

GRACE AND THE LAW

Part One: Grace in the Old Testament - Law in the New Testament

compiled by Rachel Cory, December 25, 2007

Many Christians have been taught that the GOSPEL was not introduced until the NEW TESTAMENT. This gospel, they believe, replaced the LAW which was taught in the OLD TESTAMENT. We are now in the “age of grace” they say, and it is no longer necessary to be concerned with “works of the LAW.”

Were those who lived during the time of the Old Testament saved in a different way from those living since the Cross? Will those who lived prior to the death of Christ be held to a different standard from those who have lived since? If this is the case, what does this say about the character of our God? Is this fair?

MANY HAVE TAUGHT THAT THE JEWS WERE SAVED BY WORKS.

Indeed, that was the perversion of the gospel that was taught by the religious authorities of Christ’s day. The Jews came to believe that there was merit or value in the ceremony itself. They completely lost the symbolic/prophetic meaning of the sacrificial service.

ROMANS 3:20 “For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law, since through the law comes the knowledge of sin.” RSV

No one, not in the New Testament or the Old Testament, was ever saved by keeping the law.

No one is saved or has ever been saved, by following a formula-by chanting a certain number of prayers, by going to church every week, by keeping every one of the Ten Commandments, by keeping the Ceremonial Feasts, or by donating large sums of money to the church or charities.

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.” NIV

God did not bless the Israelites because they kept the law.
They received unmerited blessing because of God’s mercy and grace,
which could only have been given because of what Christ had promised to do.

THE GOSPEL IS NOT CONFINED TO THE NEW TESTAMENT.

GALATIANS 3:8-9 Paul says that Abraham heard the gospel. “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.” NKJV

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! What was the gospel? – God will send a redeemer.

During the Old Testament period, the gospel (good news) was that someday 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 has died to pay the penalty for sin.

**Bring a lamb-----eat the bread.
Both are symbols which represent the death of Our Saviour.
One looked forward -----One looks back.
The salvation is the same -----thru the death of God’s Son.**

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 Old Testament Israel. God is the same - yesterday, today, and tomorrow. 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, “THE LAMB OF GOD.”

Every lamb brought by an Israelite represented Christ. His death would someday pay the price of redemption for every man and women. And even before the Israelites, righteous Able, Noah, Job, Abraham and others made sacrifices, seeking forgiveness of sins. These men were forgiven because of their **belief in the substitute provided by God.** They were forgiven in exactly the same way that we are forgiven today when we claim Christ’s as our substitute (Gen. 4:4; Gen. 8:20; Job 1:5). Christ said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56).

The Israelite who came in true heart sorrow for sin, with his sacrificial lamb, was forgiven because of his faith. His sins were covered (Num.15:25-29; Lev.19:23). He stood righteous before God. The word “atonement” means “covering.” The sacrificial ceremony had no power or worth apart from the faith of the one who brought the lamb. Without true heart repentance, the ceremony was 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.**”

I JOHN 5:3 “This is love for God; to obey HIS COMMANDMENTS.”

JOHN 14:21 “Who ever has my COMMANDMENTS and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.”

JOHN 14:15 “If you love me, keep my COMMANDMENTS.”

MATTHEW 19:16,17 “If you would enter into life, obey my 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 Paul, a New Testament writer, saying that
those who do not keep the Law will not be justified.*

I 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.” “I agree with the LAW that it is good” (Rom. 7:16).

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

GRACE AND THE LAW

PART TWO: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Immutable and unchangeable as God Himself.

Written in stone: for all eternity.

Placed inside of the Ark, because these 10 represent man’s part in the covenant with God.

AT THE VERY END OF THIS AGE

Revelation 11:19 “Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.”

The seventh angel sounded (Rev. 11:15). This is the very end of the age. “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our LORD and of His Christ.” And the Ark of the Covenant is seen in His temple in heaven. The only “covenant” placed inside the “ark” was the Ten Commandments - written in stone by God Himself (Deut. 4:13, Deut. 10:5). Why would attention be directed to this Ten Commandment Covenant, is it became obsolete when Jesus died. Is it possible that this law of God is still very much in force - today?

