

Gleanings from the Pentateuch

Excursus:
Theology of the Law (pt 2)

Theology of the Law

Nature of the Law

1. It is an expression of God's love
2. It is the response of love to God's love

Theology of the Law

Preface:

- the conditional nature of this covenant is undeniable ("if you will obey...")
- the experience of God's blessing is conditioned on the people's obedience to the Law
- God's "blessing" is equivalent to "salvation"

Theology of the Law

Preface:

- Q: Does this covenant teach salvation through obedience to the Law?
- A: NO! The Law was never intended as a means of meriting salvation

Obedience to the Law is the response of love to God's love

Theology of the Law

Law: The Response of Love

1. The Law was given in an existing covenant relationship
 - the Law was intended for those who knew Yahweh as their God
 - the Law was given to regulate a believer's relationship with God

Theology of the Law

Law: The Response of Love

2. Obedience to the Law is the outflow of love for God, not the meriting His favor
 - the foremost command is to love the Lord with heart, soul, mind and strength...
 - this results in love for our neighbor which fulfills the whole Law

Theology of the Law

Romans 13:8-10

Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

For this, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love is therefore the fulfillment of the law.

Theology of the Law

Law: The Response of Love

3. Obedience to the Law is the *necessary* outflow of love for God

- Obedience (not perfection) is the condition for receiving God's blessing
- No obedience = no love for God = no salvation

Theology of the Law

Continuity with the New Covenant

➤ *In the New Covenant, obedience to God's law is the necessary outflow of authentic, saving faith*

Theology of the Law

Continuity with the New Covenant

- We have the "same" condition of obedience that Israel had
- Obedience is not the meriting of salvation but the evidence of saving faith

Theology of the Law

1 John 2:3-5

And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

The one who says, "I have come to know Him" and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

But whoever keeps His word, in Him the love of God has truly been perfected.

Theology of the Law

1 John 4:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.