

GRACE AND LAW

PART THREE: WHAT LAW WAS ABOLISHED?

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References from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

Didn't Paul say that the law was abolished, wiped out, annulled?
Yes, he did. But which law? There were different types of law.
Was Paul advocating a society with no law what-so-ever? Not likely.
Let's examine Paul's statements in the light of the different types of law.

TYPES OF LAW MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE

1. **Natural Law**
2. **Civil Law**
3. **The Great Moral Law: The Ten Commandments**
4. **The Law of sacrifices and offerings, with the Aaronic priesthood**
5. **Rabbinic Law - Traditional interpretation of the Law**
6. **The prophetic Feasts of the LORD**

Let's look at each type of law in more detail:

1. **Natural Law:**

Laws of health, hygiene, horticulture, weather cycle, water cycle, heredity, gravity, etc. are examples.
The law of cause-and-effect. Obviously these natural laws are still in force.

2. **Civil Law:**

Laws governing the keeping of records, deeds, marriages, inheritance, punishment of crime, interaction with non-Israelites, buying and freeing slaves, etc - given orally by God to Moses who wrote them down.

Civil laws differ from one nation to another. Most of these laws were not received directly from God, yet so long as keeping these laws does not violate God's great moral law, we are to obey civil authority.

Hebrews 13:17 "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account."

Titus 3:1 "Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work"

Colossians 3:22 "Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God."

Romans 13:7 "Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."

3. **The Great Moral Law: The Ten Commandments**

Written in Stone – to stand forever. [See Part Two of this series.]

THE MORAL LAW (WRITTEN IN THE 10 COMMANDMENTS)

IS SEPARATE AND DISTINCT FROM THE LAW OF SACRIFICES.

THE GREAT MORAL LAW	THE LAW OF SACRIFICES
1. Defines the problem. Points out sin. (Romans 7:7) A mirror (James 1:23) (Romans 3:20; 7:7)	1. Describes the solution. Symbolized Christ as the perfect sacrifice, and His future work of atonement in Heaven. (John1:29,36)
2. Existed before sin. Where there is no law, there is no sin therefore the law existed before sin. (1 John. 3:4; Rom. 4:15). <i>Lucifer sinned when he broke God's law.</i>	2. Was <u>added</u> because of sin" (Gal 3:19)
3. Converts the soul (Psalm 19:7)	3. "Made nothing perfect." (Heb. 7:19; Heb. 9:9).
4. Will be the standard in the Judgment (Ja. 2:10-12; Rom. 2:12,13; Eccl. 12:13,14).	4. Judges no man (Col. 2:14-16).
5. Written with the finger of God, on stone (Deut. 4:13; Ex. 31:18; Ex. 32:16).	5. Written by Moses on a scroll (2 Chron 35:12).
6. Placed inside of the Ark in the Sanctuary (Ex. 40:20).	6. Kept in the Sanctuary, but NOT inside the Ark. (Deut. 31:24-26).
7. Is "holy, just and good" (Rom. 7:12).	7. "weak and unprofitable" (Heb. 7:18) "fleshly ordinances" (Heb. 9:10)
8. Is "established" (Romans 3:31)	8. Obsolete (Heb 8:13) Changed (Heb. 7:12) Annulled (Heb 7:12)
9. Is perfect (Psalm 19:7; Romans 7:12).	9. Was a symbol or shadow. (Col. 2:17, Heb. 8:6, Heb. 9:9).
11. Will be written in our hearts by the Christ as we accept Him by faith as our Saviour (Heb. 8:8-10; Rom. 2:15; 2 Cor. 3:3; Jer. 31:33,34).	11. "Will not be remembered, nor come to mind." (Isaiah 65:17)

4. Law concerning the sacrifices, Temple service, Levitical priesthood, physical circumcision:
THIS LAW WAS CHANGED.

5. Rabbinic Law - will be covered in Part Four of this series

6. The "Feasts of the LORD" - will be covered in Part Five of this series.

HEBREWS 7:12 "For the priesthood being changed, of necessity **there is also a change of the law.**"
... v.18 "For on the one hand **there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its**

weakness and unprofitableness, v.19 “...for the law made nothing perfect. On the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”

*We come near to God, we are reconciled to God, not through sacrifices, not through earthly priests, not through an ancient Temple service, but “**by a new and living way**, which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His Flesh [the death of Jesus]” (Hebrews 10:19:20).*

The ancient Sanctuary (later the Temple) with its ceremonies and sacrifices Paul calls “the copy and shadow of the heavenly things” (Heb. 8:5).

HEBREWS 8:13 “In that He (Christ) says, ‘a new covenant,’ **He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete, and growing old is ready to vanish away.**”
(At this time the Temple was still standing.)

HEBREWS 10:9 “He (Christ) **takes away the first** [symbolic service] that He may establish the second [the present ministry of Christ in Heaven].”

“The first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary” (Hebrews 9:1,10). Paul describes the sanctuary with its furniture and its sacrifices, especially the Day of Atonement service, and he says, “It is symbolic for the present time” (Hebrews 9:9) NAS.

