

BIBLE STUDY—THE LAW OF DEATH & THE LAW OF LIFE

It may seem off-topic for Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, but the Law of God is the reason why Jesus Christ died. Relating Passover with the Law of God is critically important especially when there are those who claim that the Law of God was 'done away'. A cursory reading of Romans might give that impression, but it is partly from misunderstanding what Paul meant by being "under law" where he said that "the law" has authority over a person as long as they are alive:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 7:1 Or do you not know, brothers and sisters (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that **the law [has dominion] over a person as long as he lives?**

NOTE: Some have tried to make a case that there is a difference in the phrase "**the** law" and "law". This is a questionable claim because the Greek is not consistent in the use of the definite article *the*.

To illustrate this, he gives an example of a law that applies to a married woman¹:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 7:2-3 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives, but **if her husband dies, she is released from the law of the marriage [or law of the husband]**. 3 So then, if she is joined to another man while her husband is alive, she will be called an adulteress. But **if her husband dies, she is [released] from that law**, and if she is joined to another man, she is not an adulteress.

Like the Law of Leprosy² or Law of Jealousies³, the Law of the Husband is a statute in the Law of Moses:

[NET 2.1] DEUTERONOMY 24:1-4 If a **man marries a woman** and she does not please him because he has found something indecent in her, then **he may draw up a divorce** document, give it to her, and evict her from his house. 2 **When she has left him she may go and become someone else's wife.** 3 **If the second husband rejects her and then divorces her**, gives her the papers, and evicts her from his house, **or if the second husband who married her dies, 4 her first husband who divorced her is not permitted to remarry her** after she has become ritually impure, for that is offensive to the LORD. You must not bring guilt on the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

The Law of the Husband (Law of Marriage in some translations since it also applies to husbands⁴) states that a husband who divorces his wife cannot remarry her if she was subsequently married to another man, whether her second marriage ended in divorce or the second husband dies. However, if her first husband dies, the wife is "released" from the Law of the Husband. Paul applies this to the Law of God:

¹ Also 1 Cor. 7:39.

² Lev. 14:57.

³ Num. 5:29-30.

⁴ Mark. 10:12.

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 7:4a So, my brothers and sisters, **you also died to the law through the body of Christ**, ...

Dying “to the law through the body of Christ” is a reference to baptism. Paul said that “the law” no longer “has dominion over a person” because those who are baptized died “through the body of Christ.”⁵ They are, as he put it, “released from the law.” This is why some believe that the Law of God has been ‘done away in Christ’. However, Paul was not finished:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 7:7 What shall we say then? **Is the law sin? Absolutely not!** Certainly, **I would not have known sin except through the law**. For indeed I would not have known what it means to desire something belonging to someone else if the law had not said, “Do not covet.”

Paul used the phrase “the law” to refer to the Law given to Moses by God at Mount Sinai, referred to as the Law of God throughout. Here Paul made the important distinction that the Law of God is not sin; instead, he said “[through] the law *is* the knowledge of sin”⁶ so the Law of God DEFINES sin. This is where some get derailed. Paul was not suggesting the Law of God is an issue; the problem is that the judgment of the Law of God states that “the one who sins shall die.”⁷ Paul clarifies this in the previous chapter where he emphasized that death through baptism does not mean someone can go on sinning:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 6:1-5 What shall we say then? **Are we to [continue] in sin so that grace may increase?** 2 Absolutely not! **How can we who died to sin still live in it [sin]?** 3 Or do you not know that **as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?** 4 Therefore **we have been buried with Him through baptism into death**, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may live a new life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be united in the likeness of His resurrection.

Paul said that a person “died to the **law**” in Romans 7: 4 but here he said they “died to **sin**”. So which is it? Both. *The Law* of God mandates *death* for sin. Baptism does not release someone from having to continue to keep the Law of God; it frees a person from the judgment for sin. No one could “**still** live in [sin]” after baptism unless they are still subject to the Law of God. This is the same with the Law of the Husband. If the first husband dies, the wife is free to marry again. The Law of the Husband still exists but when she marries again, she is once again subject to the judgments of the Law of the Husband. She was never released from the LAW, she is simply no longer under JUDGMENT after the first husband dies.

There are two conditions for judgment in the Law of God—transgression or obedience. A person is either a law-keeper or a lawbreaker. The Law of God is

⁵ Rom. 6:3-4.

⁶ Rom. 3:20.

⁷ Ezek. 18:4, 20.

comprised of both statutes (laws, rules) AND judgments. Speed-limit laws cannot be enforced without a judgment that penalizes someone for breaking it. Laws are meaningless without judgments. Judgments are the POWER of enforcement. The enforcement power of the Law of God IS the penalty for sin:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:56 The sting of death *is* sin, and **the power of sin is the law.**

When a criminal completes a prison sentence handed down by a judge, he is released because he has fulfilled the judgment against him. Likewise, baptism fulfills the judgment that sentences a sinner to death under the Law of God. Failing to understand this trips up some people. Continuing:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 6:6-7 We know that **our old man was crucified [in baptism] with Him [Jesus Christ]** so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 (**For someone who has died has been freed from [the penalty for] sin.**)

This is unambiguous. No one is freed from an OBLIGATION to obey the Law of God. It has authority over all LIVING beings. Baptism is a release from the penalty for sin in the Law of God because the judgment of death was fulfilled (carried out). Scripture says "it is appointed for men to die once."⁸ While this describes the natural end of all physical life, it also refers to the penalty for sin. Since all have sinned, all must die ONCE for their sins, either through baptism or in the Lake of Fire—both are a release from the death penalty. Someone who pays a fine for speeding cannot expect to continue to speed without being fined again. No one is ever free of the law simply because they were punished once. They are always subject to the law and fined every time they exceed the speed limit.

