***The Divisions of the Mosaic Law
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We now begin a new section in Romans 7:12-13. Our subject is "The Merit of the Mosaic Law," section number one.

The apostle Paul, who wrote this book, had the unique experience of being taught for three years, directly by God, the doctrines that pertain to the church – that mystery (that hidden thing) that had not been revealed in Old Testament times, but which was now revealed following the rejection of Jesus Christ as the Jewish Messiah. Church-age doctrines revealed to Paul were then recorded in the New Testament epistles. This is why the New Testament epistles are so enormously important. This is why when a group of Christians is fed nothing but Old Testament Scripture, and is fed nothing but the gospels, they are denied the core truth relative to the church, which is only found in the epistles.

**Israel vs. the Church**

Such special training of doctrine was necessary for the apostle Paul, and for the early apostles, in order for them to distinguish clearly the separation between the church era and the era of Israel. That was a great shock. It was hard for them to grasp it. The enormity of that changeover from Judaism, with its Old Testament legal system, to the church, with its grace system, is exemplified by the fact that even when we came to the Middle Ages (to the Reformation era), one of the things that the reformers completely blew (and there's no other way to describe it – they blew it completely) was grasping the distinction between Israel and the church. They could not get away from the idea that Israel had been a bad boy, and that Israel had been punished, and Israel was rejected. And instead, God picked up the church, who was acting as a good boy, the church got all of the nice things that Israel was supposed to get.

However, of course, the only way you can make that kind of a connection is by a lot of assuming, and a lot of presumptuous conclusions on your part, completely unfounded from any literal interpretation of the Word of God. All you have to do is decide that you're going to study the Bible, and you're going to accept it for what it says. And all of these things will fall in place. So, everything that pertains to Israel is out the window. And now, what pertains to the church is a brand new ballgame. Special revelation had to bring us that information, and don't try to connect the two.

**Judaism was a Theocracy**

One of the main features of the special church-age revelation to Paul was the fact that the Mosaic Law is terminated. It is no longer in operation. It no longer functions. The Mosaic Law pertained specifically to the Jewish nation, and that was a theocracy. A theocracy is a governmental system where God rules directly. You get your direct information from God.

This is what the Mormons pretend to have. The Mormons pretend that they operate under a theocracy – that their prophet is in a direct line of communication with God, and God speaks to their prophet, and their prophet passes the information to them. In the Old Testament, under the Jewish system (a beautiful system), that's what they had – a theocracy.

Now the Mosaic system is set aside because the theocracy is set aside. God no longer deals with the Jewish people as a nation, directly dealing with them, and being their president, so to speak. The Mosaic Law therefore guided the religious; the civil; and, the moral life of the Jews in a period before the coming of the Messiah Jesus Christ.

**The Jews Rejected Jesus Christ as Messiah**

Then the Jews made the terrible mistake of rejecting their Messiah, Jesus Christ, and they had him murdered by the Roman government. With that, the theocracy came to an end, and the Mosaic Law was now set aside. So, the establishment of the Davidic Covenant on earth was also postponed. When the Mosaic Law was set aside, so was that kingdom on this earth set aside. The whole system was pulled out of operation.

**The Church**

Instead, God turned temporarily from the Jews, and began building a new body of saints, which Paul has described as a mystery (a hidden truth) – a new group of believers, the church, which is made up of both Jew and gentile. This is a very special group. And as we indicated in the previous session, this group is a royal nobility. It is made up of aristocrats. And that's why one of the things that the elders sang in praise of Jesus Christ in heaven, that we saw in Revelation, is that we, who are members of the body of Christ, form a kingdom. And as those who are part of that kingdom, associated with the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings, we also share His royalty, and we're going to be pursuing that in greater detail.

So, what I'm saying is that the Mosaic Law does not apply in any way to a Christian today. The New Testament epistles, written by the apostles – those do pertain to the church age.

