

DOCTRINE OF THE MOSAIC LAW

September 22, 1993

I. Definition and description.

The Mosaic Law comprises all the legislation mediated through Moses to Israel from the giving of the Law at Sinai, including the post-Sinaitic legislation, as well as the reiteration of the Law (Deuteronomy) on the plains of Moab, as recorded in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It was at Sinai (1446BC) that the Jews officially became a nation with a Law code. Forty years later Israel began to take possession of the land first promised to Abraham, the father of the Jewish race, cf. Gen.13:14-17; 15:12-16. Moses was the father and lawgiver of the nation, leading them to independence and autonomy from Egyptian servitude. The original form of government was a theocracy. From the days of Saul until the Babylonian exile, the form of government was a monarchy. From the time of restoration of the Jewish state (after 70 years of captivity 516BC) until the fall of the second commonwealth in 70AD, the Jewish state was under the 4th cycle to a series of major world powers (Persia, Greece, and Rome). It was during the inter-testament period that the Jews distorted the Law into an instrument of salvation by works. Since the re-establishment of the Jewish State in 1948AD, the Jews have been an independent nation functioning under a socialistic democracy. With the return of Christ the believing, restored remnant will be completely secure under a theocratic monarchy with the Law of Moses directing their national and spiritual life, cf. Mal.4:4-6.

II. Vocabulary used to describe the contents of the Law.

A. אֶת־בְּרִית, *berith*: covenant (contract), Ex.19:5; 24:18.

B. תּוֹרָה, *torah*: law:

1. "Law of Moses", Josh.23:6; Heb.10:28.

2. "Law of God", Josh.24:26.

3. "Law of the LORD", 2Kgs.10:31. 4.

4. "book of the Law", Deut.28:61.

5. Or simply "Law", Deut.1:5.

C. מִצְוָה, *mitswah*: commandment (authority).

D. חֹק, *choq*: statute (boundaries).

E. עֵדוּת, *edah*: testimony (witness), Deut.6:17 "You should diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you."

F. מִשְׁפָּט, *mishpat*: judgment/ordinance (ruling), Deut.6:1 "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it."

III. The Mosaic Law is divided into three parts.

A. Codex I - the moral code: the decalogue or ten commandments.

B. Codex II - the ceremonial code: A complete and elaborate system of Christology and soteriology as portrayed via the tabernacle, Levitical priesthood, sabbaths, offerings, sacrifices, and feasts.

C. Codex III - the social code: diet, hygiene, quarantine, taxation, laws of evidence, crime, land conservation, slavery, the poor, the military, and the economy.

IV. The recipients of the Law.

A. Israel, Rom.9:4.

B. Not the Gentiles, Deut.4:8; Eph.2:12.

V. The Mosaic Covenant was ratified with Israel at Sinai, Ex.19:18.

A. The rest of the book of Exodus, plus Leviticus and the first ten chapters of Numbers, contain the

block of teaching known as the Mosaic Law.

B. God, party of the first part, agrees to make Israel His special possession (literally, a special treasure), a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, separate from all the other nations (Gentiles).

C. Israel, party of the second part, agreed to enter into the Covenant.

VI. Blessings would pursue and overtake Israel for keeping the covenant, Deut.28:2 "*And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey the LORD your God.*"

A. Blessed above all the nations, Deut.7:14; 15:6; 26:19; 28:1,13.

B. Personal economic prosperity, Deut.8:7-10; 28:8.

C. Military victory, Ex.23:22-33; Lev.26:7,8; Deut.28:7.

D. Sexual prosperity, Deut.7:13,14; 28:11.

E. Low crime, Deut.28:3.

F. Good health, Deut.7:15.

G. Right kind of weather, Deut.11:13-17; 28:12.

VII. Cursing would pursue and overtake Israel for disobedience, Deut.28:15 "*But it shall come about, if you will not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.*"

A. Cursing upon the people in the land is seen in Lev.26:14-32; Deut.28:16-62.

B. Continued failure to repent resulted in Israel being removed from the land of promise and dispersed among the peoples, Lev.26:33; Deut.28:63,64.

