

# *Is the Law Binding?*

In this newsletter will explore some common arguments against the Ten Commandments. In reality, the arguments tend to target the Sabbath specifically and not the entire law. We will compare the scriptures used in the arguments with their contexts to test whether they are truthful or misapplications.

**Argument 1: Seventh-day Adventists say there are two laws in the Old Testament. (1) the Law of God – the Ten Commandments; (2) the Law of Moses – the ceremonial law. They further claim that only the Law of Moses was done away with when Christ died on the cross. This is not what the Bible teaches! The New Testament teaches that we are under no part of the Old Testament.**

Cited verses:

“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”—Hebrews 7:12.

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”—Romans 7:6.

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”—Galatians 3:24-25.

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”—Colossians 2:14.

## **Response:**

First, let's address the separation of laws. Is there a clear difference between the Ten Commandments and Sacrificial Laws in the Old Testament? Yes, in the Old Covenant, there were two laws. The Sacrificial Law was symbolic. It pointed to Christ, 'The Lamb slain from the foundation of the World.' The Moral Law, however, showed people what sin is.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”—1 John 3:4.

Clearly, sin was not the result of breaking the Sacrificial Law. Rather, it was upon violating the

Moral Law that individuals were required to use the Sacrificial Law for forgiveness. Under the Old Covenant, the Sacrificial Law provided a means for forgiveness. Without sacrifice, sins could not be forgiven, and on the day of atonement, any unconfessed sins remained. While the feasts and sacrifices pointed to Christ, the primary purpose of the sacrificial system was to obtain forgiveness for breaking the Ten Commandments. The Bible clarifies:

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—Romans 6:23.

The sacrificial system was not unique to the Jews. Since Adam's time, something had to die to take the place of a person who sinned. An animal could not truly pay for someone's sin. Yet, by offering a perfect lamb, people showed faith in the Saviour who would come. Thus, we see that the Sacrifices served as a picture of salvation before it happened.

The heart of the covenant was the Ten Commandments. In fact, the Ten Commandments were the covenant, while the rules and laws that followed were meant to establish Israel as a nation ruled by God. These are usually called judgments and statutes in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, the word law can mean the whole covenant.

Next, to address the question of a change of law: When Christ became the High Priest and Mediator of a better covenant, was the change in the moral or ceremonial law?

“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. **For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.**”—Hebrews 7:11-14.

The levitical Law set apart only the Levites to be priests. Therefore, if Christ is a priest,

2 then the levitical law must be changed. The Ten Commandments do not speak of the priesthood. Morality does not change because there is a new priesthood.

Furthermore, the New Covenant brings the same standard with a new means of achieving it. In the Old Covenant, reliance was upon man. Moses was the mediator, Aaron was the priest, and the children of Israel pledged obedience.

“and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.”—Exodus 24:3.

This raises the question: What about the New Covenant?

“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: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”—Hebrews 8:10-12.

In the New Covenant, we rely on Christ. He writes His law in the hearts and minds of His people.

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”—2 Corinthians 3:3.

In summary, both covenants call us to obey God’s law, but they differ in how this is achieved. Christ is now our Mediator and Priest, enabling obedience to His commands. Nonetheless, our obligation to obey remains.

“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”—Hebrews 5:9.

The Methodist pastor John Wesley puts it like this:

“(Colossians 2:14 quoted) This “hand-writing of ordinances” our Lord did blot out, take away, and nail to His cross. But the Moral Law, contained in the Ten Commandments, and enforced by the prophets, He did not take away. It was not the design of His coming to revoke any part of this. This is a law which never can be broken, which stands fast as the faithful witness in heaven. The moral stands on an entirely different foundation from the ceremonial or ritual law, which was only designed for a temporary restraint upon a disobedient and stiff-necked people; whereas this was from the

beginning of the world, being “written not on tables of stone,” but on the hearts of all the children of men, when they came out of the hands of the Creator. And, however the letters once wrote by the finger of God are now in a great measure defaced by sin, yet can they not wholly be blotted out, while we have any consciousness of good and evil. **Every part of this law must remain in force, upon all mankind, and in all ages; as not depending either on time or place, or any other circumstances liable to change, but on the nature of God and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other.** “I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” Some have conceived our Lord to mean, — I am come to fulfil this by my entire and perfect obedience to it. And it cannot be doubted but he did, in this sense, fulfil every part of it. But this does not appear to be what He intends here, being foreign to the scope of his present discourse. Without question, his meaning in this place is, (consistently with all that goes before and follows after.) — I am come to establish it in its fullness, in spite of all the glosses of men: I am come to place in a full and clear view whatsoever was dark or obscure therein: I am come to declare the true and full import of every part of it; to show the length and breadth, the entire extent of every commandment contained therein, and the height and depth, the inconceivable purity and spirituality of it in all its branches.” —Wesley sermon 25. Quoted in Great Controversy, pg. 262.

