

The Law of Moses

Galatians 4:4–5 (NKJV)

⁴But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
⁵to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

- *Numerous times in the New Testament the concept of being “under the Law” is repeated.*
- *This reoccurring theme of the Law links the New Testament and the Old Testament together so that we can receive a complete revelation of all that Jesus Christ has done for us.*
- *“God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law” so that Christ could fulfill the Law and die in our place in order, “to redeem those who are under the Law” so that we who are redeemed are no longer under the Law.*
- *When the Bible speaks about being “under the Law” it is referring specifically to the Law given to Israel by God through Moses and thus it can be called the Law of Moses or the Mosaic Law.*
- *However, it would be incorrect to think that every time the word “law” is used in the Bible it is referring to the Mosaic Law.*
- *There are many laws that govern our lives.*
- *Some are natural laws that are found in nature such as the law of gravity that universally govern our physical lives.*
- *There are spiritual and moral laws that govern the lives of both believers and non-believers.*
- *There is “the Law of Faith” that deals with how to live a life of faith in Christ. (Romans 3:27)*
- *There is “the Law of the Mind” (Romans 7:23) that deals with how our minds develop patterns of thinking whether for better or worse and that is why the Bible exhorts us to meditate upon only those things that edify and are wholesome (Philippians 4:8) and produce life giving thoughts.*
- *There is “the Law of Sin and Death” (Romans 7:23; 25; 8:2) which states if we choose to sin it will produce destructive consequences in our lives.*

- *There is “the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” that can free us from the Law of Sin and Death (Romans 8:2). This Law deals with Christ in our reborn spirit that can free us from the power and the captivity of sin so that we can live victorious and fruitful lives because greater is He who is in us (Christ) than he who is in the world (our sinful nature.) (1 John 4:4)*
- *Today we will focus on the Mosaic Law.*
- *We want to understand the importance of the Mosaic Covenant that God made with Israel and the Mosaic Laws that were part and parcel with it.*
- *Even though the entire Scriptures that were given to the Jewish people from Genesis to Malachi, which many Christians call the Old Testament are the inspired Word of God only Exodus to Deuteronomy make up the Mosaic Law and spells out the Mosaic Covenant that God made with Israel on Mount Sinai.*
- *Sometimes Christians misunderstand the purpose of the Mosaic Law which leads to many misconceptions.*
- *Some Christians view the Mosaic Law as our enemy.*
- *Other Christians view the Mosaic Law as something we are to try to keep as best as possible and other Christians see the Mosaic Law as irrelevant and not worth studying.*
- *Today we are going to study the Mosaic Law as it pertains to judgment, righteousness and how it points us to Christ.*
- *Some Christians speak about the Law as if it were bad and something to be distained but Scripture clearly states, “the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.” (Romans 7:12)*
- *Other Christians cherry pick through the Law trying to keep parts of it but failing to understand the clear teaching that, “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10)*
- *There is no such thing as “good enough” in the Mosaic Law for unless one keeps every jot and tittle of the Law – the least and smallest detail, they are guilty of breaking the entire Law and will be under the full weight of the guilt and condemnation of the Law.*
- *The Law demands perfection.*
- *The Mosaic Law not only regulates the moral conduct but every detail from each animal sacrifice which had to be made at the Temple in Jerusalem to every ceremonial obligation.*

- *But some may protest “but there is no Temple in Jerusalem.” Exactly! There is no way of even attempting to keep the Mosaic Law. After Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law, the Temple was destroyed a few decades later as a sign to the unbelieving Jews that the way to God through the Mosaic Law was closed.*

1 Timothy 1:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully,

⁹knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

¹⁰for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,

- *“But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully” – The Law is not bad but in fact it is good but only if we use it “lawfully” which means for its intended purpose.*
- *“knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate” – The Law was never meant for those who were living righteously but for those who were ungodly.*
- *The Law was not created to take unrighteous people and through the keeping of the Law to make them righteous but to point out their unrighteousness.*

Romans 7:12–13 (NKJV)

¹²Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

¹³Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.