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS	
I. Have nothing in your life more important than Me.	VI. Do not murder.
II. Do not make images a part of worship.	VII. Do not have sex outside of marriage.
III. Speak’s God’s name reverently.	VIII. Do not steal.
IV. Keep the 7th day Sabbath (Saturday) Holy.	IX. Do not use lies to hurt anyone.

V. Respect authority figures.

X. Do not desire what belongs to others.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS BEFORE MT. SINAI

The following examples show that the principles/ and behaviors commanded by God were understood long before they were spoken from the mountain.

- First Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden for disobedience of God.
- Second Gen. 31:19-34; Gen. 35:2-4. Jacob commands his household to “put away the strange gods”
- Third Ex. 5:2 Pharaoh blasphemed God and suffered the consequences. Job was afraid some of his children might have cursed God in their hearts. (Job 1:5).
- Fourth Ex. 16:4-30 When some Israelites tried to gather manna on the Sabbath, God said, “How long do you refuse to keep my laws.”
- Fifth Gen. 9:20-25 Ham showed disrespect for his father, Noah and a curse was pronounced on Ham’s son Canaan.
- Sixth Gen. 4:11,12 Cain was cursed by God, for the murder of his brother Able. (Gen. 6:12) violence is equated with corruption
- Seventh Gen. 39:9 “Joseph refused to sin against God by sleeping with Potiphar’s wife.” (Gen. 6:2,5) men took multiple wives resulting in great evil.
- Eighth Gen. 44:8,16 Sons of Jacob refused to steal from Pharaoh by keeping the money they found hidden in their sacks of grain.
- Ninth Gen. 27:2-46 Jacob deceived his father and had to run for his life. (Gen. 20:9)
- Tenth Gen. 25:29-34 Jacob coveted Esau’s birthright, lied to his father, and suffered the consequences.

THE MORAL LAW WAS IN FORCE LONG BEFORE MT. SINAI. THIS LAW IS AS OLD AS GOD HIMSELF.

ROMANS 5:15 “Before the law (was given from Mt Sinai), sin was in the world.”

1 JOHN 3:4 “For sin is the transgression of the law.”

*Certainly, Lucifer sinned, when he rebelled against God in heaven.
That means there was a LAW in heaven.*

HOSEA 6:7, JOB 31:33 Adam sinned.

GENESIS 6:5 The people of Noah’s day sinned.

GENESIS 18:20 Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed for their lawlessness (sin).

These people lived long before Mt. Sinai.

GENESIS 26:5 Abraham kept Gods “commandments,” statutes and “laws.”

EXODUS 16:25 To the children of Israel, before Mt. Sinai, God said

“How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?”

WERE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS GIVEN ONLY FOR THE JEWS?

LEVITICUS 24:22 “There shall be one standard for you; it shall be for the stranger, as well as the native, for I am the Lord your God.”

NUMBERS 9:14 “You shall have one statute, both for the alien and for the native of the land.”

ISAIAH 56:6-8 “Also the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to Him, and love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, everyone who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant; Even those I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

Exodus 12:19; Exodus 12:48; Exodus 12:49; Exodus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:24; Leviticus 16:29; Leviticus 17:10-12; Leviticus 18:26; Leviticus 24:22; Numbers 9:14; Leviticus 17:8; Numbers 15:14-16; 1Kings 8:41-43; 2Chronicles 6:32; Isaiah 56:6-8. These passages speak of non-Israelites participation in worship and their duty towards the law.

The passage says, “everyone” “who holds fast My covenant.” Gentiles (non-Jews) who joined themselves to Israel were included in the Old Covenant.

To whom was God speaking when He gave His messages through Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, David, and Solomon. To the Hebrews, yes. Every covenant promise was made to Israelites. Yet, Christians today claim these promises and lessons as their own.

To whom did Christ address almost all that He said, including the sermon on the mount? To Jews. Christ said “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). Paul said of the Jews: “They are Israelites, and to them belong the son ship, the glory, the covenants (plural), the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises;” (Romans 9:4 RSV). Does this verse mean that non-Israelites are precluded from the New Covenant? Yes it does!!!