Finally, consider the claim: “The New Testament teaches we are under no part of the old.” Upon examination, this assertion is inaccurate; there is no scriptural support for such a broad statement. For example, the law written on the heart is the same law written on stone.

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”—1 John 5:3.

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”—2 Corinthians 3:3.

What Commandments were written on stone?

“And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.”—Deuteronomy 9:10.

The Lord only spoke the Ten Commandments directly to Israel. Because the people were afraid, He relayed the rest of his laws to Moses.

Here is another example of a law that appears in every era:

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.”—Genesis 9:4.

“It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.”—Leviticus 3:17.

“But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.”—Acts 15:20-21.

These examples illustrate how God commanded Noah and his children to abstain from blood before the Jewish nation existed. He gave the same command to the Jewish nation, and later repeated it to the Gentile converts to Christianity. Thus, the New Testament clearly teaches some of the same principles and laws found in the Old Testament. With this in mind, I imagine the next argument would be that the command against blood is the only exception. These arguments are like onions; you have to tear away all the layers before the heart of the problem can be revealed.

**Argument 2: The letter to the Galatians was written to warn of false teachers who were trying to take away the freedom that Christians have in Jesus Christ. They wanted to bring them into slavery to the Law of Moses (which includes the Ten Commandments!)**

Cited verses:

“And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.”—Galatians 2:4.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”—Galatians 5:1.

**Response:**

Both of these references to bondage speak of circumcision, not the Ten Commandments. This was a ceremonial act that indicated one accepted the Old Covenant. It was a sign and pledge to do the whole law, including feasts and sacrifices.

“But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: **And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:** To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”—Galatians 2:3-5

“**Stand fast therefore in the liberty where-**

**with Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.** Behold, I Paul say unto you, that **if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.** For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; **but faith which worketh by love.**”—Galatians 5:1-6

Those who went to the Sacrificial Law to be justified were not accepting the sacrifice of Christ. While literal circumcision was done away with, spiritual circumcision replaced it:

“But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”—Romans 2:29.

Paul tells us what this circumcision is. We are told in Galatians 5:6 that “Faith that worketh by love” is what is important.

“Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the **keeping of the commandments of God.**”—1 Corinthians 7:19.

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, **in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.**”—Colossians 2:11.

This faith that worketh by love is obedience to the Ten Commandments. It is ceasing from sin, which is transgression of the law. Furthermore, the ceremonial law is called a yoke of bondage, but the Moral Law is not. The Moral Law is called the exact opposite:

“But whoso looketh into the **perfect law of liberty,** and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”—James 1:25.

“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.**”—James 2:10-12.

There can be no confusion about which law James is speaking of. The Ten Commandments are not bondage. To obey them is to be free from the worst of masters, sin. But to a carnal heart, they most certainly appear to be bondage:

“For to be carnally minded is death; but to

4 be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.—Romans 8:6-7.

To be spiritually minded is to have a mind that is subject to the law of God:

“For we know that the law is spiritual...”—Romans 7:14.

The Galatians were told they must follow the Sacrificial Law, and Paul called it a yoke of bondage. There is no evidence in the Bible that the Ten Commandments were ever in question as to whether or not they were abolished. Paul said of them:

“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”—Romans 3:31.

**Argument 3: Jeremiah 31:31-34 is a prophecy regarding the Law, which included the Ten Commandments:**

“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt...”

**In Hebrews 8:8-13, we see the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy. The covenant that God made with Israel and Judah when He led them out of Egypt was the Law given at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 20). It included the Ten Commandments. The writer of Hebrews says:**

“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second”—Hebrews 8:7.

