THE LAW AND THE SAINT

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1. INTRODUCTION

It has been said that every unregenerate sinner has the heart of a Pharisee. This is true; and it is equally true that every unregenerate sinner has the heart of an Antinomian. This is the character which is expressly given to the carnal mind: it is "enmity against God"; and the proof of this is, that "it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). Should we be surprised, then, if we find the underlying principles of Phariseeism and Antinomianism uniting in the same mind? Surely not. There is no more real opposition between these apparently opposing principles, than there is between enmity and pride. Many a slothful servant has hated his master and his service, and yet had he pride and presumption enough to demand his wages. Phariseeism and Antinomianism unite, like Herod and Pilate did, against the Truth.

The term Antinomian signifies one who is against the Law, hence, when we declare that ours is an age of lawlessness, it is only another way of saying that it is an age characterized by Antinomianism. There is little need for us to pause and offer proof that this is an age of lawlessness. In every sphere of life the sad fact confronts us. In the well-nigh total absence of any real discipline in the majority of the churches, we see the principle exemplified. Not more than two generations ago, thousands, tens of thousands, of the loose-living members whose names are now retained on the membership rolls, would have been dis-fellowshipped. It is the same in the great majority of our homes. With comparatively rare exceptions, wives are no longer in subjection to their husbands (Eph. 5:22,24); and as for obeying them (1 Pet. 3:1,2,5,6), why, the majority of women demand that such a hateful word be stricken from the marriage ceremony. So it is with the children - how could it be otherwise? Obedience to parents is almost entirely a thing of the past. And what of conditions in the world? The abounding marital unfaithfulness, Sunday trading, banditry, lynchings, strikes, and a dozen other things that might be mentioned, all bear witness to the frightful wave of lawlessness which is flowing over the country.

What, we may well inquire, is the cause of the lawlessness which now so widely obtains? For every effect there is a cause, and the character of the effect usually intimates the nature of the cause. We are assured that the present wide-spread contempt for human law is the inevitable outgrowth of disrespect for Divine Law. Where there is no fear of God, we must not expect there will be much fear of man. And why is it that there is so much disrespect for Divine Law? This, in turn, is but the effect of an antecedent cause. Nor is this hard to find. Do not the utterances of Christian teachers during the last twenty-five years go far to explain the situation which now confronts us?

History has repeated itself. Of old, God complained of Ephraim, "I have written to him the great things of My Law, but they were counted as a strange thing" (Hosea 8:12). Observe how God speaks of His Law: "The great things of My Law"! They are not precepts of little moment, but to be lightly esteemed, and slighted; but are of great authority, importance, and value. But, as then, so during the last few years - they have been "counted as a strange thing". Christian teachers have vied with each other in denouncing the Law as a "yoke of bondage", "a grievous burden", "a remorseless enemy". They have declared in trumpet tones that Christians should regard the Law as "a strange thing": that it was never designed for them: that it was given to Israel, and then made an end of at the Cross of Christ. They have warned God's people to have nothing to do with the Ten Commandments. They have

denounced as "Legalists" Christians of the past, who, like Paul, "served the Law" (Rom. 7:25). They have affirmed that Grace rules the Law out of the Christian's life as absolutely as it did out of his salvation. They have held up to ridicule those who contended for a Christian Sabbath, and have classed them with Seventh-Day Adventists. Having sown the wind, is it any wonder that we are now reaping the whirlwind?

The characters of the cause determinates the character of the effect. Whatsoever a man sowth that (the same in kind) shall he also reap. Unto them who of old regarded the great things of God's Law as a strange thing, God declared, "Because Ephraim hath made many alters to sin, alters shall be unto him to sin" (Hosea 8:11). And because many of our Christian leaders have publicly repudiated Divine Law, God has visited us with a wave of lawlessness in our churches, homes, and social life. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked"!! Nor have we any hope of stemming the onrushing tide, or of causing Christian leaders to change their position. Having committed themselves publicly, the examples of past history warn us that pride will keep them from making the humbling confession that they have erred. But we have a hope that some who have been under the influence of twentieth century Antinomianism will have sufficient spiritual discernment to recognize the truth when it is presented to their notice; and it is for them we now write.

In the January 1923 issue of a contemporary, appeared the second article from the pen of Dr. McNichol, Principal of Toronto Bible School, under the caption of "Overcoming the Dispensations". The purpose of these articles is to warn God's children against the perils which lie "in the way of much of the positive pre-millennial teaching of the day". Quoting, Dr. McNicol says:

"1. There is danger when the Law is set against Grace. No scheme of prophetic interpretation can be safe which is obliged to represent the dispensations of Law and Grace as opposing systems, each excluding the other and contrary to it. If this were the case, it would mean that God had taken opposing and contradictory attitudes towards men in these two different ages. In the last analysis this representation of the relation of law and grace affects the character of God, as everything which perverts the Scriptures, disturbing thereby the mirror of His mind, ultimately does.

"So far from being opposing systems, law and grace as revealed in Scripture are parts of one harmonious and progressive plan. The present dispensation is spoken of as the age of grace, not because grace belongs to it exclusively, but because in it grace has been fully manifested. When John declared that `the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ', he was contrasting law and grace, not as two contrary and irreconcilable systems, but as two related parts of one system. The law was the shadow, Christ was the substance. The law was the pattern, Christ was the reality. The grace which had been behind the law came to light through Jesus Christ so that it could be realized. As a matter of fact, grace had been in operation from the beginning. It began in Eden with the first promise of redemption immediately after the fall. All redemption is of grace; there can be no salvation without it, and even the law itself proceeds on the basis of grace.

"The law was given to Israel not that they might be redeemed, but because they had been redeemed. The nation had been brought out of Egypt by the power of God under the blood of the slain lamb, itself the symbol and token of His grace. The law was added at Sinai as the necessary standard of life for a ransomed people, a people who now belonged to the Lord. It began with a declaration of their redemption; "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Ex. 20:2). It rested on the basis of grace, and it embodied the principle that redemption implied a conformity to God's moral order. In other words, the very grace

that redeemed Israel carried with it the necessity of revealing the law to Israel. The law was given that they might walk worthy of the relation in which they now stood to God, worthy of a salvation which was already theirs. The covenant of the law did not supersede the covenant of promise, but set forth the kind of life which those who were redeemed by the covenant of promise were expected to live.

"The law was not a covenant of works in the sense that Israel's salvation depended upon obedience to it. The devout Israelite was saved by faith in the promise of God, which was now embodied in the tabernacle services. He looked forward through the sacrifices to a salvation which they foreshadowed, and by faith accepted it, as we look back to the Cross and by faith accept the salvation which has been accomplished. The Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints are both saved in the same way, and that is, by the grace of God through Jesus Christ alone.

"Of course the people did not keep the law. It only brought sin to light and proved that righteousness could not come that way, as Paul points out in the Epistle to the Romans. It made all the more evident that there was a need for the work of Christ. But Christ came not to put the law aside and introduce another plan. `I came not to destroy', He declared, `but to fulfill'; not to dissolve the obligations of the law and release us from them, but to substantiate the law and make good all that it required. In the Sermon on the Mount He expounded and expanded the law, in all its depth and breadth, and in all its searching sweep. This Sermon spoke to His disciples; it was His law for them. It was not intended for another age and another people; it set forth the kind of life He expected His own people to live in the present age.

"Of course we cannot fulfill the law of the Sermon on the Mount as an outward standard of life. Our Lord did not leave it at that. He was Himself going to make it possible for His disciples to fulfill it, but He could not yet tell them how. When He died and rose again and ascended into heaven, and His Holy Spirit - the same Spirit which had fulfilled and exemplified that law completely in His own life - came flowing back into the lives of His disciples, then they had to keep it. The law was written on their hearts. Their lives were conformed to the law, not by slavish obedience to an outward standard, but by the free constraint of an inward spirit. The ordinance of the law was fulfilled in them when they walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.

"It is this very feature of grace which seems to make it an entirely different and separate system from the law, for it did not exist in the Old Testament dispensation. It could not be realized before the redemptive work of Christ was done and the Holy Spirit came. The Israelites occupied a different position toward the law from that occupied by the Christian now. The law demanded an obedience which the natural heart could not give. In its practical working, therefore, the law necessarily came to stand over man as a creditor, with claims of justice which had not been satisfied. These claims Christ met on the Cross and put out of the way. More than that, by virtue of our union with Him in His death and resurrection, He has brought us out of the sphere where the law as an outward authority demands obedience of the natural man, into the sphere where the law is written upon the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. He has created us `a new man' whose nature it is to fulfill the law by an inward power and principle. This is what Paul meant when he said, `I through the law died unto the law that I might live unto God' (Gal. 2:19), and when he wrote to the Romans, `Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace' (6:14).