The apostle Paul has been teaching at the Mosaic Law was a way of life for the Jewish nation, and that it was simply that. It was the way you were supposed to live. This was the way you, who were members of this theocracy, were to conduct yourselves. It had nothing to do, even for the Jews, in terms of bringing them eternal life. Law-keeping is human works. And salvation, we know very clearly from the Word of God, cannot be secured by rituals or human works of any kind.

In fact, the apostle Paul taught that the sin nature in man rebelled against God, and that the Mosaic Law caused the sin nature to rebel against God. The Mosaic Law, which declared the righteousness of God, irritated man's sin nature, and caused people to strike out and do the things that the Word of God, in the Mosaic Law, was telling them not to do.

So, Paul, in his own case, said that the Mosaic Law completely crushed his spiritual self-confidence, because, while he was very faithful in the outward observance of the law, he discovered from the Mosaic Law that the worst kind of sin was in the mind. And the mental attitude sin of covetousness hit him right between the eyes, and completely devastated his religious self-confidence. So, the point that Paul made is that the Mosaic Law leads you no place but into a blind alley. It leads you into spiritual death. It never leads you into eternal life.

We must consider what all of this kind of talk about the Mosaic Law did within a Jewish oriented community. Remember that for the first years of the New Testament era, the church was centered among Jews. It was Jews who were there before Cornelius and the gentiles ever came in at all. For him to talk to Jews in this way was naturally going to bring on a strong reaction. What he was accused of saying is that he was teaching that the Mosaic Law from God was itself an evil thing. Paul immediately denies discrediting the Law. He says, rather, that he is honoring the law for what it's supposed to be – a mere revealing of the holiness of God, and consequently, man's innate depravity. Paul was simply arguing against keeping the Mosaic Law system as a road to eternal life. It never was that, and that's what he was warning people against – that the sin nature would deceive you into thinking that that is the case.

**The Purpose of the Mosaic Law**

So, coming to Romans 7:12, Paul makes a summary statement in the view of these accusations against his treatment of the Mosaic Law. He says, "Wherefore, the law is holy." The word "wherefore" looks like this in the Greek Bible: "hoste." It means "so then." What it is doing is indicating a logical conclusion based on what he has said in verses 7-11 concerning what the law did to him. Actually, what he is doing in verse 12 is answering that question that he posed in verse 7 where he said, "What shall we say then? Is the law of sin?" He rejected it then, and now he comes back to a further amplification – that law is not an evil thing. The context indicates that the Mosaic Law clarified what was morally evil by divine standards. The context also indicates that the Mosaic Law revealed that sin was basically a mental attitude, such as coveting. The context indicates also that the sin nature used the Mosaic Law as a base of operation (a staging area) to lead men into the vilest kinds of sin by creating a spirit of rebellion against God's moral restraints.

The Mosaic Law exposed the deception of the sin nature – the righteousness of man apart from regeneration. The Mosaic Law further destroyed Paul's small delusion that he was accepted by God. He could call himself blameless as far as keeping the details of the law, but he was condemned by what he realized was his internal sin.

So, the sin nature had deceived Paul. Paul reacted with rebellion against the Mosaic Law, and he found that what he was doing was only demonstrating how condemned he was. Every contact with the Mosaic Law showed that he was headed for the lake of fire. When he realized that, that came as a bombshell to the young Pharisee who considered himself part of God's elite group.

**The Law is Holy**

"So then," this word, "hoste," is indicating all that as consequence. In view of all that having come to pass, so then he makes this statement: "The law" ("nomos"). The Greek has the word "the" in front of it, saying "*the* Law," indicating the Mosaic Law, which he has in the context: "So then" (in fact), and the word "is" is not in the Greek, so that this statement can be more emphatic. The Greek language drops the verbs when you want to be emphatic. It simply says, "So then, the law (the Mosaic Law) holy" ("hagios)". "Hagios" means "separated." That's what the word "holy" means. Among the ancient Greeks, this word meant "dedicated to the gods." So, this means "separated from evil and dedicated to God." We might view this as saying, “The law is sacred."

