even under the old covenant." But the law itself was reduced to letters. Actually it was God's spiritual principle but it only promised material well-being.

God didn't require anymore than the letter of the law obedience. That's all He required. I think we've often grown up with the concept that the old covenant was automatically hacked and hewn to pieces when Christ died on the cross. Therefore we always wonder how it is possible since many laws are never written in the Bible except as an intricate part of the old covenant and never appeared outside of it. We wonder why we should keep those laws if the old covenant was nailed to the cross. *

Actually, we are told that Christ took the old out of the way for us that there might be a new one. That's what He's doing. In other words, what happened is that Christ is opening up a new one, and that He himself took whatever penalty is brought upon us by our transgressing of the old and also our spiritual transgressions. There is no need for an old covenant any more. There's no need for it. This whole nation could come under the terms of the new so that we could gain eternal life and have the promise of God's Holy Spirit. That is all the way through the Bible. He's actually, as far as we're concerned, taking away the old and giving the new. But remember, it is only NEAR to vanishing away. That's not a contradiction. That's showing that to some people it's gone already.

We're not under the terms of the old covenant. We reckon ourselves dead, Paul says, you see? As far as we're concerned the old covenant has no more a claim upon our life. That penalty that we had to pay, which ultimately was death, has been paid for us. But it doesn't pertain to us until we believe that Jesus Christ died for us, and that He took that penalty upon Himself. But to the Jews who rejected Christ or who are beginning to come to know Christ, they were still having that penalty over them.

And so Christ came to redeem those who were under the curse of the law. He came to redeem those who were under the curse before His death and even those afterward. Paul was using this argument to show that if a Jew rejected Christ, he brought upon himself the curse of that very law, the old covenant, and he quoted it as such. That should make it very plain. When God says I'm going to keep a bargain to a thousand generations, He didn't mean for twenty-five or thirty, did He? The old covenant was broken time after time, generation after generation.

But God said, "I am a faithful One, I'll keep my part of the bargain, but in order that you don't all perish in the process, I'll come in the flesh. He's really saying, "And I'll take upon myself the penalty that this law, this covenant, brings on you so that you can be relieved, but you must accept my sacrifice in your stead. I will pay the penalty in your stead."

Once the penalty of death is paid, then the law has no more a claim on our life you see. And so when we accepted Christ, if we were Israelites, we paid whatever penalty we owed to this old covenant. We also paid whatever penalty actually had to be paid as far as breaking it even in the spirit, much less in the letter. But so do the Gentiles have to have that sacrifice because that law claims their life, whether or not they knew it, because they had broken this spiritual law, these spiritual principles. The old covenant was just a matter of revealing the spiritual law to them. In other words, the Jews were a little more guilty because they had a greater knowledge of God's spiritual law by ways of the letter of the law of the old covenant.

Actually many of these verses have seemed contradictory. It might be good for us to go through a section of Galatians. I have been in doubt and Mr. Meredith asked me a number of questions when he went through it and I've told him frankly that I had my opinion, but I've never been convinced of anything I've really heard completely. Whenever a sermon was given here on the subject, I've noticed that there were waverings, let's say whenever a sermon was reviewed. A few interpretations of the law varied from sermon to sermon. But now I think finally, after putting everything together, we can come with a single clear explanation, to grasp the difference.

At the Feast of Tabernacles, I explained to you an interesting thing that I hope you got. Maybe I'd better go back to that or you won't understand Galatians even. I've come to realize that if you don't know the old Testament, you'll never understand the new. You won't. I've had that proved to me. The very questions you have in the new covenant, the new testament, are those which arise from misunderstanding the old.

First of all, we know that God's law was in existence fundamentally from the beginning as far as the principle of love. Various points had

to be defined when new circumstances arose. We are told that it was sin, time and time again, to break the law or to break, that is -- law, long before the days of Moses. Joseph said, "If I should commit adultery, don't you know that would be sin." Not against a woman or against her husband but against God. A sin against God. Now if God had no law, it wouldn't have been any sin to him. It might have hurt the man or the woman. Mr. Armstrong has given a sermon on that. We should know that every one of the ten points of the law can be pointed out having been transgressed prior to the old covenant.

When God made the old covenant, He was merely telling the Israelites, that the laws that you have learned since you left the land of Egypt ~~and~~ have come to Sinai here, and which I have been explaining to you day by day --- Moses was revealing to them and showing them God's laws all along. God said, "All of these laws, I'll incorporate into a covenant, that is an agreement, and I'll tell you all of my spiritual laws. That is, I'll tell you how you ought to live and how you ought to be like I am." God is holy. God said, "Now Israelites, you be holy." That is, set apart, sanctified for a right use, kept pure, clean. God is like that so He said, "I'll reveal to you the way I live and I'll be the part of the husband. I'll supply you with all physical needs and then you'll be like a wife to me and you'll bear fruit in this world if you keep the law in the letter. That is all that I require of you and in turn I'll bless you in this life. I'll give you land. I'll give you children. I'll give you stock and I'll give you long years."

He didn't say, "I'll give you eternal life." But they were to bring forth fruit in the sense that they would show what would happen if someone would obey God's laws even in the letter -- keep obedient. God revealed his spiritual laws in the form of the letter, that is in the form of the twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet. And He gave it in two forms. In the first place, He gave the fundamental basis on two tables of stone, called the Tables of the Covenant. When God finished the fundamental principles, He was going to tell the people the rest of it.

And the people said, "Now Moses, get up there in a hurry, we don't want to hear anything more from God directly. You talk to us." And

so Moses went up there and God said, "You come up here, Moses. People don't want to listen to me, I'll let them listen to you." And so God gave the rest of the laws based on the ten commandments and He told Moses, "Now, you write them in a book." And that book was called the Book of the Covenant.

So the old covenant was an agreement that God said, "I'll do my part if you, Israel, do your part. And we'll agree to the terms of this covenant." The terms of the covenant, not the covenant itself completely, but the terms of the covenant were on the tables of stone and in the book. But the covenant involved is more than law, it involved an acknowledgement -- God saying, "I will do my part," Israel saying you'll do yours.

The covenant is never completed without the signatures -- right? It's of no value until there is a signature -- an agreement that both parties agree to it. In other words, their oral acknowledgement that they'll perform their part, has to be taken care of. That is why God said, "I'll do my part for even a thousand generations. I'm that kind of a person. I'll keep my part of the bargain." The Israelites also said, "So will we. We will keep it. Everything that you say, we can do." Isn't that what they said? Once that was said and the Israelites had said their part, then blood was used to seal the covenant. That was the proof. Sprinkle it over the book and over all the rest.

In order to administer this law so that it would never be forgotten -- this was after the old covenant was finished and ratified in Exodus 24 -- God said, "Now, I want a tabernacle built where you will house the terms of this covenant and then I'll have a priesthood which will enforce the terms of this covenant and keep it so that nobody in the nation will forget."

