***The Christian's Attitude toward the Law

Colossians 2:18-19

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Our subject is "The Error of Legalism," number 55.

The Old Testament Mosaic Law was a religious, social, and political way of life for the Jewish people. It was designed exclusively for the nation of Israel, which was to be the future line of descent of the coming Messiah Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Mosaic Law was never applicable as a way of life for gentiles or Christians. The fact that it is so widely treated, among religious groups today, shows how great is the subtlety of deception of Satan, and how terrible is the fact that preachers are not students of the Word of God, so that they can rightly divide the Word of Truth, and the people of God can be informed.

You've heard this many times: that the Mosaic Law is not our way of life. And it might almost become tiresome to hear that, but it is so true, and so widely misunderstood. So, it is something we should appreciate: that God has made it clear to us – that the Mosaic Law had its place in time, and it has served its purpose, but we live in a much more victorious, powerful, spiritual condition.

The Mosaic Law was, as you know, a series of prescribed human works, which foreshadowed the future person, and saving work, of Jesus Christ on the cross, who would be sacrificed as the Lamb of God. The Mosaic Law showed forth the absolute righteousness of God. As you study the principles of the Mosaic Law (the ritual system; the holy days; and, the sacrifices), it was very clear that what God's absolute righteousness was all about. And it showed what the holy character of God was.

However, there was a problem, because God said to His people: "Be holy, as I am Holy. Well, the Mosaic Law showed them what holiness was that – there was no way they could be holy (absolute righteousness) as God is absolute righteousness.

So, the Mosaic Law was a mirror. And when you looked into it, sinful man said, "I can't make it, I have no ability to justify myself." He had no power to do the right thing.

**The Sin Offering**

In came the sin offering as one of five offerings. This was required to be restored to temporal fellowship with God, when a Jew was guilty of unintentional, unknown sins. And then, he became aware of it. The sin offering applied to four different categories of Jews, as we have seen, with distinct ceremonial procedures for each one. It covered the high priest; it covered the nation of Israel as a whole; it, covered the political rulers of the people; and, it covered the common people, individually. Each of them dealt with God for their unintentional, thoughtless sinning, at some point, that violated the holy character of God, and thus broke fellowship.

It's like: "The law is the law." If the speed limit is 30 miles an hour, and you go through there at 60, and the policeman stops you, you cannot say, "I did know it was 30 miles an hour here." Ignorance of the law does not excuse you from guilt. That's the way law is. And with the Mosaic Law, you could be unintentional and thoughtless in sinning, but it was still a violation of the standard of God's character. You were out of fellowship.

**The Law**

This would include failure to bear true and complete witness to a crime. It would involve touching something unclean, or some person unclean (ceremonially unclean). And it would deal with vows that a person loosely makes to God (promises that people make to God): "Oh, God, if You'll help me get over this illness, I promise that I'll do this. If you'll help me out of this tight spot, I promise that I will do this." And then things straighten out, and you forget the promise. That is not blown off with God, as it is on a human level.

There were specific types of sin offerings, as a person's economic means prescribed. The poorer you are, the more modest the offering was. And there was a provision for each of these categories. Temporal fellowship would restore the Jew to enjoying God's blessing and His guidance, as we indicated, in the church age. And the association with people is often a way that you get brought down: associating with evil companions; associating with evil ideas; or, associating with evil customs. It will bring you down, and suddenly, you pay a terrible price, because, at heart, what does Scripture say?

When David was guilty of the sin of adultery, in Psalm 52, one year later, he finally makes his confession and admission. He makes that statement: "Against You, and You only, have I sinned." Well, there had been a murder involved. There was a marital destruction involved. There were all kinds of things that were involved there, and it was against God. Yes. Sin is against God. And if you're going to be a pal with the world, you will, sooner or later, be sinning against God, because you get used to doing things the way the world does things. And the next thing you know, you'll be excusing yourself, and you'll be accusing other people of things that they haven't said, or that they haven't done, which is causing you to be out of line with the holiness of God: "Be holy, as I am Holy." It's a command – not an invitation.