Paul says that the Mosaic Law was not in itself an evil thing, but rather something that was totally compatible with the holiness of God. The Law is holy. Obviously God, Who is holy, produced the Law, and the system that He produced, therefore, was a holy system.

**The System of the Law**

So, now we're going to pause and take a look at this system of the law. It is well that you have clearly in mind where this system fits in, because, again, I remind you that the majority of churches view the Old Testament law as the foundation of the church, and nothing could be further from the truth. The system of Judaism has a foundation of its own; and, the church has a foundation of its own. It's structured on a different foundation, and it has a totally different set of doctrines, and a totally different way of life.

**Abraham**

You remember that back in Genesis 12:1-3, God made some promises to a man named Abraham. This man was to become the Father of the Jewish nation. Abraham's family had spent 430 years in Egypt as slaves, in time, and they had become indeed a very great nation, as that promise in Genesis 12 predicted. They were probably something in the vicinity of two million slaves in Egypt by the time Moses came on the scene. The Israelites were freed from that slavery, and they made their return journey to the Promised Land that God had given to Abraham.

**Moses**

God raised that Moses to be the deliverer from Egypt. Moses himself was not crazy about this job. He did not take kindly to the idea of taking a group of slaves and transforming them into a free nation. That was tough going, but God solved the problem. They needed, as a theocracy, a system of government. That immediately became necessary. As soon as they escaped the Egyptians, across the Red Sea needed a system of government, and what God provided them with was a theocracy where God ruled the nation directly. The rules that were essential in all areas of life had to be spelled out in order to preserve their freedom. Man is by nature a law-breaker, and the enforcement of what is right is necessary for human survival.

So, the Mosaic Law system was revealed to Moses, a direct system from God. God alone, of course, is the only one who can deal with absolutes of right and wrong as they're found in the Law. This is based on His own character. The only way we can know what is right to do and what is wrong to do is because God tells us on the basis of His character. It is God who says, "It is wrong to steal." It is God who has to tell us that certain sexual acts are wrong. There is no way we can come to this conclusion on our own. That's what society is trying to do today – this idea that the consensus of society determines what is right, what is wrong.

I saw a bit of a television program the other day where a man who had written a book. His wife was dying of a terminal disease; he had helped her commit suicide; and, that had created some problems. He was explaining how the laws need to be changed on this in order to bring them more into conformity with our enlightened moral outlook. So, here was the enlightened moral outlook. Where did he get that enlightened moral outlook? From his own opinion, and from what other people agreed to?

Well, you can see where the Jews would have come. They were slaves to begin with. They had no sense and understanding of freedom. Now they were supposed to be a nation on their own. The first thing they needed was something to tell them how to live. They needed a way of life. And after the Law system was given on Mount Sinai, for centuries to come, happiness and blessing followed the Jews as they obeyed those 613 specific regulations. God summed it all up in 613 rules (613 guidelines). He said, "If you keep those, you will prosper." When they did, by and large, they certainly did prosper.

The Law system was given to Jews, and it was designed primarily for the lifestyle of those who were born-again Jews. The Law was not a means of salvation. Many times the Bible makes that clear (Acts 15:10-11, Galatians 2:16, Galatians 2:21, Galatians 3:11-12). Again and again, the apostle Paul says, "The law won't save you, but obedience to these 613 rules will bring blessing to you as part of the Jewish nation.

One of the things that you have to realize is that the only way you could keep these rules was by your own self-determination. This was your will. That's one of the things that's different about the church. This is one of the dramatic differences. These same moral rules are imposed on you and me, but because of the indwelling Holy Spirit, we have a power and a capacity to do right that these people didn't. The only thing that the Jew had to keep these 613 rules was the same thing that every unbeliever has today. There are a lot of unbelievers who do act as moral people. They do obey certain proper and desirable standards, but they do it just on the basis of their own self-will. They do it on the basis of their own determination. And very often, they'll compromise it, and they'll violate it. There's no way that they can keep these rules, nor to be interested in it.

