

## "KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS."

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." – Jno. 14:15.

We must not leave this examination of the Law, without pointing out some of the differences between the Ten Commandments of the Law Covenant made with fleshly Israel, the penalty of which was death, and the Commandments relating to those voluntarily under the favor of the New Covenant.

We have already shown that the Apostles taught that Israel's Law Covenant ceased, when fulfilled and abolished as a covenant by Christ at Calvary. We note for the benefit of some that up to that moment of its nullifying, it was *binding* and was the only way or hope of future life; and hence when the young man came to our Lord saying, "Good Teacher, what good thing must I do that I may obtain lasting life?" our Lord said "If thou desirest to enter into life, keep the Commandments," and then enumerated the ten commandments of the Law. Our Lord could not and did not ignore the Law while it was in force, neither in his own conduct nor in his teaching, but on the contrary testified that not a jot or tittle of the Law could fail or be ignored until all was accomplished, and *therefore* any one violating or teaching others to violate one of the least of them, would, if he got into the kingdom of heaven at all, be of a lower grade; and whoever would practice and teach those commandments would be *greatest* in the kingdom. Our Lord himself was the only being under that Law who ever *kept* it and *He is the greatest* in the Kingdom. – Matt. 19:16 and 5:19.

Our Lord knew that neither the young man who inquired, nor any of the fallen race, *could* keep those commandments: He therefore said, If thou *desirest* life do this, – and then, in view of his soon fulfilment of the Law, and the divine acceptance of truly consecrated ones under the new Covenant at Pentecost, he added: "Come, follow me," in consecration and sacrifice for others. Had the young man obeyed, he

would have been one of those accepted of the Father at Pentecost, an heir of life under the New Covenant.

But while our Master was obeying and fulfilling the commandments of the Jewish Law Covenant, he was giving "a *New* Commandment," not to the world, but to his followers, the letter, substance, and spirit of which, was LOVE. In various ways he illustrated and amplified this, his one command, which thus was made to summarize all his commandments – in honor to give each other preference, to forgive one another until seventy times seven times, to follow his example in sacrificing their lives for each other's and the truth's sakes, to love even their enemies and feed them if hungry, and pray for even those who persecuted them, – to obey all these commands was the new command, Love, which was the substance also of all the commandments to the Jews.

Of these commands of our Lord, and not of the Ten Commandments of Israel's Law *as a covenant*, does John the apostle speak, saying: –

"Blessed are they that do *his* commandments." – Rev. 22:14.

"And by this we know that we have known him, – if we keep *his* commandments." – 1 Jno. 2:3.

Whatsoever we ask we receive from him because we keep *his* commandments and do what is pleasing in his sight. [The Jewish Law cannot here be referred to, because "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." And so we read in the next verse, that the commands which we keep, are not those given from Sinai, but] "*This is his* Commandment [to us, under the New Covenant] that we should *believe* in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love each other as *he* gave us commandment. And he who keeps *his* commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him; and by this we know that he abides in us, by the spirit which he gave us." – 1 Jno. 3:22-24.

These commandments, under which we are placed, are not grievous and impossible, as the Jewish law was to them under it; for his yoke is easy and his burden is light to all who have his spirit; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.

The fact however, that we are not under the Jewish Law Covenant, and not dependent on it for life, but are hoping for life *as a favor*, or gift from God, through him who fulfilled the Law and canceled all claims of both the Jewish and the original Law against both Jew and Gentile – this fact does not hinder God's *free* children, justified through faith in Christ's redemption and not by the Law, from *using* the Jewish Law and every other expression, fact, figure and type, at their command, whether from nature or Scripture, in determining what would be acceptable and well pleasing to their Heavenly Father. Thus for instance Paul, who repudiated over and over again the *dominion* of the Law over any, quotes one of the Commandments as an evidence to Christian parents of what God's will would be with reference to their government of their children. (Eph. 6:2.) But mark that he does not in any wise thunder it at them as a command. (It never was a command to parents, but to children, even before being abolished.) Nor does the Apostle intimate any justification as a reward; for he writes to those who are already justified, not by deeds of obedience to the Law, but by *faith* in Jesus, their Lord and Redeemer.

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