HEBREWS 13:11-13 “For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.”

Paul tells his Hebrew readers to leave the old ways of the Temple and the sacrificial system, to come “outside the camp,” as it were, even though this means sure rejection by those who cling to the old ways.

HEBREWS 9:8 “The Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All [the presence of God] was not yet made manifest while the first Tabernacle [earthly Temple] was still standing [still had standing or significance].”

This passage is believed to have been written about AD65. The Temple along with the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, the Roman general in AD70.

HEBREWS 9:9-10 “It [the Temple] was symbolic for the present time . . . concerned only with foods and drinks (grain offerings and drink offerings), various washings and fleshly **ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.**”

Paul obviously believed that “the time of reformation” had arrived. The symbol was replaced by the reality. The 10 Commandments remain the same, but we now have a new remedy - a new way to forgiveness?

Lets look at the big picture:

Man had disobeyed God.

*Man was therefore separated from God's presence.
 Man was estranged from God.
 Satan claimed lordship of the earth.
 Without some remedy, men would belong to Satan.
 The Sanctuary with its rituals symbolized this remedy,
 the remedy for the whole sin/rebellion problem.*

***THIS REMEDY is the ministry of reconciliation, now being performed by Christ in heaven.
 Until each human being who surrenders to Christ is completely healed of sin,
 Until Satan, the great deceiver is destroyed,
 We still need this ministry.
 We still need the "blood" to cover us, and HIS ministry as priest.***

We don't need the symbolic forms - we need the reality.

OLD COVENANT -----NEW COVENANT
SYMBOLS -----REALITY
SYMBOLS FOR THAT TIME ----- A NEW AND LIVING WAY
SAME REMEDY

SYMBOL	REALITY
Sacrifice of animals for forgiveness of sin.	Christ the one true sacrifice.
Gift sacrifices of thanksgiving.	We are to present ourselves completely to God. as "living sacrifices." (Romans 12:1, I Pet. 2:5)
Offerings of grain and wine	Christ is "the bread of life."(John 6:35,48,49-51) His blood is the "wine."
Levite Priesthood.	Melchizedek Priesthood (Heb 7:17)
Levite High Priest	Christ our High Priest (Heb 6:20)
The Sanctuary courtyard with the alter.	The earth, with the cross where Jesus died.
The first and second apartments of the Temple.	Heaven itself, where Jesus has entered the presence behind the veil. Where Jesus stands as our advocate. (Heb 10:19-20)
The sweet incense offered by the priest.	Our prayers which Christ offers up to God, sweetened with His righteousness (Heb.8:4).
Ceremonial washing at consecration of the priests.	Water and Spirit baptism (We become priests.) (I Peter 2:5).
SYMBOL	REALITY
Sprinkling with water to which the ashes of the Red Heifer were added. (Num 19:2-9)	We are sprinkled with the (water) Spirit of Christ (the Red Heifer sacrifice). (Hebrews 10:22)

Circumcision of the flesh by the head of house. (Gen. 17:10)	Circumcision of the heart by Christ. (Romans 2:29) (Galatians 5:1-6) Circumcision of the flesh (removed) at the second coming, when we receive new spiritual bodies.
The Law written on stone.	The Law written in the heart. (Heb 10:16)

The forms have changed, yet the system remains, and will remain until every trace of sin has been healed. This does not happen until after the millennium. [See: "Two Resurrections and 1000 years"]
Finally, in the Earth made new - in the New Jerusalem - John wrote, "But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb *are* its temple" (Rev. 21:22). There will no longer be a need for the remedy.

ISAIAH 65:17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind."

JEREMIAH 31:34 "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

"A BETTER COVENANT"

Why does Paul say that the "new covenant" is "better? (Hebrews 7:22).

Because the Old Covenant with its forms could not change the inner man.

It could not cleanse the conscience.

It could not change the heart.

Without the knowledge of God's great sacrifice for us, our hard hearts will not be broken.

HEBREWS 9:9 "... gifts and sacrifices ... cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience--"

HEBREWS 9:14 "how much more shall the blood of Christ,
who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God,
cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.."

WHAT IS THE NEW COVENANT PROMISE?

JEREMIAH 31:33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: **I will put my law I their minds, and write it on their hearts;**" and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (Ezekiel 36:27,28; Hebrews 10:16).

PHILIPPIANS 2:13 "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

EPHESIANS 3:16-21 "that He (the Father) would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that, Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and **that you**, being rooted and grounded in love, **may be able to comprehend** with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and **to know the love of Christ**

which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

The Old Covenant - written on stone - could not do this. Why?

GALATIANS 3:21 “If there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness should have been by the law.”

The Risen Christ gives life, not the law.

HOW IS THE NEW COVENANT PROMISED FULFILLED?

Christ Himself - thru His Holy Spirit, writes the law in our hearts.

He does this thru His PRESENT ministry in heaven.