So, this was one of the big problems that the Mosaic Law system had. It told you what to do, and it told you what was right, but it gave you no way of having the capacity to live up to the standard.

So, unbelievers today reflect just as much capacity as the Jews did. The Law system, for this reason, is not a way of life for Christians. And it's not a way of life for gentiles. It is very important to keep the Mosaic Law with the Jews, and the Jews alone. The moral code of the Ten Commandments in itself is repeated in the New Testament, except for one. The only one that isn't apply to Christians in the New Testament is the one on keeping the Saturday Sabbath day holy. All the other moral rules of the Ten Commandments are reiterated. Does that mean that the church and Israel are connected? No, it doesn't. It is a reduplication of certain things in the Mosaic code, which were eternally true; reflected the character of God; and, were imposed upon believers in the church as well. Just because God tells us that certain things are wrong (the same things He told the Jews that were wrong) doesn't mean that Israel and the church are one and the same thing.

Obviously, if God's character (if God's essence) is the basis upon determining absolute moral truth, then what is wrong in one dispensation is going to be wrong in another one. Therefore, the same rules hold. But the system (the lifestyle) is the thing that is different. When unbelievers today obey the moral code of God, they are going to be blessed. When unbelievers obey the sexual code of the Mosaic Law, I guarantee you that they are going to be blessed. And the kinds of diseases now that are broken out, among those who violate the sexual code of the Mosaic Law, is an example of the fact that, even if you're an unbeliever, if you keep the rules, you come into the position of blessing. Any nation which violates the moral code on a wide scale will disintegrate, and will be destroyed. History is replete with such nations.

That's the problem we face in our society today, where rules are being judged on the basis of what most people agree – the 51% majority. Christians come along with everything that the Law system had in terms of what is right or wrong. But Christians come along with infinitely greater capacity because of the indwelling of the spirit to live up to those rules.

So, what Paul is talking about here is a system that came from God. He declares that this system was absolutely holy. Men today point to certain things in the Mosaic code, and says, "That is not right. That is unholy. That should be violated." And if you're a young person, you are going to be struggling with this syndrome: is it possible that we are so right? I mean, you look across an auditorium like this, and then you look at an auditorium where thousands are sitting. How can this place be right, and that place, with the big time, be wrong? How can you, a handful of Christian high school kids and a handful of Christian college youth, have a certain point of view because it is taught in the Word of God, and for you to say, "I'm right, and all the rest of you out there, who are my contemporaries and my peers, who reject what the Bible says – you're wrong." Well, you better learn to be just that gutsy, because that happens to be exactly where you are; that happens to be exactly where the truth is; and, that happens to be exactly where your blessings lie. If you are going to be a chicken liver, and say, "I just can't believe that I can stand up and say that all those nice people out there are wrong, and that all my friends are wrong (though they won't be my friends, if I say that they're wrong), then you must also be prepared to pay a very great personal price.

Don't forget that one of the nice things about Christianity is that there's going to come a judgment day when we're going to find out who's right and who's wrong. But by the same token, the other side of the coin is that there is an unpleasant thing about Christianity that you're going to find what a price you're paying for having missed the boat. It's a very serious thing to be wrong. So, you have to go back to a standard. And the only standard you have is the Word of God, and you should not fear standing and saying, "I'm alone, and I'm right."