**The Trespass Offering (The Guilt Offering)**

The second compulsory offering that we're going to look at now (this is the last of the five offerings) was called a trespasser offering, or sometimes known as the guilt offering. It was for the restoration also to fellowship on the Old Testament ground. But this was for intentional (known) sitting – a deliberate, willful choice to sin. Now, you also lost fellowship. If you were a Jew who was saved, trusting in the coming Messiah, and you intentionally committed a sin, you were not lost again, but you did have a problem.

Leviticus 5:14-19 is a section that deals with the trespass offering. This was compulsory (required) when you were ready to admit that you deliberately chose to do evil. It's a non-fragrant offering. It's not pleasing to God. And it is a restoration to temporal fellowship for willful sinning. In Leviticus 5:14, you have a case of special sins that are used here as examples of deliberate wrongdoing.

Leviticus 5:14: "Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'If a person acts unfaithfully, and sins unintentionally against the Lord's holy things, then he shall bring his guilt offering to the Lord: a ram without defect from the flock, according to your evaluation in silver, by shekels, in terms of the shekels of the sanctuary for a guilt offering.'" This person didn't plan to sin. As a matter of fact, he didn't view it as sin. It was just something: "Ah, this was OK to do." But it was a deliberate choice. It wasn't that he didn't know, for other reasons, that it was sinful, but it was a deliberate choice. And these are against the Lord's holy things.

There are certain things that God considers extremely special to Him. And one of the holiest things God has is the Christian. In this age, God warns: "Do not put your hand out to strike against my servants who serve me; who speak the truth; and, who represent the word of true doctrine. Think twice before you attack them. Think twice before you deal them misery, because the justice of God will deal with you for that." Why? Because we are His holy children. And you cannot treat Christians with contempt, as fools and indifferent, without suffering for it. You cannot do it as individuals, and you cannot do it as a nation, as its leadership.

**Kwanzaa and Hanukkah**

The kind of things that are behind this in the Old Testament (against God's holy things) is worshiping idols. They did a lot of that. They would excuse it: "Well, I don't really mean it. Well, it's just a custom. We don't really do this." You know, we have this we have this practice called Kwanzaa. It's another one of those substitutes for Christmas. It's from Africa. Most people don't know that it was that Kwanzaa never existed in old time, anywhere in the world. It was invented in about 1965, by a renegade godless character as the rallying point. And the government, even now, recognizes it, and the president has been talking about the wonderful principles of Kwanzaa, and what it historically stood for. Somebody needs to inform him that it never existed. It was an invention. And what it was, was just like Hanukkah. Hanukkah is something to substitute for Christ Jesus, born in Bethlehem. That is robbing God. That is worshiping in idolatry.

**The Tithe**

Robbing God of tithes is another thing. In the Old Testament, the tithe was the 10% of the temple tax, rich or poor. In the Old Testament, you didn't say, "Hey, you're a rich guy. You pay three tithes.” That is Karl Marx' idea. The United States has that in our progressive income tax – that graduated income tax. It is right out of communism, and completely against Scripture. And as you know, they had to have an amendment to the Constitution to be able to do that, because the founders said, "You're not going to do that. We're not going to allow you to set up a system where you can tax people directly at different levels.

So, nevertheless, for a Jew not to pay his 10% of whatever he had, he was robbing God. That's what Malachi says. Isn't that interesting? Look at Malachi 3:7. A lot of preachers love to quote this passage, except it doesn't apply to Christians: "From the days of your fathers, you have turned aside from My statutes, and have not kept them." The Jews have always been a stiff-necked people. And here, Malachi is speaking the message of God: "'You people have always wanted to disobey Me. Return to me and I'll return to you,' said the Lord of Hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?'" Now, as always, the say, "What are you talking about? Of course we love You, God. Of course, we're your people. What do you mean return? We didn't leave you." Yes, you did. You're not living as My people. You're living as Satan's people."

