

The Law and the Gospel

John Colquhoun (1815)

Chapter 2 (Lesson 4)

The Law at Mount Sinai

“After the Israelites, the peculiar people of God, had become grossly ignorant of the precepts and penalties of His righteous law during their long continuance and grievous bondage in Egypt, He graciously condescended to reveal it to them in express terms and with awful solemnity from Mount Sinai.”

“It was God in the person of the Son who, from the top of Mount Sinai, spoke these words...the sum of the duty required in the moral law is love.”

This law was summed up in the 10 Commandments written by the finger of God on tablets of stone. Moses broke the first tablets when he came down from the mountain and witnessed the people's sin. This was symbolic showing how the nation _____ God's law immediately. God then rewrites the 10 commandments on new stone tablets.

“His writing of the law twice, without the smallest variation, and that on tables of stone, was doubtless intended to represent to us, as well as to the Israelites, the immutable authority and enteral obligation of that law.”

Colquhoun sees three elements at work here in the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. As reformed Baptists we would slightly alter one of his three.

1. The Law was given to the people on Mount Sinai as “the covenant of grace repeated and published”

(RB-“The Law given to the people on Mount Sinai _____ the covenant of grace)

“Instead of saying to them, ‘Keep My commandments, that I may become your God’, He, on the contrary, said to each of them, ‘I am the Lord thy God; therefore, keep My commandments.’”

Colquhoun gives 7 reasons showing that at Mount Sinai the law came to the people as a covenant of grace (we again would say that the covenant of grace was being foreshadowed)

1. God _____ the 10 Commandments by saying that He is their Savior
2. The nation of Israel, who was given the law, is referred to as those that the Lord showed _____ to and are precious in His sight
3. The 10 Commandments were placed in the _____
4. God would not _____ a broken covenant with the people
5. After Moses had read the law to the people, he then sprinkled them with _____
6. The enacting of the _____ law as being connected to the moral law for the nation of Israel
7. The _____ of the Passover and circumcision

2. The Law was given in the form of a covenant of _____ on Mount Sinai

“But though it was not renewed with them, yet it was, on that solemn occasion, repeated and displayed to them. It was not proposed to them in order that they might consent, by their own works, to fulfill the condition of it; but it was displayed before them in subservience to the covenant of grace, that they might see how impossible it was for them as condemned sinners to perform that perfect obedience which is the immutable condition of life in it. Although the Lord knew well that they were far from being able to yield perfect obedience, yet He saw proper to set forth eternal life to them on these terms (Lev. 18:5; Deut. 27:26) and so to speak to them in a strain adapted to their self-righteous temper.”

“They were so full of self-confidence as to say to Moses, ‘All that the Lord hath spoken we will do’ (Ex. 19:8, 24:7)...He displayed it in that form in order that the people might, by contemplating it, see what kind and degree of righteousness is required as the condition of eternal life, and that by means of it, finding themselves utterly

destituted of perfect righteousness, they might be impelled to take hold of the covenant of grace in which the perfect righteousness of the second Adam is provided and exhibited for the justification of all who believe.”

Colquhoun gives 7 reasons showing that the law came to the people in the form of a covenant of works

1. The law came with _____, lightning, trumpet blasts, smoke, and thick _____

“Now the covenant of works was displayed in this tremendous form before the Israelites in order that self-righteous and secure sinners among them might be alarmed and deterred from expecting justification in the sight of God by the works of the law, convinced of their sinfulness and misery, they might be persuaded to flee speedily to the blessed Mediator and to trust in Him for righteousness and salvation.”

2. The law on tablets of stone are called by the Apostle Paul “the ministration of _____” (2 Cor. 3:7)
3. The Moral law is called a _____ in Scripture (Galatians 3:17-18)

“The covenant displayed on Sinai, then, was not the covenant of promise made with the fathers of the Israelite people.”

4. The law of Moses is spoken in the New Testament as a covenant of _____ (Matthew 19:17-19)
5. The law that came from Moses is _____ with the grace of Christ in the NT (Jn. 1:17)
6. The law was written first on stone _____ it was said to be written on the heart
7. The Apostle Paul calls the covenant made on Mount Sinai a covenant of _____ (Gal. 4:24)

“The covenant that genders to bondage is the covenant of works, made with Adam as the head and representative of all its natural posterity and displayed on Mount Sinai to the Israelites.”

3. The Law was given in the form of a national covenant

“In the Sinaitic transaction, then, the eternal Son of God is to be considered as the monarch or king of the Israelites (1 Samuel 12:12), and they are to be viewed as a nation or political community under a theocratic government.”

God attached to the law national _____ and national _____ based upon Israel’s obedience or disobedience to the law.

“The promises of that national covenant were promises of temporal good things to the Israelites...The penal sanctions of that national covenant were, for the most part, temporal punishments.”

Israel, as a nation, would be blessed with _____ and prosperity if they obeyed the covenant and also were threatened with war, _____, and famine if they refused to obey the covenant. They could continue to dwell in the good land that God had prepared for them if they walked in obedience, or they could be kicked out of the land if they followed the voice of another and disobeyed God’s law.

There are these three elements in view then when we consider the law being given to Israel on Mount Sinai. It showed the redeemed believers how to _____, it terrorized and threatened the lawless with fear of punishment, and it provided a national framework for the people to _____ in the land that the Lord God had given them.

“Accordingly, the Ten Commandments, as promulgated from Mount Sinai, must be considered at least in a twofold point of view-namely, as the law of Christ, or the law as a rule of life to believers; and as the law as it is the matter of a covenant of works to unregenerate sinners.”

“God’s design in making this covenant with Adam was to have that righteousness which was due to Him from man, but His great design in displaying it to Israel at Sinai was that they, by contemplating it, might see what kind and degree of righteousness it was by which they could be justified before God and that, finding themselves wholly destitute of that righteousness, they might be excited to take hold of the covenant of grace (RB-“the promise”) in which a perfect righteousness for justification is graciously provided.”