**Noah**

Where would Noah and his family have been if Noah could not stand up and say, "There are only eight of us, but there are thousands and thousands and thousands of people in the world; and we're right, and they're wrong?" Can you just see how many times Noah and his sons sat there, and when the girls brought the lunch, and they stopped working on that boat, and they sat around talking, I can just imagine them discussing: "It's really strange, isn't it? It really makes you feel uneasy to think that we're doing this, and we're saying we're right, and all those people out there are wrong. But I don't think they had any question about it. Noah knew what he was talking about. Noah knew where his information came from. Noah knew that he had he had authoritative truth, just as we know that we have it when we have the Word of God. If you know what the book says, you can stand up and say, I don't care what you think. I am right, and you are wrong."

Somebody asked me where Gandhi is today. The implication is that I don't care what group you're in, if you do not have the redemption for which Jesus was being praised in that heavenly throne room, you've got nothing. The truth of the matter is that Gandhi, with his Eastern mysticism, and the concept of the source of truth coming from within you – that's the last place in the world you'll find the truth. Here's a man that everybody is blubbering over – one that they're impressed with because he ran a spinning wheel; made his own clothes; turned them into diapers; and, wore diapers all the time. And they are very impressed with him. I saw the director, when he got the Academy Award for making the film, got up and spoke on how Gandhi has something to say to our age. Baloney! Gandhi has zero to say to our age. If you could hook up a communication line to Gandhi, he would tell you exactly what the rich man was trying to send back as a message to his five brothers who were still alive – not to come into that place of torment into which he came. Gandhi is getting his diapers burned off. That's where he is right now.

Don't you stand around being intimidated by these idiots because the overwhelming majority of people are riding high and being impressed by somebody with that kind of human viewpoint. But you have to understand that. If we hadn't had the series on Hinduism, it would have been so easy for you to be overwhelmed. This lady this morning said, because I knew what we had learned, I knew that Gandhi could not be in heaven. Yet these people were saying, "Do you think God would reject a man like that?" She said, "Yes, so I thought I'd check." And she was relieved to find she was right.

However, I took a lot of flak because I was teaching you about Eastern mysticism. So, I hope you appreciate it, and that you'll say a little nicer things about me than what you've been saying. If we don't know the enemy's thinking, we're sitting ducks for somebody like Gandhi, who comes along, and he's very impressive.

**The Divisions of the Mosaic Law**

Well, the Mosaic Law was in various divisions. One reason Paul could say it was holy was because all sections of it were compatible with the holiness and the integrity of God.

**The Moral Law – The Commandments**

First of all, you had the moral section, which are generally called "The Commandments." These set forth for man what, by God standard, is right and wrong conduct. And they are the very principles which our nation was founded upon – the moral ground from which we began. The Israelites were ruled by a theocracy, and the first section that God revealed to Moses was the moral law.

**The Religious Law – The Ordinances**

Then there was the second section, which was the religious law. That's called "The Ordinances." This related to their worship regulations relative to the ceremonies in the tabernacle and the temple. They contained the complete information on how God wanted the Jews to live after salvation. All of these rituals and all of these ceremonies pictured something concerning a spiritual truth which would, in time, be fulfilled. Here again, you have the most amazing, weirdest kind of attempts on the part of people to justify certain things that they want to do in the era of the church that are purely legalistic, ritualistic things that they picked up from the Old Testament.

**Altars**

Just having an altar in a church is an immediate indicator that these people are totally disoriented to the role of the Law in the era of the church. They're still hanging around with an altar for sacrifice, when Jesus Christ has already been sacrificed once-for-all, and there's no longer any ground for sacrifice. This is carried over again and again.

**Tithes and Offerings**

These preachers stand up and pound their pulpits, and say, "You folks should give your tithes and offerings to the Lord: tides and offerings. Where does that come from? Well, in the Old Testament, there was the religious income tax (10% across the board, rich or poor). That was given to the Levites to sustain their ministry as priests in serving in the temple. Those men were constantly serving the Lord. So, the Levites received that 10%, and of their income, they gave 10% to the high priest, and that's what sustained him. Here is this whole system that God has provided for the religious life of the Jewish people. Along we come into the church age, and we're trying to carry over that system – 10% in offering. The Jew paid his 10%. Then, when he gave anything more, it was offering.