God our Father, thru His only Son reconciles us to Himself.

Sanctification - changing the heart, AND **justification** - legal forgiveness of sins,
are BOTH accomplished thru this heavenly ministry.

IT'S NOT OVER.

Only one part of the plan for our rescue was “finished” at the cross. The promise of a sacrifice, which God would provide - this promise was fulfilled (Gen 22:8). But the rescue operation is not finished - we are still living in a world which is under the domination of Satan. We have not yet been rescued, and we certainly have not yet been completely rehabilitated.

Only when the law has been perfectly written on our hearts there will be no further need for the ministry of Christ our Heavenly Priest who pleads with us, through the Spirit, telling us of His Father’s great love, in giving His only begotten Son. His blood shields us from the Destroyer (Ex.12:23), and at the same time, this “blood” - our understanding of His sacrifice - pulls us back to the Father (II Cor 5:18).

**SAVED BY FAITH,
NOT BY WORKS OF THE LAW.**

GALATIANS 2:16 “man is not justified by works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ”, “...for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”

GALATIANS 2:21 “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain [for nothing].”

If it were possible for us to heal ourselves, we would not need THE Physician. If we could keep the law perfectly, even in thought - all by ourselves, then we would not need a Savior.

GALATIANS 3:11 “But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident for ‘The just shall live by faith’” (Habakkuk 2:4 - very Old Testament).

Notice: the Old Testament saints were saved because of their faith, as we are today.

HEBREWS 11:7 “Noah became heir of the righteousness which is by faith because he built the ark.”
Noah’s faith resulted in action - works. He built the ark.

DIFFICULT PASSAGES

EPHESIANS 2:15 Paul says that the “law contained in ordinances” was “abolished.”

One must always look at the context of the words pulled from the Scripture text. In Ephesians 2 Paul is telling a Gentile convert that **the wall of division between Jew and Gentile has been torn down**, for those who are believers in Christ. God had given a command (an ordinance) to Israel thru Moses that there were to be no business dealings with Gentiles, and no intermarriage. It is this particular “law contained in the ordinances” which Paul is addressing. This law was “abolished” in Christ, and Gentile believers are grafted into Israel. They become Israelites by faith. This was the message of the dramatic vision of the unclean animals, given to Peter on the roof of the tanner’s house. God said to Peter, “what God has called clean, call not unclean.” Just then messengers from Cornelius (a Gentile) knocked at the door. (Acts chapt 10).

COLOSSIANS 2:14 “. . . having **wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us**, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” NKJV

Again, let’s look at the context. Paul is writing to Gentiles, who have now been circumcised in heart by Christ v.11, who have been baptized, who [once were dead in sin] but now have been made alive with Christ. What then for these Gentiles, has been “wiped out?” Their sin - of course! And if we look at the Greek words translated “handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us” we find that these words can be translated “certificate of indebtedness.” It means - the record of our violation of the law. In the Old Testament, a violation of the law was written down as a debt - to be repaid. Jesus paid that debt. Remember how Paul wrote that a person who became circumcised in order to be justified with God, then became a “debtor to keep the whole law” (Gal. 5:3).

Compare the wording in New Revised Standard Version.

COLOSSIANS 2:13-14 “. . . God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, **erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands.** He set this aside, nailing it to the cross.” (RSV)

IF GOD’S LAW IS ETERNAL, AND HAS ALWAYS EXISTED; WHY DID GOD NEED TO WRITE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ON STONE?

BECAUSE THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH HAD BECOME IGNORANT OF HIS LAW.

GALATIANS 3:24 “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

Little children must be taught by simple means. You cannot just tell a child to eat healthfully. You must explain what foods are good for him. Just so, you cannot tell a spiritual infant to love God with all the heart, and his fellow man unselfishly (Matt 22:37-40). He would have no idea what that means.

The law is like a mirror (James 1:23-25). A mirror tells you when you're dirty, but the mirror can't make you clean. And throwing out the mirror won't make you any cleaner.

Paul says of his mission: "that I might gain (convert) them that are without law" (I Cor 9:21). The gentiles didn't know they were sinful. They had no standard, and no mirror. So they felt no need of a Savior.

ROMANS 3:20 "For by the law is the knowledge of sin."

I TIMOTHY 1:9 "the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly sinners,"

A person who has a new heart would not need those commandments written on stone in order to behave righteously. He is living by the principle of love for God and man. He would never lie, cheat, or steal. He would honor God's Sabbath, and His name. I don't think God will need to post the Ten Commandments on a wall in Heaven as a reminder.

We read the LAW, and see that we have failed. Christ's death paid the penalty for our sin. Now we try to keep the law - but we fail - and so - we turn to Christ asking Him to change our hearts. Do you see the two parts to Christ's work for us? The first - justification (legal forgiveness) through His death, and the second - sanctification (healing) - through His work as our Priest in Heaven.

In Part Four of this study series we will look at
The Law of the Pharisees - Righteousness by Works.

[Back to Home Page](#)