And so we have the calling of the Aronic• priesthood. In order to give them their office, God said, "Now you offer certain sacrifices which purify their bodies and will be the rites to introduce them into their office." The rest of the book of Exodus is taken up with the building of the tabernacle and the establishment of the Levitical priesthood. Not by the terms of the old covenant, but by carnal ordinances and physical laws -- laws which designated physical, corporeal human beings to an office and to build a physical tabernacle.

There were no spiritual principles involved here. This was just a law that they should build out of cloth, out of iron, out of wood, out of gold, and silver and skins -- a building. Or that they should anoint people who are flesh for an office. And so Paul tells us that the Levites became priests according to a carnal commandment. Hebrews 7:16, "That they, the Levites received theirs after the law of a carnal commandment, that Christ became priest after the law of a spiritual commandment" that is, the commandment pertaining to spirit and not carnality. Carnal does not necessarily mean wrong. It just means flesh. The rest of Exodus is taken up with carnal laws after the old covenant was concluded, having nothing to do whatsoever with terms of the old covenant, but merely added laws to enforce, to see that the old covenant would be carried out. After that was completed, the tabernacle was built and raised up the next year on the first month.

In Leviticus 1, the Lord said unto Moses: "Speak to the children of Israel about offerings." The offerings and all the diverse washings and the other physical and carnal ordinances were given about nine months after the old covenant was made and 12 months after they left Egypt. Do you see the trend?

Sometimes law in the New Testament refers to the spiritual principles of the law. In other cases it refers to the law code that God gave -- the old covenant. And sometimes it is specifically limited to the laws, carnal laws at that, which were added because of transgressions because the old covenant was broken. And why were these laws given? Because of transgression. The offerings were not all given for that, but most of them were in principle. They were all fundamental.

Notice Lev. 4:1-2, "Speak to the children of Israel saying if anyone shall sin" -- if anyone sin. What is sin? -- the transgression of the law. So if anyone shall transgress through error in any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done -- there was a law which was already commanded, telling them not to break. That if they shall do any error -- break the law -- and if it's a priest that shall sin so as to bring guilt on the people, then he was to offer an offering.

If the people committed a transgression, they were to bring an offering. This is shown in Lev. 4. Everywhere it shows that the

sin offerings, for instance, and the others for that matter in a lesser or greater type, were given nine months after the old covenant was totally ratified. The people were told that if they should transgress -- that is, whenever they should break a law -- they should offer a sacrifice. Here was law given because of transgression, but a law relating to carnal, physical things. It was a carnal law containing what the new Testament calls ordinances, but the old Testament, properly translated, calls statutes. There are good statutes and bad.

The good statutes are those that define sin. When God said that I gave you statutes which were of no value to you and which did not profit you any, He was talking about these other laws which He gave them which didn't profit them a bit, but which became a curse to them because they couldn't fulfill the law and sinned so often. We are told that the law of Moses became a bondage to the Israelites because they sinned so often and they couldn't possibly offer enough sacrifices to cover all the sins they committed day by day. What was meant for their good turned out to be for their harm because of their sins -- not because there was anything fundamentally wrong with such a law, but because of their sins.

The old covenant was not meant to contain laws which were to be done away, but to explain laws which man could not otherwise know. God did not give any old covenant laws which were to last a short time. But He gave the old covenant according to the letter, laws which man could not otherwise find out. God had to make it known to the whole congregation by that means.

God is not going to keep laws that are to our harm to a thousand generations. When there are statements in the Old Covenant, as it is in Deuteronomy, about what we should be doing that are not found outside of the Old Covenant, that doesn't mean that we shouldn't obey them. That means that they are just not found elsewhere, but they represent God's Law. All Scripture is given by inspiration and we should be sure that we rightly divide it. When we see the old Covenant, we are to know that the laws in it are not harmful or against us. David spent the 119th Psalm -- the longest chapter in all the Bible -- trying to tell us that the laws of the old covenant -- the commandments, the statutes and judgements -- are for our good as well as various other laws that were even spiritual principles added afterwards... laws which were not directly a part of the old covenant, but were just added whenever the need came

and the explanation had to be given to the people.

People come with the argument, "Now didn't Paul say....." and they argue from Paul's writings to combat the Old Testament. What they need to do is to examine the Old Testament to understand Paul's writings. The world has everything upside down. Is there anything that hasn't become upside down? Paul wasn't introducing some new doctrine -- trying to knock in the head the old. He was trying to explain the old to these poor gentiles who had no "savy" and to the Jews who didn't want to "savy." That's what he was doing! He was having a hard enough time explaining it without having preachers today trying to explain away what he was explaining.

Let's get the Bible right! Let's not start with Revelation and work back to Genesis. Let's start with Genesis and go up to Revelation. That's the way you are supposed to read any book -- from the beginning to the end. You don't read backwards. That's the way of the world. The world is backwards and they are reading the Bible backward. They want to know the conclusion is before they know how it all started and what the purpose of life is. Let's get the principles of the Old Covenant and the Old Testament clearly in mind.

You're familiar with Jer. 7:21-22 where God said, to make it amply sure that we wouldn't misunderstand, that my spiritual laws I revealed in Egypt even before Mt. Sinai, and God said that I told the people when they came out of Egypt to keep my Laws and my commandments. In other words, the Old Covenant didn't institute them. The Old Covenant merely contained the spiritual laws that they should have been keeping before. God says there is no use sacrificing burnt offerings. "Why don't you just add your burnt offerings to the rest of your sacrifices and eat them as normal flesh in your own homes instead of bringing them to my house, because it isn't going to do you any good."

Verse 21 is often misunderstood. In other words, instead of offering sacrifices, Jeremiah was saying that doesn't do you any good. Why don't you just leave them where they are and add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and just enjoy the eating of flesh itself and not worry about the offering of sacrifices because that's not

what God wants. God says, "I didn't speak to them about burnt offerings and sacrifices, but this is what I said, 'Hearken to my voice'" -- this is when God brought them out of Egypt and this what He said, "Hearken to my voice. if you'll be my God and I'll be your people." He didn't say that at Sinai. He told that to Moses even before then, He was showing them how to become His people. He also repeated it at Sinai, however. "And walk you in all My ways." Not half the way, or a quarter of the way, but all of the ways that I command you that it might be well with you, -- but they didn't hearken to my voice.

How do we know the way that is well for us. God didn't tell us many laws and it isn't recorded, but we read in Joshua the first chapter that there is a group of laws which tells us the way that will be well for us (Josh. 1:8). "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein."

This had nothing to do with the sacrifices fundamentally, except that as it also was included as a principle, let us say. Since it was a national law, they were to keep it because they had been sinning, but that they should obey the law in the first place. That is what God really wanted. That is what makes things go well for us and we have good success. This law is what makes things go well with us -- what gives us good success if we keep the Book of the law. Now that had reference fundamentally to Deuteronomy which Moses had just been repeating, where many of the laws of the Old Covenant were contained in as given at Sinai forty years earlier.

We come to the New Covenant and Jesus said, "Now don't get the wrong idea." You know, people always get the wrong idea. He said don't get the wrong idea, "I haven't come to take away the law." You see, people misunderstand time after time. He said, I haven't come to abolish the law, I've come to carry it out, but not in the letter. I've come to actually carry it out, but not in the letter, but according to the spiritual intent that God had revealed long before -- the intents of which couldn't be put down by the very letter of the law.

And so Christ said, "I haven't come to take away any of the law, that defines what a man ought to do -- not one jot or one title shall in any wise pass away from the law until all things come to pass or till all be fulfilled. Now, until all things come to pass...Has everything come to pass as God said it would? No. Not one jot, not one title, not the least point of the law as it was written in the letter. That's what He was talking about. Not the least point of the law as was written in the letter. Not the least letter of the law would be removed, until all things come to pass and now when you understand the letter of the law, it merely defines the principle.

Many points of the letter run counter to one another. You shall not work on the Sabbath, yet you are to do things of mercy. That's even in the Old Testament. The letter of the law was meant to be understood according to the principle so that the least principle would never be misunderstood. That's what Jesus was referring to. But so you would understand how to read the law in the letter, He said, "You have heard of old times certain points here that you shall not kill or you will be in danger of the judgment, but I say unto you,"-- not that it's right to kill, notice -- the letter of the law still stands. He didn't say it was wrong and that it is now right to kill, but He said more than that, "You are not even to be angry with your brother.

Christ went on to say, "You have heard it said you shall not commit adultery." It isn't right to commit adultery today, but you're not only not to commit adultery, you are not even to lust which may lead to it. The letter wasn't done away, was it? It was simple, plain, what more could you ask?

Again, "You have heard it said, you shall not foreswear, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord," that is, you shall not swear by anything else except by the Lord. Now, Jesus didn't say it's right now to swear by anything else did He? The law said you shall perform your swearing or your oaths only by God. Jesus didn't take away the letter of the law, did He? In no place did He say that it is right to swear by anything except by God, but what He tells them is this: man at this time does not have the capacity, when rightly understood, even to use God's name for an oath. We must wait until the resurrection in order to do it, because if you take God's name as a part of an oath, you're taking it in vain

since God has not promised to carry out that oath for you. If you say, "By God I'll do this," as an oath, that means that you are binding God -- you, a mortal man, binding God to do something that He hasn't promised to do for you.

Jesus didn't abolish the letter of the law. The letter said, "Don't swear by the temple, don't swear by your head, don't swear by anything, but if you perform an oath, perform it by God." Jesus didn't say to never again swear by God. He said don't do it until you can. When we become God and are members of the family of God, then we are merely swearing by ourselves.

We are told that Jesus is the Lord of the Old Testament and that He swore by Himself -- the Lord. There was none greater. He swore by Himself. He said, "I myself will do this." Thus, when we take the Lord's name we are actually in the future when we are in the Kingdom of God. What we will be doing is actually swearing by the very power that is inherent in us to perform what we intend to do. As mortal men we can't--we can't perform what we intend to do unless God helps us. We are not to use God's name or to call upon it in the form of an oath until we come to the resurrection and know when God will do it, because He hasn't said that He will do all these thing for us that we would be swearing by at this time.

In no case did Christ do away with the letter in the Old Covenant even. He is magnifying it. He is letting you understand what each letter of the Old Covenant meant. He is showing you by taking away the surface and letting you see what is beneath. "You have heard before, 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,' but I'm telling you not even to resist your enemy." Was He doing away with the letter of the law? No. We're going to pay the penalty, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But God says here through Jesus Christ, that we are not to carry out the eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth until we ourselves are able to judge according to the heart, so that we should not resist the enemy who does not know the harm he's doing for us. The time is coming, however, when we are going to judge an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The wicked are going to perish according to this very principle. Those who are in the lake of fire are going to suffer the very condemnation that they deserve and we are going to be in on that judgment. That's not during the thousand years time at all. That is at the very close.

Jesus said, don't execute an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth -- the very letter of the law -- until you are able to carry it out according to the spirit and intent of that law and the letter. But the principle still stands. The judgment is going to take place some day. You have heard it said, "you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy," But Jesus said you shall love your enemy and pray for them that persecute you. Now, David said one thing that has often been misunderstood. David said, "I hate those that hate the Lord." That's what he says, "I hate them with a perfect hate.

Hate doesn't mean murder. Jesus said, didn't he, "whoever hates his brother is a murderer." The word "hate" in the English language is, in many cases, an unfortunante rendering for a word in the Hebrew and the Greek which has more than one meaning. We are told not to hate in the sense that we love or rejoice to do harm, but we are to hate in the sense that we abhor whatsoever is wrong with someone else. That is the intent or the purpose of the original stipulation.

In that sense, the word "hate" the enemy never occurs in the Old Testament. It's a summary of a statement, you shall not seek the enemy's peace, but you shall hate everything wrong about them. Their very character was wrong. God loves those that are His enemies in this life, but He will finally abhor them. He not only abhors our works when they are wrong, but He's going to abhor the wicked individual's personality.

God doesn't say that He abhors the works of the wicked, but is going to give the wicked eternal life, does He? He doesn't love the wicked in the sense that He is going to give them eternal life even though He hates their works. He comes to the place where He abhors even the wicked. Their character is not the character of someone who doesn't know he is doing wrong. Of those, God hates their works, but He loves His enemy. That is what we are to do.

There comes a time when a person knows the truth, as some in this Church have known the truth and have departed never again to gain eternal life. Their character is so warped having knowing better that you can do nothing but abhor the very character, the very self and want to put them away. And God Himself said, "an eye for an eye" is what is going to happen in the end and we are going to have to sit in judgment. Those

people are going to be administered judgment and we are going to be part and parcel of that because they are going to receive their reward and we are going to abhor them.

Now the principle of abhorring -- not to glory and to love to harm someone else, that's carnal hatred -- but to abhor the very character of a wicked person who knows better. That's what God does. David did the same thing. There are some in the Church, when they know someone has gone off finally and forever, will say, "Oh, let's fellowship our enemy. Let's love them." But God said have nothing whatsoever to do with them. Abhor them! That's the principle. They have made their decision once for all, but some people don't see love right.

We sometimes see love the way God does not love. Love is defined by God's commandments, not carnal feelings and passions. Not by carnal desires. Hatred is not the way human beings hate, but they love to harm somebody. When we render this judgment we are doing these people a service. We're taking away a life that is wholly miserable and wretched and it is better for them to be dead, as Jesus said Himself of Judas, than that they should be alive. It isn't out of hatred and malice. It's actually out of mercy, but we have to abhor those people.

Jesus says there is not one principle contained in the letter of the Old Covenant but what it stands forever until all things have come to pass and God dares the man who will rip the slightest letter out of that Old Covenant. We must find the spiritual intent. We must understand the spiritual intent as Jesus magnified it, not to lay it aside as something that was given to the Jews, but we have something better.

The Bible does not contradict itself. Gal. 2:15 is the beginning of a new theme based upon what goes before. This verse says, "We Jews by nature" -- born of Abraham -- "and not sinners of the nations." The nations, then, have sinners. They broke God's spiritual law. "Yet knowing that man is not justified by works of law." Paul was assuming that the Galatians knew what he was writing about. "Works of Law" is sometimes translated incorrectly as "deeds of law." The term "work" means physical work. In some cases it can even mean spiritual work. But it is by the performance of law that we are not justified. The "work" is

those works mistakenly assumed to justify. Obedying the ten commandments never justified anybody, that is justify or reconcile him for past guilt or pay the penalty of past guilt. But the Jews were using sacrifices which were a physical work, the effort of sacrificing an offering, to justify themselves.

The Jews said, "Look, let's adopt the Gentile attitude of penance and let's use the sacrifices which Moses gave -- which were not for justification, but for an acknowledgment of sin -- and let's say that God, therefore, takes away the penalty that we have brought on ourselves if we offer an animal." The priest said, "Look, God is very merciful," just like the Catholic Church says today -- the Catholic Church says, let's suspend the penalty, but we can't suspend it all the way. Let's have penance -- that is, you pay a little fine and you say so many "Hail Mary's" or paternosters and God is quite satisfied. That's sufficient as far as He's concerned.

Now the Jews said, "God delights in sacrifices, He likes to see the flow of blood and so let's offer some sacrifices and that will satisfy Him and we can sin all we wish and the animals will compensate." That is what justification was. Paul said here, we, of course, are not like the nations who sinned; yet we also know that a man isn't justified by the sacrifices -- that is, these rituals of the law which the Jews were mistakenly performing for justification. There was no wrong in performing them, but for justification it became wrong.

See the difference between Judaism and the religion of Moses. Moses said, "Offer them as an acknowledgment that you have sinned, not to pay for sin." The Jews said, "Let's use these sacrifices for payments for sin to justify." That's what Judaism was, not the law of Moses.

We are justified through faith by means of Jesus Christ so that we believe in him..."That we might be justified by faith in Christ" (Gal. 2:16). So we are justified then through the faith that is of Jesus Christ. (The Panin Translation is woefully in error here because he didn't understand the meaning of "faith of", not "in." He thought it should be faith in, so he mistranslated it. The King James is even more right than many others).

We are not justified by works of law, because by works of law no flesh could be justified. You can't reconcile physical flesh and the conscience of man by the sacrifice of a lamb which doesn't know right from wrong. "But if, seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners" -- if we then want to be justified by Christ and we break the Ten Commandments and the rest of God's spiritual laws, is Christ then going to administer forgiveness to us in sin? Is he the minister of sin? Be it not so! Don't let anybody think that because Christ will justify you, you can therefore sin. That's what Paul said.

Don't let anyone think that he can break even the letter of the law of the Old Covenant knowingly and think that God is going to administer mercy to him when he has that attitude. That's what he means. But more than just the letter. If you only follow the letter and get by the spirit, you're going to die. Jesus, in Matt. 5 was explaining the spirit of the law. If you just keep only the letter then you're missing eternal life, because that letter actually kills. Sooner or later we're going to transgress the letter and it's going to bring upon us the penalty of death.

"But if seeking to be justified in Christ we are found sinners," Christ will not administer unto our sins. "But if I build again what I destroyed" -- Paul didn't destroy the Old Covenant. He destroyed himself. He destroyed his old self. He acknowledged it as dead to Christ that he would no longer live the life of sin that if I, therefore, build up again a life of sin, "I prove myself a transgressor of the law," not just the letter but the spirit of the law even.

"For I through law" -- now if the law were nailed to the cross Paul couldn't say this. You see, Paul was not converted until after all of the laws that were nailed to the cross were already nailed there, right? Paul was converted after every law that was nailed to the cross was nailed there. But he said, "I through law died to law." If the Old Covenant were nailed to the cross there was no Old Covenant -- there was no law like that in existence any more -- then he couldn't say that I through law died to law, could he? Because there was no law through which he could die. Right? Isn't that simple? Logical? Can you show me why the death penalty ever would have been administered to anybody after Christ died if all law containing the death penalty were abolished?

Look how simple it is. Does anyone not follow what Paul said? I don't know what to think of you if you can't, unless you're blind.

Now Paul says, "I through law"-- he's speaking here fundamentally of the ten commandments. "I through that law died to the law that I might live to God." You see, that law slew him. He acknowledged the law had a claim on his life and through that very law he died to the law. But it was through Christ that he might live to God. He had been crucified with Christ, who did not have to die, and the one who sacrificed Himself for us or for Paul. (Gal. 2:20).

"Christ died to become the curse of the law, and we just accept Christ as that curse, but now Christ lives in me. That is, a new life -- not a life of sin, but a life of obedience so that now I live a life in the flesh through God's Son who allowed Himself to die and gave Himself up for me so that I may not void the Grace of God. I don't now make void, or make of no use the grace of God by this means, for if righteousness is through law, that is, not through the ten commandments, but through the sacrifices and ordinances." (Gal. 2:21).

The Jews were trying to justify themselves and to become righteous by means of offerings. Paul says here, that righteousness isn't through law -- if it were, then Christ didn't die, Christ died in vain. Whatever law is referred to here is the law that would have replaced the death of Christ, but the Ten Commandments and the other laws of the letter had nothing whatsoever to do directly with the death of Christ. But He gave Himself up to take the place of another law which was only to portray the need for a Saviour which the Jews were using in place of trusting Jesus Christ.

"Now, you foolish Galatians, whoever got you to believe you have the spirit of God by offering the works of the sacrifices of the law, the rituals, the washings. Don't you realize that if you began in the spirit (verse 3), if you.....(part missing.... The Jews were trying to perfect themselves by means of flesh. They were trying to be circumcised and offer physical sacrifices and to be perfected in the flesh. For we are only perfected through the spirit of God which doesn't come by offering a sacrifice, but by trusting in the death of Christ, (verse 4).

"How did you ever get this idea, Does the one working miracles do it by means of sacrificing (the works of the law) or by means of faith

even as Abraham believed God and he was reckoned righteous by means of faith because he showed that he believed in One that would die, (verse 5-6 of Gal. 3). Do you see, then, that whoever are now becoming the Sons of God through faith are the Sons of Abraham -- that they are just like Abraham was in doing what he did. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham saying this, 'In you shall the nations be blessed'" (Gal. 3:7-8).

So, Abraham wasn't justified by offering the sacrifices that Moses gave -- which were never meant to justify anybody in the first place, but were meant only to be an acknowledgment of sin. Wherever it says in the Old Covenant that when you offer a sacrifice that it shall be forgiven you and you'll be justified, that means when they acknowledged their sins in the Old Testament, the nation then accepted them,-- that the nation would forgive their mistake and that they could be accepted within the community. It had nothing to do with the conscience, it had something to do with the flesh. That was all.

Paul was showing here that those sacrifices couldn't perfect the conscience. "Now, as many as are of the rituals or who are performing the works (the rituals of this law), fall under a curse in the following manner. Cursed is everyone who doesn't continue in doing all things written in the Book of the Law," (Gal. 3:10).