C. Israel would find no permanent rest among the nations, Lev.26:38,39; Deut.28:65-68.

D. Restoration to the land was promised to dispersed Israel if there was reversion recovery, Lev.26:40-45; Deut.30:1-10.

VIII. The Law is summarized by two great commandments, Mt.22:34-40.

A. The first is to love God, Deut.6:16.

B. The second is to love your neighbor, Lev.19:18b.

IX. The Law was never intended as an instrument of salvation, Gal.2:16.

A. For God to give man E.L. via Law, man would have to be perfect (cf. Rom.10:5), but the ISTA precludes this (Rom.8:3).

B. If there were a system of works that could confer E.L., then salvation would have been by Law, Gal.3:21.

C. But remember that, in order to gain the highest reward of all, immortality, man must have +R (God, who is +R, can only impart His life to that which is +R).

D. And since all men are sinners by birth and practice (Rom.3:23), all are born under the curse of the Law, which is our hopelessness in producing +R for E.L. (cf. Gal.3:10-12).

E. And until saving faith came, we were all in the spiritual prison of sin and death, Gal.3:23.

F. For positive volition, the Law acts as a tutor to bring us to Christ, Gal.3:24,25; 4:13.

G. The words "*under Law*" are used in the following ways in the N.T.:

1. Of all mankind in the presalvation state, Rom.3:19; Gal.3:23; 4:5.

2. Of Jews related to the age of Israel, Gal.4:4; 1Cor.9:20,21.

3. Of legalistic believers who put themselves "*under Law*" for salvation and spirituality, Gal.4:21.

4. Of the fact Church Age (CA) believers are not "*under Law*" for salvation or spirituality, Rom.6:14,15; Gal.5:18.

H. Abraham was declared justified/saved under the Abrahamic Covenant before he was circumcised (Rom.4:9-12), and 430 years before the giving of the Mosaic Covenant (Gal.3:17).

I. And David, who lived under the Law, was likewise justified by faith and not by Law, Rom 4:6.

J. Jews who try to establish righteousness by Law before God fail to do so, Rom.9:31; 10:3.

K. Paul, a strict Jew, ceased to look to the Law for +R, Phil.3:5-9.

L. Christ is the grace source of +R to all who believe, Rom.10:4.

X. Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law, Mt.5:17 "*Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I*

did not come to abolish but to fulfill."

A. He was born and lived apart from sin under the Law (Gal.4:4), thus qualifying Him to redeem man from its curse (Gal.3:13).

B. He fulfilled the ceremonial and ritual code by His work on the Cross, cf. Jn.1:29.

XI. The present purpose of the Law for the CA believer.

A. Is dead to the Law as requiring +R, Gal.2:19; cp. Rom.7:16; 10:4.

B. Stirs up the believer's STA, Rom.7:7ff.

C. A distinction must be maintained between the "lawful" and unlawful use of the Law in the CA, cf. 1Cor.9:8; 1Tim.1:6-10.

D. Declares the person and work of Jesus Christ by typology, Heb. 10:1ff.

E. It teaches divine establishment principles, 1Tim.1:8-10.

F. By walking by the Spirit, we keep the +R of the Law, Rom.8:4; Gal.5:18.

G. We are not lawless; we are under "*the law of Christ*" (1Cor.9:21; Gal.6:2), which demands application towards others (Rom.13:8,10; Gal.5:14,23).

XII. The proper teaching of the Mosaic Law in the Church Age must:

A. Differentiate between the Law's temporary aspect (like circumcision, sabbath keeping, tithing, dietary laws, animal sacrifices, etc.) and its permanent aspect (definition of sin, etc.).

B. Demonstrate its limitations and abuses (legalism: Gal.5:12; and antinomianism: Gal.5:13).

C. Illustrate the relationship between shadow and reality, cf. Heb.9:22.

D. Demonstrate divine establishment principles.

E. Point out the unfavorable reaction it arouses in many, cf. Rom.5:20.

F. Emphasize that we are "*under grace*", not Law, Rom.6:15.