

*How come the apostle Paul says we Christians have been released from the law to serve in the new way of the Spirit when we have never been under the law? Is Israel was a microcosm of all nations? Does this relate to the law being our tutor in which is not the same as being under it?*

Israel is Israel and the church is the church—two different people groups (Ro 11:17). Replacement theology is false (2 Pe 2:1). It is prophesied that Jerusalem will become an international city (Dan 11:23, Lk 21:24, Re 11:2).

Israel is not like other nations (Ge 49:16, 28). Christ Messiah will be glorified there (Is 49:3). After the rapture of the church, God will once again return his attention to Israel. For now, they are blinded (Ro 11:25, 26).

The believer who has passed from death to life (1 Jn 3:14) is under grace not law (e.g. keeping feasts, restriction to certain foods, etc.).<sup>1</sup> The law's purpose was to bring one to Christ (Ga 3:24). Paul kept commandments one through nine he believed; but, when he considered the tenth commandment, he realized that he fell short of God's perfect law. Men are doomed he concluded by keeping the law (Ro 7:8–9, 11–13). In fact, any attempt to keep the law only leads to carnality (vv. 14–23). The keeping of the law never led to spirituality (vv. 24–25). Paul's answer was found in Christ (v. 25). Christ becomes the end of the law for one who is reborn (Jn 3:7).

The law was summed up in two commandments. Jesus 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 neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Mt 22:37-40

There was nothing wrong with the law (Jn 10:34). It was an expression of God's will (Ro 7:2–9) and an operating principle (Ro 3:27). There was; however, something wrong with man. Namely, he was a sinner in need of a savior. Christ reconciled God and man (2 Co 5:18, 19). The believer naturally keeps God's moral law because he has been given a new nature (2 Co 5:17). He is led by the Spirit of God (Ro 8:14). God never nailed *do not murder* or *do not commit adultery* to the cross.

One described man's relationship to the law like a cook trying to use a fork to pick up an overdone roast from the oven. A large spatula was necessary to assist. There was nothing wrong with the fork; but, a spatula became necessary. Similarly, unregenerate men in the flesh never could keep the law. It was necessary for the Lord himself to indwell individuals so they could live as they ought. This was a mystery (Col 1:27) achieved only (Jn 14:6) through faith in Christ (Eph 3:14–19).

Until one is born again he remains under God's law and wrath. The apostle John wrote: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him (Jn 3:36)."

Laws come from God not man (1 Ti 1:8-10, Ac 5:29). Government, though sometimes ignorant of spiritual matters (1 Cor 2:8), was instituted by God to enforce the law (Ro 13:1–7). The law is perpetual and ongoing (Mt 5:18); so, when one breaks the law, he should expect to be punished.

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<sup>1</sup> Ceremonial or dietary law.

God has a criminal justice system. The law is for the lawless (1 Ti 1:9). The Psalmist wrote: “When I think of your rules from of old, I take comfort, O Lord. Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked, who forsake your law (Ps 119:52–53).” The Christian is to: hate evil and love good (Am 8:15).

When a nation is lawless, its citizens suffer. Solomon wrote: “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil (Eccl 8:11).” Eternal consequences await those who have not humbled themselves before the Lord (Re 21:8).

Spiritual people are released from the law (Ro 7:1–5) and they go on to be raised by Christ (7:4a, 6) for good works (7:4b). No one under the law can produce a good work (Is 64:6). Good works come after one is found in Christ (Eph 2:10).

The apostle Paul wrote: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Ga 3:28).” Israel is used spiritually to refer to believers in the Lord Jesus (Gal. 6:16). A gentile who has come to faith in Christ is adopted into God’s family. Paul continued: “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (v. 29).”

Men have always been saved the same way—by grace through faith (Eph 2:8–9) by looking forward to or back from the cross (He 11:4a, 5a, 7a, 8a–11a, 12, 17–18, 20a, 21a, 22a, 23a, 24, 27a, 28a, 31a, 32).

John wrote: “We know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments (1 Jn 2:3).” Men aren’t saved *by* keeping the commandments—salvation is a gift (Eph 2:8–9). Men can know that they know the Father *because* they keep his commandments. Adrian Rogers said prior to conversion, “I used to run toward sin. Now, I run from sin.”

John continued: “Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person (1 Jn 2:4).” Christians can inspect the fruits of an individual—good or bad—to know who is of God and who is not. Jesus said, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them (Mt 7:20).”

The believer is made a partaker of the divine nature (2 Pe 1:4). He loves others. John continued: “If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also (1 Jn 4:20–21).”

Christians love. John wrote: “And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him (1 Jn 4:16).”

The believer’s law is higher (Ro 13:8–10) not lower than the Ten Commandments given at Mount Sinai.