Now, how did the one who was performing rituals find himself under a curse? Not by performing rituals, but by not obeying all things written in the law to do them. Whoever are trying to gain salvation by means of the works of the sacrifices of the law are under a curse. This is the reason why they were using sacrifices mistakenly to justify themselves -- they were under a curse. "As many as are trying to perform those sacrifices find themselves under a curse." The curse is, that they were not keeping everying in the Book of the Law to do them. If they kept everything in the Book of the Law, they wouldn't have had to offer sacrifices -- the rituals to justify themselves. They wouldn't have had to, because they weren't breaking anything. They were not required to offer a sacrifice unless they broke the law. Therefore, when they offered a sacrifice, they automatically acknowledged that they broke the law.


Paul call^s their attention to this fact: Whenever you perform the works of the law, you are admitting yourself as being under a curse. Because

it is written, "Cursed is every last one of you if you don't do every last point of the law." The curse comes on anyone, as it is written in the Old Testament (Deut. 27:26). You're cursed if you don't keep everything in the law. So, by performing the sacrifice, they were automatically acknowledging they had brought upon themselves the curse of the law.

Now, Paul says, "If you are under this curse, you can't be justified by offering any works of the law for we read, "Now no one is justified by law before God. This is quite evident because the righteous live by faith. We read the righteous live by faith" (Gal. 3:11).

No one is justified by law because the Old Testament (Hab. 2:4) says that the righteous live by faith. But any law in the Old Testament nowhere says that it's a matter of faith, but it's just a matter of doing. The law as it was given in the letter was not a matter of faith, but it says that who does them shall live in them (Gal. 3:12). In Lev. 18:5 we read, "You shall keep my statutes and my ordinances, which if a man do he shall live by them." In other words, if you obey God.

Paul said, "No one is justified by the law." The spiritual laws, even the sacrificial laws were not given to justify anybody, but the righteous have to live by faith and trust God in faith. However, the law itself is not a matter of faith, but ^{he} who does them shall live in them. That has more than one meaning.

Lev. 18:5 says, "You keep my statutes.." What were the statutes?  They were the statutes defining sin as well as the statutes regulating carnal ceremonies acknowledging sin. The carnal ordinances in the Old Testament are statutes just as the letter of the law ordinances defining the spiritual law are statutes. People don't understand these things. You have to meditate on God's law to get the difference. You have to look at it perhaps somewhat as a lawyer might. All of the statutes that God had been revealing through Lev. 1 up to 18:5, both carnal and the letter of the law explanations of spiritual principles -- Moses said, if you do them you are to live in them. What does that mean?

That means if you obey the letter of the law principles which define sin, those things that we should do, that we are going to live. That doesn't justify anybody. That just means that as long as you obey them you will live -- that you don't bring on yourself any penalty. And also, if you offer a sacrifice, you can live in the land. It doesn't say you

will gain eternal life. It says you will be accepted in the community. There was nothing that had to do with faith. All you had to do was obey, and if by reason of human weakness you disobeyed, the letter of the law which defined sin, you could offer a sacrifice so you could continue to live. There is no faith involved there. That doesn't justify you. You brought on yourself by breaking the law the spiritual penalty and Paul said there is nothing in the law, there is nothing in the Ten Commandments, there is nothing in the judgments, nothing in carnal or spiritual in the Old Testament that could possibly justify you. There is nothing whatsoever from one end of the law to the other that could ever justify you from past sin.

Once the sin was committed the only way it could be taken away as far as eternity is ~~concerned~~, is that you would have faith in someone who would die in your stead. Do you see what Paul was talking about? He was trying to prove to those Gentiles not to follow the Jews who were deceiving them into assuming that the law had a means of justification for eternal life. So Paul says, "the righteous shall live by faith, but the law is not a matter of faith, but whoever does them shall live by them. But Christ, you see, redeemed us from the curse of breaking the law" ----- "I speak after man's manner though that is man's covenant" (Gal. 3:15).

Now Paul is comparing the law of the Old Testament to a human covenant. Now, "even though there is a man's covenant, no one makes that covenant void or adds anything to it when confirmed or alters the covenant. Now to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He didn't say to many of them, but to only one, that is Christ. And this I say, a covenant confirmed before by God" -- God confirmed the covenant, He made it with Abraham when he was 75 and He finally confirmed it when he was 99 -- "Now the law which came 430 years after the covenant had been given" (Gal. 3:17).

In other words, there were 430 years from the time that Abraham was 75 to the year of the exodus. "Now the law which came 430 years after the covenant had been given, that law doesn't disannul or make any of the promises void." Now, what law was he really talking about? All the law came 430 years afterward, as far as that which defines sin.

Let's say the spiritual principles came about that length of time afterward, and even the carnal ordinances came within the 430th year before the next one, if you remember all the points as God started to reveal them. It was at this time that the law which was 430 years later. It doesn't disannul to make any of the promises void.

"Now, if inheritance is to be given, that is, if eternal inheritance is to be gained by law, then it is no more by means of promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise." Therefore, God could not have given the inheritance just by means of the law of which he is talking about. "What purpose does it serve? It was added because of transgression."

We read in the Old Testament that the carnal ordinances were given because they transgressed the law. When you recognized that you transgressed the law, then you offered the sacrifices according to this law, commonly called the law of Moses. Wherefore is this law added which the Jews were using for justification? There was no law which could justify them, but wherefore is this law added which the Jews used for justification? "It was added because of transgression and only for a period of time until the seed should come to whom the promises were made. And it was ordained by means of angels in a mediator's hand which was Moses."

Moses received many of these things at the charge and command of angels. "Not of one person alone was the mediator." That is, Moses wasn't just the mediator with God, he was the mediator between man and God. "God is one of the party" (Gal. 3:20). Paul is showing that a mediator stands for Moses who is a mediator not for just one, but between two -- God and man (Israelites).

"Is this law" -- which Moses brought to the knowledge of the people -- "is the law, then, against the promises of God?" Is there anything in the law which went contrary to the promises? Of course not. "Be it not so, for if the law had been given which could make alive,"-- If any law, in other words, had been given which could justify and grant life just by the offering of an animal -- "verily righteousness then would have been by the means of the law. But lo and behold, the scripture shuts up all under sin." So that there is no law to deliver us from sin. In other words, once we have sinned and broke the law, then there is no other law made by which we could get out from under that penalty. But we are shut up (before the bar of justice) that the promise from

faith of Jesus Christ might be given to the believing" -- the promise that we can have the very faith of Christ in us to trust God to pardon all our past mistakes because Christ died. That's open to us if we believe. (Gal. 3:22).

"Now before faith came we were kept inward under law." Now this is another one that troubled me. "Under law" is used in the Bible in only one sense, and only one! It does not mean "under the jurisdiction." It means, and it is a strictly legal term, "under its penalty." Jesus volunteered to be born under the penalty of the law. If it meant that he was under the sacrificial law to obey it, why didn't he obey it? He didn't offer any sacrifice at all!

There were many laws pertaining to sacrifices that you were to offer even when you did not sin. A burnt offering wasn't offered because of sin. A peace offering wasn't offered because of sin. A thank offering wasn't offered because of sin. Yet, Christ never offered one of those -- not one! So, Christ was under the law by reason of his having subjected himself to the penalty and He was born, having volunteered even before He was born, to take upon himself the penalty and He had it through all of His life until He died. And, so, the scriptures kept us inward (Gal. 3:23).