So, Malachi, through the Holy Spirit, says, "OK, I'll tell you how you can return. Will a man rob God?" How's that for a question: "I'm going to steal from God:" "Yet you are robbing Me, but you say, 'How have we robbed You?' Well, I'll tell you: in tithes and offerings." Do you notice that both are there? "First of all, a lot of you Jews have not paid your 10% temple tax. You're stealing from Me. Secondly, you never bothered giving any offerings either." That was over and above the 10%. That was a choice.

So, verse 9 says, "You are cursed with a curse, for you're robbing Me – the whole nation of you:" stealing offerings from God. One of the dumbest things any Christian can do, who wants a long life; who wants a healthy, satisfying life; and, who wants a rewarded eternity, is to steal from God on a financial level. It is the height of blinded carnality. If you want your life to start coming apart, here's the way to do it. And with these people, as with so many Christians, they pretend they're giving. They do it in a deceitful, lying way. But they really don't give it. All they're doing is promising to give.

So, here's the Old Testament way. God says, "You are robbing Me." And verse 10 says, "This is the way it should be. Bring the whole tithe, not just part of it. Bring it – the whole thing into the storehouse." Tell me what the storehouse is.

Now, you can see how sticky this gets when you try to apply this verse in our day, which many denominations do today. Where is the storehouse? Well, there's only one place in Scripture, and that's Jerusalem. It is called the temple. And it actually had rooms which were the storage rooms, in which the funds were kept: "Bring your whole tithe to the storehouse." Well, we can't do that. We have to readjust the meaning of these words. Now do how easy it is to suddenly impose the legal system of the Mosaic Law on top of Christians? How it is to pursue: like reformed theology does; like Lutheran theology does; and, like theologies of the Reformation do, that never separates Israel and the church? They're busily pursuing how to put the Mosaic Law on Christians, so they can't be literal anymore. They say, "Well, from now on, we will call the storehouse God's church. The church is the storehouse."

Now, that's interesting, isn't it? I have a Christian brother here. He needs my help. I have God's money. It's available. I've set it aside for the Lord's work. I'm going to help him." You can't do that, because now it says, "Bring the money to the church, and we will handle it from there." The storehouse was the temple. If you want to know a signal that a church is way off spiritually, and that it is has not grasped the magnificence of the grace way of life, watch if they call themselves "the temple." They love to use the word "temple."

The church, the body of the believer, is the temple – not some building. It was in the Old Testament, but there is no temple, so there's no storehouse to bring these tithes to: "Bring the whole tide into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house." Food in My house? Yeah. Do you have pizza parties after praise and worship meetings? Now, this is for the support of the preachers. This is how the Mosaic, priestly, Aaronic system was sustained, because they were not given a part of land from which to provide for their families. It was the tithe that supplied them.

Then God says, "'You go ahead and do that this way. Test me,' said the Lord of Hosts. 'if I'm not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that you may not destroy the fruits of the ground, nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And all nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful lamb,' says the Lord of Hosts. "When you do things God's way in your life personally, you become a delightful person. When you do this as a society, you become a delightful society. As Israel deviated in its financial responsibility (this holy thing – the tithe), they brought upon themselves, eventually, their enslavement to a foreign power.

**Holy Feast Days**

Another holy thing is the holy feast days. Israel was ignoring the feast days. We have no holy days in Christianity. But what do these people, who are still trying to live with the Mosaic system do. They invent them? So, all of a sudden, Easter is a different day. It's a feast day. Christmas is a different day. And this is subtly in the minds of people. Come next Easter, I can guarantee you that we'll have a big attendance. Come next Christmas, we'll have a very big attendance. Why is that? Because it's a holy day. No, it isn't. It's the Lord's Day. And even Sunday is not a holy day. It's the same as any other day.

**The Sacrifices**

Then there are the sacrifices. They neglected those. You will notice, as we've gone through these sacrifices, that the animal, representing Jesus Christ, had to be perfect. It couldn't be blind in one eye. It couldn't be a cripple. It had to be a healthy animal, because that would represent the sinlessness of Christ. Do you know what the Jews were doing? For sacrificing, they were culling out the bad animals, and using them up in sacrifices. Is that an unholy thing, or what?