"This new revelation to the law has been created by the grace of God through the work of Jesus Christ. But the law still remains. It is the reflex of His own character and the revelation of His moral order. He cannot

set it aside, for then He would deny Himself. The wonder and glory of grace consists in this, that it came in, not to oppose the law and substitute another plan, but to meet and satisfy all its claims and provide a way of fulfilling all its obligations. It has pleased the Lord by His grace to magnify the law and make it honorable."

With the above remarks we are in hearty accord.[1] It is a superficial and erroneous conclusion that supposes the Old and New Testaments are antagonistic. The Old Testament is full of grace: the New Testament if full of Law. The revelation of the New Testament to the Old is like that of the oak tree to the acorn. It has been often said, and said truly, "The New is in the Old contained, the Old is by the New explained"! And surely this must be so. The Bible as a whole, and in its parts, is not merely for Israel or the Church, but is a written revelation from God to and for the whole human race. It is indeed sad to see how little this elementary truth is grasped today and what confusion prevails.

Even the late Mr. F. W. Grant in his notes on Exodus 19 and 20 was so inconsistent with himself as to say, First, "It is plain that redemption, as bringing the soul to God, sets up His throne within it, and obedience is the only liberty. It is plain too, that there is a `righteousness of the law' which the law itself gives no power to fulfill, but which `is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit' (Rom. 8:4). What is merely dispensational passes, but not that which is the expression of God's character and required by it. Nothing of that can pass .. grace still must affirm this, therefore, not set it (obedience) aside; but it does what law does not - it provides for the accomplishment of the condition. First of all, the obedience of Another, who owed none, has glorified God infinitely with regard to those who owed but did not pay. Secondly, - for this even could not release (nor could there be blessing in release) from the personal obligation, - grace apprehended in the heart brings back the heart to God, and the heart brought back in love serves of necessity" (italics ours).

With the above quoted words from The Numerical Bible we are in entire accord, and only wish they might be echoed by Mr. Grant's followers. But second, and most inconsistently, and erroneously, Mr. Grant says: "In the wisdom of God, that same law, whose principle was `do and live', could yet be the type of the obedience of faith in those who are subjects of a spiritual redemption, the principle of which is `live and do'. Let us remember, however, that law in itself retains none the less its character as opposed to grace, and that as a type it does not represent law any longer: we are not, as Christians in any sense under the law, but under grace" (italics his). This is a mistake, the more serious because made by one whose writings now constitute in certain circles the test of orthodoxy in the interpreting of God's Word.

What has been said above reveals the need for a serious and careful examination of the teaching of Holy Scripture concerning the Law. But to what do we refer when we speak of "The Law"? This is a term which needs to be carefully defined. In the New Testament there are three expressions used, concerning which there has been not a little confusion. First, there is "the Law of God" (Rom. 7:22,25, etc.). Second, there is "the Law of Moses" (John 7:23; Acts 13:39, 15:5, etc.). Third, there is "the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). Now these three expressions are by no means synonymous, and it is not until we learn to distinguish between them, that we can hope to arrive at any clear understanding of our subject.

The "Law of God" expresses the mind of the Creator, and is binding upon all rational creatures. It is God's unchanging moral standard for regulating the conduct of all men. In some places "the Law of God" may refer to the whole revealed will of God, but in the majority it has reference to the Ten Commandments; and it is in this restricted sense we use the term. This Law

was impressed on man's moral nature from the beginning, and though now fallen, he still shows the work of it written in his heart. This law has never been repealed, and in the very nature of things, cannot be. For God to abrogate the moral Law would be to plunge the whole universe into anarchy.

Obedience to the Law of God is man's first duty. That is why the first complaint that Jehovah made against Israel after they left Egypt was, "How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws" (Ex. 16:27). That is why the first statutes God gave to Israel were the Ten Commandments, i.e. the moral Law. That is why in the first discourse of Christ recorded in the New Testament He declared, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt 5:17), and then proceeded to expound and enforce the moral Law. And that is why in the first of the Epistles, the Holy Spirit has taught us at length the relation of the Law to sinners and saints, in connection with salvation and the subsequent walk of the saved: the word "law" occurs in Romans no less than seventy-five times, though, of course, not every reference is to the Law of God. And that is why sinners (Rom. 3:19) and saints (Jas. 2:12) shall be judged by this Law.

The "Law of Moses" is the entire system of legislation, judicial and ceremonial, which Jehovah gave to Israel during the time they were in the wilderness. The Law of Moses, as such, is binding upon none but Israelites. This Law has not been repealed. That the Law of Moses is not binding on Gentiles is clear from Acts 15.

The "Law of Christ" is God's moral Law, but in the hands of the Mediator. It is the Law which Christ Himself was "made under" (Gal. 4:4). It is the Law which was "in His heart" (Psa. 40:8). It is the Law which He came to "fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). The "Law of God" is now termed "the Law of Christ" as it relates to Christians. As creatures we are under bonds to "serve the Law of God" (Rom. 7:25). As redeemed sinners we are " the bondslaves of Christ" (Eph. 6:6), and as such we are under bonds to "serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:24). The relation between these two appellations, "the law of God" and "the Law of Christ" is clearly intimated in 1 Cor. 9:21, where the apostle states, that he was not without Law to God," for he was "under the Law of Christ". The meaning of this is very simple. As a human creature, the apostle was still under obligation to obey the moral Law of God his Creator; but as a saved man he now belonged to Christ, the Mediator, by redemption. Christ had purchased him: he was His, therefore, he was "under the Law of Christ". The "Law of Christ", then, is just the moral Law of God now in the hands of the Mediator and Redeemer - cf Ex. 34:1 and what follows!

Should any object against our definition of the distinction drawn between God's moral Law and "the Law of Moses" we request them to attend closely to what follows. God took special pains to show us the clear line of demarcation which He has Himself drawn between the two. The moral Law became incorporated in the Mosaic Law,[2] yet was it sharply distinguished from it. The proof of this is as follows: -

In the first place, let the reader note carefully the words with which Ex. 20 opens: "And God spake all these words." Observe it is not "The Lord spake all these words", but "God spake". This is the more noticeable because in the very next verse He says, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt", etc. Now the Divine titles are not used loosely, nor are they employed alternately for the purpose of variation. Each one possesses a definite and distinct signification. "God" is the creatorial title (see Gen. 1:1). "Lord" is God in covenant relationship, that is why it is "Lord God" all through Gen. 2. In Gen. 1 it is God in connection with His creatures. In Gen. 2 it is the Lord God in connection with Adam, with whom He had entered into a covenant - see Hos. 6:7, margin.

The fact, then, that Ex. 20 opens with "And God spake all these words", etc. prove conclusively that the Ten Commandments were not and are not designed solely for Israel (the covenant people), but for all mankind. The use of the title "God" in Ex. 20:1 is the more forceful because in vv. 2,5,7,10,11,12 "the Lord" is named, and named there because Israel is being addressed.

In the second place, the Ten Commandments, and they alone, of all the laws Jehovah gave to Israel, were promulgated by the finger of God, amid the most solemn manifestations and tokens of the Divine presence and majesty.

In the third place, the Ten Commandments, and they alone, of all Jehovah's statutes to Israel, were written directly by the finger of God, written upon tables of stone; and written thus to denote their lasting and imperishable nature.

In the fourth place, the Ten Commandments were further distinguished from all those laws which had merely a local application to Israel, by the fact that they alone were laid up in the ark. A tabernacle was prepared by the special direction of God, and within it an ark was placed, in which the two tables of the Law were deposited. The ark, formed of the most durable wood, was overlaid with gold, within and without. Over it was placed the mercy-seat, which became the throne of Jehovah in the midst of His people. Not until the tabernacle had been erected, and the Law placed in the ark, did Jehovah take up His abode in Israel's midst. Thus did the Lord signify to Israel that the moral Law was the basis of all His governmental dealings with them.

Thus it is clear beyond any room for doubt that the Ten Commandments, the moral Law of God, were sharply distinguished from "the Law of Moses." The "Law of Moses," excepting the moral Law incorporated therein, was binding on none but Israelites, or Gentile proselytes. But the moral Law of God, unlike the Mosaic, is binding on all men. Once this distinction is perceived, many minor difficulties are cleared up. For example: someone says, If we are to keep the Sabbath day holy, as Israel did, why must we not observe the other Sabbaths - the Sabbatic year, for instance? The answer is, Because the moral Law alone is binding on Gentiles and Christians. Why, it may be asked, does not the death penalty attached to the desecration of the Sabbath day (Ex. 31:14, etc.) still obtain? The answer is, Because though that was a part of the Mosaic Law, it was not a part of the moral Law of God, i.e. it was not inscribed on the tables of stone; therefore it concerned none but Israelites.

