

The Two Laws

George Burnside

www.CreationismOnline.com

IT WAS a beautiful evening in spring. The night was young, and a thoughtful group had settled down for a hearty discussion. Here were representatives of various orthodox churches, also two of their ministers, and, to cap it all, a Seventh day, Adventist minister. One week before all had met in this same home at the invitation of their host, Mr. Brown. The Adventist minister had for some weeks been conducting a mission in the large theatre in the city, and the members of these bodies had been attending. Two of them had appealed to their respective ministers for their opinions, and that evening one of these ministers present had laid down the premises that the law was “abolished,” or “nailed to the cross.” The argument had seemed quite conclusive. Did not Paul say that “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. Galatians 3: 24, 25.

Had not Paul told the Ephesians that Christ had “abolished In His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments”? Ephesians 2: 15.

And had not the same Paul also told the -Colossians: “Let no man therefore Judge you in meat, or in drink, or In respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days.” Colossians 2:16. Here, he had said, was conclusive evidence that a Christian was under no obligation to observe the “Jewish” Sabbath, with a peculiar stress on the word “Jewish.” The law was gone, the commandments abolished, and the Sabbaths were no longer binding. And with, these three good texts the minister that evening had labored the position of the Seventh-day Adventists.

Well, this evening arrived, and it was the Adventist minister’s turn to reply. So after a season of prayer, Bibles were opened and he proceeded to present his case. The Adventist minister commenced by saying that he too believed just what these texts said; that he was In that fortunate position where he did not have to deny or evade or avoid any Scripture at all. It will just a matter of doing what that same Paul had said that every Christian should do: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15. He reminded them that he had been preaching for some years in the Methodist Church, and that though he had since changed the day that he observed. He had not in any way changed his relation to the law of -God. He had, however, by careful study, found that what the Methodist, the Anglican, the Presbyterian, the Lutheran, and some other churches taught in respect to the law was after all, scripturally sound, and what he must do was humbly to follow out such teachings. For the Methodist, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Lutheran churches all taught that there were two laws In the Scripture, one binding on the Christian, the other abolished. It was his purpose this evening to show that while these churches had the truth theoretically, they were not following out, Its own logical and scriptural conclusions; that he was himself a more consistent Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, or Lutheran than they were, on this particular point In question. So opening his Bible he began:

Let us turn to Hebrews 7:12. It reads as follows: “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity change also of the law.” This scripture teaches that at the cross both the priesthood and the law were changed. The change of the priesthood made necessary the change of the law. This law then was dependent on the priesthood, for It was obliged to change when the priesthood changed, just as my pencil resting on this Bible at my left side, Is changed over to my right side when I lift the Bible and change Its position from my left to my right side. The position of the Bible being changed, the position of the pencil Is of necessity changed. The pencil rests upon, or Is dependent for its support on, the Bible. Thus the law referred to by the writer of Hebrews Is dependent on the priesthood, and changed because the priesthood changed. So on the right hand top of our writing pad we shall commence a diagram as follows.

Now can we find on what the priesthood depends for its existence? It ought not be difficult In view of Paul’s plain teaching on this subject. In Hebrews 5:1 he says:

“For every high priest taken from among men Is ordained for men In things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices FOR SINS.”

Here, then, it is plainly taught that the priesthood was ordained to offer its sacrifices for sins. That Is, had sin never entered the world, we should not have needed a priesthood to offer sacrifices for sin. But sin having entered, the priesthood was rendered necessary.

We shall now add to our diagram by writing the word “sin” before “priesthood,” thus we can now ask, On what does sin depend for its existence? That Is, what is sin? This is as plainly stated by John. In 1 John 3:4 we read: “Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for SIN IS THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW.” That Is, before sin there is a law, the transgression of which is sin. Law then exists before sin. That must ever be so, for “where no law is, there is no transgression.” Romans 4:15. Or, as Paul puts it In Romans 5: 13 “Sin is not imputed when there is no law.” Sin, then, depends on LAW. Let us therefore continue our diagram as follows.

Thus then, as our diagram grows, we find there are two laws, ONE BEFORE SIN-the transgression of which is sin; and ONE AFTER SIN-because of sin.