**Restitution**

So, that's what's behind this statement in Leviticus 15: if a person acts unsafely, and sins against the Lord's holy thing. This was covered, when they did this, by a perfect ram. And to that ram was added a percentage of its value as a restitution for what had been taken from God

Verse 16: "And he (the sinner) shall make restitution for that which he has sinned against the holy thing. And he shall add to it a fifth part of it, and give it to the priest. And the priest then shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering to be forgiven him." The priest will determine: "This ram is worth $50. And so the person has to add 20%: "He will add a fifth as a penalty." So the whole service will cost him $60. And that added $10 goes to God, for stealing from Him. And that $10 goes into the Treasury for the support of the priesthood.

So, this is an interesting arrangement that God has: this ram, representing the Lord Jesus Christ (the sinner substituted). To that is added the penalty, representing the grace of God. So, when you took from God a $50 ram, the grace of God brought back $60 worth. So, God received more than you had taken. He gains more through Christ than what we lost.

The whole procedure for this sacrifice is in Leviticus 7:1-6. It is all very precise, and it all has significant meaning. But it is all ritual. It, in itself, has no saving spiritual value. Leviticus 7:1 said, "Now this is the law of the guilt offering (the trespass offering). It is most holy. In the place where they slay the burnt offering (that's outside the temple), they are also to slay the guilt offering (the brazen altar). And he shall sprinkle its blood around on the altar. Then he shall offer from it all of its fat: the fat tail; the fat that covers the entrails; and, the two kidneys, with the fat that is on them, which is on the loins. The lobe of the liver shall he remove with the kidneys." All this fat, and these particular organs, are viewed as the most luxurious of the animal. So, God gets the best.

"And the priest will offer them up in smoke on the altar as an offering by fire to the Lord. It is a guilt offering. Every male among the priests may eat of it. It shall be eaten in a holy place. It is most holy." This is part of what the priests, then, were able to use as our food supply.

A believer, then, in the Old Testament, as today, is always responsible for your choices; for your actions; and, for your attitudes. Leviticus 5:17-19: "Now, if a person sin, and does any of these things which the Lord has commanded not be done, he is guilty, and shall bear his punishment. He is then to bring to the priest a ram without defect from the flock, according to your valuation for a guilt offering. So, the priest shall make atonement, in which he sinned unintentionally (he did not know it was forbidden) in the guilt offering." It’s a guilt offering. He didn't mean to, but he did: and a trespass has been committed. So, it is willful injury against the laws of God. So, you're guilty even if you did not anticipate the consequences.

In Leviticus 6:1-7, we have, again, this principle of restitution. Leviticus 6:1: "Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "When a person sins, and acts unfaithfully against the Lord, and disavows the rightful claim of his companions in regard to a deposit, or a security entrusted to him through robbery, or if he is extorted from his companions, or he has found what was lost, and lied about it, and had sworn falsely, so that he sins in regard to any one of the things a man may do." Here you have sinning by deliberately trying to defraud another person. This is where a person loses something, and you find it, and you hide it, and you don't let him know: "I found what you're looking for," and return it to him. Or if you deceive a person regarding something (a security) that he has entrusted to you, you create embezzlement, and you cause loss to the person – all of this is deliberate setting. It is a very clear choice to do so – robbing another of his property in some way, and then denying under oath, that you know anything at all about it. The guilty party is to return what he took in this illegal fashion.

Leviticus 6:4-5: "Then it shall be, when he sins and becomes guilty, that he shall restore what he took by robbery, or what he got by extortion, or the deposit which was entrusted to him, or the last thing which he found, or anything about which he swore falsely, he shall make restitution for it, in full, and add to it one fifth more. He shall give it to the one to whom it belongs on the day he presents his guilt offering." So, here you have, again, this principle of restitution: "I cheated you out of something. I must return it, and I have to give you 20% of its value back along with it (reparations)." I stole $100 from you. I have to return $120, and then come back to blessing. The guilty person then brings his ram as a trespass offering, and to secure temporal forgiveness, to come under God's blessing again.

Leviticus 6:6-7: "You shall bring to the priest his guilt (trespass) offering, to the Lord: a ram without defect from the flock, according to your evaluation for a guilt offering. And a priest shall make atonement for him, for the Lord. He shall be forgiven for any one of these things which he may have done to incur guilt."