"Inward" means imprisoned. The original Greek means imprisoned under the penalty of law -- "...shut up within a prison unto the faith to be revealed. So that the law"-- not the ten commandments or the spiritual law which defines sin -- but that the law which was given 430 years after because of transgression until Christ should come. Why was this law added? That's what Paul was talking about -- a tutor, a pedagogue. It was a "teacher to lead us unto Christ that we might be justified from faith." That is, a law which points out and leads and directs us and guides us to a knowledge of One who would die -- Christ. (Gal. 3:24).

"But the faith having come, we are no more under a tutor." Now, here is where people again made a mistake. They assume, because they don't understand the principle. If you don't understand the principle, you can assume wrongly that the term "law" in the statement "under law" is the same law which is said to be a tutor and, therefore, when it says we are no longer under a tutor, it means that we are no longer under the jurisdiction

of the law. It doesn't mean any such thing! It means that we were put in prison so that the death penalty was on us because we broke the law -- and we were shut and bound.

We, then, are in prison. One law now imprisons us, but here is another law which becomes a teacher which leads -- a pedagogue leads you, to guide you. A pedagogue was the man who went from your private home and taught you, sometimes in a public school, sometimes led you from place to place. Here, then, is the law which acts as a tutor. Not the law which has the claim over your life, but one which acts as a tutor that we might be justified by means of Christ.

"But the faith having come, we then are no longer under a tutor" (Gal. 3:24). That is, we are no longer, once the faith has come, required to follow the obligation of a tutor. Once we have graduated and learned what the tutor said, we are out of school, so to speak. A tutor teaches us as long as we are in school. Here is where people make a mistake. They don't understand how the word "under" can have more than one meaning. In one sense, "under" means that something is over you. In what sense are you "under law?" It's a legal term, but people are not legal-minded today. They don't understand law. Not even lawyers. "Under law" is the legal term that meant law has a claim over your life. It's over you. When Paul says, "under a tutor," he meant that the tutor had a claim over your life, too, but not that the tutor had a claim of the death penalty -- but that the tutor required your obedience as long as you were under it's jurisdiction. God's spiritual law required your obedience too, but once you disobeyed, it also required your life. The term "under law," however, is never used with respect to the law when it means obedience.

When the Bible means that you are "within the law," or obeying the law, it means that you are obligated to obey the law. When it means that you are obligated to obey the ten commandments, for instance, Paul doesn't say "under law." Rather, he uses a strictly legal term, "Now to those without law, I reach them as if I didn't know very much about it either. I just talk to them about general principles. I don't talk about God's law directly at first, so that they don't know about all the sacrifices, the ten commandments and the rest." Paul just showed them that they needed to obey God as a whole. "Yet, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ" (I Cor. 9:21).

The word, "under," in I Cor. 9:21 is not the same as in Galatians. The word here -- see the Diaglott -- is a term which means WITHIN! Paul says, whenever you are obligated to obey the ten commandments and the rest of the law, you are "within the law" if you obey. Not under -- within. If you are within the law, the law cannot touch you. But once you have stepped without the law, have broken the law in the sense of stepping outside of the requirements of the law, then the law comes over you -- you are under it.

The term, "under law," is a legal term which means under penalty of the law. "Within the law" means obedience to it. Therefore, when you are under a tutor, it means the tutor is over you -- he has charge over you. When you didn't obey the sacrificial law, the law didn't say, "The sacrificial law claims your life." The tutor, the sacrificial law, merely says you should do what I say. That is, you should realize that these sacrifices point to Christ. Whatever the tutor, the tutor was to do this. The tutor was to say, "Look! Christ is coming." By offering a sacrifice, then, you acknowledged your sin and you trusted that someone would come to take the penalty. That's all. As far as the tutor was concerned, you were under it in the sense that you were obligated as a citizen of Israel to offer an offering -- that's all. But you're not under the tutor and that's not the same as being under the law. It means that the sacrifices were to be performed by Israelites, and Jews too, whenever they broke the law.

Jesus said, "When you've sinned physically and contracted disease..." When He healed the lepers, he said, "Now you go offer the offering commanded by Moses as a testimony to the fact that you have sinned and now you are clean." So, Jesus said, "Therefore, until I die you must be under the tutor. That is, you perform the obligation that the tutor requires of you."

With respect to ceremonial law, the term "under a tutor" was used to show that we were under the jurisdiction, but with respect to the civil law which defines sin the term is "within the law." That is, you have utmost freedom as long as you don't disobey. You have utmost freedom as long as you don't disobey, but you are under that law when you have the penalty over you. When Christ died, of course, then the requirement of performing those rituals was no longer needed, because there is no use to perform the ritual when a sacrifice that can take away sin has really come.

You don't have any more consciousness of sin as soon as you trust in faith and ask God to forgive you. He cleans your conscience up. You don't have to acknowledge it by a sacrifice. It wasn't wrong to do so, but you don't have to. The Jews continued to do so. It wasn't wrong, but they offered it for justification if they were converted Christians. They were allowed to do it and were told to go ahead rather than to cause a stumbling block to other Jews. They were to do it as an acknowledgment of the fact that they had sinned against the community. They didn't do as the Pharisees who were trying to do it for justification.

To offer a sacrifice isn't any more wrong than to butcher an animal. That is all it was except that, in this case, it was done for a purpose. People cannot see that. They assume that if you offer any sacrifice, you must be rejecting Christ. The Jews weren't who were converted. But there were many Jews who were unconverted who were offering an animal for justification and rejected Christ. That was another matter entirely.

Now, Paul breaks up the thought in Gal. 3 and mentions that we then can become the seed of Abraham and heirs of Christ by means of promise and trusting in faith and not by performing the rituals to justify you. Paul nowhere says that you are to disobey the ten commandments to gain eternal life. He is not even talking about that.

"But I say that so long a time that the heir is a babe, he doesn't differ from a bondsman, though lord of all; but he is under guardians, and stewards until the father's appointed day. So we also when we were babes, were in bondage under the rudiments of the world." (Gal. 4:1-3). Paul is not talking about the ten commandments here. He is now going off into another point, that just as a young child is subject to guardians, so we were subject or held in bondage to the very rudiments or basic principles that motivate this world, the principles of sin.

"But when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born with the penalty of the law on his very head that he might redeem those who were under law" -- not those who were obeying the commandments, but those who had the penalty of death upon them -- "that we might become the children of God" (mistranslated as "adoption"), (Gal. 4:4-5).

So then, "You Gentiles too, are sons and God sends forth his Spirit also to all our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So then, you are no longer

bondmen to the rudiments of the world, but a son and an heir, the same as we Jews," (Gal. 4:7).

Now, verse 21, "Tell me, you that desire to be under law, hear you not the law?" Now, Paul is putting out a pointed barb. He was showing them all the way through... (Do I have to start all over again?) Notice verse 19, just before. "My little children of whom I am again in travail, until Christ be formed in you,-- but I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my voice for I am perplexed about you. Tell me, you that desire to be under law,..."