Many years ago, I taught at the Dallas Bible College. It was an evening class, and I was teaching Old Testament. It was a survey of the Old Testament. I had in my class a fellow named Bernard Rouch. In those days he had hair, and he used to sit in class and twirl it around his fingers as he listened to the instruction. He was the kind of fellow who was reaching out for something spiritually real. I remember his telling me that he would sit in that class, where I was teaching the difference between the church age and this Mosaic Law age. He said, "You'd say something, and I'd sit there and say, "Oh, that can't be true. That is absolutely false. Then I'd go back to my shop, and I'd paint signs all week, and I'd think about that, and before the week was over, I'd say, 'That is right.'" He said, "I concluded, 'That's really right.'"

So, he came out the next week, and he said, "You blew us up again with some other bombshell." I'd say something like, "If you want to make a test case of where your church stands, go and look in your church bulletin next Sunday. Do you come to the part where they have the offering, and they speak about tithes and offering? That would be a clue to you as to whether they are oriented to the grace age, or whether they're still hanging onto the Mosaic system."

Well, he said, "I went home the second week and painted my signs all week, and thought about that." He said, "That can't be right. But by the end of the week. I said, 'Yes, that is right.'"

He said, "The third week I came to class eager to see what the next bombshell was going to be." But I didn't think they were bombshells. But the administration sent one of their administrators to me, and asked me to ease up because they were getting calls from churches complaining about what I was teaching their students who were from their churches, who were going back, discovering that the churches were putting screws on them – legalistic techniques, in order to get things out of them, which they should have been seeking to bring out of them by teaching them doctrine, and letting the Spirit of God do His work. That's the big difference.

The religious Law system was very explicit for the Jews, but it was all pictures. It was a lack of reality. Today, we have only two pictures left in the church: the Lord's Supper – that's a visual aid, a visual portrayal of a core truth; and, then we have water baptism, which is, again, a visual aid, a picture (a portrayal), and that's all we have.

**The Civil Law – The Judgments**

The third section of the Mosaic Law was the civil law. These are called the judgments. They set out God's social regulations for the Jews. These civil laws dealt with such things as health laws. There were certain unclean animals that you were not to eat, and that doesn't mean that they rolled around in the dirt. It meant that they were scavenger animals. You don't eat pigs because they are scavenger animals. And scavenger animals change what they eat into meat cells within 24 hours. If a pig eats a dead rat, within 24 hours, his ham has become part of that dead rat. And when you eat that ham, happy eating. Whatever he eats – 24 hours later.

A clean animal, like a cow, goes through a series of cycles because the stomach is processing the food it eats, and it doesn't go around eating dead rats. It's not a scavenger animal. In marine life, there is a whole realm of fish that you don't eat because they are scavenger animals. These things are designed by God to clean up the bottom of the sea.

But in any case, all of these civil laws dealt with health. That's why the Jews were told, "If you obey these laws that I give you, none of these diseases shall come upon you" that were prevalent in the ancient Canaanitic world. They preserved themselves from those diseases because of these dietary laws. This wasn't just a ritual. This wasn't a ceremony. When Lord said, "Certain animals are unclean; stay away from them," it's because, like in pigs, no matter if they never touch the ground with their feet, and they're fed nothing but corn, their flesh is still shot-through with parasites and worms. That's why you are warned how much you have to cook pig meat in order to kill the worms before you eat them too.

There were quarantine procedures that were established. There were agricultural regulations. There were principles for conducting warfare. The divine institutions were spelled out under the civil code. Soil conservation was explained to the people, so that the soil wouldn't get one out. A system of taxation was laid out. Military service was explained: who goes to war; and, who doesn't go to war. What happens when somebody is called up to military service, and he's just gotten married, and so on? All of these were regulations for the preserving of the happiness of the people.

So, you take a look at the moral law section (the commandments); the religious law section (the ordinances); and, the civil law section (the judgments).