**Please note also that the sabbath was made known at Sinai, not at the creation, as the Adventists argue:**

“Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.”—Nehemiah 9:13-14.

**Response:**

It’s true that the Ten Commandments were part of the Old Covenant. The Bible actually says the Commandments were the Covenant:

“And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten

Commandments, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone.”—Deuteronomy 4:13.

But this section of Hebrews tells us plainly the fault of the Old Covenant. The covenant itself—being the Ten Commandments—was without fault. Paul declares the law to be holy and just and good (Romans 7:12). Let’s see where the fault was:

“For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:”—Hebrews 8:8.

The fault was with the people, not the law, so instead of writing the law on stone, God declared He would write them on the heart:

“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.”—Hebrews 8:10.

He does this through the power of love:

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”—John 14:15.

This is the only power strong enough to overcome sin. It is the power of God unto salvation, for God is Love. To keep the New Covenant is to allow God to write His Ten Commandments on the heart.

Was the Sabbath really not known till Sinai? True, Nehemiah tells us God “Made known” to Israel His sabbath. The Hebrew word for “made known” is pronounced Yah-daw. It can be used in many senses, including in the context of marital relations. In this case, it would be more accurately translated as recognition. The Lord revealed His Sabbath to Israel with the word “remember.” People don’t remember things that have never happened. The Sabbath has been holy since God sanctified it on the seventh day of Earth’s existence.

“And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”—Genesis 2:3.

The underlined word is the Hebrew word Qadash, meaning holy or set apart. When God spoke the Commandments from Sinai, He said:

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Qadash).”—Exodus 20:8.

God is reminding His people of the day set apart as holy since Creation. The Children of Is-

*More Food for the Little Flock —*

# Is the Law Binding

rael, under the yoke of slavery, had not recognized the Sabbath, so God caused them to recognize it as holy again.

**Argument 4: Paul wrote to the Christians in Colossae that “the handwriting of requirements (a direct reference to the Ten Commandments) that was against us, which was contrary to us” He has “taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross” (Colossians 2:14). These passages clearly teach that the sabbath is not binding today, nor has it ever been binding on Christians. Colossians 2:16-17 teaches that it was only for the people of Israel before Christ died on the cross.**

Verses cited:

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”—Colossians 2:14.

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”—Colossians 2:16-17.

**Response:**

The “handwriting of requirements” is not a direct reference to anything; the Greek word used here only appears once in the entire Greek Bible. In order to understand what exactly Paul is referencing here, we need to look in the Old Testament for the term “against us.” The Ten Commandments were not against us. Paul says:

“And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.”—Romans 7:10.

The italicized words are provided by the translator. The verse tells us the commandment was given for life. It was not against us. There is a law that was against us...

“Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?”—Deuteronomy 31:26-27.

Not only were the Sacrificial Laws against the Jews, but they were also against the Gentiles. The sacrificial services were extremely exclusive. This law included the six sacrificial sabbaths and the New Moon sabbaths. It required eating specific sacrifices or performing specific rituals. The Jews even had to journey to Jerusalem three times a year. Any who failed would be cut off from the people. All these are fulfilled in Christ and nailed to the cross. The book of the law was placed on the side of the Ark, but the Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God on stone and placed inside the Ark. Even God created a separation between the two.

It is abundantly evident that the law being spoken of in Colossians is not the Moral Law. Where does the Moral Law talk about meat, drink or new moons? These are absent from the Ten Commandments, but the conclusion is still drawn that Colossians 2 is a direct reference to the Moral Law because Sabbaths (plural) and Holy Days (plural) are mentioned. There is no evidence that this portion of scripture refers to the Moral Law, which only sets apart the Seventh day as the Sabbath (singular) to be respected as a Holy Day (singular). Paul made direct reference to the act of circumcision, saying it was a yoke “which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear”—Acts 15:10. He also testified to every man that was circumcised, “that he is a debtor to do the whole law.”—Galatians 5:3. Specifically, the sacrificial services. While James called the Ten Commandments a “Law of Liberty.”

**Argument 5: It is wrong to go to the Old Testament to support a doctrine when we clearly live under the New Testament today. In fact, Paul said those who seek to be justified by the Old Law are “estranged from Christ, and have fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4).**

**Response:**

We just covered Galatians 5, which calls us to stand fast in the liberty which God has given us. Since the Ten Commandments are the law of liberty, we can stand fast in them without being brought into bondage. But if we are circumcised, we put on the yoke of bondage, becoming a debtor

6 to do all the sacrificial services and keep all the feast days, etc.