Ceremonial Law

The first law thus must DEFINE SIN, the second law DEFINES THE REMEDY FOR SIN. For Paul as plainly says that the priesthood had a law which defined offerings, for the priests "OFFER GIFTS ACCORDING TO THE LAW." Hebrews 8:4. We again extend our diagram thus:

We shall now set out to discover which law it is that defines the REMEDY for sin. It is to be found in Leviticus, chapters 6 and 7. In Leviticus 6: 9 we read: This is the law of the Burnt offering. Leviticus 6: 14 we read: This Is the law of the Meat Leviticus 6: 26 we read: This is the law of the Sin Leviticus 7:1 we read: In-As Is the law of the Trespass Leviticus 7: 11 we read: This Is the law of the Peace

Here then is a law, with five commandments In It. Notice that it is distinctly called THE LAW, not five laws. Leviticus 7: 37. It is the law of offerings, setting out its five main provisions. It is this specific law that Paul refers to In Hebrews 9:10, which, he says, "stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances [margin, "rites and ceremonies"] imposed on them until the time of reformation."

This remedy-defining law is, then, the RITUAL or CEREMONIAL LAW, which Paul says stood ONLY In rites or ceremonies. That Is, It contained nothing else but rites or ceremonies. This law was written by Moses In a book. Deuteronomy 31:9,24.

Moral Law

We should experience no difficulty in discovering the first law, the one that defines sin. For Paul is just as explicit In this. He himself says In Romans 7:7: "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

Here he quotes the tenth commandment of the moral law, and says that this one for instance, defines lust. Likewise each of the Ten Commandments, called the moral law, defines some particular sin. Idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, etc, are all thus clearly defined, leaving man entirely without excuse.

This is a law complete in itself for we read "He added no more." Deuteronomy 5:22. It was written with the finger of God," upon "two tables of stone." Exodus 31:18. Let us now extend our diagram further.

Relationship of the Two Laws

And now, what relationship do these two laws sustain each to the other? This is not hard to find, for related they are and must be. That relationship however, is just as clearly expressed In Scripture as all other factors. In Leviticus 4: 27-31 we read:

"If any one of the common people sin while he does somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and It shall be forgiven him."

How very clearly this whole ceremony is defined! If a man sins, he breaks LAW No. 1, the moral law of the Ten Commandments. Then he brings his offering, according to LAW No. 2, the law of sacrifices, and he receives forgiveness. Here then the two laws are brought into right relation. LAW No. 1 defines sin, for sin is the transgression of the moral law, the Ten Commandments. LAW No. 2 defines sacrifices, the ceremonial law which is the remedy for sin. When the Israelite sinned, he broke the first law. To secure forgiveness he must obey the second law. THEN THERE ARE TWO DISTINCT LAWS, and this fact must be overlooked. We shall continue our extension of the diagram:

It might be well here to notice what the Scripture has to say about these two laws, and how the gospel stands related to each of them. The grand moral law, God declared to be "HIS COVENANT, which He commanded you to perform, even Ten Commandments." Deuteronomy 4:13. Never is this law called the old covenant, but it is most explicitly called "HIS" or "GOD" or "MY" covenant. God's covenant is also said, to be a "COMMANDED" covenant, for it will be remembered that the old covenant, like the new covenant, Is a purely voluntary one of God's covenant we read In 1 Chronicles 16:15-17:

"Be you mindful always of HIS COVENANT; the word which He COMMANDED to a thousand generations; even of the covenant which He made with Abraham, and of His oath unto Isaac, and has confirmed the same to Jacob for a LAW, and to Israel FOR AN EVERLASTING COVENANT."

So the Ten Commandment law Is God's commanded everlasting covenant. Of this covenant we read in Psalm 89:34: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of MY lips." Alter, the Lord would not, for that law was perfect (Psalm 19:7), and to alter a perfect law would make it imperfect. Of this law we read: "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws." Genesis 26:5.

Relation of Gospel to the Moral Law

The relation of the gospel to this moral law, the law which gives "the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3: 20), Is stated quite plainly by:

PAUL: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, WE ESTABLISH THE LAW." Romans 3:31.

"Circumcision Is nothing, and un-circumcision Is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God [is everything]." 1 Corinthians 7: 19.

JOHN: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." 1 John 5:1

"He that said, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, Is a liar, and the truth Is not In him." 1 John 2: 4.

JAMES: "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. No* it thou commit no adultery. Yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." James 2:10, 11.

JESUS: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." Matthew 6: 17.

"If you love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15.

"Not everyone that said unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which Is In heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied In Thy name? And In Thy name have cast out devils? And In Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work Iniquity!" Matthew 7:21,23.

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19: 17.

"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22: 14.

Relation of Gospel to the Ceremonial Law

Ephesians 2:15. "Having abolished In His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained, in ordinances; for to make In Himself of twain one new man, so making peace."

Here Paul leaves no room for misunderstanding. He clearly says that the commandments that were abolished were those contained in ORDINANCES-RITES or CEREMONIES, as we find In Hebrews 9:10 (margin). This was the old covenant remedial law-and after the Lamb of God was slain for us-man needed no longer the blood of beasts, for now "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1: 7.

Colossians 2: 14-17: "Blotting out THE HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES nailing it to His cross. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or In respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: WHICH ARE A SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME."

Here Paul states just as emphatically that it was the HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES-the RITUAL OR CEREMONIAL law that was "blotted out" and nailed to His cross. And along with these ceremonies went the meats, drinks, holy days, new, moons, and the annual Sabbath days, WHICH WERE A SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME.

But did the ceremonial law have Sabbath days? It surely did. They are listed In Leviticus 23 as follows:

Verse 4. These are the Feasts of the Lord:

Verse 5.	The 14th day of the first month	Feast of Passover,
Verse 9.	The 15th day of the first month	Feast of Unleavened bread. (7 holy days. Verse 6.)
Verses 10,11.	The 16th day of the first month	Feast of First-fruits.
Verses 15,16.	Fifty days later	Feast of Pentecost.
Verse 24.	The 1st day of the, 7th month	Feast of Trumpets.
Verse 27.	The 10th day of the 7th month	Feast of Atonement.
Verse 34.	The 15th day of the 7th month	Feast of Tabernacles (7 holy days. Verse 36.)
Verse 36.	The 22nd day of the 7th month	Feast of Tabernacles.

All these days were annual Sabbaths, not to be confused with the weekly Sabbath of the moral law, which was not "a shadow of things to come," but a "memorial" of creation-something in the past. The annual Sabbaths were all typical of Christ and His ministry. For instance we read:

-1 Corinthians 5:7 "Christ our Passover to sacrificed, for us."

1 Corinthians 15:22, 23. "For as In Adam all die, even so In Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits."

Acts 2:1-4. "When the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

And so these shadowy, typical, ceremonial Sabbaths, with their two groups of holy days, and new moons (Numbers 28:11), were all "nailed to the cross"; for Christ having come, we no longer needed shadows to guide us. They were therefore "blotted" as the shadowy Moon is eclipsed by the Sun.

Now for Galatians 3: 24, 25.

"Therefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

Now again we inquire, Of which law is Paul writing? This he makes perfectly clear in verse 19. He Is speaking of the law which was "added because of transgressions." This law acted as a pedagogue to lead Israel to the gospel. Its sacrifices pointed to the one great Sacrifice on Calvary; Its blood to the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; its priesthood to that of Jesus our High Priest; Its sanctuary to the "sanctuary" and the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched." Hebrews 8:2. Hence, this law was no longer required as a pedagogue, for now the Teacher Himself had come. Let us see the relationship of this law in the following illustration, thus.

We see, then, that there are two distinct laws found in the Scriptures. And the confusion that exists over the subject of the law is because some will attempt to blend these two systems. Such an attempt is not only unscriptural, but also is anti scriptural, for it makes contradictions where with a right interpretation only harmony exists. The moral law condemned the sinner; the ceremonial law pointed the way to pardon. The distinction between the two systems is broad and clear. Let us not some of these distinctions:

This distinction is not something recognized only by Seventh-day Adventists.