But remember - we who are not biological descendants of Jacob, *become* “children of Abraham,” Israelites by adoption, and part of the greater congregation of Israel, by “faith” in Jesus (Gal. 3:6-7). We are “grafted” in to the tree which has the faith of Abraham as it’s root (Romans 11). And remember that not every one who claims to be a Jew, is a Jew in the sight of God (Rev. 3:9, John 8:39, Rom. 2:28-29, Gal. 3:6-7).

**THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY THEY OBEY THE LAW OF CHRIST (GAL 6:2),
BUT NOT THE COMMANDMENTS OF MOSES.**

These people are surprised to learn that it was Christ

who spoke the Ten Commandments from Mt. Sinai

(1 Cor. 10:1-4, Nehemiah 9:9-14, James 4:12, John 5:22, Acts 10:42, 1 Tim. 2:5, Heb 12:26).

John 1:17 “For the law was given by Moses **but** grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

The “but” was supplied by the King James translators. It is not in the original. Read some of the newer translations. The law was given to Moses by the preincarnate Christ. He has been the “mediator” from the moment of Adam’s sin. The law IS full of grace and truth. Every command, when accepted in faith, is a promise of power to obey.

When Christ gave His commandments in the New Testament, to love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself, He was quoting from the Old Testament (Matt. 22:36-40, Mark 12:28-34, Deut. 6:5, Deut. 10:12, Deut. 30:6, Lev. 19:18).

Commandments 1-4: Show our love for God

Commandments 5-10: Show our love for fellow man

The answers which Christ gave to Satan when he was tempted in the wilderness,
were all quoted from the Old Testament.

The words of the Beatitudes and The Lord’s Prayer (MATT 6:9-13),
all were taken from the Old Testament.

I Chron. 29:10,11; Lamentations 3:30,

Deut. 15:7,8; Proverbs 30:8, Proverbs 24:17; Deut. 14:1;

Proverbs 25:21; Isaiah 66:1; Job 31:29; Psalm 37:11; Exodus 23:4,5; Isaiah 50:6

There was nothing wrong with the Ten Commandments. They had been covered with a clutter of tradition. Christ came to clarify the Law and to set it free from tradition. He came to “magnify the Law and make it honorable” (Isaiah 42:21).

Christ taught nothing new. He clarified the law of love which was as old as God Himself.

GOD’S LAW AND CHRIST’S LAW ARE THE SAME.

Christ said, “I and my Father are one.” They are one in purpose and thought.

PSALM 40:8 “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yes, thy law is within my heart” (Rom 7:22).

It is HIS will that we keep HIS law.

LOVE AND THE LAW ARE THE SAME.

2 JOHN 6 “**And this is love, that we keep His commandments.**”

ROMANS 13:10 “therefore, love is the fulfilling of the Law.”

THE LAW IS A REVELATION OF THE CHARACTER OF GOD!

The same words which are used to describe God, are used to describe God’s LAW.

TRUTH (Isaiah 26:12, Psalm 119:142) -- GOOD (Romans 7:16) --- SPIRITUAL (Romans 7:14)
LOVE (1John 4:8, 1John 4:16, Romans 13:10) ---- GOSPEL (2Thessalonians 1:7-9)
HOLY (Romans 7:12) ----JUST (Romans 7:12).

The greatest revelation of God's character was the life of Christ,
who kept the Law of God perfectly.

THE LAW IS FOREVER, JUST AS GOD IS FOREVER.

ISAIAH 51:6-7 "For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, ...
but My salvation (grace) will be forever, and My righteousness (law) will not be abolished."

LUKE 16:17 "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the LAW to fail."

ECCLESIASTES 3:14 "I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever.
Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it."

WHAT WAS CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE MORAL LAW?

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

MATTHEW 7:23 "Depart from me you who practice lawlessness!"

JOHN 15:10 "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's
commandments, and abide in His love."