Oddly enough, many protestants teach that the Jews can be justified by the sacrificial service. Contextually, this is what Paul says can estrange one from Christ and make them fall from Grace. But let's take this question at face value. Does the Bible teach that the Ten Commandments can justify you? No. Do Adventists teach that the Ten Commandments can justify you? No. Does Ellen White teach that the Ten Commandments can justify you? No. Only Christ can justify a sinner, and they can only be justified by faith. Let's take a deeper look at this.

When Adam sinned, could he have been justified by perfect obedience for the rest of his life? No. The only thing that could justify Him was a sacrifice that prefigured Christ. But it is well established that in order to have salvation, there is a part that man must play. Paul writes in Romans:

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone.”—Romans 9:30-32.

Here we see that the Jews followed after the Law of Righteousness but did not attain it, because they didn't follow it by faith. What is the Law of Righteousness?

“My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.”—Psalm 119:172.

The Ten Commandments are the Law of Righteousness, but not the means of attaining it. Under the Old Covenant, the means of attaining righteousness was self-effort, as expressed in the words, We will do. When Israel failed to keep the Commandments, they turned to sacrifices. In this context, the Jews attempted to use sacrifices as a substitute for the righteousness of faith-driven obedience, and to some extent, this was acceptable. However, as time went on, many lost sight of the coming Saviour and began placing their hope in the sacrifices themselves. With Christ's coming, the true fulfillment of these symbols arrived, but many still believed the ritual acts had merit. In continuing the sacrifices, they ceased to walk by faith and not by sight. Isaiah, foreseeing this misplacement of trust, prophesied of a time when the sacrificial system would be viewed as idolatry:

“He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a

dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.”—Isaiah 66:3-4.

The Jews refused to listen to the voice of the Saviour and chose their sacrifices instead. They were trying to obtain the righteousness of perfect obedience to the Commandments by offering sacrifices. When there ceased to be any merit of faith in their services, they became idolaters.

“The terms of the ‘Old Covenant’ were, Obey and live: ‘If a man do, he shall even live in them’ (Ezekiel 20:11; Leviticus 18:5); but ‘cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.’ Deuteronomy 27:26. The ‘new covenant’ was established upon ‘better promises’—the promise of forgiveness of sins and of the grace of God to renew the heart and bring it into harmony with the principles of God's law. ‘This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.... I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more.’ Jeremiah 31:33, 34. The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about establishing our own righteousness, we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth ‘the fruits of the Spirit.’ Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as He walked. Through the prophet He declared of Himself, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.’ Psalm 40:8. And when among men He said, ‘The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.’ John 8:29.”—Patriarchs and Prophets, pg. 372.

### **The Righteousness of Christ**

When Christ came, He demonstrated perfect obedience to the Law; He showed what true righteousness was, and the Law itself bore witness to His righteousness.

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”—Romans 3:21.

Christ was the righteousness outside the

law. He kept the law, but it was not where His righteousness came from. He was God in the flesh; His righteousness was from Himself. His obedience was a witness to what was in His heart. When we are connected to Christ, we partake of His life-giving righteousness. This is how the Christian receives righteousness, through Christ the vine. His branches receive righteousness outside the law if they abide in Him and He in them. Our righteousness is by faith in Christ and not through obedience to the Ten Commandments. If our righteousness were derived from obedience, we could never be righteous, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Christ would not be able to save one person who did not keep every commandment. Heroes of Christianity, such as Martin Luther, who entered the grave as a pork-eating Sabbath-breaker, could never enter heaven. Glory be to God who judges the thoughts and intents of the Heart, and winks at times of ignorance. Because Jesus has a righteousness outside the Law, He can give it to Luther, and by faith in Jesus, Luther will one day hear the voice of Christ and awake to everlasting life. Then righteousness is through Christ, but if we have the righteousness of Christ, won't the law bear witness of it in our lives? Paul concludes that it will:

“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”—Romans 3:31.