So, Christians today, as a Jew of the Old Testament, can be sneaky – deliberately sinning. If you associate with people, some people give you the feeling that you cannot trust them. You get the feeling that they are sneaky; that they are deceptive; and, that they will do whatever they can, behind the scenes, to get their way. And when that happens, you have been guilty of a sin before God, that requires not only returning what you took, but a restitution penalty as well.

**Grace**

This trespass offering spoke of sins committed as such. So, it was a non-fragrant aroma to God. Yes, you made the offer, and you've made your confession in this way, but it did not please God that you had to bring this offering. It did not please Him that one of the Jew (His special people) should have to act in this kind of a deceptive way. But as long as you have the sin nature, and the world, and Satan, even Christians can do this. But the grace of God, even in the Old Testament, made everybody a gainer. God had His believing Jew back in fellowship: the victim had regained his property, with 20% reparations; and, the wrongdoer was forgiven. He was back in temporal fellowship with God. God in His grace as a win-win situation. He always leaves the door open for a way out.

You learn that not to think that anything is beneath a person when they want to retaliate, and be angry, and in indignation, because they cannot have their own way in something.

**Vengeance**

This trespass offering (for deliberate sinning) certainly teaches responsibility for our sins, and not the least of it is the sin of vengeance. Here's one place you can get even. Here's one place that you can be tempted. You've frustrated me. You won't let me have my way, and I'll get even with you. It's like a child who is playing with another child's toy. And the kid wants his toy back, and he doesn't want to give him the toy. And finally he is told that he has to get this toy back. So, he takes it, and he breaks it in two, and he says, "Here's your toy." That's what Christians do. That is exercising vengeance, because you're making me do the right thing.

This is one of the most amazing things – to see Christians who become antagonistic toward people who are leading them in the right direction for God's blessing in time and eternity. And they hold those people in contempt and indignation, because they're requiring them to do the right thing.

A Christian, going along in fellowship with the Father, is active, and productive in divine good production. And what he is, is Christlike. In the Old Testament, that was the objective – for you to live the way the coming Messiah is going to live. But they didn't have the capacity. They didn't have the power of the Spirit of God to do that. We do.

**Forgiveness**

When a Christian is wronged by someone, or maybe he thinks that someone has been out of line with him, you can respond with vengeance. That comes under this category of deliberate, willful setting. And in the Old Testament, when somebody did that, in came the trespass offering. You may retaliate with this person in some way against him. You may have a good old sin nature way of snarling, and debating, and emoting, and pretty soon accusing people of things that they never did, or thought, or said. And the result is that you have joined your oppressor out of fellowship. You end your divine good production. So, when somebody abuses you in this way, what do you do? You forgive him, and you turn it over to the Lord to do the vengeance. That's what we're talking about. You don't fall into this trap of: "I'm going to get even with you. I'm going to deal the justice of God."

In the movie "The Godfather," when the undertaker came and wanted the Godfather to deal with two men who had abused his daughter, and had brought great sorrow to her, he calls in his agent, and he tells him that he wants him to deal with this matter of his friend, the undertaker, and that he has to deal with these men who have done this terrible thing to his daughter. Then the Godfather says. "But don't go too far. Don't kill them. We are not murderers. They didn't kill the daughter." And what is the Godfather saying? We exercise our own vengeance. We determine what is just and fair. And in this case, since these men didn't kill the daughter, they were to be punished and physically abused, but they were not to be killed.

Well, what do you do with that kind of treatment? You do not become part of it. You forgive it, and leave it with the Lord, and you go on. This is one way to handle your response to a principle that would cause you to need to be participating in the trespass offering, for getting into a problem yourself.

In 1 Peter 5:7, Peter gives us this guidance, on the matter of taking care of your abuser – of the vengeance: "Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you. You leave your abuser to the Lord.

Romans 12:19 tells us to walk away from the abuser, and leave the vengeance to the Lord, with no anger on your part, and no getting upset: "Never take your own vengeance, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God. For it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine. I will repay,' says the Lord."