*If the Father and the Son are "one"
then how can the commandments of the Son be different from the commandments of the Father?*

FAR FROM THROWING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AWAY,
GOD'S GRACE ENABLES US TO KEEP THEM MORE PERFECTLY SO THAT THE RIGHTEOUS
REQUIREMENT OF THE LAW MAY THEN BE FULFILLED IN US.

ROMANS 6:15 "What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?
God forbid!"

ROMANS 3:31 "**Do we then make void the law through faith?
God forbid: yea, we establish the law.**"

THE SPIRITUAL MIND IS SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD.

ROMANS 8:6-7 "The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; The
sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so." NIV

*The natural human mind, without the Spirit of God is selfish (sinful or carnal). It cannot submit to the law
of God. This is why it means death to be controlled by the sinful mind.*

To be controlled by the Spirit of God on the other hand, is to partake of the divine nature, which is life. God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying out, "Abba! Father!" (Gal. 4:6). The mind indwelt by the Spirit of Christ reaches out towards God. This mind submits to the law of God, just as Christ submitted to His Father's will (John 15:10). This mind says, "Oh how I love Thy law" (Ps. 119:97).

The law has not be changed. The believer is changed and is brought into harmony with the law.

**DO I PAY A PENALTY WHEN I BREAK GOD'S LAW,
EVEN IF CHRIST HAS FORGIVEN ME?**

Yes, I pay a penalty. (Gal. 6:7).

"Do not be deceived. God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."

My relationships in this world, my health, perhaps my finances may suffer. God does not change the law of cause and effect. It is the "second death" penalty at the final end of the wicked - which sentence is commuted.

THE CURSE OF THE LAW

GALATIANS 3:10 "For as man as are of the works of the law [are trying to earn salvation by their own good works] are under the curse: for it is written, 'Cursed is every one who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.'"

GALATIANS 3:13 Christ "redeemed us from the curse of the law."

The text does not say that Christ redeemed us "from the law." We are redeemed from the curse-- which is eternal death. The law is not the curse. The curse is that which results from breaking the law. God said, "If you sin - you will die" (Gen 2:17).

The moral law pronounces a blessing upon those who abide within its limits, and a curse upon those who violate its principles. Upon those who have transgressed, the law pronounces a curse - "You will die" (James 1:15). Christ has set us free from this curse.

"FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH" ROMANS 8:2

ROMANS 7:16,23 Paul said, "I consent unto the law that it is good." "But I see ANOTHER LAW at work in my members." This other law, is the "law of sin and death," (also called "the curse of the law") In fact Paul says, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death" (Romans 7:24). He said this because it is natural for human beings to sin.

We are selfish by nature. Despite this, Paul saw yet another law at work - "**the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.**" This law "has set me free," Paul said, "from the law of sin and death." (ROMANS 8:1,2) The Spirit of Christ, dwelling within us, is stronger than the natural/carnal/selfish nature.

"The LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE in Christ Jesus
has set me free from the LAW OF SIN AND DEATH."

"LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE"

Healing Grace

Restores Life (New Heart)

"LAW OF SIN AND DEATH"

No Healing

Death Inevitable

Breaking the Cycle
of addiction (slavery) to Sin

Continued slavery
of addiction to Sin

★★ **Did you see that God's grace is also called a law; the "law of the Spirit of Life?"** ★★

We have no power within ourselves to love unselfishly, but when we are "filled with the Spirit of Christ," when we become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4) then we become channels for God's love. No longer slaves of Satan (Gal. 4:7, Rom. 6:16) or our own desires, (Gal 5:17) we have "power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12).

This is righteousness by faith.

We are legally free from the penalty for sin - which is death.

We are healed of the addiction to sin - which results in death.

WHERE DOES GRACE COME IN?

ROMANS 1:5 "We RECEIVED GRACE and apostleship FOR OBEDIENCE to the faith ..."

Did you get that? We received grace, to enable us to obey the law of Christ. Far from throwing out the law. God, through His grace gives us power to obey it.

