

ROMANS: CHARTER OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
"Part XI: The Christian, The Mosaic Law And Sanctified Living"
(Romans 6:14b-8:5)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Though the majority of Christians assert that they do not have to perform animal sacrifices now that Christ slain for sin, many believe we are obligated to keep some of the laws of Moses:

(1) In his book entitled, "The Place of the Old Testament Law in the Life of the New Testament Believers," p. 7, a nationally-known Evangelical author has written: "The encouragement [for the Christian] to live by the moral instruction of the Old Testament Law . . . for the discovery and enjoyment of true life, is further confirmed in both the Old and New Testament passages."

This author in other writings reportedly advocates circumcision as "a moral duty for the Christian," and opposes believers wearing clothing of mixed fibers, promotes sexual abstinence between married couples etc. that are taught in the Old Testament Law.

Is it then true that THOUGH a Christian is justified by faith alone apart from the deeds of the Mosaic Law, that he is bound by God's will to keep at least parts of that Law if he would live righteously and not be given over to a life of sinful license?

(2) In its book, Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . ., p. 244, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists teach that "While Christ's death ended the authority of the ceremonial law, it established that of the Ten Commandments."

Well, is the Christian still obligated to keep the Ten Commandments? If so, **WHY** are we meeting here on **SUNDAY** and not on **SATURDAY** as that is the true **ORIGINAL Sabbath**?!

(3) In the February 1988 circular, "News and Comments >From RBC Ministries," put out by Radio Bible Class, Reverend Mart De Haan reported that "A growing number of Christians and Messianic Jewish believers are eating only kosher food, observing Sabbath law, and keeping the Festival cycle of Israel. Many believe they have found a way of being more obedient to God, and are encouraging others to join them in adopting a Torah-observant life (living by Old Testament teaching and laws.)"

Well, is God happier with the believer if he lives under the Hebrew Torah, under Moses' Law than if he does **NOT**? **WHY**?

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

Need: "I am confused about my relation as a Christian to Moses' Law: (a) I can see how Christ's death replaced the Law's animal sacrifices, but (b) certainly we are NOT to be LAWLESS, are we? Must we avoid sinful license by heeding SOME of Moses' laws?!"

- I. **Paul revealed the Christian's relationship to the Mosaic Law by addressing questions his PRO-law, Judaistic critics posed to him:**
 - A. Typical of Paul's arguments in Romans, he voiced his Judaistic critics' questions that he often had fielded in his apostolic ministry.
 - B. Those questions that Paul **opposed** are voiced in Romans 6:14b-7:13:
 1. One question Paul's critics voiced was [and I paraphrase]: "If Christians are not under Law as you say, Paul, are you advocating that they sin since they are now under grace?" (Rom. 6:14b, 15)
 2. A second question [we paraphrase] was: "Are you saying since the Law was done away' that God gave Moses a sinful law that had to be removed, implying God was sinful to give it?" (Romans 7:7)
 3. A third question [we paraphrase] was: "Paul, are you teaching that the Law was destructive in needing to be done away? If so, are you implying God is a calamitous, destructive God?" (Rom. 7:13)
- II. **Paul's ANSWERS to these questions reveal the Christian's relation to the Law and show how Christians are to live holy lives:**
 - A. First, the Christian's **relationships** to **sin** and **righteousness** make sinning for him completely **unacceptable**, Romans 6:15-7:6:
 1. Paul reveals that a person is irrevocably **ENSLAVED** either to **sin OR** to **practice righteousness**, Romans 6:15-16.
 2. Hence, the liberation of the believer from sin by justification is designed to bring him into servitude to righteousness, 6:17-23.
 - B. However, the Christian's **relationships** to the **Mosaic Law** and **Christ** involves a shift in **government** over the believer that **alienates** him from the Law's **regime** and unites him to Christ, Romans 7:1-6:
 1. Paul pictured the relation of the believer to the Law as that of a widow's relation to her deceased husband, Romans 7:1-3:
 - a. While a woman's husband is still living, she is legally bound to remain faithful in marriage to no man but him, Rom. 7:1-2a, 3a.
 - b. Yet, once her husband dies, she is free from her initial marital obligation to him so that she may marry another, Rom. 7:2b, 3b.