In the chapters following this, we propose to offer an exposition of the principal scriptures in the New Testament which refer to the Ten Commandments. First, we will take up the passages which are appealed to by those who deny that the Law is in anywise binding on Christians. Second, we shall treat of some of the many passages which unmistakable prove that all are under lasting obligations to obey the Law of God. Third, a separate booklet[3] will be devoted to the Christian Sabbath. Fourth, in another separate booklet[4] we shall discuss the nature of true Christian liberty. May Divine grace so illumine our understandings and rule our hearts that we shall run in the way of God's commandments.

2. THE NEGATIVE SIDE.

What is the relation between the Law and the saint? By the Law we refer to the Ten Commandments engraven upon the tables of stone by the finger of God; by the saint we mean, the believer living in the present dispensation. What, then, is the relation between the Christian living today and the Ten Commandments formally proclaimed in the time of Moses? It is indeed sad that such a question needs to be raised, and that the Divine answer requires to be pressed upon the people of God. There was a time when it would not have

been easy to find a Christian who was ignorant upon this subject; a time when the first thing committed to memory by the children of Christian parents was the Ten Commandments. But, alas, today it is far otherwise. Now, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find those who can give a clear and scriptural answer to our opening question. And as to finding children who can repeat the Ten Commandments, they are rare indeed.

The Law and the saint. Present-day teachings on this subject, as on almost every other scriptural theme, is conflicting and contradictory. There are indeed few Divine doctrines upon which even Christian teachers are uniform in their testimony. What differences of opinion exist concerning Church-truth and the ordinances! What a variety of interpretations of prophecy now confront us! What a lack of harmony concerning the doctrine of sanctification. The same confusion prevails concerning the relation of the Law to the saint. Just as the Confusion of Tongues (Gen. 11) immediately preceded God's call to Abraham (the father of us all) to leave his native home and go forth into that land which he was to receive for an inheritance (Gen. 12), so there is a confusion of tongues in the theological world just before the people of God are to be called away from this earth to their heavenly inheritance (1 Peter 1:4). That God has a good reason for permitting the present confusion of tongues, we doubt not - "For there must be factions among you; that they that are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11:19, R.V.).

What is the relation of the Law to the saint? Three answers have been given. First, that sinners become saints by obeying the Law. Second, that the Law is a rule of life for believers. Third, that the Law has nothing whatever to do with believers today. Those who give the first answer teach that the Law defines what God requires from man, and therefore man must keep it in order to be accepted by God. Those who give the second answer teach that the Law exhibits a standard of conduct, and that while this Old Testament standard receives amplification in the New, yet the latter does not set aside the former. Those who give the third answer teach that the Law was a yoke of bondage, grievous to be borne, and that it has been made an end of so far as Christians are concerned. The first answer is Legalism pure and simple: salvation by works; the second, relates to true Christian liberty; the third, is Antinomianism - lawlessness, a repudiation of God's governmental authority. The first view prevailed generally through the Medieval Ages, when Popery reigned almost supreme. The second view prevailed generally during the time of the Reformers and Puritans. The third view has come into prominence during the last century, and now is the popular belief of our day.

How thankful we should be that it is our happy privilege to return from the theological bedlam that surrounds us, and enter the quiet sanctuary of God's truth; that we may turn away from the conflicting voices of men, to hear what God says on the subject. We trust that this is the hearty desire of our readers. We cherish the hope that few who have read the above paragraphs are so conceited as to suppose they have no need to examine or re-examine what the Scriptures teach about the relation of the Law to believers. We are persuaded, rather, that the reader shares the conviction of the writer, namely, that this is an imperative necessity. It is so easy to conclude that our views of certain Divine truths have been formed from our own study of what we have (correctly or incorrectly) imbibed from human teachers. Our need is that of the Bereans (Acts 17:11) - to "Search the Scriptures daily" to find out whether or not what we hear and read is in accord with the Word of Truth. Moreover, this is sure, "if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor. 8:2). Therefore it behooves every one of us to definitely look to God for light and help, and then reverently turn to His Word for the needed

instruction.

Before we present to the reader some of the leading scriptures which set forth the relation of the Law to believers of this dispensation, it will first be necessary to examine the passages which are appealed to by those who affirm that the Law has no relation to the people of God living today. Let us then turn to these passages, and without prejudice (as far as that is possible) seek to ascertain their true meaning.

1. "For as many as have sinned without Law shall also perish without Law...for when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves" (Rom. 2:12-14). These verses really have no direct bearing on our present theme, inasmuch as they treat of other than saints. Yet, as this passage does relate to the wider subject of the Law in general, and as it is made use of by those who flatly and hotly deny the Law has any relation to believers today, we give it a brief notice.

It is affirmed by some whom we respect, but from whom on this subject we are obliged to differ, that the Law was given to the nation of Israel and to none else, and therefore, that neither Gentiles nor Christians are under any obligation to keep it. That the Law was formally given to Israel at Sinai is freely granted. But does that prove it was meant for none other than the descendants of Jacob? Surely not. When writing to the saints at Rome (many of whom were Gentiles, see 1:13; 11:13; 15:15, 16, etc.) Paul said, "But now we are delivered from the Law" (7:6). Again, in 8:7 he declares, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be": mark, it is not "the Jewish mind", but the "carnal mind" to Jew and Gentile alike. Now, there would be no point to this statement if the mind of man, as man, is not obligated to be in subjection to the Law of God. Man's mind is not subject, and because of its innate depravity "cannot be"; nevertheless, it ought to be. Once more: note how in Eph. 2:2 the wicked are said to be "children of disobedience"; this is meaningless if they are not under obligation to obey the commandments of God. These scriptures, then, are sufficient to establish the fact that Gentiles, as well as Jews, are "under the Law".

Returning now to Rom. 2:12,13. The simple meaning of these verses is that, the Gentiles never had given to them the two tablets of stone on which the Ten Commandments were inscribed, nor were they in possession of the Scriptures, wherein those Commandments were recorded. But it should be carefully noted that Rom. 2:5 goes on to state these very Gentiles "show the work of the Law written on their hearts". On these verses Prof. Stifler has well said, "The argument (of v.14) lies in this, that Gentiles have what is tantamount to the moral Law". The fact that the Gentiles are "a law unto themselves" shows that God gave them the equivalent of what He gave the Jews, namely, a standard of right and wrong. In the case of the former, it was "written in their hearts", in the case of the latter, it was written on tables of stone, and afterwards in the Scriptures. "From this it is clear that the moral Law given to Israel by Moses was but a transcript, or compendium, of the Law which God, in the creation, had stamped upon the moral nature of man...The moral Law, therefore, was not altogether new in the time of the exodus; nor was it something exclusively for Israel, but was a gift for the whole race, and therefore, must be of perpetual validity" (Mr. Wm. Mead).

2. "For ye are not under the Law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). This is the favorite verse with those who take the position that the Law has no relation to believers of this dispensation. "Not under the Law" is explicit, and seems final. What, then, have we to say concerning it? This: that like every other verse in the Bible, it must not be divorced from its setting, but is to be studied and faithfully interpreted in the light of its context.

What, then, is the context about? First, what is the remote context concerned with? Second, what is the theme of the immediate context? By the remote context we mean, the Epistle as a whole. This is always the first thing to be weighed in connection with the exposition of any passage. Failure here is responsible for the great majority of misinterpretations and erroneous applications of Scripture. It should be carefully noted that the words "Ye are not under the Law" but "under grace" are found not in Hebrews, but in Romans. This, of itself, should warn us that "not under Law" needs to be understood in a modified sense. If it were true that the Law has been abrogated, then the Epistle to the Hebrews would be the one place of all others where we should expect to find this taught. The theme of Hebrews is, The superiority of Christianity over Judaism.[5] In the expansion of this theme the apostle, again and again, shows how the prominent things in Judaism are not obsolete - see chapter 7 for the changing of the priesthood, from the Aaronic to the Melchizedek order; chapters 8 and 9 for the substitution of the new covenant for the old, etc. And yet, not a word is said in it that the Law is now supplanted by grace.

