

Understanding The Law of God



MORAL
LAW

CEREMONIAL
LAW

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This is quite a bit of a controversial topic. Most individuals would say they understand quite a bit about the law of God. We will try to break down the law into two categories. There are two aspects to the law, which are ceremonial and moral. There seems to be quite a bit of opinions as to how to tell the difference between the ceremonial law and the moral law. In this study we will see from scripture, clear cut ways as to how to tell the difference between the two aspects. I believe this will allow everyone a simple accurate way to view the law and understand its meaning as well. This does not mean there are two laws but simply two aspects to the law.

First we will define the terms Moral and ceremonial. The definition of Moral is:

“Of, relating to, or concerned with the *principles or rules of right conduct or the distinction between right and wrong*; ethical:”

Now this is definitely one aspect of the law. There is a mistake many are making. They are saying that the moral law is different from the civil law God gave to Israel. The moral law is connected to

the civil law. The moral law dictates the way we ought to live and treat one another in society. There is a civil law but it is contained in the moral law. We will see this point with scripture but first let's define ceremonial just to have more clarity. Ceremonial means:

“A system of ceremonies, rites, or formalities prescribed for or observed on any particular occasion; a rite.”

This definition definitely describes the other aspect of the law, the ceremonial law. One thing I want us to notice and keep in mind about this definition is that it says *“observed on any particular occasion”*. Ceremonies are performed on particular occasions or appointed times. A ceremony is not the occasion itself. Let's take a wedding for example. Many things happen on a wedding. The term wedding encompasses many things but the wedding ceremony is only ONE part of the entire occasion. There is also a reception and other rituals but the wedding CEREMONY happens in the very beginning. After the wedding ceremony is over the WEDDING occasion still continues in which

there is a reception and things like that. Even afterwards there is an anniversary in which though the couple have each other and is married they remember the vows taken and the memories which shaped their relationship on that occasion. Keep this point in mind in discussing the Sanctuary, the priesthood and the sacrificial system.

So we see two clear definitions of moral and ceremonial, and now we can apply it to scripture as we look at things more carefully.

Let's take a look at when the law was given at Mount Sinai to see specifically How Christ distinguished the difference. Let's first take a look at *Exodus chapter 20 verse 1 and 2* which says,

*“And **God spake all these words**, saying, **I am the LORD thy God**, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”*

Every detail is very important especially when God speaks. Notice it is God speaking directly to the people. From verse 1 to 17 God is verbally

giving His law to the people and notice what happens at *verse 18 through 22*.

“And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.

And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces that ye sin not.

And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.”

Now we see that God did not intend on ending His statements, but the people were afraid and they removed themselves. **Moses tried to discourage this decision and tell them to continue to listen to God but they refused** and only Moses went forward. This is the reason why the scriptures call the law, the Law of Moses at

times. Moses never gave a law but He became the mediator between Israel and God simply because He was the only one that wanted to draw near unto God and hear His voice. Notice this statement,

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel”

We see here that God is still speaking directly to the entire congregation. His delivering of the moral law was directly to all the tribes. Even after they removed themselves from hearing God, God still told Moses to deliver the law to the entire congregation. As we continue to read, we see Exodus chapter 21 verse 1 continues the same sentiment. It says,

*“Now these are the judgments which **thou shalt set before them.**”*

We notice God is still setting laws for the whole congregation to follow. Now here is something interesting, Our Father reveals that it is Christ that is to lead them in “The Way” and that He will bring them into the promise land (New Jerusalem)

and that it is not by works of keeping the moral law which was given from Chapter 20-23 of Exodus, but by following the Angel that was to go before them in (Exodus 23:20-22) which says,

“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him.

But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.”

Now let's take a look at the ratification of this covenant in chapter 24 of Exodus verse 1 to 8.

“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.

And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him.

And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.

And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.

And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.”

There are quite a few important points in this group of scripture. Let's examine them closely.

