

## HOW THE NEW CREATURE FULFILS THE LAW

IN HIS LETTER to the Romans St. Paul goes very far back in his reasoning and brings the subject of Sin Atonement down in logical order to the Christian's standpoint. In the first and second chapters he shows how sin entered into the world and why some are more blemished than others. Yet the greater degradation of some does not prove that man originated with the monkey, but that some of the race went down more rapidly in their evil ways than did others. Then the Apostle goes on, "Art thou a Jew and makest thou a boast of the Law?" God gave this Law to the Jews and not to the Gentiles; therefore, only the Jew could get its blessing or its curse. But the Jew thought that the Law was the thing by which he could be justified. In this way he stumbled. The Apostle wished the Jew to know that by the deeds of the Law no flesh could be justified in God's sight. The Jews were seeking for eternal life. The Law Covenant proffered them that eternal life if they would obey it. But they found that they were unable to obey the Divine Law; and that, therefore, the Law Covenant was unprofitable to them; for it gave them death instead of life. No imperfect man can keep God's Law.

In the fifth chapter St. Paul proceeds to show how the redemption was provided. Then he continues, saying, Before the Law, sin was in the world. But where there was no Law there could be no transgression of the Law. Before the Law was given the Jew had his share with the rest of the world in a hope of deliverance and blessing; but as soon as the Law came, which he was unable to keep, he was cut off entirely, so far as hope of justification was concerned; consequently, Jews have had two condemnations upon them – the Adamic condemnation and that of the Law – "Cursed by the Law and bruised by the Fall." We see that the Law Covenant could not grant the Divine blessing of life to the Jew because he was unable to live up to its requirements.

## **THE JEWS UNDER A SECOND CONDEMNATION.**

In connection with this argument showing the difference between the attitude of the Jewish people toward God and that of the other nations, St. Paul says, "Sin is not imputed where there is no Law." God had made a special Covenant with the Jews, of which Moses was the Mediator. By obedience to this Covenant they were to have eternal life. The Apostle wished them to see that they did not get eternal life and that the difficulty was that they did not keep the Law. He wished them to see that in this very Law the Jew was condemned. He wished them to see that they were in disfavor. He wished them to see that in covenanting to keep the Law and failing they brought an additional condemnation upon themselves. Sentence had been passed upon Father Adam. He died; and all of his children were born in a dying condition, and legally dead. Thus the Jews were doubly sentenced as compared with the rest of the world, who were all condemned through heredity on account of the one transgression. The Apostle was showing the Jews that there was only one door of hope and that, while all mankind needed a Savior, the Jews needed one more than did any other people in the world. The Jew had enjoyed much advantage and he, therefore, had the more condemnation.

The Jews thought that the Gentiles were worse in God's sight than were themselves. They said, Now think of the rest of the world, eating their mackerel and swine and hares, and doing things that we would not do! Now, says the Apostle, "Sin is not imputed where there is no Law." God has not charged infraction of this Law to any of the nations. You have violated God's Law many times, for if you have broken even one commandment, you have broken the Law as a whole. The arrangement was not that you should have eternal life for keeping certain commandments, but for keeping them all.

The Apostle goes on to say, Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not know the Law and who did not sin according to Adam's transgression. In Adam all died. The world is

under the general condemnation to death, not for sins of their own, but for Adam's transgression. God transferred us Jews from this condition to the Law Covenant arrangement. But we have failed in this second trial and are in more condemnation than are the Gentiles.

Thus the Apostle proved to them that not only the Gentiles needed a Savior, but the Jews also; not only the world outside of Israel, but Israel also; and that because Israel was under a special arrangement with God there needed to be some special work done for their recovery.

Then the Apostle proceeds further to show that Christ, who knew no sin, was made a curse for the Jew; and that thus there is a special provision made by God to release the Jew from condemnation. The special sense in which Christ was made a curse for the Jew the Apostle has stipulated. (Gal. 3:13,14.) This was to hang upon a tree – the extreme penalty of the Law. (Deut. 21:23.) Christ was made a curse in that He died on the cross. (I Peter 2:24.) Such a death would not [R4869 : page 340] have been necessary for the salvation of the rest of mankind, but it was necessary for that of the Jew.

### **"WHO SHALL DELIVER ME?"**

Taking the standpoint of a Jew under the Law, St. Paul, in chapter 7, describes the condition of Israel, saying that the Jew had undertaken to keep the Law, but had come under bondage to that Law; because of the weakness of his body he could not attain life. Then St. Paul cries, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" He was under the Law which says, Serve God, not only *with your mind*, but *perfectly*. This he could not do because of weakness of the flesh. Who would deliver him from this dead body which caused the trouble? His *mind* was in harmony with righteousness, but he was imperfect. Then he tells us how he got rid of the condemnation of the dead body, that deliverance came through Jesus Christ.

How have *we* this relief? All who have made consecration and by faith come into Christ are reckoned dead to the flesh and alive as New

Creatures. So St. Paul was glorying, neither in the flesh, nor in the Law, but in Christ, who delivered him from this condemnation of the flesh as it would belong to the Jew or to any of Adam's posterity.