- *The purpose of the Law was to reveal the true nature and depravity of sin, “But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.”*
- *On the surface that may not sound like a wonderful thing but the Law was essential for us to come to a full realization of our lost and hopeless state so that we could turn to Christ to receive salvation and righteousness by faith.*
- *If one takes heed to what the Law reveals to them about their lost and sinful condition then they will see the Law as their friend, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” (Proverb 27:6)*
- *However, if someone fails to heed what the Law says to them then it will become their judge to condemn them for their unrighteousness even as Jesus said, “He*

who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.” (John 12:48)

Galatians 3:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

²⁵But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

- *The Law was created to be our tutor, not to teach us how to live righteously, but to lead us to the One who would make us righteous through His own sacrifice and His righteousness.*
- *The Law does not reward good behaviour but only punishes bad behaviour and those who transgress the Law for, “the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward.” (Hebrews 2:2)*

Romans 3:9 (NKJV)

⁹What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

- *“Are we better than they? Not at all” - The Law makes a level playing field where we come to the realization that we are all lost sinners without hope so that no one is better and no one is worse but all are in need of salvation.*
- *This crucifies elitism and pride for we all come to Christ the same way - totally helpless and hopeless sinners.*

Galatians 3:22 (NKJV)

²²But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

²³But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

- *“the Scripture has confined all under sin” and “kept under guard by the Law” – The Greek word for “confined” means to “imprison, enclose, to restrict.”*
- *The purpose of being kept under guard by the Law is two fold:*
- *First, the Law revealed that because of sin we were not free but were sinners and transgressors and like a condemned man waiting in a prison cell until he would be called to stand before the judge to receive his sentence.*
- *Second, the Law actually puts boundaries to the extent that unrighteousness, sin, and rebellion can reign on the earth so that mankind would not be wiped*

out until the time Christ would come and save those who choose to put their faith in Him.

Hebrews 10:28 (NKJV)

²⁸Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

- *The Law was not given in order to provide us with mercy because “anyone who rejected Moses’ law died without mercy” but the Law was given to lead us to the One who would pour out His mercy and grace upon us.*
- *The Law functions in only one of two ways depending upon our response: either the person chooses to hear what the Law says about their lost and sinful state and then allows the Law to lead them to the Messiah for salvation or the Law will bring them into judgment and condemnation without mercy if they refuse.*
- *God chose the tribe of the Levites to be the priests of the Mosaic Covenant.*
- *Why did God choose the Levites of all the tribes of Israel to be the ones who ministered before Him and carried out the duties of the Mosaic Law?*
- *Some may speculate it may be because they were the most dedicated to serve God or that they were merciful and compassionate to minister to the needs of the people.*
- *However, the Bible paints an entirely different picture.*
- *The story of the priestly calling on the tribe of Levi begins back in Genesis 34.*

Genesis 34:1–7 (NKJV)

¹Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

²And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her.

³His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman.

⁴So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, “Get me this young woman as a wife.”

⁵And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob held his peace until they came.

⁶Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him.

⁷And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done.

Genesis 34:13–19 (NKJV)

¹³But the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, and spoke deceitfully, because he had defiled Dinah their sister.

¹⁴And they said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a reproach to us.

¹⁵But on this condition we will consent to you: If you will become as we are, if every male of you is circumcised,

¹⁶then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

¹⁷But if you will not heed us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone."

¹⁸And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem, Hamor's son.

¹⁹So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. He was more honorable than all the household of his father.

Genesis 34:24–31 (NKJV)

²⁴And all who went out of the gate of his city heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

²⁵Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males.

²⁶And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out.

²⁷The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled.

²⁸They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what was in the city and what was in the field,

²⁹and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that was in the houses.

³⁰Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I."

³¹But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"

- *The characteristic that Levi possessed and by which he made his decisions was "an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" in other words justice without mercy.*
- *After Jacob expressed his utter dismay at the slaughter of all the men in the city that belonged to Shechem's father, Levi's response was an unflinching, "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"*

- *Shechem tried to make amends with Jacob and his sons by not only fully complying with their request that he be circumcised but he persuaded every man in their city to do the same.*
- **“So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob’s daughter. He was more honorable than all the household of his father.” – Even though Shechem is described as “more honorable than all the household of his father” this did not spare him the wrath of Levi nor the consequence for defiling Levi’s sister Dinah.**
- *The Law does not measure in a balance those things we have done honourable against our transgressions but simply and justly brings to bear the full weight of the penalty of our sins.*
- **“Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males.” – It is also significant to note that the reason Shechem and all the men of the city could not defend themselves against Levi and Simeon is because they were in severe pain do to being recently circumcised. Paul speaks about the relationship between the Law and circumcision, “And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.” (Galatians 5:3)**

Genesis 49:5–7 (NKJV)

⁵“Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place.
⁶Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly;
 For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.
⁷Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel.

- *Jacob prophesied over Simeon and Levi regarding their future role in Israel, “I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel” and the Levites as the priests were given no land under Moses but were scattered through out the entire land to minister to the people of Israel.*
- *But how does Jacob describe the ministry of Simeon and Levi? “Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place” and “For in their anger they slew a man” and “their wrath for it is cruel.”*
- *Jacob, who lived before the Law and thus was not under the Law, does not seek to be under the ministry of Levi saying, “Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly” for he knew he had failed many times and if he were to be judged by the Law all that would await him would be certain doom and condemnation.*

Exodus 32:25–29 (NKJV)

²⁵Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies),

²⁶then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, “Whoever is on the LORD’s side—come to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.

²⁷And he said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.’ ”

²⁸So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.

²⁹Then Moses said, “Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother.”

- “Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother.” - *The things that stood out about the Levites was their unrestrained zeal to bring judgment upon all those who transgressed the Law as can be seen in Exodus 32 after the people had sinned by worshipping the golden calf.*
- *The Levites did not even show mercy to their own sons and brothers.*
- *Paul addresses those in the Galatian church who were seeking to keep the Law by pointing out to them what it really means to be under the Law when he says, “Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?” (Galatians 4:21)*
- *The Law speaks of justice without mercy.*

Galatians 3:10–13 (NKJV)

¹⁰For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.”

- *The Mosaic Law deals with judgment even as Jacob prophesied over Levi, “Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel!”*

¹¹But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”

¹²Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”

- *But then Paul gives the contrast of the New Covenant where we do not try to be justified by the works of the Law but by faith in Jesus Christ.*

¹³Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”)

- *The wonderful contrast between the Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant is that under the Mosaic Covenant all those who broke the Law received the curse but under the New Covenant, Christ became accursed for us so that all who believe in Him should not only be freed from the curse but receive the blessing of His righteousness.*

Genesis 49:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸“Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s children shall bow down before you.

⁹Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?

¹⁰The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

- *Immediately after Jacob prophesies over Simeon and Levi and he turns to Judah and speaks forth a wonderful Messianic prophesy looking forward with joy and expectation to Jesus Christ with the words, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.”*
- *Even as the Mosaic Covenant had a priesthood and laws so must the New Covenant have a priesthood and laws.*

Hebrews 7:11–14 (NKJV)

¹¹Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?

¹²For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.

¹³For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.

¹⁴For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.

- *Jesus Christ as our High Priest of the New Covenant comes from the tribe of Judah and not of Levi.*
- *Levi means “to be joined; attached to” and thus the Mosaic Covenant caused those who failed to keep the Law to be bound and kept under judgment.*
- *Judah means, “praise” speaking about the freedom and joy we have in Christ under the New Covenant that was purchased for us by His own blood.*

- *If the New Covenant has a new priesthood then it must also have new laws.*

James 2:12–13 (NKJV)

¹²So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.

¹³For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

- *We have received the New Covenant and with it the law of liberty by which Christ has set us free from judgment to receive His mercy.*

Romans 6:14 (TNIV)

¹⁴For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

- *Not only do we receive mercy through the New Covenant in Christ so that we are not under condemnation and judgment but we also are recipients of His grace so that we have the power to live a victorious, holy and fruitful life for the glory of God.*

Romans 8:4–6 (NKJV)

⁴that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

⁶For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

- *When someone is under the Mosaic Covenant and the Law they focus on sin which actually causes the sinful nature to rise up and bring forth death.*
- *When someone is under the New Covenant it causes them to be God conscious as they think upon all that God has done for them.*
- *When we study the Old Testament we can understand what we deserved and what Christ saved us from so that we can set our minds on Christ. This results in not only thankfulness but fills us with appreciation.*

Matthew 22:36–40 (NKJV)

³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

³⁷Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’

³⁸This is the first and great commandment.

³⁹And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

- *Trying harder does not give us freedom but it just produces exhaustion and a sin conscious life.*
- *Loving God and others is the commandment that motivates us and produces delight in our hearts so we do not serve God with heaviness but joy and anticipation.*
- *Christians who have cultivated a deep love and appreciate for all that God has done for them through Jesus Christ will live a pure life because they want to delight His heart.*