“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.”

This is very important point to notice, after the law was given to the people, God asks Aaron and His sons as well as 70 elders to worship separate from the rest of the congregation, this is very important to understand. Keep in mind the separation in further points.

“Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people”

The Law given in Exodus chapter 20-23 was all counted as one set of laws. The 10 commandments as well as the statutes and judgments are considered the same law. The way it is delivered is very important. It was given to **all** the people directly from God. The next verse is,

“*Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.*”

We see here that before the tables of stones were given to them, Moses wrote ALL the words of Jehovah, including the 10 commandments and the Judgments in a book. Another point to examine is the altar that was built; most people would connect this to the ceremonial law but instead it was a ratification of the covenant that was given directly to them by God. Notice the verse says,

“*builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.*”

As you study the sacrificial law, you will see the altar represents the cross, but here the altar itself signifies the 12 tribes of Israel accepting by faith the sacrifice and Our heavenly Father consuming the offering with fire to show that He accepts this agreement. This was similar to when Abraham ratifies the covenant with God with a sacrifice as well in *Genesis 15:10-18*.

The most important point of these scripture to remember is the close of the covenant. Only Blood can ratify a covenant, though it was the blood of an animal, by faith it truly was the covenant based on Christ Blood only because of faith. This statement Moses makes which states,

“Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words”

The blood sprinkling on the people symbolized the blood cleansing us from our sins and also meaning the Life of Christ being poured out on the people. Then Moses clearly states

“, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words”.

The covenant was made concerning the words delivered directly by God to ALL the people. The covenant was to be concerning the words which

the Lord spoke not what the people agreed with. If you noticed, I have not showed the ceremonial law being given as yet.

We see that the law which pertained to Morality, how we should treat each other and the remorse for the things we have done ethically wrong to each other was given by God directly to ALL the people Himself and through Moses. Now there is a point I wanted to reveal about this statement in *Exodus 24:1*,

“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.”

Now we will see something interesting. We see that 70 elders as well as Aaron and His sons were told to separate themselves to worship God separately. Let's see why, in *Exodus 24 verse 12* which says,

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments

which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.”

So we clearly see after God has delivered a law himself that we clearly see as morally and ethically right in Heavens eyes, we now have God calling Moses up the mountain not only to obtain the 2 tables of stone which represented the covenant they just made in Exodus 23 but also to receive ANOTHER law added, that God will give to Aaron and His sons as well as the 70 elders that “thou mayest teach them”.

We clearly see one set of laws given and dictated by God Himself, then ratified and confirmed with Blood as well as sprinkled the blood on the book of the covenant but also on the people entering into this covenant. Now we see another law God wants to give but only to a few so that *they* can teach the people the meaning and principles of that law.

Now what was this law that was about to be given?

It was the ceremonial law. To save time I will give the chapters and what they pertained to. While Moses went up the mountain in *Exodus 25 through 27* was the law about *the tabernacle and furniture and the materials required*, which all had symbolic significance. *Exodus chapter 27* was about *the garment of the priesthood* which also is full in symbolic significance. Verse one in that chapter reveals proof as to this ceremonial law being only given to specific group. It says,

“And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.”

We see that the Priesthood was not designated to all the people but **ONLY** to Aaron and his sons. It also says they were the only ones to minister in the tabernacle and with the sacrificial offerings to the LORD. *Exodus chapter 30* was also explaining the *Priests responsibility as to ministering incense* in the holy place of the sanctuary.

We see that when God gave the moral law and ratified a covenant there was **no sacrificial system or priesthood or even a tabernacle involved**. Afterwards God gave the ceremonial law **ONLY** to Aaron His sons and the Levites that *they may teach the people* the meaning of these things. This group of people was to reveal to the people daily, who the true priest and sacrifice really is and also to reveal His work in the heavenly sanctuary. We clearly see here a distinction between the moral and ceremonial law. One was given to all the people by God directly whether it be by His own voice or through Moses, the other was **ONLY** given to Aaron His sons and 70 Levite elders which were to teach the meaning to the people to elevate their faith and knowledge of God. Now that we clearly see the distinction lets see what changed after the cross and why. Turn to **Hebrews chapter 7 verses 11 to 13**,

“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of

necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.”