Strong's Concordance defines "grace" as "the divine influence or the working of divine power upon the heart, and its reflection in the life." As the Spirit of Christ works upon the heart (grace), we are gradually changed. We begin to love what we once hated. We begin to give unselfishly of ourselves. We begin to love the law of God - to see its beauty and its truth. We gain little by little, the victory over our old bad habits.

Grace is also defined as "unmerited favor." The gift of His only begotten Son, and His continued infusion of power into our lives is not something we can earn.

PHONY GRACE THE COUNTERFEIT GOSPEL

<u>TRUE GRACE</u>	<u>COUNTERFEIT GRACE</u>
Gives power to keep the LAW.	Says it's not necessary to keep the LAW.
Jesus saves you from your sins.	Jesus saves you in your sins.
Jesus cleanses me from the inside out. I receive a new heart and a new mind	Jesus just covers me with his righteousness, but I'm still dirty on the inside.
"I can do all things through Christ" (Phil. 4:13). I can stop sinning.	I don't have to stop sinning, as long I just keep saying I'm sorry. Confession without repentance.

TRUE GRACE	COUNTERFEIT GRACE
I always have free will. Jesus cannot heal me if I do not consent to be changed.	Jesus loves me too much to ever let me be lost no matter what I do. Presumption is the counterfeit of faith.
Salvation is not heaven (that's just the home of the saved). Salvation is freedom from the slavery of sin in my life, forever.	Salvation is heaven and eternal life. Without a change of heart for everyone, it wouldn't be heaven, so why would we want to live there.

GOD DOES NOT WRITE A NEW MORAL CODE FOR THE PERSON WHO IS SAVED!
 HE CHANGES THE HEART,
 SO THAT THE NEW CHILD OF GOD NOW LOVES HIS LAW.

HEBREWS 8:10 “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts”
 (Ezekiel 36:27,28, Jeremiah 3:33, Hebrews 10:16).

PSALM 40:8 “I delight to do thy will... yea, they law is written within my heart.”

ROMANS 7:22 “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.”

PSALM 119:97 “Oh how I love thy Law!”

PSALM 119:165 “Great peace have they which love thy law.”

VICTORY OVER SIN IS PROMISED

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

“For with God, nothing is impossible” (Luke 1:37).

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless”
 (Jude 24)

“The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work” (2 Timothy 4:18).

“No temptation has overtaken you but God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape ...”
 (1 Corinthians 10:13).

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly
 He who calls you is faithful, Who also will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

When we accept Jesus as our Saviour, and we are “born again,” Christ Himself by His Spirit comes to dwell in each one of us (John 17:23,26; Col 1:27; 1Cor. 15:45). Through the power which His presence imparts we begin to live a new life of righteousness (Rom. 6:4). We no longer “fulfill the lusts of the flesh” (Rom. 6:12, Gal.5:16). The law of love is “written in our hearts” (Rom. 2:15; 2 Cor. 3:3). The righteous requirement of the law is then fulfilled for us and “in us.” (Rom. 8:4).

IF JESUS HAS PROMISED POWER TO OBEY- THEN WHY AM I STILL SINNING?

Salvation is a process, as well as a legal standing. The Bible calls it justification and sanctification. We stand before God forgiven - now - the moment we ask in faith. We are justified. But our transformation of heart (Sanctification) is a gradual process. God does not suddenly take over, forcing us to do His bidding. He wins us gradually - changing our thinking. When He promised that He would write His law on our hearts - He meant that He would so change our understanding, that we would come to agree with Him, in everything. Look at the context of the New Covenant promise in Ezekiel 36:24-27. Our transformation will not be completed until HE has brought us into our "own land" --the earth made new.

WHY ARE WE TO BE JUDGED BY OUR WORKS IF WE'RE NOT SAVED BY THEM?

Not everyone will be judged by his/her works. Only those who will not accept Christ's spotless record in place of their own, will find their own works compared with the Law. (Revelation 20:12) The Law can only condemn-it cannot save.

PAUL SAYS, "WE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE" ROMANS 6:14.

"But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law." (Gal. 5:18).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE UNDER THE LAW?

