

Romans 9:4-5 Who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the *temple* service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Last week, we discussed the beginning of the Law (the giving of the Ten Commandments) and how these commandments provided a distinguishing marker for Israel and began their social and moral structure. Other laws had been written that provided social and moral structure, but these laws had given Israel a higher standard than the nations around them. The four laws concerning the worship of God are fantastically unique to the understanding of any deity during this time in history. The Ten Commandments as we know them are:

1. There are no other gods in my presence.
2. Do not make any idols.
3. Do not take the Lord's name in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy.
5. Honor thy mother and father.
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not testify false witness against your neighbor.
10. Do not covet.

Looking at Deuteronomy 5 in conjunction with Exodus 20 reveals that there are more than 10 verbal commands; some of the commands are broken down into more precise actions. As part of the rule to not make any idols, the Lord also says you shall not worship them or serve them. These have a slightly different verb stem, but the emphatic nature remains. In the command to keep the sabbath, God expounds on this by saying, "You will work six days, you will do all your work (in those six days)." Then He says on the seventh, "You will not do any work." Finally, the law of not coveting is also expounded upon. The command you will not covet (desire, long for) is repeated twice, but the list of what not to covet has seven objects (Deut 5:8). This has led to confusion.

Why do we call them the Ten Commandments? Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13 – *ăsereth dāvār*. "And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten words." What is obvious is that the ten words do refer to this list but as to the separation; really it is inconsequential to the meaning.

Each of these commandments is expanded and given a table of offenses in the rest of the Torah, all except for coveting. The rule for not coveting is unique in that it is preventive in nature to keep one from breaking the previous four laws of murder, adultery, stealing, being false to one another.

The rule of not coveting is repeated (Deuteronomy 7:23-26). Note in this reference that the abominable act is taking the idol or even the gold or silver. The instruction to not long for these things is preventive. The 600+ laws that are given in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy can be divided into three categories: civil laws, moral laws, and ceremonial laws. These can further be broken down into other categories: moral, social, dietary, purity, feasts, sacrificial, Levitical, tabernacle, and still more.

In the text, there is no division of the Law, every part is expected to be understood and followed to the fullest. The divisions are man-made and allow us to categorize these laws. The negative repercussion is that Christendom has taken these divisions as an opportunity to divide up the Law so as to choose which part of the Law is enacted today.

The Law was to Israel and had particular blessings and curses based on Israel's performance.

First of all, the blessing in Exodus 19:3-4 is three-fold and then expounded upon in Deuteronomy 28.

1. Treasured possession – peculiar or special among all the peoples
2. Kingdom of priests – A representative nation; an advocate between the nations and God
3. Holy nation – a nation set apart, distinguished, and to be a picture of God's character on Earth

Deuteronomy 28

4. Set high above all nations
5. Blessed in the city and country
6. Fruit of the womb (multiplication)
7. Multiplication in the crops and animals
8. Food supplies
9. Enemies are defeated

The curses in Deuteronomy are basically the opposite of the blessings

1. Become lower than the nations
2. You will not have good production
3. Problems with procreation

Verses 20—46

The blessings and curses from keeping the Law are all physical. The spiritual concept of being holy is still visible in separateness, not holy before the Lord. Remember that righteousness of the individual is still in accordance with the faith of Abraham. Honoring and keeping the Law is a national concept. Our culture is all about the individual — what does this mean to me? We read the Law and desire to have it in our lives, but the Law is about national obedience or disobedience. Individuals do make up the nation, but the responsibility of keeping the Law is a national responsibility.

After understanding the details of the Law, we must (unfortunately) understand that the Law is not intended for the Church. In the New Testament, there is no question that it says the church is not under the Law (Romans 6:12-15). In our studies of Romans, we carefully dismantled the concept of the Law and the purpose of the Law. But what about the 10 Commandments?

Most people will point out that 9 of the 10 commandments are repeated in the New Testament. The only one that is not is about the sabbath. But we have already engaged this briefly. You cannot take out part of the Law and say it's applicable now but another part is not. It is either all or none (Galatians 5:2-6; James 2:8-10).

Many churches teach or agree that the Law does not save. But after salvation, they believe the Law, in part or in whole, is necessary in some form or another.

Hebrew Roots:

This is the belief that the church should not only follow the Old Testament Law but that it is mandated by Paul. They believe that the New Testament was written in Hebrew, not Greek, so our texts are unreliable. They are of the persuasion that all the Law is still active except for those pertaining to making sacrifices. The moral, civil, ceremonial, laws pertaining to feasts, and dietary laws are still active. Many of the leaders of these movements are Gentile and change their name to Jewish names in an attempt to regain their Hebrew roots. They think that believers have neglected their call to become Jewish and even need to take on circumcision if they have not done so already.