What is Paul referring to? Does this mean, "Tell me, you that desire to obey God's commandments? No, that would contradict the whole tenor of scripture. Does this mean, "Tell me, you who desire to perform sacrifices? Is that what he is talking about? No, he is actually speaking of those Jews who by the act of offering the sacrifices were admitting themselves under the penalty of the law -- he is actually showing what they're doing. He said in the first place, "As many as are of the works of the law, who seek justification, are under the curse, that is, under the law." He said, "Now tell me, those who by offering your sacrifices and seeking justification by that means -- those of you who are actually desiring to acknowledge you are under the law..." That's what they were doing. They were by that very means glad to acknowledge they were under the law, showing that they were trying to glorify these sacrifices and show that the sacrifices were so much greater that it could pay the penalty for their sins.

"So, tell me, you Jews, who aren't seeing this thing clearly -- who desire to be under the law." That is what they were actually doing. It seems strange to our ears, but we have to understand it in the tone in which Paul said it. He says, "Tell me now...Look here!..." That's the thought. "Look here, you who desire to be under the law." They didn't want to bring on themselves the penalty of death. They were really trying to glorify the sacrifices and show how much greater that was than law, but he's showing that by doing that they were really bringing upon themselves the penalty of law.

"Now tell me," he says, "you who desire to be under the law. Don't you even hear what the law itself says." They were acknowledging this and

he was showing that they weren't even listening to the law which had a claim over their life by their very actions. "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons," and then he shows the covenant and how the one covenant produced nothing but bondage. In other words, he says, "You foolish Jews, and some Gentiles who followed suit -- "don't you understand that by offering these sacrifices and by wanting to belong to the Old Covenant by wanting to obey in the letter"-- which means that they were also going to bring upon themselves the curses -- "that you are only engendering yourself to bondage."

The Old Covenant engendered to bondage. Every time you broke it, you became in bondage to sin. You became the slave to sin every time you broke the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant, which had no mercy for eternal life, merely brought the death penalty down upon you once again. These Jews, who by their sacrifices didn't see things clearly, were actually desiring to be in bondage. They wanted to serve the Old Covenant according to the letter and offer sacrifices to get themselves out from under it.

This was a very strange attitude! But it wasn't much later that the Gentiles had another attitude almost the same. They said, "Let's break God's spiritual law that grace may abound." We can hear any number of ministers say, "We can't keep God's law. Therefore, let's not worry about keeping it. Let's not be concerned about it. I don't care how much you break the law, Christ died for you." That's the theme. They frankly say that the law is holy, the law is just, the law is good and if man were only better, he could keep it. But they say that man can't, which happens to be generally true. "Therefore, let's not try. But whenever we break it, let's have the penalty of Christ take the place of the death penalty."

Some of them go so far as to say there is no law at all by which they even do away with grace, but the Jews went to the other extreme. They said, "Let's offer sacrifices." They say, "We're sinning all the time." They knew it. Some of the Pharisees, however, were such hypocrites that they wouldn't admit it. They tried to appear so righteous that they weren't even breaking any laws. But many a time they did, and

in many cases, of course, they were even touching physical things they should not have done.

Paul was showing here that those of you who by your sacrifices are only trying to bring upon yourself, or desiring to bring upon yourself, the penalty of the law that you could glorify the sacrifices. The Old Covenant only brings a penalty and has no means of justifying you.

"For freedom then, Christ has set us free. Stand fast then, and be not entangled in a yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). This is not the ten commandments, but all these sacrifices -- a part of the law added because of transgression. "Don't become entangled again in having to alter those because you want to be a part of the Old Covenant which brings a curse on you. "

Every Jew actually had acknowledged -- even when he was young, he came to that knowledge -- that he had broken the law some time or another. He was offering the sacrifices. They were actually getting under the penalty of this law by admitting themselves under the penalty. Paul said, "Don't become engendered with a yoke of offering all these sacrifices which never delivered you from anything."

"Behold, I Paul say to you, that, if you receive circumcision for justification -- they ordered circumcision when it didn't matter -- but if you receive it for the purpose of justifying yourself for eternal life, Christ won't profit you a thing." "And I testify again to every man who is circumcised, every Jew who is circumcised in the flesh, because he was a Jew and was in that community, that he became a debtor to do the whole law." In other words, Paul was saying that a circumcised Jew was in the community and according to the Old Covenant, had to keep all the rituals. It was just a part and parcel of the constitution of the nation. You were circumcised and you kept all of the law.

Paul goes one step further. He says, "I am testifying now to you Jews that I testify again to every man who is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Now, you were severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:3-4).

There is nothing wrong with circumcision, but it profits us nothing if we receive it in place of Christ. Christ profits us nothing if we want to be circumcised in order to be justified. There was nothing wrong

with circumcising Timothy -- we know that he was -- but he wasn't circumcised to be justified. He was only circumcised not to offend the Jews. Circumcision or uncircumcision profits nothing one way or the other.

Paul says, of course, that you are then debtors to do the whole law if you are circumcised. That statement is found in the Old Testament. That is, if you were circumcised, you were part of the nation, you had to obey all the laws and all the rituals as well. But Paul says if you perform circumcision and all of these rituals that go with it for justification, then you're severed from Christ if you are going to do all of these things.

Paul was showing to the Gentiles who had thought they should be circumcised, that if they were circumcised for justification, then according to law they would have to offer all of the sacrifices. He knew that would break them in a hurry. Many Jews said this, "All you have to do is to be circumcised and you don't have to do anything more, because you live in a Gentile community." Remember, even the Jews living abroad didn't offer sacrifices. They could only do that at Jerusalem.

Therefore, Paul was saying, "Now you Gentiles, if you mistake the principles of the covenant, and if you follow the Jews by circumcising your children, if you follow the Jews in circumcising your children for the purpose of gaining salvation and being justified from sin, then that very law which says you must be circumcised, says also that you must keep all of the rituals." He knew that they could not do that. And he was showing them that there is no need. If you try the one, you must do the other, but if you try them both even, you are severed from Christ. That is the real principle.

There is nothing wrong, even today, in circumcising your child, but that does not obligate any of us to keep the rest of the law. We reckon ourselves dead to the covenant. We died when we acknowledged ourselves as sinners and that Christ paid the penalty. And that even goes for our children, because we and our children are being brought up under the terms of the New Covenant. We don't have to keep the terms and conditions of the old in respect to the letter of the law. Fundamentally even, the Old Covenant did not contain the statement about sacrifices and

circumcision, but I am associating them with the Old Covenant in this case.

In other words, the Jews wanted to gain eternal life by keeping the covenant in the letter and offering the sacrifices. Paul is saying that we are to do more than to keep the Old Covenant in the letter, we are to acknowledge ourselves dead to that covenant, but keep everything that it said -- not just in the letter, but in the spirit and intent.-- not just what is on the surface, but the very intent of the law.