The ANGLICAN CHURCH teaches exactly the same thing. Notice in her Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. Article 7 reads:

“Although the law given from God, by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the civil Precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received In any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.”

Now the METHODIST CHURCH teaches precisely the same thing. Notice the following from the “Methodist Episcopal Church Doctrines and Discipline,” Article 6, page 23: “Although the law given from God by Moses as touching ceremonies and rites, does not bind Christians, yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.”

Now let us notice the PRESBYTERIANS. “Confession of Faith,” chapter 19, articles 2 and 5: “The moral law does for ever bind all as well justified persons as others to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard to the matter contained in it, but also his respect of the authority of God, the Creator, who gave It. Neither does Christ in the gospel any way dissolve but much strengthen this obligation.”

Also from the Larger Catechism, Questions 93 and 98:

“Question. What is the moral law?”

“Answer. The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding everyone to personal, perfect and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto.

“Question. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?

“Answer. The moral law is summarily comprehended In the Ten commandments, which were delivered by the voice of God upon Mount Sinai and written by Him on two tables of stone; and, are recorded In the twentieth chapter of Exodus.”

Also In “Confession of Faith.” Chapter 19, article 3:

“Beside this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits, and partly holding forth divers Instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament.”

From the LUTHERAN “Shorter Catechism” we quote:

“Question. Are we under obligation to keep the moral law?

“Answer. Yes, because it is founded on the nature of God, and cannot be changed. It Is of universal application, which was Impossible with respect to the ceremonial and civil laws. Christ demands obedience to His law.”

“Question. Are we under obligation to keep the ceremonial, or church, law of the Jews?

“Answer. No; the ordinances which it enjoined were only types and shadows of Christ; and when they were fulfilled by His death, and the distinction between the Jew and Gentile was removed, the ceremonial law was abolished, because it was no longer necessary.”

As late as August 2, 1926, the Lutheran Herald published In Australia, said:

“The moral law, or the Ten Commandments, Is defined in our Lutheran Catechism as follows: ‘They [the Ten Commandments] are the holy will of God, or the law wherein God tells us how we are to be and what we are to do and not to do. There is no controversy In the Christian churches regarding the fact that this law is binding upon all men for all time.

“The ceremonial law consisted of laws which pertained to the religious life and worship of the Jews having no intrinsic value in themselves, but only In as far as they prefigured the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessed fruit, of His redemption. They consisted largely of divine precepts respecting meat and drink, various sacrifices, feasts, holy days, seasons, and ceremonies which were performed In the temple, the end and aim of which was to point to the promised Messiah. The ceremonial laws lost their meaning with the coming of Christ and the completion of His work of redemption. The moral law, however, will retain its value as long as the earth exists.”

THE SALVATION ARMY. Mrs. Booth, the wife of the founder of the Salvation Army, In, her book entitled “Aggressive Christianity” says:-

“I find frequently a total misapprehension as to the meaning of the apostle, and a total confounding of the moral with the ceremonial law. Now, always mind, when you read anything about the law, to examine and. find out which law is meant. Whether it is the great Moral Law, which never has been, and never can be abrogated; or the Ceremonial Law, which in Christ certainly was done away. Mind which, because your salvation may depend upon that point. If you make a mistake there you may be lost through It; therefore, be very careful.”

THE BAPTISTS. From the Baptist “Church Manual” we quote:

“We believe that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government; that it is holy, just and good.”

We have thus learned from the Scriptures that there are TWO DISTINCT LAWS-the law of sacrifices abolished by the gospel, and the law of God-the Ten Commandments-binding upon all men alike while time shall last.

And we also discover thereby, that the official teaching of the great orthodox churches in their respective articles of religion, their confessions of faith, their manuals and catechisms, that there are two such Laws, one abolished, the other binding, Is scripturally sound doctrine, even though many of their modern representatives In the pulpit no longer teach this. Some even go so far in their efforts to evade the Sabbath of the fourth commandment as to say that all law has been abolished. To do this, they cite the texts that speak of the ceremonial law as proof that the moral law has been abrogated. Such a practice is inexcusable dishonesty.

