

Lesson 35

8.4 Duration of the Law

- The Law was given to a people in their infancy. The story of Israel is a picture, a macro-picture, of what God does in the life of each one of us. Through the blood of Jesus Christ, we are born again, then God begins to deal with us, and we grow; that's how it was with Israel. By analyzing how God dealt with Israel, we can bring all the principles into our lives because the principles are the same. God always uses a parallel.

⇒ **Romans 15:4;** Everything that has been written before was written for our learning....

- Israel as a people in God's plan after leaving Egypt was like a newborn child on its way to its land. God then began to treat them like a child. How do you treat a child? A child depends on you for everything, it breaks everything in the house, eats everything it's not supposed to eat and doesn't eat what it's supposed to eat, you have to be there to teach it everything; that's how it was with Israel. The law was this '*baby-sitter*'! These people didn't know something, so the law adapted to it.

⇒ **Galatians 3:23~27**

- Here Paul is explaining things to the Galatians as an Israelite:
 - **V.23:** '*we were kept under the guard by the law*' ; in another version we have: ...we were under the guardianship of the law and were enclosed in it.
 - **V.24:** ... *the law was our tutor* '*tutor aio*' ; it served as our aio. Aio = tutor, teacher of children, Master of Children, chamberlain, squire; it's like Paul says: the law has become our teacher, our master, our 'babysitter'.
 - **V.25:** So, when faith came, that child should have grown up and recognized his time of adulthood.
 - **V.26:** The condition for being a child of God: only through faith in Jesus Christ.

⇒ **Galatians 4:1~7**

- It was customary at that time, even in Galatia, for wealthy Greek and Roman families to assign a slave, almost always the most educated, to look after their son in the household while he was at an age when he needed guidance, while he was a minor.

⇒ **II Kings 10:1~2;** It is something very old.

The curators, the guardians, the aios, were responsible for the entire upbringing of the child. The father determined the time when the boy would be declared of age (**V.2**), the time when he would reach the age of majority; they are like our 18 or 21 years. Today it's automatic, for some things you reach the age of majority at 18 and for others at 21, but back then it was the father who set the age of majority for his son. So, until the boy reached that age, the slave was in charge of him. That's why it says (**V.1**), '*Although he (the boy) is master of all, he is no different from a servant*', in other words, he is on the same level as a slave in relation to his guardian. But when the day of his emancipation came, there was a ceremony called '*adoption of sons*' (**V.5**). Here the adoption of children doesn't mean that a father who has no children adopts them from someone else, it was the name of the coming of age ceremony, the day when the father determined his son's majority and ratified it in a public ceremony. The day when the son had the same authority as his father, could negotiate, use the family name, do what our children do when they come of age.

- Paul is using this parallel, which was familiar to the Galatians, to explain that while Israel was under the law, it was under the tutor. But when God determined the fullness of time (**V.4**), see the parallel, the coming of Jesus Christ, it was for Israel to come out from under the tutor, to come out from under the law, to come to maturity. It's very important to understand this aspect of the Law.

⇒ **John 1:17;** ‘*Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*’

Until Christ came, the law confined us and kept us in custody. But when Christ came, we attained the freedom and maturity of faith. Those who live by the law are inferior to those who live by faith.

- Israel was supposed to come out of the law, recognize their Messiah, and move into a time of maturity where there was no longer this hard, cold servant of the law. Do or die, the law says! But Israel had to grow up. What does our maturity look like? **God uses natural things to explain spiritual things.** What's it like for a child between the ages of 18 and 25? Normally, we no longer say (*there are parents who do this and end up getting in the way*): did you brush your teeth? did you greet the visitor? do this or that. If we act like that, it keeps the child immature, no one does that or shouldn't do that, because the child is already older. All the principles are already ‘*inside*’ the person and things are done automatically; they are already an adult.
- Isn't that how we live? Spiritually, we should act in the same way, because in God's plan, today we are in the age of maturity, in the age of grace. The difference is that it is no longer the law that governs God's people, but the Holy Spirit. My new spirit, inhabited by the Holy Spirit, guides me. When I allow the Holy Spirit to take full control of me, then I naturally do the things of God as a spiritual adult where sin no longer has dominion over me.

⇒ **Hebrews 5:12~14;** The author speaks to the Hebrews about Christian maturity.

⇒ **I Corinthians 3:1~3;** Carnal believer (*child*) vs. spiritual believer (*adult*).

⇒ **Romans 7:1~6;** Law and grace.

⇒ **Romans 7:7~25;** The law and sin; by the law I know sin.

⇒ **Romans 8:1~17;** The new life under grace, according to the Spirit of holiness and adoption.

- Paul teaches us not to go back to the law; we no longer follow God by keeping the law in the traditional way. This must be made very clear if we are to understand the Bible. It was because of Israel's immaturity that the Law was necessary until the descendant to whom the promise was made came, ⇒ **Galatians 3:19.**

8.5 Why was the Law given? Ten reasons why the Law was given.

- There were several reasons why the Law was given by God; let's look at ten of them:
 - 1st. **Reveal God's holiness:** The Israelites, coming out of Egyptian paganism, needed to know God's holiness and God's character. Those who looked at the law said: ‘*To be with God, I must be like this because God is like this*’. The law said: ‘**Be holy, for I, Jehovah, am holy.**’ The Law reveals God's holiness.