Paul said that he served the law not according to the letter (II Cor. 3). It is the same law, but not the letter only, but the spirit. We just don't serve the physical letter only, but the intent. Jesus himself said, "I don't come to do away with the letter, I'm come to add to it." When we see that, then we recognize that we have died to the strict letter of the law of the Old Covenant which only promised material life and that through Christ we keep not only the very letter of the law, but we keep it in the spirit that we might gain eternal life.

Circumcision and sacrifices were associated with an Old Covenant afterward as a reminder of sin. Once Christ came, we don't have to perform those things. That was nailed to the cross through Christ. He was a circumcised man, and he died. Whatever requirement the Old Covenant placed -- and even all of the other laws associated with it -- on circumcision, was fulfilled in the sense that Christ was circumcised in the flesh. But any requirement to be circumcised in the flesh has been paid by Jesus Christ. He was circumcised in the flesh and He died. His sacrifice was typically accepted. There couldn't have been an uncircumcised man sacrificed for us. He had to be circumcised., because even the letter of the law that went along with the Old Covenant though not a part of it, was added afterward -- the carnal ordinances. They said you needed to be circumcised and you needed to offer sacrifices. Christ didn't come under that, but as a sacrifice, he was circumcised. Any requirement to be circumcised in the flesh has actually been taken care of as far as Christ and as far as we are concerned.

The Law, as given by Herman L. Hoeh (1954)

- Page 1: How long was the Old Covenant in effect?
- Page 2: Repetition in Deuteronomy
- Page 3: Commandments contained in ordinances, sacrifices and rituals
- Page 4: Christ paid the penalty for sin
- Page 5: Christ's death replace physical sacrifices
- Page 6: No need for Old Covenant any longer
- Page 7: Understanding Galatians
- Page 8: God revealed spiritual laws in the form of the letter
- Page 9: Old Covenant was an agreement
- Page 10: Offerings in Leviticus given nine months after Old Covenant
- Page 11: Good statutes define sin
- Page 12: Spiritual laws revealed before Sinai (Jer. 7:21-22)
- Page 13: Keep Book of the Law fundamentally in Deuteronomy
- Page 14: Letter of the law defines the principle explained by Christ
- Page 15: Jesus didn't abolish the letter of the law; magnified it
- Page 16: Hatred defined
- Page 17: Love is defined by God's commandments
- Page 18: Jews used sacrifices to justify themselves and pay penalty of past guilt
- Page 19: Paul said, "I through law died to law" that existed
- Page 20: Galatians 2:20-21
- Page 21: Galatians 3:5-10
- Page 22: Curse of the law on those who disobeyed it
- Page 23: Righteous shall live by faith in Christ
- Page 24: Galatians 3:19-20, carnal ordinances given because of transgressions
- Page 25: "under the law" means under its penalty when Jesus volunteered to die
- Page 26: "under a tutor" means being taught, led and disciplined
- Page 27: "within the law" (1 Cor. 9:21) means obedience to it
- Page 28: Galatians 4:1-5
- Page 29: Galatians 4:21, under law and sacrificing
- Page 30: Law and grace
- Page 31: Galatians 5:1-4
- Page 32: Circumcision and other rituals don't justify
- Page 33: Keep intent and spirit of the law

Law of Moses – Quotes

The Law as given by Herman L. Hoeh in 1954

Dr. Hoeh had doubts about the meaning of Galatians. “If you don’t understand the OT you’ll never understand the New.... God’s law was in existence fundamentally from the beginning as far as the principle of love” (p.7)

God revealed His spiritual laws in the form of the letter at Sinai (p.8).

The “Book of the Covenant” had laws based on the Ten Commandments. It involved more than law. It involved and acknowledgment. The agreement had a signature and was sealed by blood sprinkled on the Book. After Ex. 24, instructions for building the Tabernacle and establishing the priesthood were given. (p.9)

Heb. 7:16 – “carnal commandments” mean fleshly commandments.

Lev. 1 is about offerings and washings. Sometimes “law” in the NT refers to spiritual principles of the law. In other cases it refers to the law code, the old cov. Sometimes to carnal laws which were added because of transgressions.

Lev. 4:1-2 – If any sin – sacrifices were required. (p.10)

There are good statutes and bad ones. Good statutes define sin. Others have no value. They didn’t profit and became a curse. The Old Cov. was meant to explain laws which men could not otherwise know.

Psalms 119 – laws, commandments, statutes and judgments are good. (p.11)

Examine OT to understand Paul’s writings. Jer. 7:21-22 – Old Cov. contained spiritual laws that they should have been keeping before. Verse 21 is often misunderstood. Obedience was wanted. (p. 12)

Josh. 1:8 – “book of the law”. Matt. 5 is about the New Cov. and JC who taught that the law was to be kept according to its spiritual intent that God revealed long before – the intents of which couldn’t be put down by the very letter of the law. (p.13)

“Jesus didn’t abolish the letter of the law”. He magnified it. (p.15)

“We must find the spiritual intent” as Jesus magnified it. Gal. 2:15 – “works of law” refers to physical work and sometimes to spiritual work. We are not justified by either. (p. 17)

The Jews were using sacrifices to justify themselves like penance is used by the Catholic church. There is a difference between Judaism and the religion of Moses. Sacrifices acknowledged sin and were not meant to justify. Gal. 2:16 – We are justified by the faith OF JC. (p.18)

In Matt. 5, JC explains the spirit of the law. Paul “died to the law” (p.19).

Paul said the law “slew him.” It had a claim on his life. Through Christ he could live to God (Gal. 2:20). Gal. 2:21 – “through sacrifices and ordinances”. Gal. 3:3-4. (p.20).

Gal. 3:5-8, 10 – “works” = rituals. (p.21)

Curse (Deut. 27:26) and Gal. 3:11-12. Lev. 18:5 says “keep my statutes”, but which ones? Gal. 3:12 – must “live by them”. What does that mean? Obey them to live. (p.22)

Gal. 3:17 – (p.23)

Gal. 3:20 – The Mediator. No law can deliver from sin. (p.24)

Gal. 3:22-23 – “under law” = under the penalty. “inward” = imprisoned, “under guard” (NKJ). Gal. 3:24 – the law added was a teacher to lead people to Christ (p.25)

The law was a guide. Once we live by faith we are “not required to follow the obligations of a tutor.” “under law” = the law is over you, a legal term to mean the law has a claim on your life. A tutor is required to teach obedience. Paul was “within the law” (1 Cor. 9:21). (p.26)

Timothy was not circumcised to be justified. It was done so the Jews would not be offended. If you are circumcised, you are a debtor to do the whole law, including rituals (p.32)

The Jews wanted to gain eternal life by keeping the covenant in the letter and by offering the sacrifices. Paul said: We are to acknowledge ourselves to be dead to the cov., but keep everything that it said – not just in the letter, but in the spirit and intent – not just what is on the surface, but the very intent of the law.

2 Cor. 3 – Same law but not the letter only, but the spirit and intent. Jesus came to magnify and expand the law. Any requirement to be circumcised in the flesh has been paid by JC. He was circumcised and died as a sacrifice for us. (p.33)