Violation of the Law of God, carries a death sentence. To live with that knowledge, "You sin - you die." That's what it means to live - "under the law." Jesus was "born under the law" (Gal. 4:4). That means He would have died forever, and we with Him - if He had sinned.

Without Christ, this law of sin-and-death is the only reality. Because HE paid the penalty for sin, we can be forgiven. We don't have to die. The record of our guilt has been wiped out.

This is the meaning of Colossians 2:14.

ANOTHER OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD VERSE

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

Let's look at the context of Col. 2:14. 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) and 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 the violations of the law. Remember how Paul wrote that a person who broke one commandment was a "debtor to the whole law" (Gal. 5:3). (Guilty IS guilty - period, whether you broke one commandment, or all ten.) Now their sins had been nailed to the cross of Christ.

Compare the wording in the NRSV.

“erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands [for punishment]. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross.” New Revised Standard Version

*THANK YOU FATHER IN HEAVEN,
FOR SENDING JESUS,
WHO DIED SO THAT I CAN BE FREE OF SIN,
AND RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE
IN THE EARTH MADE NEW.*

GRACE AND LAW

PART THREE: WHAT LAW WAS ABOLISHED?

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. Rabbinic Law**
- 5. The Feasts of the Lord**
- 6. Law concerning the sacrifices, Temple service, priesthood, circumcision,**

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 One 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 then future work of atonement in Heaven. (John 1:29,36)
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 in a scroll (2 Chron 35:12).
6. Placed inside of the Ark in the Sanctuary (Ex. 40:20).	6. Placed in a pocket on the outside of 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. **Rabbinic Law - will be covered in Part Four of our study.**

5. **Law concerning the “Feasts fo the LORD” - will be covered in a separate study.**

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

HEBREWS 7:12 “For the priesthood being changed, of necessity **there is a 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 ceremonial 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, 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 forms had changed - yet had the law itself been abolished completely? People continued to

need 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 individuals,

the remedy for the whole sin/rebellion problem.

The ministry of reconciliation, now being performed by Christ in heaven is the remedy.

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

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) The blood of Christ is the wine.
Levite Priesthood.	Melchizedek Priesthood (Heb 7:17)
Levite High Priest	Christ our High Priest (Heb 6:20)
The Temple/Sanctuary Courtyard with the alter.	The earth, with the cross where Jesus died.
The first and second apartments of the Temple. (No veil separates the apartments since the death of Christ.)	Heaven itself, where Jesus has entered the presence behind the veil. Where Jesus stands as our advocate. (Heb 10:19-20)
The Incense	Christ (the priest) offers our prayers to God, sweetened with the incense (His righteousness) (Heb.8:4).
The Manna	Christ "the bread from heaven" (John 6:49-51)

Ceremonial (washing of priests)	Water and Spirit baptism (We become priests) (I Peter 2:5).
Sprinkling with water to which the ashes of the Red Heifer were added. (Num 19:2-9)	We are sprinkled with the Holy Spirit, by Christ. (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)
The Law written on stone.	The Law written in the heart. (Heb 10:16) Notice: there IS still a law.
Symbolic - Prophetic Feast Days	Did the Feasts remain, though the way in which they are kept has changed?

Can you see in this chart, that the forms are changed, yet the system remains, and will remain until all traces of sin are healed from within - which does not happen until after the millenium. [See the study at this site on the millenium.] And finally, in the New Earth, 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 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 the Holy Spirit, writes the law in our hearts.

He does this thru His PRESENT ministry in heaven.

It is our understanding of the sacrifice which God has made - His only begotten Son,
which changes our hearts.

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 completely rehabilitated.

Only when the law has been perfectly written on our hearts will there 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” - the 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).

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. Remember how Paul wrote that a person who broke one commandment became a “debtor to the whole law” (Gal. 5:3). Now our sins have been nailed to the cross of Christ. Compare the wording in the NRSV.

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.”

**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 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 - through His death, and the second - sanctification (healing) - through His work as our Priest in Heaven.