There are a few things I would like to point out. Very clear simple things. The first thing is that its states,

““If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,)”

This statement reveals that the levitical priesthood could not perfect anything nor could it bring salvation to any. Then it mentions “(for under it the people received the law,)”. Very interesting, looking back to exodus was the moral law or the first set of laws given to the Levites to give to the people? No, it was ONLY the ceremonial law that the Levites had to teach the people its significance. So we clearly see here that the law mentioned here is ONLY referring to the ceremonial law. As we continue, Paul gets really specific as to what this law consists of.

“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”

We see here in order for the reality of this law to be revealed the priesthood would have to CHANGE. Now, we see the levitical priesthood did not help any become perfect, so in order for this new priesthood, to help the people obtain perfection, it would have to change.

The Levitical Priesthood was fulfilled in Christ, it represented Him. Now as was mentioned before, the levitical priesthood gave the people a law (ceremonial). That law was directly linked to the levitical priesthood and Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, which is why the scripture states,

“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”

We see clearly that the priesthood changed and the law connected to that priesthood changed also. We do not see anything mentioned about any other law besides the one given to the Levites to teach the people. To prove this point lets see a few verses to see how the change in the Priesthood

affected the ceremonial law which pertained to the sacrificial Law and the sanctuary on earth.

“Heb 7:26 For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

Heb 7:27 **Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.**

Heb 7:28 For *the law maketh men high priests* which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

It says here that the law required that the priest offer sacrifices for their own sins. This would not be applied to Jesus; it states that He offered ONCE when He offered Himself. It also says that the law, the ceremonial law, makes men high priest that have weaknesses but Jesus priesthood is not based on a law but an oath from the Father Himself (Hebrews 7:20-21). Let's continue to see the changes.

Heb 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an **high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;**

Heb 8:2 *A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.*

Heb 8:3 For every **high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices:** wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

Heb 8:4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that **there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:**

Heb 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God *when he was about to make the tabernacle:* for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Heb 8:6 But now hath *he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*

These group of scriptures we see quite a few changes, We already saw Jesus is now a high priest not based on the levitical priesthood but a priesthood after the order of Melchisedek. It then mentions that, as High priest, Christ ministers in a Sanctuary. This sanctuary is not the same as the pattern on this earth but the true or actual tabernacle pitched in Heaven by God Himself. Also notice what type of law that it mentions **“there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:**

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things” It says the law requires the priest to offer gifts according to the law, which we know in exodus is only referring to the ceremonial law, not the moral law. Here is a very important point, it also says, this law given to the Levites was an example and SHADOW of heavenly things. We clearly see that the change was made to the sanctuary services as well as the location after the priesthood was changed (Hebrews 9:24); now lets see what else has changed.

Heb 10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which

they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Heb 10:2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

Heb 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Heb 10:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

Heb 10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

The last change we see in this group of scriptures, Are the sacrifices. We see clearly that the Shadow of good things to come were the sacrifices and offerings offered by the High Priest. Christ Himself is our sacrifice and fulfilled the symbol of the sacrifice when He died on the cross. Because of the life He now lives, His priesthood is forever, and the sacrifice is completed and the Sanctuary in heaven is being ministered in until all is

completed. Though the sacrifice is completed Jesus has to continue to be the lamb slain until all has been redeemed. His death will continue to be relevant as our sacrifice forever.

