

The Law Was not Done Away In the NT Church!

Mainstream Christendom teaches their doctrine of *Salvation by Grace* and expresses dismay at the notion of salvation by works. I understand that Luther spoke of the epistle of James, as the *Epistle of Straw* because James wrote that “For as the body without spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:26). They even teach that the Law was done away or was fulfilled in Christ and so is no more, was nailed to the Cross. Nothing could be further from the truth and shows just how far off the mark mainstream Christendom has gone.

For why do we read in John 3:4 that *sin is the transgression of the law* (KJV) or as it should read correctly translated that *sin is lawlessness* (NIV) – a state of rebellion? And in Revelation 14:13 “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus”. James wrote in chapter 2:8-11, “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well; But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. 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.”

Our Lord Jesus spoke of there being two Great Commandments which summarized the Ten Commandments (Mat 22:26-40), just as Moses had done (Deut 6:5, Lev 19:18). The first of these concerns loving God with all our heart and the second is like this and requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves. Jesus went on to say that on these two great commandments depend all the law and the prophets (the Bible).

Jesus also said in Matthew 5:17, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.” With this Jesus referred to the prophecies in the Pentateuch (the 5 books of Moses – the Law) and the Prophetic books which foretold of His coming (e.g. Deut 18:15-18). These prophecies Jesus fulfilled but He did not come to do away with the law. Save of course the sacrificial law for this would be replaced by His once and only perfect sacrifice as mankind’s perfect Passover Lamb.

If mainstream Christendom is right that the law has been done away, then why do read in Revelation 11:19 that the Ark of the testament (Covenant) is with God in Heaven? The Ark of the Covenant contained the stone tablets on which God had written the Ten Commandments (Heb 9:4). It seems that God has preserved these historic tablets when Nebuchadnezzar troops destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple of Solomon! So why should we even imagine the Law was done away when God set these in stone for Moses and has preserved the Ark of the Covenant with these very stone? The sacrificial law was added later because of Israel’s disobedience; but the Ten Commandments were not repealed. It is still wrong to steal, commit adultery, kill, dishonour our parents and to take God’s name in vain. It is still wrong to covet our neighbour’s wife and cattle and so on.

Mainstream can not point to anywhere in our Lord Jesus’ teaching that the law was done away. His sermon on the mount is quintessential Christianity and contained in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. In this Jesus explained that the law was now extended to include a spirit plane dimension. So it is not sufficient to avoid the deed of adultery but one also had to avoid doing this in one’s mind’s eye (Matt 5:27-28). Likewise it is not sufficient to avoid killing someone, it is also necessary not to harbour anger or hatred towards another (Matt 5:21-22).

God the Father told Moses (Deut 18:15-19) that He would send a prophet, whom Peter identified to have been Jesus (Acts 3:20, 22-23) and that Israel would have to listen to Him – which they didn’t! Now Jesus said that He did not come to destroy the law and indeed He enlarged its scope to a spirit plane. To uphold the law like this requires that we receive God’s enabling holy spirit for without this we can not uphold the law.

What then was nailed to the Cross? Mainstream Christendom claims it was the Law. So does this mean we can kill, steal, commit adultery? Of course not. Whatever Paul and the others write in the N.T., it can not be contrary to Jesus’ message. So if Jesus said that He came to uphold the law, then Paul can not negate this. And Paul does not do this. What was nailed to the cross are our past sins – the charge sheet against us. When we repent of these, accept that Jesus’ shed blood pays in full for these past sins, then these will be forgiven by God the Father (Rom 5:10). Then we have to undertake to avoid future sin (future lawlessness and breaking of the law). Of course we can not succeed in this perfectly. When we break the law again we must again become reconciled by repenting, asking forgiveness and having those fresh transgressions paid for in full by Jesus’ shed blood. In none of this is there any sign that the Law was done away.

The Old Covenant is a marriage covenant between God the Father and physical Israel. The New Covenant is a marriage covenant to come between Jesus and His Bride to be, the Church of God. These covenants are very similar and are marriage covenants. Both marriages and man’s marriage by the Garden of Eden Marriage law are all covenants for life and are all based on the two Great Commandments. It is really preposterous to even think the law was done away.

The same applies to other covenants. For example the perpetual Sabbath covenant and the perpetual circumcision covenant. These were never cancelled. God is not a will-o'-the-wisp God who keeps changing His mind. It says clearly that the Sabbath covenant (Exod 31:12-17) applies to all the generations of Israel (verse 17). In verse 18 God then gave the two stone tablets to Moses on which the Sabbath law was included. So when an Israelite is called by God the Father to His Son Jesus (John 6:44, 65) and he responds, then he is not released from that perpetual Sabbath covenant. It still applies in the N.T. church. God's church can not be divided between Sabbath observing Israelites and Sunday-observing Gentiles. Indeed there can be no difference between the two for all become children of Abraham and all abide by the Sabbath covenant, which covenant reminds us that God made in six days the heaven and earth and rested on the seventh day!

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Henk Jens

Phone: +61-2-9740-3534

Email: hwj@zip.com.au

Post: P.O. Box 121, Belmore, 2192, NSW, Australia