-----THE EVERLASTING COVENANT-----
Great Moral Law of God : Sabbath Blessed & Hallowed

-----RESCUE – REHABILITATION COVENANTS-----

The Sign = Don't Eat of Tree	With Adam (Seth-Able) and all mankind Promise: <u>Seed of woman will crush the serpent's head</u> <u>Serpent will crush the heel of the Seed of the woman</u> (REMEDY FOR SIN/violation of the covenant = animal sacrifice)		The "serpent" crushed the heel of Messiah at the cross - fulfilling the Old Covenant promise.	Satan and Rebellious Destroyed in Lake of Fire	-----ETERNITY----- They will all know Me. (Jer. 31:34) New Covenant promise fulfilled.
	With Noah and all mankind and all creatures Promise: God will never again destroy the earth by water <u>Covenant with Adam/mankind continues: sacrifice for sin - offered by Noah</u>	D E A T H			
	With Abraham and his SEED Promise: Your Descendent will "bless all mankind." Promise: Your Seed will "inherit the earth" (we inherit under Christ who invites all who believe) Sign of Covenant participation: <u>Circumcision performed by priest=male head of house.</u> <u>Covenant with Adam continues: sign- animal sacrifice - offered by Abraham</u> ["God will provide a lamb."] Note: Job (head of his house) offered sacrifices for sins of his children. (Job 1:5)	O F C H R I S T	God has provided a lamb - His own Son- fulfilling the Old Covenant promise. VIOLATION OF NEW COVENANT = refusing the Spirit of Christ. REMEDY= Ask the Father, in the name of Christ (because of His death) to forgive your sin.		
	Old Covenant with Israel (and foreigners who join) Promise: "You will be my own special people - if you keep my Law written on stone." Sign of covenant participation=keeping the law written on stone. (Israel broke the covenant.) Covenant with Abraham continues, with sign of circumcision <u>Covenant with Adam continues with sacrifice for sins as the REMEDY</u> More elaborate system of sacrifices (Sanctuary/Temple/priesthood etc) Levite priesthood replaces individual head of household. [Under New Covenant: Melchisedec priesthood of all believers, replaces Levite (Heb. 7:21).]		New Covenant with Israel (all who accept Messiah are grafted into Israel) Promise: <u>I will write my law on their hearts. (SAME LAW)</u> <u>I will be their God, and they will be my people.</u> Sign: Love for God & Love for one another. (Same commanded in The TEN - Matt 22:36-40.) Circumcision of the heart by Christ - the true priest. HOW does Christ do this? By His PRESENT ministry in heaven (the pattern shown to Moses). The "washing of water (HS) by the Word" (Christ). (Eph. 5:26). "Sprinkling" with HS (symbolized by sprinkling with ashes of Red Heifer) (I Peter 1:2).		

The two phase rescue - rehabilitation work of Christ.

Phase one - be the lamb.

Phase two - write the law in their hearts.

THE COVENANTS: AN OVERVIEW

The Everlasting Covenant:

Between God and mankind. Began with creation of the earth - will continue thru eternity.
Includes the 7th Day Sabbath.

ISAIAH 24:5-6 “The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.”

This covenant says, “Trust and obey God or death will be the result.”

Why is the everlasting covenant ratified (guaranteed) with blood?

HEBREWS 13:20-21 “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

NOTE: God knew, before He created any being with free will, that one day there would be a rebellion. He knew that rescue of His entire creation would require the death of His only begotten Son. The Son of God was begotten for this express purpose. He was the anointed “before the foundation of the world” to carry out this very task of salvation. This is why the everlasting covenant was ratified with blood. It was the covenant between the Father and His Son pledging the life of entire creation promising a way out, should rebellion arise.

The covenant with Noah:

GENESIS 9:12-17 “And God said: ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting [perpetual] covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.’ And God said to Noah, ‘This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.’”

The covenant with Abraham:

GENESIS 17:7-19 Between God and Abrahams descendants thru Isaac. An everlasting covenant. Promise of the land which then belonged to the descendants of Canaan (symbolic of the earth), for an “everlasting possession.” Circumcision to be the “sign of the covenant” (symbolic of transformation at the second coming). Sarah to be the mother of many nations. Promise of a son, to be named Isaac. With Isaac and his descendants, God would establish His covenant for an everlasting [perpetual] covenant.