The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the coming of Christ, said that, rather than destroy the law, “He will MAGNIFY THE LAW, and make it honorable.” Isaiah 42: 21. This He did by showing that not only is the letter of the law still in force, but that Its spirit also must be obeyed. It is not enough that we kill not, the spirit of the law requires that we hate not, for “whosoever hates his brother is a murderer.”

1 John 3: 15. It is not sufficient that the Christian abstain from adultery. For, said Jesus, he that lusts commits adultery already in his heart." Matthew 5:27,28. It is therefore quite natural that we find the Apostle James saying: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

Thus we find God's truth, His will, expressed in the eternal law of God. Walking In the light of His commandments brings great joy, for, "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Psalm 119: 165.

It brings stability to the character, for Jehovah says: "If that thou had hearkened to My commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isaiah 48:18. Said David: "O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119: 97.

John points the way to fewer disappointments in prayer, for he says: "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing In His sight." 1 John 3: 22,

In the Revelation, he tells of our passport to the kingdom: "Blessed are they that do His commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22: 14.

JESUS SAID, "IF YE LOVE ME KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS." John 14:15.

Thus closed an Intensely Interesting and profitable discussion, the respective members deciding, that as the law of God was binding on all Christians, It must be obeyed, including the fourth commandment. Further argument, they contended, was futile. The Word of God settled with them, all contention. As for their future, God was well able to take care of that, and He had particularly promised to do so. Had He not said:

"Do not be troubled, then, and cry, 'What are we to eat?' or 'what are we to drink?' or 'how are we to be clothed?' (pagans make all that their aim In life) for well your heavenly Father knows you need all that. Seek God's Realm and His goodness and all that will be yours over and above." Matthew 6: 31-33. Moffatt's translation.

The Two Laws Compared

<u>Attribute</u>	<u>The Ten Commandments</u>	<u>The Ceremonial Law</u>
1. Spoken By	God Deuteronomy 4:12	Moses Leviticus 1:1-3
2. Written By	God Exodus 31:18 Deuteronomy 10:3,4	Moses Deuteronomy 31:9
3. Written On	Stone Exodus 31:18 Deuteronomy 10:3,4	Paper Deuteronomy 31:24
4. Inside Ark	Yes Deuteronomy 10:1-5	No Deuteronomy 31:26
5. Complete?	Yes Deuteronomy 5:22	No Leviticus 1:1-3, 4:1-3
6. Eternal?	Yes Psalm 111:7,8	No Hebrews 7:12
7. Good?	Yes Romans 7:12	No Colossians 2:14
8. Points Out?	Sin 1 John 3:4	Savior Leviticus 4:27-31 John 1:29
9. Obey?	Yes Matthew 5:19	No Acts 15:24
10. Spiritual?	Yes Romans 7:14	No Hebrews 7:16
11. Perfect	Yes Psalm 19:7	No Hebrews 7:19
12. Liberty	Yes James 2:11,12	No Galatians 5:1
13. Delight	Yes Psalm 119:17,77	No Acts 15:10
14. Christ	Upheld Isaiah 42:21	Abolished Ephesians 2:15
15. Eternal	Yes Matthew 5:18	No Galatians 3:19
16. Standard?	Yes James 2:8-12	No Colossians 2:16,17
17. Sabbath	Creation Exodus 20:8-11	Sinai Leviticus 23:24
18. Sabbath	Before Sin Genesis 2:1-3	After Sin Leviticus 23:24

God's 10 Commandment Law Is Not Moses' Ceremonial Law

The Law of God

1 Chronicles	16:40
	22:12
2 Chronicles	12:1
	17:9
	31:3,4
	35:26
Ezra	7:10,12
	7:21,26
Nehemiah	8:18
	10:28,29
Psalms	1:2
	19:7
	37:31
	40:8
	78:1
	81:4
	89:30
	119:1-176

The Law of Moses

Joshua	8:31, 34
	22:5
	23:6
1 Kings	2:3
2 Kings	14:6
	21:8
	23:25
2 Chronicles	23:18
	25:4
	30:16
Ezra	3:2
	7:6
Nehemiah	8:8

www.CreationismOnline.com