

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE FOR ALL ITS WORTH

CHAPTER 9 – THE LAW(S):
COVENANT STIPULATIONS FOR ISRAEL

THE ROLE OF THE LAW

- God's gift to His people to allow them to be formed into His community with one another
- God's instructions on how to worship Him
- Boundaries on relationship with the surrounding communities

WHAT IS THE LAW?

- The word “law” has many different usages and represents everything from each of the individual laws, to the whole of the law, to the whole of the Old Testament.

WHAT IS THE LAW?

- Even if we can define what specifically is the “law” in Scripture, how do we exegete them and utilize good hermeneutics with the law?

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- Old Testament law is a covenant
 - A covenant was created by an “overlord”, suzerain, and presented to a “vassal”, servant.
 - This was standard practice in the OT times
 - God was the suzerain and Israel is the servant

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- Old Testament law is a covenant
 - The servant maintains the covenant or is punished
 - The suzerain can re-work the covenant at any time.

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- 6 parts to a Covenant
 - Preamble – Identified the parties
 - Prologue – How the parties are connected
 - Stipulations – The Laws
 - Witnesses – Who enforces the covenant
 - Sanctions – Blessings and Curses
 - Document Clause – Ensuring regular review

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- The Old Testament is not our Testament
 - The loyalty of the covenant, not TO the covenant, is still expected
 - However, *how* this loyalty is upheld has changed significantly through Christ
 - In order for Stipulations to be valid, they must be renewed in the New Testament

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- Two kinds of Old Covenant stipulations have not been renewed in the New Covenant.
 - Israelite Civil Laws
 - Israelite Ritual Laws

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- Part of the Old Covenant is renewed in the New Covenant.
 - Ethical laws are still paramount in the NT
 - Love the Lord your God
 - Love your neighbor

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- The OT is still the word of God for us even though it is not the command of God to us.
 - The significance of the New Covenant is found in how the law functioned in the Old Covenant
 - Redemptive history is at the forefront

CHRISTIANS AND THE OT LAW

- Only that which is renewed in the New Testament can be considered the Law of Christ
 - The ten commandments (Matthew 5:21-37 and John 7:23)
 - The 2 great commands (Matthew 22:36-40)

ROLE OF THE LAW FOR ISRAEL AND THE BIBLE

- Galatians 3:23-29
- There is no statement in the OT that people were saved by the law.
- The law was God's gift to Israel

ROLE OF THE LAW FOR ISRAEL AND THE BIBLE

- The problem with the law was not that Israel *couldn't* keep the law.
- The problem was that Israel *wouldn't* keep the law.

ROLE OF THE LAW FOR ISRAEL AND THE BIBLE

- The law then did not serve as a means of salvation.
- The law served as parameters of relationship and loyalty between God and His people.
- The law then is not a complete list but examples of what could and should be done to please God.

TYPES OF LAWS

- 2 types of laws
 - Apodictic
 - Casuistic

TYPES OF LAWS

- Apodictic

- Direct commands beginning with “do” or “don’t”
- Limited in wording, but sweeping in spirit
- When faced with these, we must realize how unworthy we are to belong to God

TYPES OF LAWS

- Casuistic
 - Case by case law
 - They represent some people in certain situations
 - These are fully conditional
 - None of these are renewed in the New Covenant

TYPES OF LAWS

- Casuistic

- Deuteronomy 15:12-17

If any of your people—Hebrew men or women—sell themselves to you and serve you six years, in the seventh year you must let them go free. And when you release them, do not send them away empty-handed. Supply them liberally from your flock, your threshing floor and your winepress. Give to them as the Lord your God has blessed you. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you. That is why I give you this command today.

But if your servant says to you, “I do not want to leave you,” because he loves you and your family and is well off with you, then take an awl and push it through his earlobe into the door, and he will become your servant for life. Do the same for your female servant.

OT LAW AS BENEFIT TO ISRAEL

- Food laws

- Designed to protect against disease
- Would have been expensive to raise certain animals
- Foods favored as sacrifices by other cultures

OT LAW AS BENEFIT TO ISRAEL

- Shedding of Blood
 - One who sins against God does not deserve to live
 - However, He taught about substitution
 - This is not about animal sacrifice, it's about the payment for sin being death and the gift of substitution

OT LAW AS BENEFIT TO ISRAEL

- Unusual Prohibitions

- Deuteronomy 14:21 – “Do not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk”
- Prohibitions against the Canaanite religious practices

OT LAW AS BENEFIT TO ISRAEL

- Blessings to those who keep the laws
 - Deuteronomy 14:28-29
 - Benefits the needy and those who benefit the needy
 - Produces good practices

HOMEWORK

- Read Chapter 10
- Read Ezekiel 37:1-14 and exegete and interpret
- Read Exodus 17:1-7 and Numbers 20:1-13
- Compare those to 1 Corinthians 10:4 (*sensus plenior*)