The covenant with Isaac:

The covenant with Jacob:

The covenant with Israel:

I Chronicles 16:14-18 David remembers the perpetual (everlasting) covenant made with Abraham, and Isaac, confirmed also to Jacob and Israel. Promise of the land of Canaan. (Psalm 105:10).

Numbers 25:10-13 Perpetual covenant with the tribe of Levi, appointed as the priesthood.

The New Covenant with Israel:

Jeremiah 32:40 “Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely. They shall be My people, and I will be their God; then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever...”

GRACE AND THE LAW

Part Five: Righteousness by Works - The Law of the Pharisees

Deut 4:13 The Old Covenant IS the Ten Commandments

Deut 9:1, 9, 15 The Old Covenant IS the Ten Commandments.

Hagar - Pauls imagery

5. Rabbinic law:

Added by religious authorities, who wanted to prevent another “punishment” of God, like the Babylonian captivity. Based upon interpretations of Old Testament Scriptures by the religious teachers. Very detailed. There were 100s of regulations just concerning Sabbath observance. The authorities had completely missed the point. Israel had turned away from God in their hearts - this is why God allowed the captivity. Their neglect/failure to obey God’s commandments was only the outward sign of their heart condition. The religious authorities thought to keep the people in line, but even the leaders themselves had become hard of heart, because they were focused only on outward obedience to the law. They were hypocrites. Their treatment of God’s Own Son revealed their true love of power.

Christ taught that true obedience is from the heart - and only God can change the heart -- therefore “without faith it is impossible to please Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

What about tradition?

What did Paul say about the law?

Keeping the Law - in our own strength - a means to salvation?	Keeping the law - empowered by Christ’s indwelling - Model for the Christian life.

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

Christ is the end of trying to keep the letter of the law, in your own strength, in order to be righteous before God.. Christ is the end of legalism.

II CORINTHIANS 3:5-6 “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter (legalism), but of the Spirit; for the letter kills but the Spirit gives life.”

ROMANS 3:27 “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”

The works which we do in order to win God’s favor, in order to be saved, are useless, because we cannot, out of our unsaved hearts perform works that are free of selfish intent. We must first receive grace, the healing purifying power of God. Then we will do good works, we will bring forth the fruits of the spirit, not in order to be saved, but because we are saved.

PHILIPPIANS 3:3-9 Paul says that he kept the law perfectly as far as was humanly possible, but when the Holy Spirit convicted Him of the true spirit of the law (that is loving ones fellow men) he realized he was lost and could never meet the requirements in his own strength. He had no confidence in his own ability to obey God perfectly, but trusted to the power of the Holy Spirit in him.

ROMANS 6:7 “... a woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives, but if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband ... You also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God ... But we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so the we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.”

You have become dead to law keeping as a means to salvation. You still keep the law, but not as a way to be saved. You now keep the law because you have been saved, and have received power from Christ.

Paul here is contrasting the attempt to gain salvation by our own works, which is futile slavery, the “oldness of the letter,” with the “newness of the Spirit”, the indwelling power of grace, which produces inward change, true righteousness, not just outwardly correct behavior.

The law was the first husband, but he was a tyrant which could only point out her sins (Gal. 7:7-23). When you realized the impossibility of keeping the law in you own strength you “died to the law” as a means of salvation, and were married to Christ. The law didn’t love you and the law could not help you to obey. Jesus loves you, and He gives you power to obey willingly and joyfully. This new marriage is happy!

This same symbol of marriage Paul uses in Galatians 4:21 and Galatians 5:6. Abraham’s taking Hagar represents our attempt to gain salvation in our own way, by works. The miracle child given through Sarah symbolizes salvation by grace, the gift of God. Paul went on to say that clinging to circumcision or to any of the ceremonial laws, was to continue trying to achieve salvation by works.

ROMANS 9:30-32 *****