

The *Law* and the Believer

I. The Mosaic Law Defined

The **written** or **Mosaic Law** was a **conditional covenant** established by **God** with **Israel**. According to **Jewish tradition**, and the **New Testament**, **Moses** received the **Law** by means of **angels** (Acts 7:53, Galatians 3:19, Hebrews 2:2).

The **Law** promised **life** and **blessing** if **obeyed**, but **cursing** and **judgment** if not **fully obeyed** (Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15). It expressed the **righteous will of God**, and served to set **Israel apart** from other **nations**. The **Law** provided the means by which **Israel** could **approach** and **worship** before a **holy God**, whose **presence** would now be **among them** (Exodus 25:8-9). The “**Law**” is a **unit of 613 laws** that can be separated into **three basic divisions**, each essential to the other:

The **Commandments**—expressing the **righteous will of God**

The **Judgments**—governing the **social life** of **Israel**

The **Ordinances**—governing the **religious life** of **Israel**

II. The Law and the Messiah

A. Messiah’s *Embrace* of the **Law**

1. He was born a Jew *under* the Law

But when the **fullness of time** came, **God** sent forth **His Son**,
born of a woman, born under the Law, (Galatians 4:4)

And when the days for their (**Mary’s**) **purification**
according to the **Law of Moses** were completed,
they brought **Him (Jesus)** up to **Jerusalem** to **present Him** to the **Lord**...
(Luke 2:22)

2. He fended off the *temptations* of **Satan** using the **commandments** of the Law (Matthew 4:4-10).

He (Messiah) answered (the **devil**) and said,
“It is **written**, ‘Man shall **not live on bread alone**...(Deut. 8:3)”

‘You shall **not** put the **LORD your God** to the **test** (Deut. 6:16).”

‘You shall **worship** the **LORD your God**, and **serve Him only** (Deut. 6:13).”

3. He used the Law of Moses to *defend* His ministry on the Sabbath day.

Departing from there, **He (Messiah)** went into their **synagogue**.

And a **man** *was there* whose **hand was withered**. And they questioned **Jesus**, asking, "Is it **lawful** to **heal** on the **Sabbath**?"—so that they might **accuse Him**.

And **He** said to them, *"What man is there among you who has a **sheep**, and if it **falls** into a **pit** on the **Sabbath**, will he not take hold of it and **lift it out**? How much more **valuable** then is a **man** than a **sheep**! So then, it is **lawful** to **do good** on the **Sabbath**."

Then **He** said to the man, "Stretch out **your hand**!"
He stretched it out, and it was **restored to normal**, like the other.
(Matthew 12:9-14, *Deuteronomy 22:4)

4. **He taught** from the **Law** what **He knew** were its **great commandments**.

One of them, a **lawyer**, asked **Him (Jesus)** *a question, testing Him*,
"Teacher, which is the **great commandment** in the **Law**?"

And **He** said to him,
" 'YOU SHALL **LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD** WITH ALL YOUR **HEART**,
AND WITH ALL YOUR **SOUL**, AND WITH ALL YOUR **MIND**.' "

"This is the **great and foremost commandment**. The **second** is like it,
'YOU SHALL **LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF**."
"On these **two commandments** depend the **whole Law** and the **Prophets**."
(Matthew 22:35-40, Deuteronomy 6:5)

5. After **miraculously healing** a **leper**, **He instructed him** to **go** to the **priests**, and **fulfill** what was **required** by the **Law**.

And a **leper** came to **Him (Messiah)** and **bowed down** before **Him**, and said,
"Lord, if **You are willing**, **You** can make me **clean**."

Jesus stretched out **His hand** and **touched him**, saying,
"I am willing; be cleansed."
And **immediately** his **leprosy** was **cleansed**.

And **Jesus** said to him, "See that you tell **no one**; but go, show yourself to the **priest** and **present the offering** that **Moses commanded**, as a **testimony** to them." (Matthew 8:2-4, Leviticus 13:49, 14:2)

6. **He** appealed to the **Law** to establish the **truthfulness** of **His testimony**.