Christ has given us His righteousness, and now He commands us to keep it. We do not derive our righteousness from obedience; rather, we are obedient because that was the righteousness of Christ and the righteousness Adam lost: obedience. Obedience is the seal of our faith, the outward show of an inward change of character and destiny. It is proof that we are abiding in Christ. Paul tells us:

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”—2 Corinthians 13:5.

If we have Christ in us, we will be in harmony with the Ten Commandments. Christ kept them all and said, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”—Psalm 40:8. Has He now changed? No, Paul tells us to examine ourselves, and James says to look into the perfect law. In this way, we can see whether Christ is abiding in us; whether our life is in harmony with the righteousness we have been given.

Seventh-day Adventists don't believe that the Ten Commandments give us righteousness. Our righteousness is of Christ, who commanded us

to keep what He has given us lest we lose our crown of life.

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”—Revelation 3:11.

We are blessed if we keep His righteousness, but what remains if we willfully disregard it?

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”—Revelation 22:14-15.

Righteousness is a gift, no strings attached, but we have to keep it, or our crown will be taken from us. Of course, we cannot keep ourselves spotless, but we have a mighty Saviour who will empower us to hold fast what He has given us. By faith in His exceeding great and precious promises, we can be victorious:

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”—2 Peter 1:3-4.

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy”—Jude 1:24.

Christ has given us a charge. He expects us to watch and keep the righteousness He has supplied us by His own blood:

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”—Revelation 16:15.

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. **Watch** ye therefore, and **pray always**, that ye may be **accounted worthy** to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and **to stand before the Son of man**.”—Luke 21:34-36.

Revelation depicts Christ's coming; it tells us the wicked will ask, “Who shall be able to stand?” (Revelation 6:17). The answer is those who have watched and prayed. Those who have clean hands, a pure heart, and have kept the righ-

8 teousness Christ gave them. On that day, the law, the great standard of righteousness, will testify on their behalf. They will be found “without fault before the throne of God.”—Revelation 14:5.

### **An Example from Nature**

Many examples from nature illustrate the power of God and His salvation. The wise man noted the conies in proverbs:

“There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise. ...The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks”—Proverbs 30:24, 26.

The Conies the wise man speaks about are believed to be Hyrax or Dassies. These little rodent-like creatures live in the clefts of rocky mountains and only eat for 1 hour a day. The rest of the time, they spend watching for predators. When they see one, they sound an alarm and hide in the cleft of the rock. We are told that this is exceedingly wise. When we see the approach of Satan, we are to do the same; hide in the Rock. We might be weak, but we can hide our weakness in the Rock of our Salvation.

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”—Hebrews 4:14-16.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)”—Hebrews 10:22-23.

“The days of man were shortened by his own course of sin in transgressing the righteous law of God. The race was finally so greatly depreciated that they appeared inferior and almost valueless. They were generally incompetent to appreciate the mystery of Calvary, the grand and elevated facts of the atonement, and the plan of salvation, because of the indulgence of the carnal mind. Yet, notwithstanding the weakness, and enfeebled mental, moral, and physical powers of the human race, Christ, true to the purpose for which He left heaven, continues His interest in the feeble, depreci-

ated, degenerate specimens of humanity, and invites them to hide their weakness and great deficiencies in Him. If they will come unto Him, He will supply all their needs.”—Story of Redemption, pg. 49.

### **Conclusion**

Keep the righteousness that Christ has given you. This is the message of the Bible, the writings of Ellen White, and the profession of the Adventist faith. People who are at odds with the Commandments are at odds with the righteousness Christ gives. They demonstrate they still have their carnal hearts for “the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”—Romans 8:7. But we who walk by faith will fulfill the law.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”—Romans 8:3-4.

To walk in the Spirit is to walk in faith:

“For we walk by faith, not by sight”—2 Corinthians 5:7.

We conclude from the Bible that those who love God and walk by faith will not make the law void, but uphold it. It is the law of faith and love, the perfect law of liberty, and it bears witness of Christ in us, unless we are reprobates. As for the question “Is the Law binding?” The law has never been binding; by nature, it is a law of freedom. Freedom is not something that binds or restricts. The accusations against the law are framed by Lucifer, the fallen angel. He presented loyalty to God as bondage and still does today.

*For a finished work,*



**Jonathan Taylor**

*Wisdom is justified of all her children. -Luke 7:35*

*More Food for the Little Flock —*