

Does Grace Replace The Law?

compiled by Rachel Cory, December 25, 2007

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Scripture quoted from the NKJV, unless otherwise noted.

Romans 10:4 “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

Many Christians have been taught that the Gospel of the NEW Testament, replaced the Law of the OLD Testament. “We are now living under grace,” they say, “and it is no longer necessary to consider the Ten Commandments, or to be burdened with works of the law.”

Were First Covenant Israelites (and believing non-Hebrews) **saved in a different way** from New Covenant believers? Will those who have lived since the death of Christ, be held to a **different standard in the judgment**? If this is the case, what does this say about the character of our God? Is His justice the same for all people?

MANY HAVE TAUGHT THAT THE JEWS WERE SAVED BY WORKS.

Indeed, that was the perversion of God’s Word which was taught by the religious authorities of Christ’s day. The Jews believed there was merit in the ceremonies themselves - that they were justified before God *because* they performed all the “works of the law.” This is “the law for righteousness” in Romans 10:4. Law-keeping for (as a means to) righteousness. Paul refutes this idea soundly. Christ, he wrote, put an end to that doctrine.

Romans 3:20 “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

Galatians 2:16 “...for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”

Galatians 3:11 “... that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident ...”

Galatians 3:21 "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law."

*No one - not before the Cross or since - has, or ever will, be saved, by chanting a certain number of prayers or words, by going to church every week, by confessing to a priest, by keeping every one of the Ten Commandments, by offering sacrifices or keeping the Ceremonial Feasts, by donating large sums of money to the church or charities, or by any other **formula**.*

Isaiah 64:5 "All of us are like someone unclean, all our righteous deeds like menstrual rags [the most filthy thing he could think of]; we wither, all of us, like leaves; and our misdeeds blow us away like the wind." (CJB)

Wow! That's what God thinks of the "righteous deeds" we do. They are all tainted by our own self interest. Yikes! Only if the Spirit of Christ - in us - motivates our "works," are those actions worthy in the site of God. Without Him - without the perfect love of God that flows from Him, our works are dead and accomplish nothing in the heavenly sense.

Deuteronomy 9:6 "Know therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness; for you are a stubborn people. RSV

Daniel 9:18 "Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears Your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy."

God did NOT bless Abraham, Isaac, Jacob or individuals within ancient Israel because they kept the law perfectly. They received unmerited blessing (grace) because of God's mercy! Grace was absolutely the most important part of God's relationship with the patriarchs.

THE GOSPEL IS NOT CONFINED - TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Galatians 3:8-9 "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.' So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham."

Hebrews 4:2 "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

*Did you hear that? **Old Testament Israel heard the gospel!** Abraham heard the gospel!*

Question: What was the gospel - before Jesus came? Answer: God will send a Savior.

During the Old Testament period, the gospel (good news) was that a Savior would come to pay the penalty for sin. Since the death of Christ, the good news is that a Savior has come, and his death has paid the penalty for sin.

Bring a lamb. ----- Eat the Bread.
Both are symbols which represent the death of Our Savior.
One looked forward. ----- One looks back.
The salvation is the same.

GRACE IS NOT CONFINED TO THE NEW TESTAMENT!

Genesis 6:8 "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

Exodus 22:27 God said, "I will hear; for I am gracious."

Exodus 34:6 God is "merciful and gracious, long suffering..."

The word "grace" means "unmerited favor." It is also defined as "the divine influence in the life." Most certainly the unmerited favor of God was shown to Israel under the "first" covenant. God is the same - yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Malachi 3:6). Every believer from Adam through Abraham to this very day, has felt the divine influence. Every believer has known the grace of God.

THE SACRIFICIAL LAMB POINTED TO CHRIST

Every lamb brought by an Israelite represented Christ. His death would pay the price of redemption for every man and women who believed. Even before the Israelites, righteous Able, Noah, Job, Abraham and others offered sacrifices, seeking forgiveness of sins. These men were forgiven because they believed the God of Israel, and sincerely repented. They were forgiven in exactly the same way that we are forgiven today. Christ said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56). How did he "see" it? By faith. When we believe and rejoice in Christ's death for us, we are looking back by faith (Gen. 4:4; Gen. 8:20; Job 1:5).

The Israelite who came in true heart sorrow for sin, with his sacrificial lamb, was forgiven because of his faith - his belief that the Lord would forgive. His sins were covered (Num.15:25-29; Lev.19:23). He stood justified - declared righteous before God. The word "atonement" means "covering" or "reconciliation." **The sacrificial ceremony had no worth apart from the humble faith of the one who brought the lamb.** Without true heart repentance, the ceremony was actually repulsive to God (1 Sam. 15:22; Ps. 51:16,17; Hos. 6:6; Heb. 9:9).

THE LAW IS NOT CONFINED TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Romans 13:10 “Love is the fulfillment of the law.”

Galatians 5:14 “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this:
‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

1 John 5:3 “**This is love for God; to obey His commandments.**”

John 14:21 [Jesus speaking] “Who ever has my commandments and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.”

John 14:15 [Jesus speaking] “If you love me, keep my commandments.”

Matthew 19:17 [Jesus speaking] “If you would enter into life, obey the commandments.”

Question: Who spoke the Ten Commandments from the top of the mountain?

Who wrote The Covenant on stone tablets?

Answer: The Son of God - The “one mediator between God and man” (2Timothy 2:5).

The Ten Commandments ARE His commandments.

Romans 2:12-13 “For not the hearers of the law are justified,
but the doers of the law shall be justified.”

NOTE: Here we have the Apostle Paul, saying

those who do not keep the Law, will not be justified.

1 John 2:4 “The man who says ‘I know Him,’ but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

Romans 7:12 “The law is holy and the commandment is holy, just, and good.”

Romans 7:14 “The law is spiritual.”

Romans 7:16 “I agree with the law that it is good.”

Romans 7:22 “In my inner being I delight in God’s law.”

Grace was there all along. And God’s Law was there all along. Long before Mount Sinai, “Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” (Gen 26:5). Abraham obeyed “by faith.” The indwelling Spirit of Christ gives us strength, and wisdom to obey. We obey by faith, and we receive faith and grace, from God who is merciful.

For those who say there was no “Spirit of Christ” during the Old Testament period:

1 Peter 1:10-11 “Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow” (NIV).

He was there all along. He has been “the only mediator between God and man” since the Fall in the Garden. He was there for them. He is there for you. See our study: [The Mediator](#). It is filled with examples of Christ, all through the period called the Old Testament.

GRACE FOR OBEDIENCE

Romans 1:5 [Christ] “... through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, for His name's sake” (NAS).

What is it, that we obey by faith? Answer: His Commandments.

THE NEW COVENANT

Do you know what the New Covenant says?
Do you know where it is found in the Scriptures?

Hebrews 8:10 “For this is the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and I will inscribe them on their hearts. And I will be their God and they will be my people” (NET).

Jeremiah 31:31-33 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, . . . 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (ESV).

What “law” do you suppose Jeremiah believed the LORD was talking about?

I’ve heard many Christians say, “That’s only for Jews.” Is that right? No! According to Paul, non-Hebrew believers in Yeshua, are “grafted in” to the Olive Tree that is Israel (*Romans Chapter 11*). We become citizens of “the commonwealth of Israel,” by faith (*Ephesians Chapter 2*). Unrepentant Hebrews are “broken off” from the Tree - “cut off” from Israel. That is why Paul could write, “And thus all Israel will be saved.”

There is no gate into the New Jerusalem, labeled “Gentiles Enter Here.”

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.
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