2. Similarly, the Christian who is positionally seen by God to have **died IN** Christ to the Law's **government**, is free to be united to Christ to live under His and not the Law's **regime**, Romans 7:4-6.
- C. Now, in **shifting** from the **LAW** to **CHRIST**, Paul is not implying the Law is **SIN**: rather, the Law **exposes** sin in the **sinner**, Rom. 7:7-12.
 - D. Paul then handled the critic's charge that Paul implied the Mosaic Law was an evil in making him guilty of death, thus implying God was evil to have authored it: Paul answered that it was **not** the **Law** that made him guilty, but the **sin** in the **sinner** that the Law merely **exposed** as **ALONE** making one guilty of death, Romans 7:13-14.
 - E. So, in view of the **sin NATURE within** a human being as being identified as the **evil** to be handled, and **not** the **LAW**, Paul exposed the utter **helplessness** of a human being to **perform righteousness** by way of that sinful nature **while living under the Law**, Rom. 7:15-24:
 1. Paul admitted that, within his sinful nature, what he wanted to do that was in keeping with the law he could not make himself do, 15a
 2. What he in turn did not want to do of sin, he could not help himself from going ahead and doing anyway, Romans 7:15b.
 3. This revealed that the **problem** resided **not** with God's **law**, but with the **sin nature within** the human **heart**, Romans 7:16-17.
 4. Paul expanded this theme to focus on the absolute helplessness of a human's effort to live a holy life **while under the Law**, 7:18-24.
 - F. However, due to the justified status of the Christian, in dependence upon the **indwelling HOLY SPIRIT** of **God**, what he could **NOT** do under the **Law's** government as it was hindered by the sin nature in himself, **GOD** accomplishes **for** the Christian as he relies on God's Spirit to live His **own** righteousness through him by faith, Rom. 8:1-5.

Application: (1) We must see God has two GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS of living: (a) one intends to CONDEMN by way of the Law and the sinful nature to show man his need FOR Christ (b) while the other SANCTIFIES by way of the Spirit's control of the Christian who lives by faith. (2) Once we believe in Christ, we are to (3) shift FROM the LAW unto the Holy Spirit for truly sanctified living, and (4) NOT feel GUILTY in doing so!

Lesson: (1) The Mosaic Law is HOLY, for it came from GOD. (2) Yet, LIVING UNDER its GOVERNMENT is a wretched existence as one is left using ONLY his OWN SIN NATURE to do so, and that only yields sin and condemnation. (3) Thankfully, faith in Christ removes the believer from the REGIME of the Law that he might live under Christ's REGIME by the SPIRIT'S control of the believer APART FROM his sinful nature.

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

A story is told of a ship that had run out of fresh drinking water as it sailed lost in the mid-Atlantic Ocean. For days the people on board languished in thirst on the ocean, not knowing exactly how far they were from land where they could obtain drinking water. They knew the **rule** that to drink of the sea water in which ocean going vessels sailed to quench their thirst would harm and not help them.

Finally, just as all hope was lost, they spotted another vessel, and signaled their distressful message: "S-O-S -- Need drinking water."

The second ship replied: "Dip your bucket overboard. You are at the mouth of the Amazon River!"

In similar fashion, to use an analogy, once one has put his faith in Christ for salvation from sin, the "ship" of his life's experience has passed into an entirely new brand of sailing water, the fresh water of the mouth of the river called the Grace of God in Christ. He can NOW do what he FORMERLY could NOT have done -- he can dip his water bucket overboard as FREE from the GOVERNMENT of the LAW and drink to his fill as he is sailing in an ocean of God's grace in Christ!

Yet, many a believer, thinking he is STILL under the OLD government of the LAW, suffers in futile spiritual defeat simply because he lives by the OLD rule that cannot be kept successfully in the sinful nature, and fails to take advantage of God's drinking water engulfing him and stay victorious over sin!

We are not under the Law as a GOVERNMENT, so we are not bound by its RULES. Oh yes, there is RULE, but the RULE of the CONTROL of the Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus! THAT rule FREES us to operate INDEPENDENT of the OLD rule of the LAW and go ahead and dip our bucket overboard and DRINK of God's grace!