Now, some of you are so sweet, that you have very seldom, if ever, experience anybody treating you in an abusive way, especially for doing good. That's what is here – that in the Old Testament system, there were people who had treated others kindly, and in return had received abuse. That is the deliberate sinning for which a trespass offering was most important, to bring you back into fellowship. But there is the same principle for us. Don't take your own vengeance. Take it to the Lord. Leave it there, and let him deal with the person. That's the worst thing you can do. The most terrible thing you do with a person is to take this person to the Lord and say, "Here's what he has done. Here's what she did. And I leave the disposition of discipline with you, Father." And you don't get into that yourself. That is part of deliberate sinning.

In Colossians 3:13, Paul gives this advice: "Forgive people, as Jesus Christ has forgiven us." Forgive the delusions of the human viewpoint that people have. And you do it without asking to be forgiven. Colossians 3:13: "Bearing with one another, forgiving each other. Whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you." This does not mean that somebody hasn't really abuse you, or that somebody hasn't mistreated you. But, I mean, you don't even, in your mind, have a bitterness of attitude. If you understand what is involved here, with breaking temporal fellowship, you just feel sorry for the person. And you hope that they will come to their senses. The price is terrible.

Philippians 3:13 also advises us, on not bringing ourselves under God's judgment: Forget the person, and the attacks on you, and go along with your own happiness in the Lord. Don't compromise that. Philippians 3:13: "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid all of it yet (the fullness of His mission). But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind; and, reaching forward to what lies ahead." And when people mistreat you for your kindness, forget it. Move on for what's ahead. Do not become part of their problem. And the result is that there will rest upon you, then, the great and wonderful blessing and mercy of God.

**The Law Preserved the Jews' Freedom**

So, the whole Mosaic Law system was upheld in a very distinct dispensation. And I hope that you have a little bit of a feel of the complexity (of all the details that you had to constantly do). Nothing ever got settled. Nothing ever was finished. There was always another offering; another ceremony; and, another thing that had to be done. The Mosaic Law was a very specific style of living that God produced for the Jewish people. And it was part of what God promised to Abraham back in Genesis 6:1-3. He promised great blessing upon Abraham and his descendants; that he would have a posterity; and, that through him would come, eventually, a blessing to all nations (as Galatians 3:8 points out), which was Christ the Savior. Abraham's family had spent 430 years in slavery in Egypt, where they had become a nation of two million people. Now, the Israelites, suddenly, find themselves under Moses' leadership, and freed from slavery, and they're on their way back to the Promised Land. God had risen up Moses to be the deliverer. Moses was not crazy for this job – trying to transform slaves into a free nation. And as he found, indeed, it was a tough job.

**The Ten Commandments**

Eventually, all those who were 20 years old and up never made it into the Promised Land. They couldn't get over their slave mentality. But God had solved the problem for this nation. And, at that point, they were out of Egypt; they escaped across the Red Sea; and, now they needed to preserve their freedom. So, how do they do it? Well, God preserved their freedom by taking Moses up to Mount Sinai, and first of all, giving him two stone tablets on which were written the moral code for societal freedom. It's called the Ten Commandments. And on these Ten Commandments was given the basic lifestyle of the Jewish nation: the morality basis – personally, politically, socially, and religiously. And if they obeyed these ten principles of freedom, they would be a free nation. And to the extent, eventually, that they violated those principles of freedom given to them so that they could preserve the freedom they now had out of Egypt, they eventually went back into being captive to other nations.

**A Theocracy**

So, they had a system that we call a theocracy, because under this system, God was the king. God directed the priests who spoke to the people. God spoke to them through prophets, and they lived under the direct guidance of God. It's a wonderful government style. The rules that they had in the Mosaic code) were essential, because life, to be orderly, must have law. The same principle was incorporated in the Constitution of the United States – a nation under law. Everybody knows what the laws are. Everybody knows what the government can do and cannot do. And the result is that people who obey the law will have freedom to operate to maximum blessing in that nation.