"Not under the Law, but under grace" is found in Romans, the great theme of which is, The righteousness of God: man's need of God's righteousness, how it becomes the believer's, what are the legal consequences of this, and the effect it should have on our conduct. The prominent feature of the first eight chapters of Romans is that they treat of the judicial side of Gospel truth, rather than with the experimental and practical. Romans 5 and 6, especially, treat of justification and its consequences. In the light of this fact it is not difficult to discover the meaning of 6:14. "Ye are not under the Law, but under grace" signifies, Ye are under a system of gratuitous justification. "The whole previous argument explains this sentence. He refers to our acceptance. He goes back to the justification of the guilty, `without the deeds of the Law', the act of free grace; and briefly re-states it thus, that he may take up afresh the position that this glorious liberation means not license, but Divine order" (Bishop Moule - 1893).

"Ye are not under the Law but under grace". The contrast is not between the Law of Moses and the gospel of Christ, as two economies or dispensations, rather is it a contrast between Law and grace as the principles of two methods of justification, the one false, the other true; the one of human devising, the other of Divine provision. "Under Law' means, ruled by Law as a covenant of works" (Dr. Griffith-Thomas). "Law" and "grace" here are parallel with "the Law of works" and "the Law of faith" in 3:27! Rom. 6:14 was just as true of the Old Testament saints as of New Testament believers. Caleb, Joshua, David, Elijah, Daniel were no more "under Law" in the sense that these words bear in Rom. 6:14, than Christians are today. Instead, they were "under grace" in the matter of their justification, just as truly as we are.

"Not under the Law" does not mean, Not under obligation to obey the precepts of the moral Law; but signifies, Not keeping the Law in order to be saved. The apostle asserts in this verse that Christians are not under the Law, as an actual, effectual adequate means of justification or sanctification, and if they are so, their case is utterly hopeless; for ruin must inevitably ensue. That this is all that he means is apparent from the sequel of his remarks (6:15 - 8:39). What can be plainer, than that the moral Law as `precept' is altogether approved and recognized by him. See chapter 7:12-14. Nay, so far is the apostle from pleading for oblivion or repeal of moral precepts, that he asserts directly (8:3,4) that the Gospel is designed to secure obedience to these moral precepts; which the Law was unable to do. It is, then, from the Law viewed in this light, and this only, namely, as inadequate to effect the justification and secure the obedience

of sinners, that the apostle declares us to be free.

"Let no one, then, abuse this declaration by imagining that it inanywise affords ground to believe that Christians are freed from obligation to obey the precepts of the moral Law. What is the Divine Law but a transcript of the Divine will? And are not Christians to be conformed to this? Is not all the Law summed up in these two declarations: "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart; and thy neighbour as thyself"! And are Christians absolved from loving God and their neighbour? If not, then this part of the subject stands unembarrassed by anything which the apostle has said in our text or context' (Prof. Moses Stuart).

The force of Rom. 6:14 becomes more apparent if we observe what follows it. In the very next verse we read, "What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the Law, but under grace? God forbid". This anticipates an objection: If we are not under the Law as the ground of our justification, then are we to be lawless? The inspired answer is, God forbid. Nothing is more self-evidently certain then, that if the moral Law is not a rule of life to believers, they are at liberty to disregard its precepts. But the apostle rejects this error with the utmost abhorrence. We quote here a part of Calvin's comments on Rom. 6:15: "But we are much deceived if we think, that the righteousness which God approves of in His Law is abolished, when the Law is abrogated; for the abrogation is by no means to be applied to the precepts which teach the right way of living, as Christ confirms and sanctions these, and does not abrogate them; but the right view is, that nothing is taken away but the curse, to which men without grace are subject".

In what follows, to the end of this chapter, the apostle shows that though the believer is "not under Law" as the ground of his justification, nevertheless, he is under the Law as a rule of his Christian life, that is, he is under obligations to obey its moral precepts. In v. 18 (which contains the positive answer to the question asked in v. 15) the apostle declares, "being then made free from sin, ye became the servants (bond-slaves) of righteousness". Again in v. 22 he says, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness". Observe carefully, it is not here said "servants of Christ", nor "servants of the Father", which would bring in quite another thought, but "servants of God", which enforces the believer's responsibility to the Law-giver. That this is the meaning of Rom 6:18 and 22 is clear from 7:25, where the apostle says, "So then with the mind I myself serve THE LAW OF GOD".

3. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the Law...Now we are delivered from the Law" (Rom. 7:4,6). These statements really call for a full exposition of Rom. 7:1-6. but it would occupy too much space to give that here. Perhaps we can arrive at the meaning of these two verses by a shorter route. They occur in a section of the Epistle which treats of the results of Divine righteousness being imputed to the believer. Chapter 4 deals with the imputation of this righteousness; chapters 5 to 8 give the results. The results (summarized) are as follows: 5:1-11 Justification and Reconciliation; 5:12-6:23 Identification with Christ, the last Adam; 7:1-25 Emancipation from the Curse of the Law; 8:1-39 Preservation through time and eternity. Thus it will be seen that these chapters deal mainly with the Divine rather than the human side of things. "Dead to the Law" in 7:4 is parallel with "dead to sin" in 6:2: parallel in this sense, that it is objective "death" not subjective; the judicial and not the practical aspect of truth which is in view. Observe it is said, we "become dead to the Law by the body of Christ", not by a Divine repeal of the Law. In other words, we died to the Law vicariously, in the person of our blessed Substitute. So, too, we are "delivered from the Law", or as the R. V. more accurately puts it "We have been discharged from the Law", because we have "died to that

wherein we were held". In Christ we "died" to the judicial threatenings and ceremonial requirements of the Law.

"Dead to the Law". "By the term the Law, in this place, is intended that Law which is obligatory on both Jews and Gentiles. It is the Law, the work of which is written in the hearts of all men; and that Law which was given to the Jews in which they rested, 2:17. It is the Law taken in the largest extent of the word, including the whole will of God in any way manifested to all mankind, whether Jew of Gentile. All those whom the apostle is addressing, had been under this Law in their unconverted state...To the moral Law exclusively here and throughout the rest of the chapter, the apostle refers...Dead to the Law means freedom from the power of the Law, as having endured its penalty, and satisfied its demands. It has ceased to have a claim on the obedience of believers in order to life (better, on believers it has ceased to pronounce its curse - A.W.P.), although it still remains their rule of duty" (Robert Haldane). On the words, "Now we are delivered from the Law", Mr. Haldane says: "Christ hath fulfilled the Law, and suffered its penalty for them, and they in consequence are free from its demands for the purpose of obtaining life, or that, on account of the breach of it, the purpose of obtaining life, or that, on account of the breath of it, they should suffer death".

One further word needs to be said on Rom. 7:4-6. Some insist that the whole passage treats only of Jewish believers. But this is certainly a mistake. When Paul says in v.1 "I speak to them that know Law" - there is no article in the Greek - he reasons on the basis that his readers were fully cognizant of the principle that "the Law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth". If Paul was here confining his address to Jewish believers, he had said, "I speak to those among you who know the Law". When he says "Know ye not, brethren" (v. 1) and "Wherefore, my brethren" (v. 4) he is addressing his brethren in Christ as the Jews, his brethren by nature, he is careful to so intimate, "My brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (9:3)! Finally, it should be carefully noted how the apostle uses the pronouns "ye" and "we" interchangeably in vv.4 and 5. The emphatic "ye also" in v.4 seems specifically designed to show that his illustration in the previous verses, with its obvious suggestion of Israel's history, was strictly applicable to all Christians.

"The deliverance from Law in Galatians is that which leads to the son ship of all saints, while the deliverance in Romans leads to the union of all saints with Christ. But in both they are viewed as all alike having been in bondage under Law, and all alike delivered from it. For indeed it is the design of the Holy Spirit ever to lead the saints of all ages to regard themselves as delivered from a common guilt, redeemed from a common curse - "the curse of the Law" - rescued from a common doom; and all this as the result of the curse being fulfilled in the death of Him in whom they all alike died" (Charles Campbell).

4. "For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4). Frequently, only the first half of this verse is quoted, "Christ is the end of the Law". But this is not all that is said here. Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness, that is, before God. The context unequivocally settles the scope and significance of this expression. Paul had just affirmed that Israel, who was ignorant of God's righteousness, had gone about "to establish their own righteousness". Once more it is justification which is in view, and not the walk of a believer. Says Dr. Thos. Chalmers: "There is one obvious sense in which Christ is the end of the Law, and that is when the Law is viewed as a schoolmaster brings us to the conclusion, as to its last lesson, that Christ is our only refuge, our only righteousness". So also Dr. G. Thomas: "With Christ before us legal righteousness is necessarily at an end, and in not submitting to Christ, the

Jews were refusing to submit to the God who gave them the Law".

