

The Law Of Moses: One Single, Complete System



Foundations (Day 93)
by Derek Prince

During the previous week we came to the following conclusion: according to the New Testament, salvation is received through faith alone – faith in Christ's finished work of atonement – without human works of any kind. But thereafter this faith always issues in appropriate works – actions which correspond with the faith that has been professed. A faith that does not produce these appropriate works is a mere empty profession – a dead faith – incapable of bringing a real experience of salvation.

This conclusion naturally leads us to a further question. What works should we look for in the life of every person who professes faith in Christ for salvation? More specifically, what is the relationship between faith in Christ and the requirements of the law of Moses?

The answer of the New Testament is clear and consistent: Once a person has trusted Christ for salvation, his righteousness no longer depends on observing the law of Moses, either wholly or in part.

This is a subject on which there is a great deal of confused thinking and speaking among Christians. In order to clear up the confusion, we must first recognise certain basic facts about the law.

The first great fact is that the law was given complete, once for all, through Moses.

> "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17)

Notice that phrase "the law was given through Moses." Not "some laws," or "part of the law," but the law – the whole law, complete and entire in one system – was given at one period in history and through the human instrumentality of one man only, and that man was Moses. Everywhere in Scripture, unless some special qualifying phrase is added to modify or change the meaning, the phrase "the law" denotes the complete system of law given by God through Moses.

Confirmation of this is found in Romans.

> "For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam." (5:13-14)

Notice the two phrases indicating a definite period of time: "until the law," and "from Adam to Moses." When God created Adam and placed him in the garden, He gave him not a complete system of law but a single negative commandment.

> "You shall not eat... the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden." (Gen. 3:1-3)

When Adam transgressed this commandment, sin entered into the human race and came upon Adam and all his descendants from that time onward. The evidence that sin came upon all men from the time of Adam onward is the fact that all men became liable to death, which is the outcome of sin.

Before the time of Moses, and the events described in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, there was no divine system of law given to the human race. Furthermore, after the close of this period, nothing further was ever added to this system of law. That the law was thus given once for all, complete, is made plain by the words of Moses.

> "Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgements which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers is giving you. You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:1-2)

These words show that the system of law given by God to Israel through Moses was complete and final. Thereafter nothing more was ever to be added to it and nothing was ever to be taken away from it.

Devotional

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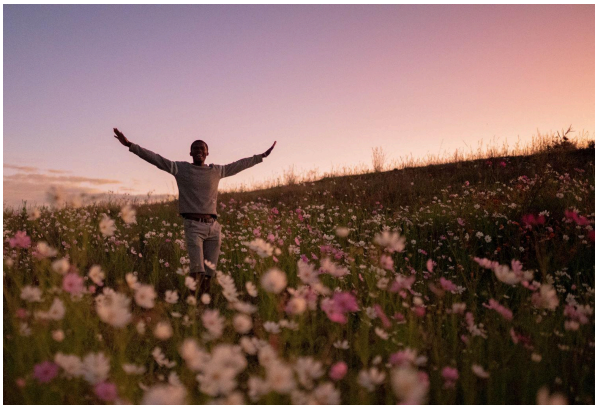

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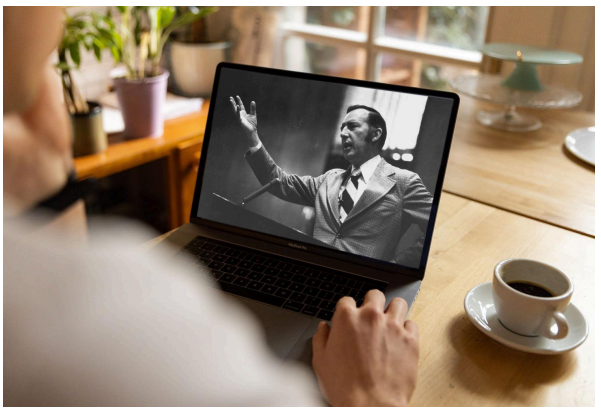

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