"Even in **your law** it has been **written** that the **testimony of two men is true**.
I am He who **testifies** about **Myself**, and the **Father** who **sent Me** **testifies about Me**."
(John 8:17-18, Deuteronomy 17:6, 19:15)

7. He affirmed His Messiahship and Ministry from the Law and the Prophets.

Then **beginning** with Moses and with **all** the prophets,
He (Jesus) explained to them the **things** concerning *Himself* in **all** the Scriptures.
(Luke 24:27)

B. Messiah's *Emphasis* on having an "inward" righteousness that exceeded that of "external" Law-keeping.

"For I say to you that unless **your righteousness surpasses** *that* of the **scribes** and **Pharisees**, you will **not enter** the **kingdom of heaven**."
(Matthew 5:20)

"You have heard that the **ancients** were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits **murder** shall be **liable** to the **court**.'
But *I say* to you that everyone who is **angry** with **his brother** shall be **guilty** before the **court**;...(Matthew 5:21-22a)

"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; but *I say* to you that everyone who **looks** at a woman with **lust** for her has already **committed adultery** with her in **his heart**. (Matthew 5:27-28)

"Woe to you, **scribes** and **Pharisees, hypocrites!**
For you **tithe** *mint* and *dill* and *cumin*,
and have **neglected** the **weightier matters of the law**:
justice and **mercy** and **faithfulness**; but **these** are the things
you should have done without **neglecting** the **others**." (Matthew 23:23)

"Woe to you, **scribes** and **Pharisees, hypocrites!**
For you are like **whitewashed tombs** which on the **outside** appear **beautiful**,
but **inside** they are full of **dead men's bones** and **all uncleanness**.
So you, too, **outwardly** appear **righteous** to men,
but **inwardly** you are full of **hypocrisy** and **lawlessness**. (Matthew 23:27-28)

And He (Jesus) said to them,..
Do you not understand that whatever goes **into** the **man** from the **outside** cannot **defile** him, because it does **not go** into **his heart**, but into his **stomach**, and is **eliminated**?" (*Thus He declared all foods clean*.)
And He was saying, "That which proceeds **out** of the man, that is what **defiles** the man.

For from **within**, out of the **heart** of **men**, proceed **evil thoughts**,
fornications, **thefts**, **murders**, **adulteries**, **deeds of coveting** and **wickedness**,
as well as **deceit**, **sensuality**, **envy**, **slander**, **pride** and **foolishness**.
All these **evil things** proceed from **within** and **defile the man**." (Mark 7:18-23)

C. Messiah's *Expressed intent* → **not** to "abolish" the Law and the Prophets, but to "fulfill" them.

“Do **not** think that I came to **abolish** the **Law** or the **Prophets**;
I did **not** come to **abolish** but to fulfill.

For truly I say to you,
until **heaven** and **earth** pass away, **not** the smallest **letter** or **stroke**
shall pass from the **Law** until **all is accomplished**.”
(Matthew 5:17-18)

D. Messiah’s *Establishment* of a New Covenant

And when **He (Jesus)** had taken *some bread* and given **thanks**,
He broke it and gave it to them, saying,
“This is **My body** which is **given** for **you**; **do this** in remembrance of **Me**.”

And in the same way *He took the cup* after they had eaten, saying,
“**This cup** which is **poured out** for you is the new covenant in My blood.
(Luke 22:19-20) (Jeremiah 31:31)

Expanded Study → As *Believers*, We are under a New Covenant in Messiah

- A. A **New Covenant** *promised* to Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-34)
- B. A **New Covenant** *inaugurated* through the **Messiah’s** death
(Luke 22:19-20)
- C. A **New Covenant** *based* on “**better promises**,” whose **blessings**
are given to **all who** believe:

Not that **we (Paul)** are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything
as *coming* from **ourselves**, but our **adequacy** is **from God**,

who also made us **adequate** as servants of a new covenant,
not of the **letter** but of the **Spirit**; for the **letter kills**,
but the **Spirit gives life**. (II Corinthians 3:5-6)

Now if **He (Jesus)** were on **earth**, **He** would **not** be a **priest** at all,
since there are **those** who offer the gifts according to the Law;
who serve a **copy** and **shadow** of the **heavenly things**,

just as **Moses** was **warned by God** when he was about to erect the **tabernacle**;
for, “**SEE**,” **He** says, “**THAT YOU MAKE all things**
ACCORDING TO THE **PATTERN** WHICH WAS **SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN**.”

But now **He** has obtained a **more excellent ministry**,
by as much as **He** is also the **mediator** of a better covenant,
which has been **enacted** on better promises. (Hebrews 8:4-6)