In verse 18 the Apostle says, "In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing" – that is, no perfection. It has imperfection from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. Although the Israelites sought to keep the Law the reason why they did not do so was that the flesh was weak. So we are to admit that the flesh is imperfect, while the New Creature strives to keep the body under. We are to realize that from the standpoint of Divine Justice we are walking *after* righteousness – no longer walking after sin. The thought of "*walking after*" is that we do not *catch up*, that we are not living *up to* perfect righteousness, but striving thereto. The New Creature is handicapped by the flesh. And what was true of the Apostle must be true of all the Lord's people. If at any time we have thought we were living up to God's standard of righteousness we have not had the proper conception. If we see what the Lord read into the Ten Commandments, it is this: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God [not with *part* of the mind, but] with *all* of thy mind, with *all* of thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself. This is the real spirit of the Law and its requirement; and this would be possible only to a being that is perfect. On account of his imperfections man cannot keep the Law; therefore, God has provided redemption and forgiveness of sins through His Son. The world in general will have the opportunity of restitution, of having their minds restored gradually. But for the Church there is a different provision. We present our bodies a living sacrifice, after we recognize the "high calling." Then our High Priest sacrifices us and God accepts it as a part of our Lord's own sacrifice. And eventually we shall secure a spirit body, and not a human body such as Adam had and such as is promised to the world.

## **DELIVERANCE THROUGH CHRIST**

In chapter 8 the Apostle shows that a way of escape from the condemnation of the Law Covenant was provided for those Jews who

come into Christ. Of the Church class he says, "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you." The Church are said to be New Creatures in Christ Jesus. To these "old things have passed away and all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The Apostle intimates to us that if we are in Christ we are keeping God's Law in a way that is impossible to others. But the New Creature is to remember that he has not yet received his new body, which will be perfect and which he will receive in the First Resurrection. In the meantime he has only the body of flesh in which to operate. At death, "It is sown an animal body; it is raised a spirit body." (I Cor. 15:44.) The old body was not strong enough to keep God's Law; even with the assistance of the New Creature the body is still weak. Why? Because we are born in sin and shapen in iniquity. Sin has reigned for over six thousand years. The weakness, etc., are all the more intense by reason of the long centuries of sin.

In the statement, "In that it [the Law Covenant] was weak through the flesh" (vs. 3,4), the Apostle does not wish us to understand that the Law was weak, for it was perfect. The **Law** was capable, but the Law **Covenant** was weak. There was some fault to be found with the Law Covenant, which was weak in that it had an insufficient mediator who could not give a ransom to God for mankind. The same Law Covenant, under a better Mediator, Christ Jesus, will be strong in this particular in which formerly it was weak.

Any of the Jews who could have kept the Law Covenant would have had eternal life, for this was the Divine promise: "The man which doeth these things shall live by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) Those who will be willing and able to keep the Divine Law, eventually, are to have eternal life. All who will not do so are not to have eternal life.

The Apostle says that if righteousness could have come by the Law it would have come thus – instead of by the cross. Father Adam

had been condemned. His whole race was condemned in him because of his disobedience. They were unable to keep the Law, hence, by God's arrangement, as by one man sin entered into the world and death as the result of sin, by one man also comes reconciliation, freedom from sin. – I Cor. 15:21,22.

## **THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW IS FULFILLED IN US**

What comfort and consolation are in this assurance! These are wonderful words of life, indeed! They inspire us with hope. If God will accept perfect heart-intentions, instead of the absolute perfection of the flesh, then, indeed, we have hope of attaining to the standard which He has marked for us – the standard of perfection. We can walk *after*, or according to the Spirit. So far as our mortal bodies are concerned we cannot walk *up* to the Spirit's requirements; but our *minds* can walk according to the Spirit; our intentions can be perfect; and what our Heavenly Father seeks in us is *perfection of intention* and as perfect control of our flesh as possible.

The statement that our Lord condemned sin in the flesh means that He sentenced sin and made possible the overthrow of sin. Sin in the flesh had already been condemned that the world through our Lord might be saved. He demonstrated that a perfect man need not sin, and thus magnified the Divine Law. The question may arise as to whether He did more than magnify the Law. Yes. He made an arrangement whereby the Kingdom of Righteousness shall overthrow sin and bring in everlasting righteousness.

The spirit of the Law that was given to the Jew is upon the New Creature, but not the Law Covenant. We are received of the Lord aside from the Law Covenant. God's Law is not to be ignored. Justice has but one Law **[R4869 : page 341]** and that was given to the Jew as the basis of their Covenant. St. Paul goes on to show that as the Israelites did not get eternal life by their endeavors to keep that Law, neither could anyone else get life in that way. But God has made an arrangement through Christ by which this curse of the Law through human weakness

will be set aside by the satisfaction of Justice. (Rom. 8:14.) The Church is also under the new commandment of sacrificial love.

"Gather My saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by *sacrifice*." (Psa. 50:5.) Those who have accepted this new arrangement give up all earthly interests to become New Creatures. And the spirit of the Law is fulfilled in these, for they are walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit of the Law, seeking to attain, through Christ, the blessed portion to which they are invited – joint-heirship in the Kingdom. Their work with Christ at the present time is to share in the sacrifice, the blood of which, in the end of this Age, will be used in sealing with Israel the New Covenant. When the New Covenant shall be opened to Israel and all the world, it will signify to them an opportunity for eternal life, through the better Mediator, the Anointed Head and Body.