5. Another passage frequently appealed to by those who insist on the total abrogation of the Law is 2 Cor. 3. Such expressions as "That which is done away" (v. 11), and "that which is abolished" (v. 13) are regarded as alluding to the Ten Commandments "written and engraven in stones" (v. 7). That this is a mistake, is easily proven. For in Rom. 13:9 and Eph. 6:2 several of the Ten Commandments are quoted and enforced. This is quite sufficient to prove that the moral Law is not "done away". And such scriptures as Isa. 2:2,3; Jer. 31:33, etc., make it plain that the Law is not abolished".

In 2 Cor. 3 (and again and again throughout the Epistle) Paul is contending against false "apostles" (note 2:17 and see further 6:1; 11:3,4,13,22) who, preaching the Law to the exclusion of Christ, were seducing the people of God from the blessings of the new covenant. Consequently, the apostle is not here treating of the Law as the moral standard of conduct for believers, but as that which condemns sinners. The inspired penman is pointing out the folly of turning back to the Law as the ground of acceptance before God - which was what the false apostles insisted on. The method he follows is to draw a series of contrasts between the old covenant and the new, showing the immeasurable superiority of the latter over the former. He shows that apart from Christ, the old covenant was but a ministration of condemnation and death; that just as the body without the spirit is dead, so the Law without Christ was but a lifeless "letter". 2 Cor. 3, then contrasts Christianity with Judaism. That which has been "done away" is the old covenant; that which is "abolished" (for the Christian) is the ceremonial law.

6. In the Galatian Epistle there are quite a number of verses which are used by those who affirm the Law has no relation to believers today - e.g. 2:19; 3:13; 3:23-25; 4:5; 5:18. Now it is impossible to understand these verses unless we first see what is the theme and character of the Epistle in which they are found. The theme of Galatians is the Believer's Emancipation from the Law. The special character of the Epistle is that it was written to confirm the faith of Christians, who had been troubled and shaken by Judaisers. But a careful reading of the Epistle should show the Emancipation here viewed is not from the Law as the standard of moral conduct, but from the curse or penalty of the Law; and the particular heresy of the Judaisers was not that they pressed the Ten Commandments upon the saints as a rule of life, but that they insisted the works of the Law must be fulfilled before a sinner could be saved. (See Acts 15:1). "The trouble at Galatia was legalism and ritualism. Speaking strictly the two are one; for the attempt to secure Divine favor through law observance leads inevitably to ritualism in its worst form. That the Galatians were going over to the ground of law for acceptance with God is evident from the whole tenor of the Epistle" (Prof. W. G. Morehead on "Galatians"). "The object of the Epistle to the Galatians was to restore among them the pure Gospel which they had received, but which they had so mingled with human works and ceremonies and a notion of their own free will and merits, as to have well-nigh lost it" ("Grace in Galatians" by Dr. George S. Bishop).

The central issue raised in Galatians is not what is the standard of conduct for the believer's life, but what is the ground of a sinner's salvation. In proof of this assertion note carefully that in Gal. 1:7 Paul expressly says the Judaisistic troublers were they who "would pervert the Gospel of Christ". Again, "That no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God is evident", etc. (3:11), shows the trend of the argument. Again; "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law" (5:3 and cf 6:15) indicates wherein the Judaisers erred. So, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are

justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4) evidences the subject of the Epistle. To "fall from grace" means not for a Christian to obey the Ten Commandments, but to do the works of the Law (moral and ceremonial) in order to be justified. The Law and the Gospel are irreconcilable. Every attempt to combine them strikes equally at the majesty of the Law and the grace of the Gospel.

On Gal. 3:25 Dr. George Bishop has this to say: "We are no longer `under a schoolmaster! i.e., for discipline, for penalty. It does not mean for precept. It does not mean that the Ten Commandments are abolished. It simply says, You are not saved by keeping the Commandments, nor are you lost if you fail. It is Christ who has saved you, and you cannot be lost. Now you will obey from the instinct of the new nature and from gratitude, for these are holiness". On 5:13, 14 he says, "By love serve one another". Here the Law is brought in as a service. `I am among you', Saud Hesysm ;as One that serveth' - `If ye love Me keep My commandments'. The New Testament repeats and enforces all the Ten Commandments. They were given to be kept, and kept they shall be. Matt. 5:19: `For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'. The Law is fulfilled': the Law was given to be fulfilled, not only for us, but in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. There is danger here of a mistake on either side - for if we do not preach faith alone for salvation, no one is saved; but if we preach a faith that does not obey, we preach that which nullifies the faith which saves us."

On Gal. 5:18 Dr. John Eadie has this to say: "The Galatians were putting themselves in subjection to Law, and ignoring the free government of the Spirit. To be led by the Spirit is incompatible with being under the Law. So the beginning of Gal. 3. To be under the Law is thus to acknowledge its claim and to seek to obey it in hope of meriting eternal life". To be led by the Spirit is incompatible with being under the Law because the Holy Spirit leads a sinner to trust in Christ alone for salvation.

7. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross" (Col. 2:14). Here it is assumed that the "handwriting of ordinances" refers to the Ten Commandments, and, that "which was contrary to us", refers to Christians. Such a distortion is quickly discovered once this interpretation is exposed to the light. Observe, in the first place, that at the beginning of the previous verse the apostle refers to Gentile believers - "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh", etc. The "us" of v.14 refers, then to Jewish believers. But between the "you" and the "us" is a word which supplies the key to what follows, namely, the word "together", which here, as in Eph. 2:5, 6, points to the spiritual union of believing Gentiles with believing Jews. Believing Jews and gentiles were "quickened together". And how could that be? Because they were "quickened together with Him". Christ acted vicariously, as the Representative of all His people, so that when He died they all died (judicially); when He was quickened they all were; when He rose again they all rose; not merely one part of them did, but all together. But in order for Jew and Gentile to enjoy fellowship, in order for them to be brought "together", that which had hitherto separated them must be made an end of. And it is this which is in view in Col. 2:14. The handwriting of ordinances was against us," i.e. against the Jews, for their Divinely-given Law prohibited them for all religious intercourse with the Gentiles. But that which had been against the Jews, was taken out of the way, being nailed to the Cross. Nor does this interpretation stand unsupported: it is indubitably confirmed by a parallel passage.

It is well-known among students of the Word that the Epistles of Ephesians and Colossians are largely complementary and supplementary; and it

will frequently be found that the one is absolutely indispensable to the interpretation of the other. Now in Eph. 2 there is a passage which is strictly parallel with this portion of Col. 2. In v. 11 the apostle addresses the Gentile saints, who were of the Uncircumcision - note the reference to "uncircumsision" in Col. 2:13. Then in v. 12 he reminds them of how in their unconverted state they had been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel", etc. But in v. 13 he tells them that they had been "made nigh" by the blood of Christ. The result of this is stated in v. 14: "For He is our peace who hath made both one" (i.e. both believing Jews and believing Gentiles): the "made both one" being parallel with the "quickened together" of Col. 2:13. Next the apostle tells how this had been made possible: "And hath broken down the middle wall of partition" (that had separated Jew from Gentile); which is parallel with "and took it out of the way", etc. Then the apostle declares, "having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the Law of commandments contained in ordinances", which is parallel with "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances"! Thus has God most graciously made us entirely independent of all human interpretations of Col. 2:13, 14, by interpreting it for us in Eph. 2:11-15. How much we lose by failing to compare scripture with scripture.

8. One other verse we must consider, and that is 1 Tim. 1:9: "Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinner", etc. The key to this is supplied in the immediate context. In vv. 3 and 4 the apostle bids Timothy to "charge some that they preach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies", etc. It is clear that he has in mind those who had been infected by Judaisers. In v. 5 the apostle tells his son in the faith what was the "end", of "the commandments" - i.e. the moral Law, as is clear from what precedes and what follows. The design or aim of that Law which is "holy and just and good" (Rom. 7:12) was to direct and advance love to God and men; but this love ("charity") can spring only "out of a pure heart and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned".

Next, in vv. 6 and 7 the apostle taxes the Judaisers and those affected by them, as having "swerved" from love and faith, turning aside to "vain jangling", and setting themselves up as teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they said nor affirmed. Then, in v. 8, the apostle guards against His readers drawing a false inference from what he had just said in v. 7, and so he declares "But we know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully"; thus amplifying what he had affirmed in v. 5. Lest they should think that because he had reflected upon the Judaisers, he had also disparaged the Law itself, he added this safeguard in v. 8. To "use" the Law "lawfully", is to use it as God intended it to be used: not as a means of salvation, but as a standard of conduct; not as the ground of our justification, but as the director of our obedience to God. The Law is used un-lawfully, not when presented as the rule of the believer's life, but when it is opposed to Christ!

