



2017 Q4 The Book of Romans Lesson 2 The Controversy

SABBATH

“The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” John 1: 17.

Is the apostle John correct? Was the “law” given by Moses? It’s called the “Mosaic law,” so if not, then by whom?

Are we supposed to read Scripture concretely, or with another, more open, mindset? Is it possible that John, himself – the near constant companion of our Savior for 3+ years, had an “Imperial Law” mindset?

“The law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” Assuming that God Himself gave “the law” to Moses, then is there no grace and truth in the “Mosaic” law?

Consider the following:

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions **given to Moses**. PP 364.

What was the state of the Israelites at the time of the presentation of the “Mosaic” law?

What was the level of their moral development?

What kind of people *needed* a law on the books telling them not to commit incest [Lev. 18: 6-18.]?

What kind of people *needed* a law telling them not to avoid child sacrifice or bestiality [Lev 18: 21, 23]?

What was the level of their moral development at the time of Christ?

They were, by then, consummate “law” keepers and legislators. The written law was their bread and water. Might they have needed a deeper *revelation* of the same “grace and truth” present in the Mosaic law?



We need to understand that **EVERY** word of the imposed [written] law that came from God's mouth is a revelation of some aspect of His Design [natural] law, and therefore, a revelation of some facet of His Character of Love, and therefore, Life.

Here's what the founder of our church had to say on the subject:

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Matt. 4:4.

SUNDAY

A Better Covenant

But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises. Heb. 8:6.

From the lesson:

"Perhaps the greatest difference between the religion of the Old Testament and that of the New is the fact that the New Testament era was introduced by the coming of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. He was sent by God to be the Savior. People could not ignore Him and expect to be saved. Only through the atonement He provided could their sins be forgiven. Only by the imputation of His perfect life could they stand before God without condemnation. In other words, salvation was through the righteousness of Jesus—and nothing else."

There's truth and error in this paragraph. Which is which?

Why was the "new" covenant better than the "old" covenant? [Hint: see Heb. 8: 9 as to the problem with the "old" one.]

Was there anything wrong with the "old" covenant *from God's side* of the contract? Of course not, the covenant was broken by the children of Israel soon after it was ratified. The bride had an affair during the honeymoon.

How is the "new" covenant built on "better" promises?

Are God's promises dependent on His mood?

Was He in a better mood for the "new" covenant?

Also from the lesson:



“Meanwhile, the moral requirements remain unchanged in the New Testament, because these were founded in the character of God and of Christ. Obedience to God’s moral law is just as much a part of the New Covenant as it is of the Old Testament.”

WHY? ^^^^^^^^^^^^^

MONDAY

Jewish Laws and Regulations

The lesson does an admirable job of distilling the various laws and regulations in to 5 broad categories [see below].

“It is convenient for us to classify Old Testament laws into various categories: (1) moral law, (2) ceremonial law, (3) civil law, (4) statutes and judgments, and (5) health laws.

This classification is in part artificial. In actuality some of these categories are interrelated, and there is considerable overlap. The ancients did not see them as separate and distinct.

The moral law is summed up by the Ten Commandments(Exod. 20:1–17).

This law sums up the moral requirements of humanity. These ten precepts are amplified and applied in various statutes and judgments throughout the first five books of the Bible. These amplifications show what it meant to keep the law of God in various situations. Not unrelated are the civil laws. These, too, are based on the moral law. These define a citizen’s relationship to civil authorities and to fellow citizens. They name the penalties for various infractions.

The ceremonial law regulated the sanctuary ritual, describing the various offerings and the individual citizen’s responsibilities. The feast days are specified and their observance defined. The health laws overlap the other laws. The various laws relating to uncleanness define ceremonial uncleanness, and yet they also go beyond this to include hygienic and health principles. Laws regarding clean and unclean meats are based on physical considerations.”

Which. Law. Lens. Are you looking through?

TUESDAY

As the Custom of Moses

At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses¹ and was about to kill him. ²⁵ But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son’s foreskin and touched Moses’ feet with it. “Surely you are a



bridegroom of blood to me,” she said. ²⁶ So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said “bridegroom of blood,” referring to circumcision.) Exodus 4: 24-26.

On the way from Midian, Moses received a startling and terrible warning of the Lord’s displeasure. An angel appeared to him in a threatening manner, as if he would immediately destroy him. No explanation was given; but Moses remembered that he had disregarded one of God’s requirements; **yielding to the persuasion of his wife**, he had neglected to perform the rite of circumcision upon their youngest son. He had failed to comply with the condition by which his child could be entitled to the blessings of God’s covenant with Israel; and such a neglect on the part of their chosen leader could not but lessen the force of the divine precepts upon the people. Zipporah, fearing that her husband would be slain, performed the rite herself, and the angel then permitted Moses to pursue his journey. In his mission to Pharaoh, Moses was to be placed in a position of great peril; his life could be preserved only through the protection of holy angels. But while living in neglect of a known duty, he would not be secure; for he could not be shielded by the angels of God. PP 255.

Why did / do the Jews place such a heavy significance on circumcision?

From the bottom section in the lesson:

“What is your attitude toward church leadership? How cooperative are you? Why is cooperation so important? How could we function if everyone was doing only what he or she wanted to do, independent of the larger body?”

WEDNESDAY

The Gentile Believers

With them they sent the following letter:

The apostles and elders, your brothers,

To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia:

Greetings.

²⁴ We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. ²⁵ So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. ²⁸ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: ²⁹ **You are to abstain from food sacrificed to**



idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

Farewell. Acts 15: 23-29.

What do these [highlighted] requirements have in common?

Which laws are being observed [Hint: it's not the 10 Commandments]?

From the bottom section:

“Could we, in some ways, be laying on people burdens that are not necessary but are more from tradition than divine command? If so, how?”

THURSDAY

Paul and The Galatians

From the Lesson:

“It is an oversimplification to ask whether Paul is speaking of ceremonial or moral laws in Galatians and Romans. Historically, the argument

was whether or not Gentile converts should be required to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. The Jerusalem Council already had ruled on this question, but some refused to follow its decision.

Some read in Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Romans evidence that the moral law—the Ten Commandments (or, in truth, only the fourth commandment)—is no longer binding on Christians. Yet, they are missing the point of the letters, and missing the historical context and issues that Paul was addressing. Paul, as we'll see, stressed that salvation was by faith alone and not by the keeping of the law, even the moral law. Yet that isn't the same thing as saying that the moral law shouldn't be kept. Obedience to the Ten Commandments was never an issue; those who make it an issue are reading back into texts a contemporary issue, one that Paul wasn't dealing with. **How do you respond to those who claim the Sabbath is no longer binding upon Christians? How can you show the truth of the Sabbath in a way that does not compromise the integrity of the gospel?”**

WHICH LAW LENS?