We see here without a doubt that no law has been erased or eradicated from the law of God, rather it has been CHANGED in order for Christ to perform them in this present time until ALL be fulfilled as mentioned in Matthew 5:17-18. The Moral law and the ceremonial law, though they are intertwined they are still distinct from each other, Similar to the Father and the Son. One given to all the people of God, the other given only to the Levites until Jesus was to come to assume His true position as High Priest after becoming our sacrifice and ministering in the true tabernacle.

Now if the shadow was the law given to the Levites this means that the rest of the law still should be applied, by principle, to our lives as well. The 10 commandments as well as the statutes and judgments are all ONE LAW, the moral law. Let's see a few examples of this.

Matthew mentions the two greatest commandments, in Chapter 22 verses 26-40. many think Jesus was giving them new commandments when Jesus was reiterating statements Moses gave of the moral law in Deuteronomy chapter 6 verse 5 and in Leviticus 19 verse 19. These laws summed up the entire law as well as everything the prophets preached. Speaking of what the prophets preached. There is a prophecy in Malachi chapter 4 verse 4 which states,

“Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.”

An interesting point in this verse is that the word remembers in this verse means to mention or bring to remembrance. God asks us to basically preach this law and the next two verses reveals the time in History in which it will be preached.

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”

Elijah is referring to the power and authority that would be given to Gods people to preach with boldness before Christ second coming. One of the things this “Elijah” will be doing is preaching and restoring the Law. It also mentions “Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse”. There is only curses on those who do not walk in the law of the LORD (Galatians 3:10, Romans 2:5-11, Deuteronomy 30:19-20).

Let’s look at a few more examples of how the 10 commandments are the same as the statutes and judgments.

In Matthew Chapter 5 verses 17 through 48, Jesus begins to magnify or teach the spirit of the law. As He brings he people into a deeper meaning of the law which seems to be referring to the 10 commandments, We see Jesus mentions making an oath. Jesus magnifies or reveals the spirit of

this law by explaining we ought to live and stand by every yes and nay that we make. Yes, a oath is apart of the moral law and Jesus here is revealing the spirit of it. We know this law is apart of the statutes found in Leviticus chapter 5 verses 4, but it's mentioned with part of the 10 commandments as Jesus is preaching. Verse 30 goes into eye for an eye which is not apart of the 10 commandments but the statutes (Exodus 21:24). We see here, Jesus did not separate the statutes from the 10 commandments. They were all apart of the moral law and receiving the spirit of the moral law allows us to receive the character of Christ, through His Spirit of course.

There is one more example which I believe will show us that the 10 commandments and the statutes and Judgments make up the moral law and they are one law. James Chapter 2 verse 1 to 12, which says,

“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

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 art become a transgressor of the law.

So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”

Ok so let us unpack this group of scripture. The first point to mention is that James is using a specific statute as an example. He is saying to Be a respecter of persons is evil. This is not mention in the actual 10 commandments but in Leviticus chapter 19 verse 15. another point is , *“if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors”*. It mentions that if you are a respecter of persons then the LAW reveals that you are a transgressor. Because Christ fulfilled and changed the ceremonial law at the cross, this could not possibly be referring to the ceremonial law at all. So it must be talking about the moral law. Lets continue to see if this is true.

It mentions if you keep the whole law, and offend in one point you are guilty of breaking all of it. Now James is talking about breaking the law, not to be a respecter of persons but look what James compares that law to.

“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 art become a transgressor of the law.”

These verses are connecting being a respecter of persons, to the 10 commandments. Saying you cant keep the commandments and break one point because the one who said one command also said the other. We see here the whole law is referring to the whole MORAL law which consists of the 10 commandments and the statutes and Judgments.

Now that we clearly see the distinction of the Moral and ceremonial law we can easily read both old and new testament scripture as one book. As we read the epistles, and the Gospel when the word law is mention we can understand which one the scripture is speaking of. I hope this has opened up some helpful information as you continue to study. Now we can truly accept the promise in Hebrews chapter 8 verse 10 which says,

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put MY LAWS into their mind, and WRITE THEM in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:”

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