2nd. **To expose man's sinfulness and his inability to fulfill it:** Man looked at the law and should have said, '*I will never be able to keep it.*'

3rd. **To reveal the kind of life, the standard of holiness, that God required of people who had fellowship with Him:** Israel had been redeemed. What kind of life does the Savior require? \Rightarrow **Psalms 24:3~5**

4th. **The Law was a support to lead to the Messiah, Christ:** The Law served to oversee the physical, mental, and spiritual development of the Israelites until they reached maturity in the Lord. The Law led the child to his maturity, which would come in the fullness of time, when Jesus would come and vindicate the Law, when He would remove the Law as the controller of life. Therefore, it served as a nurse until Christ.

5th. **It was the unifying principle that made the founding of the nation possible:** The nation voluntarily submitted to this principle.

\Rightarrow **Exodus 19:5~8;** The people voluntarily accepted this.

\Rightarrow **Deuteronomy 5:27;** ditto.

\Rightarrow **Deuteronomy 5:28~29;** God knew of the future unfaithfulness of Israel.

\Rightarrow **Deuteronomy 4:8;** What nation has the Law like Israel?

The Law distinguished Israel from the other nations; it was part of Israel's witness to the other nations. So, the Law was the unifying principle that set Israel apart from the other nations.

6th. **To set Israel apart from the other nations:** To become a nation of priests, a holy nation, and the '*light of the world*' \Rightarrow **Exodus 19:5~6.** Israel was created to be a priestly nation, that is, a nation that would mediate between God and the other nations. God created a nation to bless the other nations who had rejected Him. Witness and priests to be the light of the world!

7th. **The Law was given to a redeemed people to provide for the forgiveness of sins and the restoration of fellowship with God:** The nation was preserved before God through the annual sacrifice of the blood of atonement, and the individuals of the nation were restored and received forgiveness for specific sins through the sacrifices God provided; \Rightarrow **Leviticus 1 through 7.** A redeemed nation (or *redeemed individual*) is a nation (or *individual*) that has God's provision for the forgiveness of sins. Through the law came the knowledge of sin, but for every sin, in the law itself, God made provision to make it right with Him. All the sin offerings were part of the law.

8th. **Providing worship for a redeemed people:**

\Rightarrow **Leviticus 23;** Annual Cycle of the Feasts of Worship to God.

These feasts focused Israel on the past (*remembering the deliverance from Egypt*) and the future (*FAITH in the promised future redemption*). When they left Egypt, they must have thought, 'How will we worship God? Think, what standard should they have when they left Egypt when the Egyptians worshiped their gods in cults that were foreign to the true God? Then God established a cycle of worship festivals that were prophecies of the program of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, Jesus Christ. These seven annual festivals prophesy the program of Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God. These feasts are fundamental for us to understand in prophecy what God would do for the salvation of mankind.

9th. **It was a test of the people's faith:** Although the nation as a whole had entered the Promised Land, not everyone personally believed in God. The law revealed whether or not a person was in right relationship with God. It was a person's FAITH in God that made them submissive and obedient to the law.

10th. **The Law was given to reveal Jesus Christ:** The New Testament makes it very clear: The Law was given to prepare the nation to receive its King and Savior, the Messiah.

- When we look at these ten reasons why the Law was given, we see that there is something that is REVELATORY and there is something that is REGULATIVE in the Law.

➤ **REVELATORY:** of the holiness of God; of the sinfulness of man; of the standard of holiness required by God; of the person and work of Jesus Christ. Reveals an aspect of the law that is **PERMANENT**.

➤ **REGULATIVE:** because it regulated the life and worship of the Israelites. The regulatory aspect of the Law that is **TEMPORARY**.

⇒ **I Timothy 1:8;** The legitimate use of the law today is the use of its revelatory aspect.

⇒ **Romans 10:4;** The regulatory aspect was only up until Jesus Christ.

- The Law made it clear that sin is sin ⇒ **Galatians 3:22** and that 'without blood there is no remission of sins' ⇒ **Hebrews 9:22**. For every transgression of the law, there was a provision to sacrifice an animal and offer the blood as atonement.

⇒ **James 2:10**

In all, there were 613 laws, statutes, and commandments. No commandment had to be broken to meet God's standard of holiness.

⇒ **Hebrews 10:4 VERSE** ⇒ **I John 1:7**

- Animal sacrifices did not wash away sins as only the blood of Jesus does; sacrifices covered (Kippur) sins. The people who sacrificed showed their FAITH in God's provision. It was on the basis of FAITH that sins were covered until Christ came and removed them once and for all.

⇒ **Hebrews 10:1~10;** The law is the shadow of the sacrifice of Jesus.

⇒ **Galatians 5:1;** The law was a yoke of slavery, for in it there was no freedom and no power to obey.

⇒ **Romans 7:12;** But the Law is called '*good, holy, and just*' because it reveals the standard of God's holiness.