However, man is, by nature, lawbreaker. Therefore, when people break the law, it has to be enforced, and they have to be punished. The Mosaic Law system originated with God, and it revealed to Moses what Ezra 7:12 calls the law of God. So, God does have certain things that are right, and that are wrong.

We have a southern judge who has been fighting the battle that he placed a stone monument in the Capitol building on which were inscribed the Ten Commandments on one side, and other things relative to freedom on the other side. And he's been under attack. Why? Because anything that comes from the Bible is suspect. If it comes from any other religion but Judeo-Christianity, it's OK. But God alone has absolutes of right and wrong. And this is what was found in the Mosaic Law. And on Mount Sinai, these were made clear. And for centuries to come, happiness and blessing for the Jews rested on their obedience to the whole Mosaic code, which eventually, when the whole thing was given to Moses, came down to 613 specific rules.

Exodus 19:5-6: "You shall not worship them or serve them (these idol gods). The Lord your God, I'm a jealous God, visiting iniquity of the Fathers on the children, on the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me – but showing loving kindness to thousands, those who love Me, those who keep My commandments." So, it was very clear to the Jews: "If you want to be happy, obey My commandments." And you start with a moral code.

Now, this law system was given only to the Jewish people. It was for use during the dispensation of the Old Testament (the dispensation of the Jews). In Exodus 19:3, it says, "You shall have no other gods before Me." God is the one who was going to lead this nation. He would be their ruler. And He would be in charge of the nation. It's a theocracy.

Deuteronomy 4:44: "Now, this is the law which Moses set before the sons of Israel. These are the testimonies, the statutes, and the ordinances which Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, when they came out of Egypt. So, all of this was to be their lifestyle.

Is the United States a theocracy? No, but the United States is not under the Mosaic Law as such. Now, it is true that all the principles in the Mosaic Law, except the Sabbath Day principle, are repeated in a New Testament under grace. But there are many things that the law was not, and this is the problem. The law is not a means of salvation. What do the Jews think today? They think that if they keep the rules of the Mosaic Law, they will go to heaven. That's exactly what they think. Obedience to these 613 rules was dependent on human effort and human determination. They had no indwelling Holy Spirit. They broke down every time.

Unbelievers can keep these rules. That shows that it's not a means of salvation. The law was never given to gentiles or Christians. What the moral commandments of the morality of the Ten Commandments does is that it give us protection of life, liberty, privacy, and property in a national entity. Even unbelievers obey this moral code, and they're blessed. Any nation that obeys the moral code of the Ten Commandments will be blessed. Any nation that violates this code (as in the murder of abortion – of aborted children) have spilled innocent blood. That nation will come under divine judgment.

Christians have a higher code. They have to do everything that the Jews had to do, but they also have the power to do what is right.

So, this whole system, getting back to where we started, in Colossians 3: Paul said: "Let no one act as your judge in regard to food to eat, or not; drinks to drink, or not; festivals to remember; new moons (holidays), or, the Sabbath Day – all these things of the Mosaic Law. That does not apply to Christians. And any group who is still living under the Mosaic Law system will have the whole shebang. They'll have the altar; they'll have the candles burning; they'll have the incense; they'll have the priesthood that you have to go through to approach God; and, they'll have the sacramental system, substituting for the sacrifices. And it's a sorry, degenerated mass of the sin nature undermining the grace way of life.

So, for the Christian, we have an infinitely better way. And all that we have seen of the Mosaic Law is a tiresome picture, but it could accomplish nothing. Yes, Paul, in the New Testament says, "The law was good. The law was holy. But it was weak through the sin nature, on which it depended for execution.

So, this is a great victory for us, when Paul says, "Forget the Old Testament. Go on into the New Testament. And learn how to live the power system. That is what makes life super now. And I'm telling you that it will affect you physically; it will affect you emotionally, when you live the grace power system; it will affect you financially, it will affect you in your social relationships; and, it will affect the whole nation when it has a contingent of believers who can live the grace way of life. Grace is God doing it for us. No Christian can live the grace way of life on his own. He, too, has to have it done for him. Why frustrate that with going back to a loser system like the Mosaic Law?

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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