Finally, in vv. 9 and 10 the apostle contrasts the design of the Law as it respected believers and unbelievers: "The Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient", etc. That is to say, the Law as an instrument of terror and condemnation, was not made for the righteous but for the wicked. "The Law, threatening, compelling, condemning, is not made for a righteous man, because he is pushed forward to duty of his own accord, and is no more led by the spirit of bondage and fear of punishment" (Turretin). "By the Law is to be understood, the moral Law, as it is armed with stings and terrors, to restrain rebellious sinners. By the righteous man, is meant, one in whom a principle of Divine grace is planted, and who, for the knowledge and love of God, chooses the things that are pleasing to Him. As the Law has annexed so many severe threatenings to the transgression

of it, it is evidently directed to the wicked, who will only be compelled by fear from the outrageous breaking of it" (Poole's Annotations).

We have now examined every passage of any importance in the New Testament which is used by modern Antinomians. And not one of them has a word to say against believers in this dispensation using the Law as the standard of their moral conduct. In our next article, we shall treat of the positive side of the subject, and show that the children of God are obligated to obey the Ten Commandments, not as a condition of salvation, but as the director of their obedience to God.

In this article we have departed from our usual custom, in that we have quoted from quite a number of the commentators of the past. This has been done, not because we desired to buttress our expositions by an appeal to human authorities - though the interpretations of godly men of the past are not to be scorned and regarded as obsolete, rather should they receive the careful examination which they merit, for it was under such teaching was produced Christian conduct that puts to unutterable shame the laxity of the present-day Christian walk. No, we have appealed to the writings of Christian exegetes of the past that it might be seen we have not given a forced and novel interpretation of those passages which stood in the way of what we deem to be the truth on the subject of the relation of the Law to Christians; but instead, an interpretation which, though the result of personal study, is in full accord with that given by many, who for piety, scholarship, spiritual discernment, and knowledge of the Scriptures, few living today are worthy to be compared.

3. THE POSITIVE SIDE

What is the relation of the Law (the Ten Commandments) to Christians? In our previous chapter we pointed out how that three radically different answers have been returned to this question. The first, that sinners become saints by obeying the Law. This is Legalism pure and simple. It is heresy of the most dangerous kind. All who really believe and act on it as the ground of their acceptance by God, will perish eternally. Second, others say that the Law is not binding on Christians because it has been abolished. This is, we are fully assured, a serious error. It arises from a mistaken interpretation of certain passages in the Epistles. The inevitable tendency of such an error is toward Antinomianism, the "turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness" (Jude 4). Third, others affirm, and the writer is among the number, that the Ten Commandments are an expression of the unchanging character and will of God: that they are a moral standard of conduct which we disregard at our peril: that they are, and will ever be, binding upon every Christian.

In our last chapter we sought to prepare the way for the present one. There, we dealt with the negative side; here, we shall treat of the positive. In the former, we sought to give the true meaning of the principal passages in the New Testament appealed to by those who deny that the Ten Commandments are now binding on Christians. In the present chapter, we shall endeavor to expound some of the many passages in the New Testament which affirm that the Ten Commandments are now binding on Christians. We, therefore, invite the reader's most diligent and prayerful attention to the scriptures cited and our comments upon them.

1. "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the

kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:17-19). It might appear to the disciples of Christ that their Master intended to set aside Moses and the Prophets, and introduce an entirely new standard of morality. It was true indeed that He would expose the error of depending on the work of the Law for acceptance with God (as Moses and the prophets had done before Him); but it was no part of His design to set aside the Law itself. He was about to correct various corruptions, which obtained among the Jews, hence He is careful to preface what He has to say by cautioning them not to misconstrue His designs. So far from having any intention of repudiating Moses, He most emphatically asserts: first, that He had not come to destroy the Law; second, that He had come to "fulfill" it; third, that the Law is of perpetual obligation; fourth, that whoso breaks one of the least of the Law's commandments and teaches other so to do, shall suffer loss; fifth, that he who kept the Law and taught men to respect and obey it should be rewarded.

"I am not come to destroy the Law" - the Prophets simply expounded the Law, and rebuked Israel for their failure to keep it, and forwarned them of the consequences of continued disobedience. "I am not come to destroy the Law." Nothing could be more explicit. The word "destroy" here means "to dissolve or overthrow". When, then, our Lord said that He had not come to destroy the Law He gave us to understand that it was not the purpose of His mission to repeal or annul the Ten Commandments: that he had not come to free men from their obligations to them. And if He did not "destroy" the Law, then no one had destroyed it; and if no one has destroyed it, then the Law still stands with all its Divine authority; and if the Law still abides as the unchanging expression of God's character and will, then every human creature is under lasting obligation to obey it; and if every human creature, then the Christian!

Second, the Son of God went on to say "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill". The word "fulfill" here means "to fill up, to complete". Christ "fulfilled" the Law in three ways: first, by rendering personal obedience to its precepts. God's Law was within His heart (Psa. 40:8), and in thought, word and deed, He perfectly met its requirements; and thus by His obedience He magnified the Law and made it honorable (Isa. 42:21). Second, by suffering (at the Cross) its death-penalty on behalf of His people who had transgressed it. Third, by exhibiting its fulness and spirituality and by amplifying its contents. Thus did Christ, our Exemplar, "fulfill the Law."

So far from Christ having repealed the Law, He expressly affirmed, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled." In these words He announces the perpetuity of the Law. So long as heaven and earth shall last, the Law will endure, and by necessary implication, the lasting obligations of all men to fulfill it.

But this is not all that our Lord here said. With omniscient foresight He anticipated what Mr. Mead has aptly termed "The Modern Outcry against the Law", and proceeds to solemnly warn against it. He said, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven".

2. "Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law" (Rom. 3:31). In the previous part of the chapter the apostle had proven that "there is none righteous, no not one" (v. 10); second, he had declared "By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified" (v. 2); then in vv. 21-26 he had set forth the Divine way of salvation - "through faith in Christ's blood". In v.28, he sums up his argument by affirming "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law". In vv. 29,30 he proves that this is true for Jew and Gentile alike. Then, in v.31, he anticipates an objection: What about the Law, then? This

was a very pertinent question. Twice had he said that justification was apart from the deeds of the Law. If, then, the Law served no purpose in effecting the salvation of sinners, has it no office at all? If we are saved "through faith" is the Law useless? Are we to understand you to mean (Paul) that the Law has been annulled? Not at all, is the apostle's answer: "We establish the Law."

What did the apostle mean when he said "we establish the Law"? He meant that, as saved men, Christians are under additional obligations to obey the Law, for they are now furnished with new and more powerful motives to serve God. Righteousness imputed to the believer produces in the justified one a kind and an extent of obedience which could not otherwise have been obtained. So far from rendering void or nullifying the authority and use of the Law, it sustains and confirms them. Our moral obligation to God and our neighbor has not been weakened, but strengthened. Below we offer one or two brief excerpts from other expositors.

"Does not the doctrine of faith evacuate the Old Testament of its meaning, and does it not make law void, and lead to disregard of it? Does it not open the door to license of living? To this the apostle replies, that it certainly does not; but that, on the contrary, the Gospel puts law on a proper basis and establishes it on its foundation as a revelation of God's will" (Dr. Griffith-Thomas).

"We cancel law, then, by this faith of ours? We open the door, then, to moral license? We abolish code and precept, then, when we ask not for conduct, but for faith? Away with the thought; nay, we establish law; we go the very way to give a new sacredness to its every command, and to disclose a new power for the fulfillment of them all. But how this is, and is to be, the later argument is to show" (Dr. Handley Moule).

"Objection. If man is justified by faith without works, does not that do away with law entirely, i.e. teach lawlessness? Answer: By no means. It establishes the law. When a man is saved by grace, that does not make him lawless. There is a power within him which does not destroy, but it strengthens the law, and causes him to keep it, not through fear, but through love of God" (H. S. Miller, M.A.).

3. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man...with the mind I myself serve the Law of God" (Rom 7:22-25). In this chapter the apostle does two things: first, he shows what is not and what is the Law's relation to the believer - judicially, the believer is emancipated from the curse or penalty of the Law (7:1-6); morally, the believer is under bonds to obey the Law (vv. 22,25). Secondly, he guards against a false inference being drawn from what he had taught in chapter 6. In 6:1-11 he sets forth the believer's identification with Christ as "dead to sin" (vv. 2,7, etc.). Then, from v. 11 onwards, he shows the effect this truth should have upon the believer's walk. In chapter 7 he follows the same order of thought. In 7:1-6 he treats of the believer's identification with Christ as "dead to the law" (see vv. 4 and 6). Then, from v. 7 onwards he describes the experiences of the Christian. Thus the first half of Rom. 6 and the first half of Rom. 7 deal with the believer's standing, whereas the second half of each chapter treats of the believer's state; but with this difference: the second half of Rom. 6 reveals what our state ought to be, whereas the second half of Rom. 7 (vv. 13-25) shows what our state actually is.[6]

The controversy which has raged over Rom. 7 is largely the fruitage of the Perfectionism of Wesley and his followers. That brethren, whom we have cause to respect, should have adopted this error in a modified form, only shows how widespread today is the spirit of Laodiceanism. To talk of "getting out of Rom. 7 into Rom. 8" is excuseless folly. Rom. 7 and 8 both apply with undiminished force and pertinence to every believer on earth today. The second half of Rom. 7 describes the conflict of the two natures

in the child of God: it simply sets forth in detail what is summarized in Gal. 5:17. Rom. 7:14,15,18,19,21 are far short of the standard set before him - we mean God's standard, not that of the so-called "victorious life" teachers. If any Christian reader is ready to say that Rom. 7:19 does not describe his life, we say in all kindness, that he is sadly deceived. We do not mean by this that every Christian breaks the laws of men, or that he is an overt transgressor of the laws of God. But we do mean that his life is far, far below the level of the life our Saviour lived here on earth. We do mean that there is much of "the flesh" still evident in every Christian - not the least in those who make such loud boastings of their spiritual attainments. We do mean that every Christian has urgent need to daily pray for the forgiveness of his daily sins (Luke 11:4), for "in many things we all stumble" (James 3:2, R.V.).

The second half of Rom. 7, then, is describing the state of the Christian, i.e. the conflict between the two natures within him. In v. 14 the apostle declares, "We know that the Law is spiritual". How different is this language from the disparaging way that many now refer to God's Law! In v. 22 he exclaims, "I delight in the Law of God after the inward man". How far removed is this from the delusion that the Law has been abolished, and that it no longer serves any purpose for the Christian! The apostle Paul did not ignore the Law, still less did he regard it as an enemy. The new nature within him delighted in it: so, too, did the Psalmist, see Psa. 119:72, 97, 140. But the old nature was still within him too, warring against the new, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, so that he cried, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (v.24) - and we sincerely pity every professing Christian who does not echo this cry. Next the apostle thanks God that he shall be delivered yet "through Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 25), not "by the power of the Holy Spirit" note! The deliverance is future, at the return of Christ, see Phil. 3:20, etc. Finally, and mark that this comes after he had spoken of the promised "deliverance", he sums up his dual experience by saying, "So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin". Could anything be plainer? Instead of affirming that the Law had nothing to do with him as a Christian, nor he with it, he expressly declared that he served "the Law of God". This is sufficient for us. Let others refuse to "serve" the Law of God at their peril.

4. "For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit" (Rom. 8:3,4). This throws light on Rom. 3:31, showing us, in part, how the Law is established". The reference here is to the new nature. The believer now has a heart that loves God, and therefore does it "delight in the Law of God". And it is ever at the heart that God looks, though, of course, He takes note of our actions too. But in heart the believer "fulfills" the holy requirements of God's Law, inasmuch as his innermost desire is to serve, please, and glorify the Law-giver. The righteous requirements of the Law are "fulfilled" in us because we now obey from the heart (Rom. 6:17).

5. "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law" (Rom. 13:8-10). Here again, the apostle, so far from lending the slightest encouragement to the strange delusion that the Ten Commandments have become obsolete to Christians, actually quotes five of them, and then declares, "Love is the fulfilling of

the Law". Love is not a substitution for Law-obedience, but it is that which prompts the believer to render obedience to it. Note carefully, it is not "love is the abrogating of the Law", but "love is the fulfilling of the Law". "The whole Law is grounded on love to God and love to man. This cannot be violated without the breach of Law; and if there is love, it will influence us to the observance of all God's commandments" (Haldane). Love is the fulfilling of the Law because love is what the Law demands. The prohibitions of the Law are not unreasonable restraints on Christian liberty, but the just and wise requirements of love. We may add that the above is another passage which serves to explain Rom. 3:31, for it supplies a practical exemplification of the way in which the Gospel establishes the Law as the expression of the Divine will, which love alone can fulfill.

6. "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the Law; as under the Law, that i might gain them that are under the Law; to them that are without Law, as without Law, (being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without Law" (1 Cor. 9:19-22). The central thought of this passage is how the apostle forewent his Christian liberty for the sake of the Gospel. Though "free" from all, he nevertheless, made himself "the servant" of all. To the unconverted Jews he "became a Jew;" Acts 16:3 supplies an illustration. To those who deemed themselves to be yet under the ceremonial law, he acted accordingly: Acts 21:26 supplies an example of this. To them without Law: that is, Gentiles without the ceremonial law, he abstained from the use of all ceremonies as they did: cf. Gal. 2:3. Yet, he did not act as "without Law to God", but instead, as "under the Law to Christ"; that is, as still under the moral Law of God. He never counted himself free from that, nor would he do anything contrary to the eternal Law of righteousness. To be "under Law to God", is, without question, to be under the God. Therefore, to be under the Law of Christ, is to be under the Law of God, for the Law was not abrogated but reinforced by Christ. This text, then, gives a plain and decisive answer to the question, How the believer is under the Law of God, namely, as he is "under the Law to Christ", belonging to Christ, as he does, by redemption.

7. "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Gal. 5:13,14). Here the apostle first reminds the Galatian saints (and us) that they had been called unto "liberty", i.e., from the curse of the moral Law (3:13). Second, he defines the bounds of that liberty, and shows that it must not deteriorate to fleshly license, but that it is bounded by the requirements of the unchanging moral Law of God, which requires that we love our neighbor as ourselves. Third, he repeats here, what he had said in Rom. 13:8-10, namely, that love is the fulfilling of the Law. The new commandment of love to our brethren is comprehended in the old commandment of love to our neighbor, hence the former is enforced by an appeal to the latter.

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). We quote here part of the late Dr. George Bishop's comments on this verse: "The apostle here emphasizes a danger. The believer before believing, relied upon his works to save him. After believing, seeing he is in no way saved by his works, he is in danger of despising good works and minifying their value. At first he was an Arminian living by law; now he is in danger of becoming an Antinomian and flinging away the law altogether.

"But the law is holy and the commandment holy, and just, and good. It is God's standard - the eternal Norm. Fulfilled by Christ for us, it still

remains the swerveless and unerring rule of righteousness. We are without the law for salvation, but not without the law for obedience. Angels are under the law `doing God's commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word' (Psa. 103:20). The law then is immutable - its reign universal and without exception. The law! It is the transcript of the Divine perfection: the standard of eternal justice: the joy and rapture of all holy beings. The law! We are above it for salvation, but under it, or rather in it and it in us, as a principle of holiness" (Grace in Galatians).

8. "Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:1-3). Once more we have a direct quotation from the tables of stone as the regulator of the Christian conscience. First, the apostle bids children obey their parents in the Lord. Second, he enforces this by an appeal to the fifth commandment in the Decalogue. What a proof this is that the Christian is under the Law (for the apostle is writing to Christians), under it "to Christ". Third, not only does the apostle here quote the fifth commandment, but he reminds us that there is a promise annexed to it, a promise concerning the prolongation of earthly life. How this refutes those who declare that our blessings are all spiritual and heavenly)Eph. 1:3). Let the ones who are constantly criticizing those who press on the children of God the scriptures which have to do with our earthly walk, and who term this a "coming down from our position in the heavenlies' weigh carefully Eph. 6:2,3 and also 1 Tim. 4:8 - "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"; and let them also study 1 Pet. 3:10. In the administration of His government, God acts upon immutable principles.[7]

9. "But we know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully" (1 Tim. 1:8). The Law is used unlawfully, when sinners rest on their imperfect obedience to it as the ground of their acceptance by God. So, too, believers use it unlawfully, when they obey its precepts out of servile fear. But used lawfully, the Law is good. This could never have been said if the Law is an enemy to be shunned. Nor could it have been said if it has been repealed for the Christian. In that case, the apostle would have said, "The Law is not binding upon us". But he did not so say. Instead, he declared "The Law if good". He said more than that, he affirmed, "We know that the Law is good". It is not a debateable point, rather is it one that has been Divinely settled for us. But the Law is only "good" if a man (Greek, any one) use it lawfully. To use the Law lawfully is to regard it as the unchanging expression of the Will of God, and therefore to "delight" in it. To use the Law lawfully is to receive it as the corrector of our conduct. To use the Law lawfully is to "fulfill" it in love.

10. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people" (Heb. 8:8,10). Let it be carefully noted that this passage unmistakably demonstrates two things: first, it proves conclusively that the Law has not been "abolished"! Second, it proves that the Law does have a use and value for those that are saved, for it is saved Israel that is here in view! Nor is there any possible room for doubt as to whether or not this applies to Gentile Christians now.