This is why Paul could say, no matter how you look at the law, no matter what section, there is only one way you can describe it: it's holy. It's a perfectly holy thing. And there was nothing evil about it. The purpose of the Law was, of course, to govern the people of Israel as a theocracy, and also to show them that they needed a Savior. The purpose of the Law was to act as a mirror to show them how they were specific violators of the character of God in certain respects – not just in general, but by certain rules. That's why these 613 laid it out so that a person could say, "Boy, I've broken that one; I've broken that one; and, I've broken that one." He didn't just say, "Yeah, I know I'm a bad person." He knew why he was bad. It made it very explicit.

Consequently, it removed the Jew from the impression that he could somehow make it with a holy, righteous God on something he could do. He saw how degraded he was. Unfortunately, the Jewish rabbis came along (the scribes and the teachers of the Law), and they missed the point that this was a mirror, and that they were to look to God for the spiritual salvation they needed. What they did instead was gave the people the impression that if you just went through the motions, and performed these rituals, then you were saved. That's why they had that big battle in the early New Testament church when these Jews came into Christianity. And Christianity that Paul taught had nothing to do with the Mosaic system. They said, "Wait a minute. We know that no male can go to heaven without the right of circumcision performed upon him." The apostle Paul said, "Wrong, wrong, wrong. The old system is dead. It no longer applies. That was a visual aid. The reality is now here. The removal of the flesh now can indeed be performed." And Paul said, "It's the circumcision of the heart (the mind), which comes about through accepting Christ as Savior that counts with God – not the circumcision in the flesh. It never did count.

So, the rabbis completely distorted the law, and converted into something that in fact became unholy in the way people dealt with it. This is what Paul meant. Paul said, "By the time the rabbis got through with it, I had such a wrong impression, as a Pharisee, as to how I was going to gain salvation with God, that I was going down the very road leading me into the lake of fire. The thing that was leading me there was the Mosaic Law." Paul said, "I'm not saying that there's something intrinsically wrong with the Law. It was the way we were taught to use the Mosaic Law. That was the problem."

People are still trying to do this today. The book of Galatians says that the Law, for the Jewish people, was a schoolmaster to guide them until the reality came in Christ. In the Greek world, families who were well-off would have a pedagogue who would be sent. He was one of the slaves. When the children went to school, the pedagogue would go with him. And it was his job to watch this kid, and make him behave, and make him apply himself, and make him study and do what's right. And he was, in effect, the schoolmaster. And until that boy came to a certain age when he could take on personal independence as an adult, he was under the guidance of that pedagogue.

Well, Paul says in Galatians, "That's what the Law was. The Law was a schoolmaster, hanging on to the Jew; guiding him; directing him; keeping him in tow; and, having him do right until Jesus Christ came; salvation was provided; and, a whole new provision was made.

**The Law is a Whole Unit**

One of the terrible things about the law is that it is a whole unit. This is another mistake people make. People say, "Oh, yeah, I know that all those rituals (those sacrifices – those religious things) – we don't do that anymore. And we don't do that civil stuff anymore either. But the Ten Commandments – that we keep on." And they try to hang on to these elements of the Law. But the Word of God says that the law is a unit, and if you break one of the 613 commandments, you've broken the whole Law. And that was the problem. Nobody could keep from breaking one of those rules. And the result was that nobody could keep the Law at all. Once you broke any of it, you were completely done for.

So, the Law could not justify, Galatians 3:10-11 says. The Law could not give eternal life, Galatians 3:21 says. The law could not provide salvation (Galatians 2:16, Philippians 3:9, Hebrew 7:19). The law could not provide spirituality (Galatians 3:2). The Jew did not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to guide him. The Law could do no miracles (Galatians 3:5). The Law could not solve the problem of being controlled by the sin nature (Romans 7:18).

