

# **The Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ (2)**

## **The Law of Moses Done Away**

by Cecil Willis

Last week we tried to focus the problem for the discussion of the following weeks. We want to study the relationship between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ. This is one of the misunderstood subjects in religious matters today. Last week, however we pointed out that this is not a problem peculiar to modern times, but that many of the epistles in the New Testament were written to correct misimpressions concerning the Law of Moses. It is our prayer that our lessons may correct some misunderstandings, and clarify some hazy points in the minds of those who study with us.

It is very apparent, from our lesson title; what shall be the nature of our lesson. I believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that men; in this dispensation, are not living under the Law of Moses, but rather, we are living under the Law of Christ. According to Scriptural usage of the terms faith or belief, one cannot believe a proposition unless there be evidence for belief. A conviction not supported by evidence is but an opinion. Mine is a belief, for the Scripture abounds in evidence showing that we are not under the Law of Moses today. The Scriptures also command that one be ready to give an answer concerning the reason of the hope and the faith in him. This we shall try to do in this lesson.

### **Is the Old Testament Inspired?**

There are many people who believe, and many who teach, that all an individual has to do in order to go to Heaven is to keep the Ten Commandment Law. Yet those individuals could not produce Scriptures to prove such a belief to save their lives. The Law of Moses was done away, as we shall study presently.

However, there is one point upon which clarification needs to be made before we begin studying these various passages showing that the Ten Commandment Law is not yet binding. There are some people who think that if one teaches that the Law of Moses was done away after it was in effect for a given period of time, and that it served its purpose and was done away, that this one is saying that the Old Testament was uninspired. There were some people who felt exactly this way in New Testament times. When Paul- wrote to the Galatian brethren, in Chapter 3, and told them that salvation was by the promise culminating in Christ, and not by the Law of

Moses; they asked, "What then serveth the law?"

Friends, I believe the Old Testament is inspired just as strongly as any of these advocates of the theory that we are yet living under the Ten Commandment Law. In fact, I am quite confident that I hold a much stronger view of inspiration than do most of modern denominationalists. Denominationalism has become greatly affected by the studies of higher criticism, which in nothing but Modernism. In fact, the Old Testament Scriptures themselves teach that the Old Testament Law was temporary. Further, the New Testament teaches us that the Old Testament Law was done away. The individual who teaches that the Ten Commandment Law is still binding must therefore disregard the teaching of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Jesus said, "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (Jno. 5:46,47). Jesus said that the man who does not believe the Old Testament will not believe the New. It is showing a lack of faith in the Old Testament to argue contrary to its teaching. It teaches that the Law of Moses was to be done away. So those who argue that we are yet under the Old Testament are the ones who do not believe the Old Testament. They also must be unconscious of New Testament teaching, some of which we shall have occasion to study later.

### **Are We Under Any Law?**

One other clarification needs to be made before we proceed further. Simply because one does not believe that the Old Testament Law, the Ten Commandment Law, is still binding; does not mean that one can violate the laws against killing, lying, stealing, adultery, which are stated in the Law. Almost every commandment in the Ten Commandment Law, is restated, in substance, in the New Testament. Jesus not only forbade killing, but he made a stricter law. He said, "Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment" (Matt. 5:21,22). This is the law that I believe. to be binding upon us today. It is even stricter than the Old Covenant.

Let us notice one other instance in which the basic content of the Ten Commandment Law is restated in the New Testament. Each time it is enlarged. Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27, 28). The Law said one had to commit the actual, overt act to be guilty. But not so with the Law of Christ. One is not to kill, or hate his brother today, not because it was a part of the Ten Commandment Law, but because it is a part of the Law of Christ. One is not to commit adultery or to look on a

woman to lust after her, not because Moses' Law forbade and condemned adultery, but because Christ's Law prohibits it. Every commandment of the Ten Commandments, save one, is restated in substance in the New Testament. We are to follow the Law of Christ, rather than the Law of Moses.

### **The Passing of the Old Covenant**

Let us notice now, an instance in which the Old Testament plainly declared that there would come a time when it would be done away. This quotation that declares the Law is to be done away is found in Jer. 31:31-34, and Paul quotes it in Hebrews 8:7-13: "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them forth out of the land of Egypt. For they continued not in my covenant, And I regarded them not, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind, And on their heart also will I write them: And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; And they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, And every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: For all shall know me, From the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And their sins will I remember no more." To this quotation, Paul added, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away."

Paul therefore used these statements from Jeremiah's prophecy to show that the Old Covenant was done away. Therefore those who maintain that the Old Testament Law is still binding upon men today deny the teaching of the Old Testament itself. Paul said the first Law was faulty; therefore a second was given.

There are many other passages in the New Testament that declare that this Old Covenant was abrogated. In the book of Ephesians, Paul said that the Law was a barrier, a wall, between the Jews and the Gentiles. Remember that the Law of Moses was given only to Jews, and that it excluded the Gentiles. Therefore the Law separated these two classes of people. But Paul taught that no longer did this barrier exist. Now both Jews and Gentiles had a right to the promises of God. "Wherefore remember, that once ye the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace who made both one, and brake down the

middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances (Eph. 2:11-17)." He spoke of the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision, which of course, means the Jews and the Gentiles. He said that there previously was a barrier between the two, so that the Gentiles had no hope and were without God in the world. But now this barrier has been taken away. What is the barrier or what was the barrier between Jew and Gentile? Friends, I do not have to guess as to what the barrier that Paul said was taken out of the way is. According to Paul, the barrier is the Law of Moses; It is the "law of commandments." What happened to the "law of commandments?" It was done away.

"For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh, for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2:14-18).

Paul so clearly taught in the Ephesian passage that the Old Testament was done away in Christ, that one will need help from some modern denominational teacher of error to misunderstand his message. This Law was done away in order that all men might be reconciled unto God in one body, the church. Paul emphasized that these racial barriers were broken down in Jesus Christ, when he said, "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female, for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

Jesus indicated that there was a change of law by His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, as we have already observed. John, as he recorded events in the life of Christ, commented, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Jno. 1:17).

### **Conclusion**

So one who does not believe that the Old Testament Law was temporary, and is therefore abrogated, must reject the teaching of both the Old and New Testaments. Yet we studied last week how the danger of intermixing Judaism with Christianity is as much a problem today as it was in New Testament times. It is our humble prayer that by our studies we can help correct some of the misimpressions of men, and clarify and exalt God's teaching concerning the relationship existing between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ.