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THE GIVING OF THE LAW

THE CROSS OF CALVARY

The Law and the Gospel

By C. M. Snow

Perfect Harmony

God's work is not self-destructive. Free salvation does not put a license on sin. Therefore the gospel does not abolish the law. The law of God came into the world for a definite purpose—that man might know the character of God and the principles that underlie his government. There must be the utmost harmony between the character of God, the law of God, and those who are accounted worthy of eternal life. "We shall be like him," says the apostle John, "for we shall see him as he is." When the universe is freed from the disease of sin, there will be one unbroken harmony of life and character through all the realm of God. The apostle says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation." Sin made salvation necessary. "Sin is the transgression of the law." That salvation which the gospel brings to light is salvation from sin and its consequences—death. The necessity of salvation proves the existence of sin; and the existence of sin proves the existence of the law, for "sin is the transgression of the law."

The Law and the Gospel Must Stand or Fall Together

If, then, we assert the abolition of the law because of the existence of the gospel, we take away the very necessity for the existence of the gospel. If the law is abolished, there is no sin, for "sin is not imputed where there is no law." If there is no sin, there is no need of salvation, no need of a Saviour, no need of a gospel. Take the law of God out of this world, and God could not condemn any man for any act he might do. There would be no sin then, for we cannot transgress a law that does not exist. There would be no salvation then, for we cannot be saved from a condition that does not exist. There would be no gospel then, for God will never proclaim the "good news" of a salvation for which there is no need.

The Existence of Sin Proves That the Moral Law Is Binding

The Word declares, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Again: "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The Bible, in both the Old and the New Testament, recognizes the presence of sin in the earth. It must therefore recognize the existence of the law of which sin is the transgression. As the forgiveness of our sins depends upon the confession of our sins, and as the fact of our being sinners proves the existence of the law of God, we see at once that the forgiveness of our sins depends upon our recognition of the existence of the law of God.

A Perfect Law

If that law were abrogated by the death of Christ while we still live in him, then we should be driven to the conclusion that the trouble was with the law rather than with us who had broken it. It would mean that the law was imperfect or unjust, or both, and that the only way to get rid of it and save our lives was for Christ to be slain under its condemnation, that he might thereby, in some unexplainable way, remove the faulty code from the realm of God.

Christ Did Not Come to Abolish a Holy Law

But what is the word of Inspiration in reference thereto? "So that the law, is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and

good." Rom. 7:12. A. R. V. James calls it "the perfect law, the law of liberty." James 1:25. Did Christ come to the world to abolish that which was holy and righteous and good and perfect?—Nay, verily; for those are the very qualities of his own character. Because his character was in perfect harmony with that law, he was holy and righteous and good and perfect. The law of God being the expression of his character, God could not abolish it without abolishing his own attributes. The conflict in heaven never was between righteousness and righteousness,—between perfection and perfection,—but between righteousness and unrighteousness, perfection and imperfection. So Christ says: "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill." Matt. 5:17. On the other hand, we read, "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." If he abolished the law, the inevitable conclusion would be that the law was of iniquitous origin, a part of the works of the devil. Thus we see what dishonor it brings upon God to claim the abolition of his law through the mediatorial work of Christ. The devil had sinned and caused many other of the angels to sin. When the angels sinned, they transgressed the law of God. "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, . . . the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment." 2 Peter 2:4-9. For God to abolish the law which they transgressed would be to acknowledge that the law and the giver of the law were in the wrong, and Satan and all his angels were in the right. It would palliate the sin, excuse the sinner, and declare the law imperfect and unjust. Satan would indeed have cause to exult if that were done. It would be the proof of all his accusations against God and his government. As long as men are being judged righteous or unrighteous, worthy of eternal life or meriting eternal death, God cannot abolish the law, for that is his only standard of righteousness.

Christ a Commandment Keeper

Christ declares of himself: "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." John 15:10. Because he did that, the Word calls him "Jesus Christ the righteous." Again: "Be ye holy; for I am holy." What is the test of holiness?—The law, there is no other. "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect." Matt. 5:48. The standard of perfection is the law—"Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty." Looking into that law, we see revealed the defects of our character. If we are faulty, it reflects our faults; if righteous, it witnesses to that righteousness.

The Law Points Out Our Sins

But that law, perfect as perfection itself, cannot confer perfection upon us. It can reveal it, or the lack of it, in us; but the very test of its perfection is that it can reveal our every imperfection. The remedy for our imperfection is not in the law, but in something outside of the law. It is found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We cannot be saved in our sins—but we can be saved. Jesus Christ was "manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 9:26. "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

Christ Takes Away Our Sins

That righteousness, that perfection in the eye of the law, comes to us through Christ; and the "good news" of that fact is the gospel of Jesus

Christ. When there was no power in ourselves to keep us from sin, no power in us to save us from the consequences of sins already committed, no power in us to achieve righteousness by the deeds we might do, then came the gospel of Christ, "the power of God unto salvation." Then came Christ, bearing "our sins in his own body on the tree;" "made . . . sin for us," that he might pay the penalty of the broken law for us, and confer upon us an inheritance in the kingdom of righteousness.

The Law Fulfilled in Christ

Thus we see that there is no conflict between the law and the gospel. The one reveals sin, the other reveals the remedy. The one reveals the character of God, the other reveals the only arrangement whereby we can have bestowed upon us the likeness of that character. The one reveals heaven's rule of government, the other reveals the only arrangement God has made to counteract the effect of Satan's rebellion against that government. Thus do the two work together, and thus will they continue to work together until sin and all the results of sin have been eradicated from the universe. Then will the gospel cease, for salvation will have been completed; but the law will never cease. "The sum of thy word is truth; and every one of thy righteous ordinances endureth forever." Ps. 119:160.

A BIBLE STUDY

The Law of God

1. WHEN God brought his people out of Egypt, how did he republish his law?
"And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone." Deut. 4:12, 13. See also Neh. 9:13, 14.
2. Where are the ten commandments recorded?
In Ex. 20:2-17.
3. How comprehensive are these commandments?
"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13.

the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Ps. 40:7, 8. See Heb. 10:5, 7.

8. Who did he say would enter the kingdom of heaven?

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:21.

9. What did he say of those who should break one of God's commandments, or should teach men to do so?

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:19, first part.

10. Who did he say would be called great in the kingdom?

"But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom." Same verse, last part.

11. For what did Christ reprove the Pharisees?

"But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" Matt. 15:3.

12. In consequence of this, what value did Christ place upon their worship?

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Verse 9.

The Apostles' Teaching

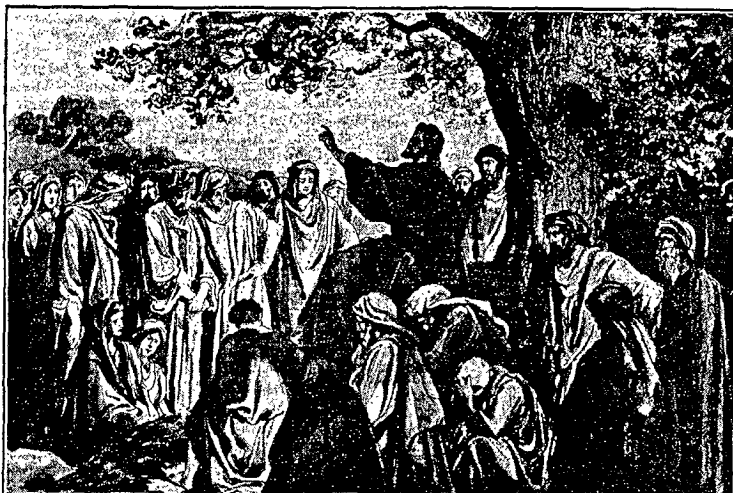
13. What is sin declared to be?
"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

14. By what is the knowledge of sin?
"For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20. See Rom. 7:7.

15. How many of the commandments is it necessary to break in order to become a transgressor of the law?

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." James 2:10, 11.

NOTE.—This shows that the ten commandments are a complete whole, and together constitute but one law. Like a chain of ten links, all are inseparably connected. If one link is broken, the chain is broken.



"THINK NOT THAT I AM COME TO DESTROY THE LAW OR THE PROPHETS."—JESUS

4. What inspired tribute is paid to the law of God?

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Ps. 19:7, 8.

5. What blessing does the psalmist say attends the keeping of God's commandments?

"Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." Verse 11.

Christ's Teaching Concerning the Law

6. What did Christ state as a condition of entering into life?

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matt. 19:17.

7. When Christ came to this earth, what was his attitude toward God's will, or law?

"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of

16. What will be the standard in the judgment?
"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." Verse 12.

17. How do those with renewed hearts and minds regard the commandments of God?

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3.

18. What is said of one who professes to know the Lord, but does not keep his commandments?

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John 2:4.

19. What promise is made to the willing and obedient?

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." Isa. 1:19.

The Testimony of the Psalmist

20. What is said of those who love God's law?
"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Ps. 119:165.

21. What is another blessing attending the keeping of God's commandments?

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments." Ps. 111:10.

22. In what does the man delight whom the psalmist describes as blessed?

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Ps. 1:1, 2. See Rom. 7:22.

The Perpetuity of the Law

23. What is said of the stability of God's character?

"For I am the Lord, I change not." Mal. 3:6.

24. How enduring are his commandments?

"The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness." Ps. 111:7, 8.

25. Did Christ come to abolish or to destroy the law?

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matt. 5:17.

NOTE.—"The moral law contained in the ten commandments, and enforced by the prophets, did not take away. It was not the design of his coming to revoke any part of this. . . . Every part of the law must remain in force upon all mankind and in all ages, as not depending either on time or place, or any other circumstance liable to change, but on the nature of God, and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other."—John Wesley, in his "Sermons," Vol. I, No. 25, pages 221, 222.

26. When used with reference to prophecy, what does the word *fulfill* mean?

To fill up; to accomplish; to bring to pass; as, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet." Matt. 4:14.

27. What does it mean when used with reference to law?

To perform, to keep, or to act in accordance with; as, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Gal. 6:2. See also Matt. 3:15; James 2:8, 9.

28. How did Christ treat his Father's commandments?

"I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." John 15:10.

The Relation of Faith to Commandment Keeping

29. Does faith in God make void the law?

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31.

30. What, more than all else, proves the perpetuity and immutability of the law of God?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "Christ died for our sins." 1 Cor. 15:3.

NOTE.—Could the law have been abolished, and sin been disposed of in this way, Christ need not have come and died for our sins. The gift of Christ, therefore, more than all else, proves the immutability of the law of God. Christ must come and die, and satisfy the claims of the law, or the world must perish. The law could not give way. Says Spurgeon in his sermon on "The Perpetuity of the Law of God," "Our Lord Jesus Christ gave a greater vindication of the law by dying because it had been broken, than all the lost can ever give by their miseries." The fact that the law is to be the standard in the judgment is another proof of its enduring nature. See Eccl. 12:13, 14; James 2:8-12.

31. What relation does a justified person sustain to the law?

"For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Rom. 2:13.

32. By what may we know that we have passed from death unto life?

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John 3:14.

33. And how may we know that we love the brethren?

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments." 1 John 5:2.

34. What is the love of God?

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." Verse 3.

35. How are those described who will be prepared for the coming of Christ?

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

The Moral and Ceremonial Laws

36. By whom was the ten-commandment law proclaimed?

"And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone." Deut. 4:12, 13.

The Law of God

I

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI

Thou shalt not kill.

VII

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII

Thou shalt not steal.

IX

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

37. How was the ceremonial law made known to Israel?

"And the Lord called unto Moses, . . . saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering, etc. Lev. 1:1, 2. "This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings; which the Lord commanded Moses in Mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the Lord, in the wilderness of Sinai." Lev. 7:37, 38.

38. Were the ten commandments a distinct and complete law by themselves?

"These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me." Deut. 5:22. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written." Ex. 24:12.

39. Was the ceremonial law a complete law in itself?

"The law of commandments contained in ordinances." Eph. 2:15.

40. On what did God write the ten commandments?

"And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone." Deut. 4:13.

41. In what were the laws or commandments respecting sacrifices and burnt offerings written?

"And they removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses." 2 Chron. 35:12.

42. Where were the ten commandments placed?

"And he took and put the testimony into the ark, . . . and put the mercy seat above upon the ark." Ex. 40:20.

43. Where did Moses command the Levites to put the book of the law which he had written?

"Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God." Deut. 31:25, 26.

44. What is the nature of the moral law?

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Ps. 19:7. "For we know that the law is spiritual." Rom. 7:14.

45. Could the offerings commanded by the ceremonial law satisfy or make perfect the conscience of the believer?

"Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." Heb. 9:9.

The Ceremonial Law Abolished by Christ

46. How did Christ's death affect the ceremonial law?

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Col. 2:14. "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances." Eph. 2:15.

47. Why was the ceremonial law taken away?

"For there is a disannulling of a foregoing commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness (for the law made nothing perfect), and a bringing in thereupon of a better hope, through which we draw nigh unto God." Heb. 7:18, 19, R. V.

48. What miraculous event occurred at the death of Christ signifying that the sacrificial system was forever at an end?

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Matt. 27:50, 51.

49. In what words had the prophet Daniel foretold this?

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Dan. 9:27.

50. How enduring is the moral law?

"Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever." Ps. 119:152.

The Relation of the Law to the Gospel

51. What is one of the uses of the law?

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20.

52. In thus making known sin, and the consequent need of a Saviour, what part does the law act?

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Gal. 3:24.

53. What is the gospel declared to be?

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. 1:16.

54. What is the significance of the name bestowed by the angel upon the Saviour before his birth?

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21.

55. In whom is this power to save from sin revealed?

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks

foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. 1:23, 24.

56. What was foretold concerning Christ's attitude toward the law of God?

"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is written within my heart." Ps. 40:7, 8.

Faith and the Law

57. Does the faith which brings righteousness abolish the law?

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31.

NOTE.—The law reveals the perfection of character required, and so gives a knowledge of sin; but it is powerless to confer the character demanded. In the gospel, the law, first written in the heart of Christ, becomes "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," and is thus transferred to the heart of the believer, in whose heart Christ dwells by faith. Thus the new covenant promise is fulfilled that the law shall be written in the heart. This is the genuine experience of righteousness by faith,—a righteousness which is witnessed by the law, and revealed in the life in harmony with the law. The gospel is thus seen to be the provision for restoring the law to its place in the heart and life of the one who believes on Christ and accepts his mediatorial work. Such faith, instead of making void the law, establishes it in the heart of the believer. The gospel is not against the law, therefore, but upholds, maintains, and presents the law to us in Christ.

58. What did Christ take away when he died upon the cross?

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

59. What has Christ abolished by his death and resurrection?

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10.

60. What scripture shows that God's remnant people will have a right conception of the proper relation between the law of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ?

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

The Witness of the Law and the Prophets

The Jewish Scriptures to which Christ appealed consisted of the law and the prophets. Both bore witness to him as the Messiah. Both prepared his way. Both were fulfilled by him.

The moral law revealed the disease for which he brought the remedy. Its precepts were designed to convince of sin. On the other hand, the ceremonial law was suited to typify the remedy for sin. It contained a shadow of the "good things" of the gospel. It pictured the way of salvation.

What the ceremonial law obscurely typified, the prophets more plainly predicted. Both pointed to the coming Messiah. The daily sacrifices of the one and the successive utterances of the other, pointed to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The fulfillment of the moral law, the ceremonial law, and the prophets, in the character and work of Christ, is a threefold cord of evidence which cannot be broken. He, and he alone, perfectly fulfilled the precepts of the moral law. He, and he alone, fulfilled the types of the ceremonial law. He, and he alone, fulfilled the predictions of the prophets. By his fulfillment of the moral law he became a law. He translated its written precepts into living deeds. With his death the ceremonial system came to an end.—"Creation Centered in Christ," H. Grattan Guinness, D. D., London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1896, pages 31, 32.

THE TWO LAWS CONTRASTED

THE MORAL LAW

Is called the "royal law." James 2:8.

Was spoken by God. Deut. 4:12, 13.

Was written by God on tables of stone. Ex. 24:12.

Was written "with the finger of God." Ex. 31:18.

Was placed in the ark. Ex. 40:20; 1 Kings 8:9; Heb. 9:4.

Is "perfect." Ps. 19:7.

Is to "stand fast forever." Ps. 111:7, 8.

Was not destroyed by Christ. Matt. 5:17.

Was to be magnified by Christ. Isa. 52:21.

Gives knowledge of sin. Rom. 3:20; 7:7.

THE CEREMONIAL LAW

Is called "the law . . . contained in ordinances." Eph. 2:15.

Was spoken by Moses. Lev. 1:1-3.

Was "the handwriting of ordinances." Col. 2:14.

Was written by Moses in a book. 2 Chron. 35:12.

Was placed in the side of the ark. Deut. 31:24-26.

"Made nothing perfect." Heb. 7:19.

Was nailed to the cross. Col. 2:14.

Was abolished by Christ. Eph. 2:15.

Was taken out of the way by Christ. Col. 2:14.

Was instituted in consequence of sin. Leviticus 3-7.

The Perpetuity of the Law of God

By C. H. Spurgeon

"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. 5:18.

I gather from our text two things upon which I shall speak at this time. The first is that the law of God is perpetual: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." The meaning is that even in the least point it must abide till all be fulfilled. Secondly, we perceive that the law must be fulfilled: Not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. He who came to bring in the gospel dispensation here asserts that he has not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.

PART I

The Law Perpetual

First, the law of God must be perpetual. There is no abrogation of it, nor amendment of it. It is not to be toned down or adjusted to our fallen condition; but every one of the Lord's righteous judgments abideth forever. I would urge three reasons which will establish this teaching.

In the first place, our Lord Jesus declares that he did not come to abolish it. His words are most express: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." And Paul tells us with regard to the gospel, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:31. The gospel is the means of the firm establishment and vindication of the law of God.

Jesus Came to Explain It

Jesus did not come to change the law, but he came to explain it, and that very fact shows that it remains; for there is no need to explain that which is abrogated. Upon one particular point in which there happened to be a little ceremonialism involved, namely, the keeping of the Sabbath, our Lord enlarged, and showed that the Jewish idea was not the true one. The Pharisees forbade even the doing of works of necessity and mercy, such as rubbing ears of corn to satisfy hunger, and healing the sick. Our Lord Jesus showed that it was not at all according to the mind of God to forbid these things. In straining over the letter, and carrying an outward observance to excess, they had missed the spirit of the Sabbath law, which suggested works of piety such as truly hallow the day. He showed that—

Sabbatic Rest

was not mere inaction, and he said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He pointed to the priests who labored hard at offering sacrifices, and said of them: "The priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless." They were doing divine service, and were within the law. To meet the popular error he took care to do some of his grandest miracles upon the Sabbath day; and though this excited great wrath against him, as if he were a law breaker, yet he did it on purpose that they might see that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, and that it was meant to be a day for doing that which honors God and blesses men. O that men knew how to keep the spiritual Sabbath by ceasing from all servile work, and from all work done for self!

The Rest of Faith

is the true Sabbath, and the service of God is the most acceptable hallowing of the day. O that the day were wholly spent in serving God and doing good! The sum of our Lord's teaching was that works of necessity, works of mercy, and works of piety are lawful on the Sabbath. He did explain the law in that point and in others, yet the explanation did not alter the command, but only removed the rust of tradition which had settled upon it. By thus explaining the law he confirmed it; he could not have meant to abolish it, or he would not have needed to expound it.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in addition to explaining the law and pointing out its spiritual character, also unveiled—

Its Living Essence;

for when one asked him, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In other words, he has told us, All the law is fulfilled in this—

"Thou Shalt Love."

There is the pith and marrow of it. Does any man say to me, "You see, then, instead of the ten commandments, we have received the two commandments, and these are much easier?" I answer that this reading of the law is not in the least easier. Such a remark implies a want of thought and experience. Those two precepts comprehend the ten at their fullest extent, and cannot be regarded as the essence of a jot or tittle of them. Whatever difficulties surround the ten commands are equally found in the two, which are their sum and substance. If you love God with all your heart, you must keep the first table; and if you love your neighbor as yourself, you must keep the second table. If any suppose that the law of love is an adaptation of the moral law to man's fallen condition,

they greatly err. I can only say that the supposed adaptation is no more adapted to us than the original law. If there could be conceived to be any difference in difficulty, it might be easier to keep the ten than the two; for if we go no deeper than the letter, the two are more exacting, since they deal with the—

Heart and Soul and Mind.

The ten commands mean all that the two express; but if we forget this, and look only at the wording of them, I say it is harder for a man to

the Saviour went to the tree, and there bore our sins, and purged them once for all. He was crushed beneath the load of our guilt, and cried, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and at last, when he had borne—

"All that incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, but none to spare,"

he bowed his head and said, "It is finished." Our Lord Jesus Christ gave a greater vindication to the law by dying, because it had been broken, than all the lost can ever give by their miseries. He has borne all that was due from his people, and the law is defrauded of nothing. By his death he has vindicated the honor of God's moral government, and made it just for him to be merciful. When—



C. H. SPURGEON

love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength, and his neighbor as himself, than it would be merely to abstain from killing, stealing, and false witness. Christ has not, therefore, abrogated or at all moderated the law to meet our helplessness; he has left it in all its sublime perfection, as it always must be left; and he has pointed out how deep are its foundations, how elevated are its heights, how measureless are its length and breadth. Like the laws of the Medes and the Persians, God's commands cannot be altered; we are saved by another method.

The Law Lived by Christ

To show that he never meant to abrogate the law, our Lord Jesus has embodied all its commands in his own life. In his own person there was a nature which was perfectly conformed to the law of God; and as was his nature such was his life. He could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" and again, "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." He was so perfect and pure, so infinitely good, and so complete in his agreement and communion with the Father, that he in all things carried out the Father's will. The Father said of him, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Point out, if you possibly can, any way in which Christ has violated the law, or left it unfulfilled. There was never an unclean thought or rebellious desire in his soul; he had nothing to regret or to retract. He was thrice tempted in the wilderness, and the enemy had the impertinence even to suggest idolatry, but he instantly overthrew the adversary. The prince of this world came to him, but he found nothing in him.

"My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in thy Word;
But in thy life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters."

Once more, that the Master did not come to alter the law is clear, because after having embodied it in his life, he willingly gave himself up to bear its penalty, though he had never broken it, bearing the penalty for us, even as it is written, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. If the law had demanded more of us than it ought to have done, would the Lord Jesus have rendered to it the penalty which resulted from its too severe demands? I am sure he would not. But because the law asked only what it ought to ask, namely,—

Perfect Obedience,

and exacted of the transgressor only what it ought to exact, namely, death as the penalty for sin,—death under divine wrath,—therefore

The Lawgiver Himself Submits to the Law.

when the Sovereign himself bears the extreme penalty of that law, then is the justice of God set upon such a glorious high throne that all admiring worlds must wonder at it. If therefore it is clearly proved that Jesus was obedient to the law, even to the extent of death, he certainly did not come to abolish or abrogate it. And if he did not remove it, who can do so? If he declares that he came to establish it, who shall overthrow it?

The Law Perpetual by Nature

But, secondly, the law of God must be perpetual from its very nature; for does it not strike you the moment you think of it that right must always be right, truth must always be truth, and purity must always be purity? Before the ten commandments were published at Sinai, there was still that same law of right and wrong laid upon men by the necessity of their being God's creatures.

Right Was Always Right

before a single command had been committed to words. When Adam was in the garden, it was always right that he should love his Maker, and it would always have been wrong that he should have been at cross-purposes with his God; and it does not matter what happens in this world, or what changes take place in the universe, it never can be right to lie, or to commit adultery, or murder, or theft, or to worship an idol god. I will not say that the principles of right and wrong are as absolutely self-existent as God, but I do say that I cannot grasp the idea of God himself as existing apart from his being always holy and always true; so that the very idea of right and wrong seems to me to be necessarily permanent, and cannot possibly be shifted. You cannot bring right down to a lower level; it must be where it always is. Right is right eternally, and cannot be wrong. You cannot lift up wrong and make it somewhat right; it must be wrong while the world standeth. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not the smallest letter or accent of the moral law can possibly change. In spirit the law is eternal.

It Does Not Ask Too Much

The law of God is no more than God might most righteously ask of us. If God were about to give us a more tolerant law, it would be an admission on his part that he asked too much at first. Can that be supposed? Was there, after all, some justification for the statement of the wicked and slothful servant when he said, "I feared thee, because thou art an austere man"? It cannot be. For God to alter his law would be an admission that he made a mistake at first, that he put poor, imperfect men (we are often hearing that said) under too rigorous a régime, and therefore he is now prepared to abate his claims, and make them more reasonable.

A Specious but False Doctrine

It has been said that man's moral inability to keep the perfect law exempts him from the duty of doing so. This is very specious, but it is utterly false. Man's inability is not of the kind which removes responsibility; it is moral, not physical. Never fall into the error that moral inability will be an excuse for sin. What! when a man becomes such a liar that he cannot speak the truth, is he thereby exempted from the duty of truthfulness? If your servant owes you a day's labor, is he free from the duty because he has made himself so drunk that he cannot serve you? Is a man freed from a debt by the fact that he has squandered the money, and therefore cannot pay it? Is a lustful man free to indulge his passions because he cannot understand the beauty of chastity? This is dangerous doctrine. The law is a just one, and man is bound

by it, though sin has rendered him incapable of doing so.

I should like to ask any brother who thinks that God has put us under an altered rule: Which particular part of the law is it that God has relaxed?

Which Precept

do you feel free to break? Which law is it that God has exempted you from? That law of worshipping him only? Do you propose to have another god? Do you intend to make graven images? The fact is that when we come to detail, we cannot afford to lose a single link of this wonderful golden chain, which is perfect in every part as well as perfect as a whole. The law is—

Absolutely Complete

and you can neither add to it nor take from it. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." If, then, no part of it can be taken down, it must stand, and stand forever.

A third reason I will give why the law must be perpetual is that to suppose it altered is most dangerous. To take away from the law its perpetuity is, first of all, to take away from it its power to convince of sin. Is it so that I, being an imperfect creature, am not expected to keep a perfect law? Then it follows that I do not sin when I break the law; and if all that is required of me is that I am to do according to the best of my knowledge and ability, then I have—

A Very Convenient Rule Indeed,

and most men will take care to adjust it so as to give themselves as much latitude as possible. By removing the law you have done away with sin; for sin is the transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression. When you have done away with sin, you may as well have done away with the Saviour and with salvation; for they are by no means needless. When you have reduced sin to a minimum, what need is there of that great and glorious salvation which Jesus Christ has come to bring into the world? Brethren, we must have none of this; it is evidently a way of mischief.

By lowering the law you weaken its power in the hands of God as a convicer of sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin."

It Is the Looking-Glass

which shows us our spots, and that is a most useful thing, though nothing but the gospel can wash them away.

It is only a pure and perfect law that the holy Spirit can use in order to show to us our depravity and sinfulness. Lower the law, and you dim the light by which man perceives his guilt. This is a very serious loss to the sinner, rather than a gain; for it lessens the likelihood of his conviction and conversion.

You have also taken away from the law its power to shut us up to the faith of Christ.

What Is the Law of God For?

For us to keep in order to be saved by it?—Not at all. It is sent in order to show us that we cannot be saved by works, and to shut us up to be saved by grace. But if you make out that the law is altered so that a man can keep it, you have left him his old legal hope, and he is sure to cling to it. You need a perfect law that shuts man right up to—

Hopelessness Apart From Jesus,

that puts him into an iron cage, and locks him up, and offers him no escape but by faith in Jesus; then he begins to cry, "Lord, save me by grace, for I perceive that I cannot be saved by my own works." This is how Paul describes it to the Galatians: "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was—

Our Schoolmaster

to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." I say you have deprived the gospel of its slightest auxiliary when you have set aside the law. You have taken away from it the schoolmaster that is to bring men to Christ. No; it must stand, and stand in all its terrors, to drive men away from self-righteousness, and constrain them to fly to Christ. They will never accept grace till they tremble before a just and holy law. Therefore the law serves a most necessary and blessed purpose, and it must not be removed from its place.

To alter the law is to leave us without any law at all. A sliding scale of duty is—

An Immoral Invention,

fatal to the principles of law. If each man is to be accepted because he does his best, we are all doing our best. Is there anybody that is not? If we take their words for it, all our fellow men are doing as well as they can, considering their imperfect natures. Self-righteousness builds itself a nest even in the worst character. This is the man's talk: "Really, if you knew me, you would say I have been a good fellow to do as well as I have. Consider what a poor, fallen creature I am; what strong passions were born in me; what temptations to vice beset me, and you will not blame me much. After all, I dare say God is as satisfied with me as with many who are a great deal better, because I had so few advantages." Yes, you have shifted the standard, and every man will now do that which is right

in his own eyes, and claim to be doing his best. If you shift the standard pound weight or the bushel measure, you will certainly never get full weight or measurement again. There will be—

No Standard

to go by, and each man will do his best with his own pounds and bushels. If the standard be tampered with, you have taken away the foundation upon which trade is conducted; and it is the same in soul matters—abolish the best rule that ever can be, even God's own law, and there is no law left worthy of the name. What a fine opening this leaves for vanity! No wonder that man talk of perfect sanctification if the law has been lowered. There is nothing at all remarkable in our getting up to the rule if it is conveniently lowered for us. I believe I shall be perfectly sanctified when I keep God's law without omission or transgression, but not till then. If any man says that he is perfectly sanctified because he has come up to a modified law of his own, I am glad to know what he means; for I have no longer any discussion with him. I see nothing wonderful in his attainment. Sin is any want of conformity to the law of God, and until we are perfectly conformed to that law in all its spiritual length and breadth, it is idle for us to talk about perfect sanctification. No man is perfectly clean till he accepts absolute purity as the standard by which he is to be judged. So long as there is in us any coming short of the perfect law, we are not perfect. What a humbling truth this is! The law shall not pass away, but it must be fulfilled. This truth must be maintained; for if it goes, our tacklings are loosed, we cannot well strengthen the mast; the ship goes all to pieces; she becomes—

A Total Wreck.

The gospel itself would be destroyed could you destroy the law. To tamper with the law is to trifle with the gospel. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

PART II

The Law Must Be Fulfilled

I come to show, secondly, that the law must be fulfilled. I hope there are some in this place who are saying, "We cannot fulfill it." That is exactly where I want to bring you. Salvation by the works of the law must be felt to be impossible by every man who would be saved. We must learn that salvation is of grace through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord, and not by our own doings or feelings; but this is a doctrine no one will receive till he has learned the precious truth that salvation by the works of the law can never come to any man of woman born. Yet the law must be fulfilled. Many will say with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" I answer,—

The Law Is Fulfilled in Christ

and by faith we receive the fruit thereof. First, as I have already said, the law is fulfilled in the matchless sacrifice of Jesus Christ. If a man has broken a law, what does the law do with him? It says: "I must be honored. You have broken my command which was sanctioned by the penalty of death. Inasmuch as you did not honor me by obedience, but dishonored me by transgression, you must die." Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great covenant representative of his people, their second Adam, stood forward on the behalf of all who are in him, and presented himself as a victim to divine justice. Since his people were guilty of death, he, as their covenant head, came under death, in their place and stead. It was a glorious thing that such representative death was possible, and it was only so because of the original constitution of the race as springing from a common father, and placed under a single head. Inasmuch as our fall was by one Adam, it was possible for us to be—

Raised by Another Adam.

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It became possible for God, upon the principle of representation, to allow of substitution. Our first fall was not by our personal fault, but through the failure of our representative; and now in comes our second and grander representative, the Son of God, and he sets us free, not by our honoring the law, but by his doing so. He came under the law by his birth, and being found as a man loaded with the guilt of all his people, he was visited with its penalty. The law lifts its bloody ax, and it smites our glorious Head that we may go free. It is the Son of God that honors the law by dying, the just for the unjust. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." There is death demanded, and in Christ death is presented.

Life for Life Is Rendered

—an infinitely precious life instead of the poor lives of men. Jesus has died, and so the law has been fulfilled by the endurance of its penalty; and being fulfilled, its power to condemn and punish the believer has passed away. Secondly, the law has been fulfilled again for us by Christ in his life. I have already gone over this, but I want to establish you in it. Jesus Christ, as our head and representative, came into the world for the double purpose of bearing the penalty and at the same time keeping the law. One of his main designs in coming to earth was to bring in—

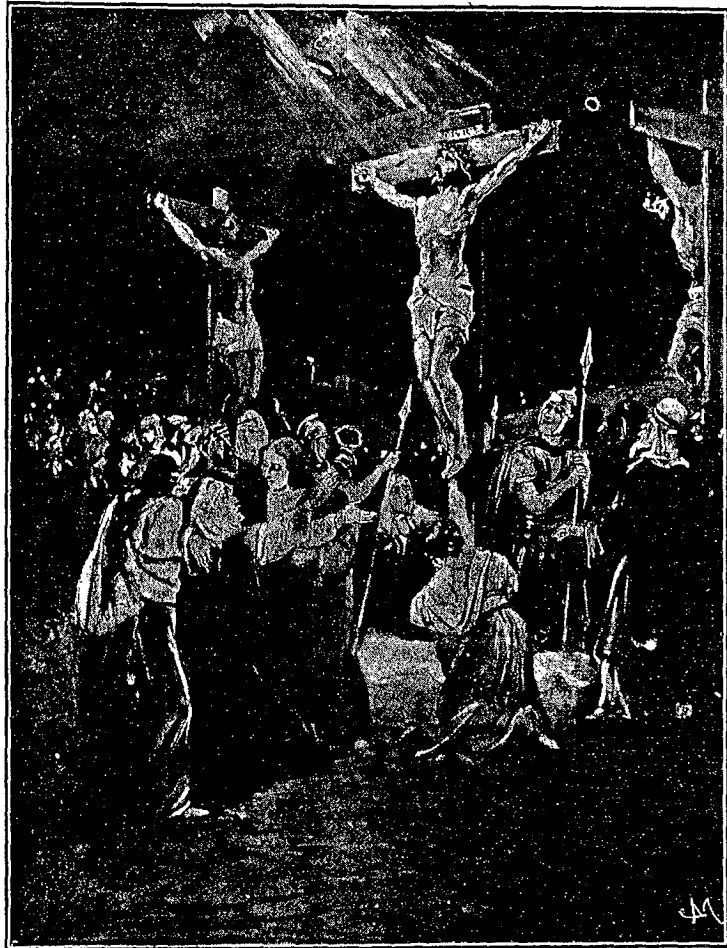
"Everlasting Righteousness."

"As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The law requires a perfect life, and he that believeth in Jesus Christ

presents to the law a perfect life, which he has made his own by faith. It is not his own life, but Christ is made of God unto us righteousness, even to us who are one with him. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." That which Jesus did is counted as though we did it, and because he was righteous—

God Sees Us in Him,

and counts us righteous upon the principle of substitution and representation. O how blessed it is to put on this robe and to wear it, and so to stand before the Most High in a better righteousness than ever his law demanded; for that demanded the perfect righteousness of a creature, but we put on the absolute righteousness of the Creator himself, and what can the law ask more? It is written, "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name wherewith he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honorable."



"DO WE THEN MAKE VOID THE LAW THROUGH FAITH? GOD FORBID: YEA, WE ESTABLISH THE LAW." ROM. 3:31

Aye, but that is not all. The law has to be—

Fulfilled in Us Personally

in a spiritual and gospel sense. "Well," say you, "but how can that be?" I reply in the words of our apostle: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," Christ has done and is doing by the Holy Spirit, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Regeneration is a work by which the law is fulfilled; for when a man is born again, there is placed in him a new nature, which loves the law of God, and is perfectly conformed thereto. The new nature which God implants in every believer at the time he is born again is incapable of sin; it cannot sin; for it is born of God.

That New Nature

is the offspring of the eternal Father; and the Spirit of God dwells in it, and with it, and strengthens it. It is light, it is purity, it is, according to the Scripture, the living and incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever. If incorruptible, it is sinless; for sin is corruption, and corrupts everything that it touches. The apostle Paul, when describing his inward conflicts, showed that he himself, his real and best self, did keep the law; for he says, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God." Rom. 7:25. He consented to the law that it was good, which showed that he was on the side of the law; and though sin that dwelt in his members led him into transgression, yet his new nature did not allow it, but hated and loathed it, and cried out against it as one in bondage. The newborn soul delights in the law of the Lord, and there is within it a quenchless life which aspires after absolute perfection, and will never rest till it pays to God perfect obedience, and comes to be like God himself.

This which is begun in regeneration is continued, and grows till it ultimately arrives at

absolute perfection. That will be seen in the world to come; and O, what a fulfillment of the law will be there! The law will admit no man to heaven till he is—

Perfectly Conformed to It,

but every believer shall be in that perfect condition. Our nature shall be refined from all its dross, and be as pure as gold. It will be our delight in heaven to be holy. There will be nothing about us then to kick against a single commandment. We shall there know in our own hearts the glory and excellency of the divine will, and our will shall run in the same channel. We shall not imagine that the precepts are rigorous; they will be our own will as truly as they are God's will. Nothing which God has commanded, however much of self-denial it requires now, will require any self-denial from us then. Holiness will be our element, our delight. Our nature will be entirely conformed to the nature and mind of God, as holiness and goodness, and then the law will be fulfilled in us, and we shall stand before God, having washed our robes

has loved us, this is the whole gospel; let us love God, this is all its moral."

Love is the sum of both the law and the gospel. It is the old command as well as the new revelation. God made man in his image, and being love himself, said, "Thou shalt love." On this divine command, in its twofold bearing, the command to love God and man, hang "all the law and the prophets." Herein is the whole of duty. Love worketh no ill, but only good; hence, "love is the fulfilling of the law." But the command to love could not produce love. An example was needed, and more than that, a motive. That motive is found joined with example and precept in the words of Jesus Christ, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

"A new commandment," new not in its nature, but in its spring, its object, its measure. This is the love that seeketh not its own; that bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things; never faileth. Amid the perishable, it proves enduring. Prophecies shall fall, knowledge shall vanish, yea, heaven and earth shall pass away, but faith, hope, and love shall remain forever; and of these three immortal graces the greatest is love, for God himself is love.

The source of love is not the hills of heaven, but the heart of God. Wherever God is, love is. . . . Love fills immensity, and inhabits eternity, and its name is holy. Love rules the universe. Love redeems the lost. In its greatness it stoops that it may raise the low. In its graces it suffers to save. Jesus Christ is but incarnate love; love which has come down from inaccessible heights, clothed with the lowly vesture of humanity. Love was his motive, love his message, love his precept, love his passion, love his reward. The magic of his might is love. The heaven to which he leads is love. Love is the law of angels. Love is the light of the New Jerusalem. Love is the old law of heaven, older than the everlasting hills, newly written in the hearts of God's redeemed. Love is the theme of the Bible; the soul of its unity; the root that bears its branches, the fruit upon its boughs. Love is the bond of the moral universe; the mighty law of gravitation which unites the beings of which it is composed; the sum of its system; the alpha of its genesis; the Omega of its goal—"Creation Centered in Christ." H. Gratian Guinness, D. D., London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1896, pages 95-97.

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