“They often wear articles of traditional Jewish clothing, practice Davidic dancing, and incorporate Hebrew names and phrases into their writing and conversations. Most reject the use of the name "Jesus" in favor of Yeshua or YHWH, claiming that these are the "true" names that God desires for Himself. In most cases, they elevate the Torah as the foundational teaching for the Church, which brings about the demotion of the New Testament, causing it to become secondary in importance and only to be understood in light of the Old Testament.”

Many Hebrew Roots believers spiritualize movements, clothing, chants, and speaking in Hebrew to have a more "spiritual experience." The point is that they believe that the Law is not only for Israel but also for the Church.

Negation:

1. Israel is not even under the Law (Jeremiah 31 – The New Covenant)

2. Colossians 2:16-17
3. Romans 14:5
4. Galatians 3:23-29 – The Church is made up of Jew and Gentile and is the current body of Christ

Many other forms and different variations are taken on. Some break the Law down and then search to try to find what part of the Law is valid for today. Moral and civil laws are usually the two that are most likely to be promoted.

“Why, then, does the moral law carry over into the new covenant and not the ceremonial and civil laws? One reason is that, unlike the ceremonial and civil laws, the moral law predates the Mosaic covenant. The moral law, in fact, goes back to the creation. It is the standard to which God holds all human beings in all times and in all places.”

But as stated, the system of the Mosaic Law is not in play for the church or even for the Jew. There is the objection that there are many imperatives and implorations to the church in the epistles. This is true. What needs to be clarified is what Hebrew Roots, various forms of Reformed Theology, Dual Covenant, and Torah Submission advocates will teach is that following the Law (in some form or another) makes one holy, increases godly maturity (brings to completion), and adds a deeper spiritual experience. Some of them even suggest that the promised blessings and curses from the Old Testament currently come upon believers based on their performance.

1. Given that the apostles were highly in tune with Christ, did they or did they not follow the Law?
2. If they follow the Law, why did they not enjoy the blessings of the Law?
3. How does one avoid the curses now if one were to break the Law (no Levitical system)?
4. It is clear that one must ignore many passages in the epistles to come to these conclusions.

Back to the question of the believer's responsibility now — Many of the Church Age commands resemble or even look exactly like Old Testament Law: "do not commit adultery, do not steal, flee idolatry." But what was the premise of the Law? Was it "do this and you will be blessed, do them not and you will be cursed?" The Law also was a system of societal controls under a theocracy.

The believer has everything provided to him based upon grace; the life we live now is lived because of what Jesus has done for us. Our acts of service and sacrifice to each other for the sake of Jesus Christ are done out of appreciation for the grace we have received.

That does not mean that there are not benefits to serving.

1. Eternal/millennial rewards (2nd Timothy 2:12; 4:7-8; James 1:12; 1Pet 1:6-7; 5:1-4)
2. Avoidance of the pitfalls of sin (natural repercussions of sin)
3. Avoidance of godly discipline (Hebrews 12:7-11; 1Cor 11:27-33; James 5:19-20; 1st John 5:16-17)

In conclusion:

1. Grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus
2. Love God/love people
 - a. Not to gain
 - b. But because you have
3. Avoid sin
 - a. Not to avoid curses
 - b. But because you have been
4. The Ten Commandments is not a system for the Church to be holy or gain blessings

The conclusions of The Law

1. A system of rules given by God to Moses to the people of Israel after they had been redeemed.
2. The Ten Letters (commandments) are an abbreviated overview of the entire system
3. They comprised of
 - a. Civil
 - b. Moral
 - c. Ceremonial
 - i. Sacrifices
 - ii. Feast
 - iii. Tabernacle worship
 - iv. Levitical priestly duties

In the rest of Romans 9:4, it also mentions temple services and promises, which we will cover in greater detail. But in short, the temple services shadowed the heavenly tabernacle. We will be referring to Hebrews 9 for much of that lesson. The services were manifold in purpose of which two main ones stand out: a foreshadowing of the final sacrifice of Jesus and the uniqueness of the worship of YAHWEH among all other so-called gods.

The promises are not the covenants and it is not the Law, so what are the promises? The promises refer to the seed promise and what the Seed would accomplish. The promises were made to Adam and to Abraham and carried out through to Jesus. This was provided to the Jews, but does this apply to Church currently?