The passage just quoted refers to "the new covenant". Is the new covenant restricted to Israel? Emphatically no. Did not our Saviour say at the Holy Supper, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out

for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28, R.V.)? Was Christ's blood of the new covenant limited to Israel? Certainly not. Note how the apostle quotes our Lord's words when writing to the Corinthians, see 1 Cor. 11:25. So, too, in 2 Cor. 3:6 the apostle Paul declares that God has made us (not is going to make us) "ministers of the new covenant". This is proof positive that Christians are under the new covenant. The new covenant is made with all that Christ died for, and therefore Heb. 8:8-10 assures us that God puts His laws into the minds and writes them upon the hearts of every one of His redeemed.

But so anxious are some to grasp at everything which they imagine favors their contention that in no sense are believers under the Law, this passage is sometimes appealed to in support. It is argued that since God has now (by regeneration) written the Law on the believer's heart, He no longer needs any outward commandments to rule and direct him. Inward principle, it is said, will now move him spontaneously, so that all need for external law is removed. This error was so ably exposed fifty years ago by Dr. Martin, we transcribe a part of his refutation:

"How was it with our first parents? If ever outward law, categorical and imperative, might have been dispensed with, it might in Adam's case. In all the compass of his nature, there was nothing adverse to the law of God. He was a law unto himself. He was the moral law unto himself; loving God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself, in all things content, in nothing coveting. Was imperative, authoritative, sovereign commandment therefore utterly unnecessary? Did God see it to be needless to say to him, Thou shalt, or, Thou shalt not? It was the very thing that infinite wisdom saw he needed. And therefore did He give commandment - "Thou shalt not eat of it".

"How was it with the last Adam? All God's law was in His heart operating there, an inward principle of grace; He surely, if any, might have dispensed with strict, imperative, authoritative law and commandment. `I delight to do Thy will, O God; Thy law also is within My heart". Was no commandment, therefore, laid upon - no obedience-statute ordained - unto Him? Or did He complain if there was? Nay; I hear Him specially rejoicing in it. Every word He uttered, every work He did, was by commandment: `My Father which sent me, He gave Me commandment what I should say and what I should do; as He gave me commandment therefore, so I speak'.

"And shall His members, though the regenerating Spirit dwells in them, claim an exemption from what the Son was not exempt? Shall believers, because the Spirit puts the law into their hearts, claim a right to act merely at the dictate of inward gracious principle, untrammeled, uncontrolled by outward peremptory statute? I appeal to Paul in the seventh chapter of the Romans, where he says: "The law is holy', and adds, as if to show that it was no inward actuating law of the heart, but God's outward commanding law to the will: `the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good'. And I appeal to the sweet singer of Israel, as I find him in the 119th Psalm, which is throughout the breathing of a heart in which the law of God is written, owning himself with joy as under peremptory external law: `Thou hast commanded us to keep Thy precepts diligently'".

11. If ye fulfill the royal Law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (James 2:8). The immediate purpose of the apostle was to correct an evil - common in all climes and ages - of which his brethren were guilty. They had paid deference to the wealthy, and shown them greater respect than the poor who attended their assembly (see preceding verses). They had, in fact, "despised the poor" (v.6). The result was that the worthy name of Christ had been "blasphemed" (v.7). Now it is striking to observe the method followed and the ground of appeal made by the apostle James in correcting this evil.

First, he says, "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the Law as transgressors" (vv. 8,9). He shows that in despising the poor they had transgressed the Law, for the Law says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". Here then, if proof positive that the Law was binding upon those to whom James wrote, for it is impossible for one who is in every sense "dead to the Law" to be a "transgressor" of it. And here, it is probable that some will raise the quibble that the Epistle of James is Jewish. True, the Epistle is addressed to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. Yet it cannot be gainsaid that the apostle was writing to men of faith (1:3); men who had been regenerated - "begotten" (1:18); men who were called by the worthy name of Christ (2:7), and therefore Christians. And it is to them the apostle here appeals to the Law! - another conclusive proof that the Law has not been abolished.

The apostle here terms the Law, "the royal Law". This was to empathize its authority, and to remind his regenerated brethren that the slightest deflection from it was rebellion. The royal Law also calls attention to the supreme dignity of its Author. This royal Law, we learn, is transcribed in the Scriptures - the reference here was, of course, to the Old Testament Scriptures.

Next, the apostle says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou are become a transgressor of the Law" (vv. 10,11). His purpose is evident. He presses on those to whom he writes that, he who fails to love his neighbour is just as much and just as truly a transgressor of the Law as the man who is guilty of adultery or murder, for he has rebelled against the authority of the One who gave the whole Law. In this quotation of the 6th and 7th commandments all doubt is removed as to what "Law" is in view in this passage.

Finally, the apostle says, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (vv. 12,13). This is solemn and urgently needs pressing upon the Lord's people today: Christians are going to be "judged by the Law"! The Law is God's unchanging standard of conduct for all; and all alike, saints and sinners, are going to be weighed in its balances; not of course, in order to determine their eternal destiny, but to settle the apportionment of reward and punishment. It should be obvious to all that the very word "reward" implies obedience to the Law! Let it be repeated, though, that this judgment for Christians has nothing whatever to do with their salvation. Instead, it is to determine the measure of reward which they shall enjoy in Heaven. Should any object against the idea of any future judgment (not punishment but judgment) for Christians, we would ask them to carefully ponder 1 Cor. 11:31, 32: 2 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 10:30 - in each case the Greek word is the same as here in James 2:12.

It should be noted that the apostle here terms the Law by which we shall be judged "the Law of liberty". It is, of course, the same as "the royal Law" in v. 8. But why term it the Law of liberty? Because such it is to the Christian. He obeys it (or should do) not from fear, but out of love. The only true "liberty" lies in complete subjection to God. There was, too, a peculiar propriety in the apostle James here styling the Law of God "the Law of liberty". His brethren had been guilty of "respecting persons", showing undue deference to the rich; and this was indeed servility of the worst kind. But to "love our neighbour" will free us from this.

12. Other passages in the New Testament which show more directly the

bearing of the Law on believers might be quoted, but we close, by calling attention to 1 John 2:6: "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John 2:6). This is very simple, and yet deeply important. The believer is here exhorted to regulate his walk by that of the walk of Christ. How did He walk? We answer, in perfect obedience to the Law of God. Gal. 4:4 tells us, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law." Psa. 40:8 declares that God's Law was in His heart. Everything recorded about the Saviour in the four Gospels evidences His complete subjection to the Law. If, then, the Christian desires to honor and please God, if he would walk as Christ walked, then must he regulate his conduct by and render obedience to the Ten Commandments. Not that we would for a moment insist that the Christian has nothing more than the Ten Commandments by which to regulate his conduct. No; Christ came to "fulfill" the Law, and as we have intimated, one thing this means is that, He has brought out the fulness of its contents, He has brought to light its exceeding spirituality, He has shown us (both directly and through His apostles) its manifold application. But whatever amplification the Law has received in the New Testament, nothing has been given by God which in any wise conflicts with what he first imprinted on man's moral nature, and afterwards wrote with His own finger at Sinai, nothing that in the slightest modifies its authority or our obligation to render obedience to it. May the Holy Spirit so enlighten our sin-darkened understandings and so draw out our hearts unto God, that we shall truthfully say, "The Law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver...O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psa. 119:72-97).

[1]

Except that in the closing paragraphs Dr. McNicol is somewhat confused about the present relation of the Law to the believer.

[2] And this of necessity. As already stated, the Ten Commandments reveal the will of the Creator for every human creature, and as Israelites were first God's creatures before being brought into the relationship of His covenant people, the moral Law was given to them before the Mosaic Law. This explains why the Ten Commandments are repeated in Deut. 5. In Ex. 20 they are addressed to God's creatures; in Deut. 5, to Israel as Jehovah's covenant people Mark the absence in Deut. 5 of "God spake all these words"!

[3] "The Christian Sabbath". 30 cents.

[4] "Christian Liberty". 15 cents.

[5] This theme is developed by showing the superiority of Christ - the Center and Life of Christianity - over angels. Adam, Moses, Hoshua, Aaron, and the whole Levitical economy.

[6] Vv. 8-12 are more or less in the nature of a parenthesis.

[7] That some obedient children are short-lived no more belies the Word of God than that some diligent men are poor, yet Prov. 10:4 says, "The hand of the diligent maketh rich:" The truth is, that these promises reveal the general purpose of God, but He always reserves to Himself the sovereign right to make whom He pleases exceptions to the general rule.