So, in effect, Paul says, "The law became a curse in spite of the fact that it is holy. It was good; it was holy; and, it was compatible to God's righteous standards. But the sin nature came into the picture and used that as a staging area. It used that very holy Law as a means to attack God, and to rebel against Him.

So, Israel found that the law actually works against them. As a matter of fact, in Acts 15:10, the Law is described as a yoke, that rested upon the Jewish people, which they could not bear. And the whole picture of the Jews under the Law system was one of total failure: impossible to secure salvation; and, impossible to secure sanctification. If you can't keep the whole law perfectly right from the start, then you've had it. And that was the problem.

In 2 Kings 17, we close this evening with a very impressive record of the failure of the Jewish people under the Law system. And this is the experience that anybody will have who thinks that they can come to God, and come to a relationship with God on the system of the Law. 2 Kings 17:7: "For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh King of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the nations whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God. And they built them high places in all the cities, from the tower of the watchman to the fortified cities." These high places were where the phallic cults were practiced – the sex worship of Baal.

Verse 10: "And they set them up images and idols in every high hill and under every green tree. And there they burned incense in all the high places, as did the nations who the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger. For they served idols of which the Lord had said to them, 'You shall not do this thing.' Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, 'Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes according to all the Law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants and prophets. Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks like the neck of their fathers who did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that he made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He testified against them. And they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the nations who were around about them concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them melted images – even two calves, and made an idol, and worshiped all the hosts of heaven and served Baal. And they cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and use divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil on the sight of the Lord to provoke Him to anger."

They descended to the degree (became so debased) that they were offering their children to Molech in sacrifice. That's what it means when it says, "Passing through the fire."

This was the people who had the Law. Was there something wrong with the Law? Was this what made them act this way? Paul said, "No, the Law was holy. But the problem was after the first generation. Joshua's generation, those people who had been the Exodus generation – they obeyed the Word. They were prospered. They drove the pagans out from before them with ease. But along came their children, and their children wondered, as they looked upon the pagan nations about them, which they didn't clean out: "Is it possible that these sophisticated people over here, with all their culture (and they had culture) are all wrong, and we're right? Is it possible that they have nothing good? And that is a problem."

Our kids have a problem when they get away from home, in certain areas where they're brought under other religious influences. And I don't mean just pagan, but just Christian influences where the emphasis is not upon the Word of God. It is very tempting for them to say, "I can't believe that we are so right, and they're so wrong. I can't believe that we are so separated from them. Surely we have some common ground of compatibility. That is a dangerous ground for you to pursue.

Here in 2 Kings 17, you have the dramatic example that this is what the Jews did. And pretty soon, the next generation that came along watched their parents playing all this paganistic ritual. And, consequently, whatever spiritual reality was left in the parents, they had a little residue. And when the kids came along, they threw it all overboard. There was nothing left. And that's the problem.

Once you get into a system of rituals and externals, you put yourself on the course of self-destruction, and one in which you will destroy everyone else who has any confidence in your leadership and in your influence.

So, when Paul says, "The Law is holy," he means that it was produced by God. There was nothing wrong with anything it said. All three sections of the Law were perfectly, marvelously-produced wisdom – divine viewpoint wisdom. All you had to do was obey it, and you would prosper. The problem was with people who thought that by doing these externals, they could find themselves compatible with God, and they could find eternal life. And that was the point of destruction. Without the new birth (and they had to be born again), and without being redeemed (and they had to be redeemed just like we did, and without regeneration (and they had to regenerated just like we do), there was no way for them to use the Law in the right way.

Thank God that that system is gone. Don't give it a second thought. Do not yearn for it. It has nothing but the kiss of doom upon it. We who are in the royal family of God have the mark of royalty upon us because we are indwelt by the Spirit of God. We can do everything that the Law called upon the Jew to do, which he could not do. Those same rules – we can keep. It's a matter of knowing the Word, and our positive attitude toward doing what God has called upon us to do.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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