The same applies to the Law of God. It is possible for someone to sin after baptism because the Law of God continues to exist and always has authority even after the death of baptism. This is why Paul asked "**How can we who died to sin still live in it [sin]?**" Baptism fulfills the penalty of death and the person is no longer under JUDGMENT but they must continue to obey the Law of God. Next, Paul explains what happens after being baptized into the death of Jesus Christ:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 6:8-11 Now **if we died with Christ,** we believe that **we will also live with Him.** 9 We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead, He is never going to die again; death no longer has mastery over Him. 10 For the death He died, **He died to sin** once for all, but the life He lives, **He lives to God.** 11 So **you too consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.**

Those who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ "died to sin" but are raised and are "alive to God;" that is, they are raised from death to live a NEW way:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 6:12-13 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires, 13 and do not present your members to sin as instruments to be used for unrighteousness, but **present yourselves to God as those who are alive**

⁸ Heb. 9:27.

from the dead and your members to God as instruments **to be used for righteousness.**

The purpose of baptism is that someone dies to one way of life so they can live by another. When someone is raised out of the water of baptism, they are expected to dedicate their lives to God for RIGHTEOUSNESS sake. What is righteousness?

LUKE 1:6 And they were both **righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.**

1 JOHN 5:17 **All unrighteousness is sin,** and there is sin not *leading* to death.

Righteousness is obedience to the Law of God whereas unrighteousness is transgression of the Law of God. When person is raised from baptism, it is for the purpose of living by the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. This is living "under grace":

[NET.1] ROMANS 6:14-23 For sin will have no mastery over you, because **you are not under law but under grace.** What then? Shall we sin because **we are not under law but under grace?** Absolutely not! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves as obedient slaves, **you are slaves of the one you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or obedience resulting in righteousness?** 17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves to sin, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching you were entrusted to, 18 and **having been freed from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness.** 19 (I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.) For **just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.** 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness. 21 So what benefit did you then reap from those things that you are now ashamed of? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now, **freed from sin and enslaved to God,** you have your benefit leading to sanctification, and the end is eternal life. 23 For **the [wages] of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul uses the analogy of being "freed from [*slavery to*] sin and enslaved to God" to describe the change from being "under law" to being "under grace." Baptism is the transfer of a slave from one slave master to another. Before baptism, all are under the slave master of sin. After baptism, God becomes their master. All were enslaved to sin because "through one man [*Adam*] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because **all sinned.**"⁹ But exactly how did ALL sin? It happened in the Garden in Eden:

GENESIS 3:5 "[*Satan speaking to Eve*] For God knows that **in the day you eat of it [the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil]** your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**"

Eve was deceived by Satan and FELL into sin. In contrast, Adam CHOSE to sin:

⁹ Rom. 5:12.

1 TIMOTHY 2:14 And **Adam was not deceived, but the woman [Eve] being deceived, fell into [came to be in] transgression.**

The sin of Adam and Eve brought the death penalty into the world:

ROMANS 5:14 Nevertheless **death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam,** who is a type of Him who was to come.

Adam was not deceived so what are sins that are not “according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam?” Eve had likely never encountered evil prior to Satan so when she was deceived, it seems she had an innocent desire to be wise:

GENESIS 3:6 So **when the woman [Eve] saw that the tree was** good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and **a tree desirable to make one wise,** she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband [Adam] with her, and he ate.

Instead of appearing sinister and poisonous, Satan pointed out that the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil looked delicious. He then played upon her innocence by saying it was a source of wisdom. She “**fell** into [came to be in] transgression” by deception. The wording indicates she did not sin intentionally but she simply wanted wisdom. Adam, however, clearly did not have innocent motives because he “was **not** deceived.” Adam intentionally rebelled against God and ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil.

Eve was deceived into sin but Adam sinned by rebellion. Those are the two types of sins—sins by deception, also called “sins of ignorance” or “unintentional sins”¹⁰ and sins of rebellion like those of Adam or Nadab and Abihu¹¹. This is why Paul said that ALL have sinned, “**even those who had not sinned [like Adam].**” The whole world has sinned either by rebellion like Adam or sinned by deception like Eve. Paul said he sinned because he was deceived:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 7:8-12 But sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of wrong desires. For apart from the law, sin is dead. 9 And I was once alive apart from the law, but **with the coming of the commandment, sin became alive 10 and I died.** So I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life brought death! 11 **For sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it I died.** 12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.

Paul was deceived into believing that strict works under the Law of God produced righteousness. That is why he said “apart from the law, sin is dead” and he died “**when** the commandment **came.**” What did he mean? It hints at something Jesus Christ said:

¹⁰ Lev. 4:2.

¹¹ Lev. 10:1-2; 16:1-2.

JOHN 15:22 “If I [Jesus Christ] had not come and spoken to them [hateful people], they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

Whatever Jesus Christ spoke carried such weight that it took away the excuses for sin. What did He say? His exact words are not recorded¹², but Paul knew:

ROMANS 1:17 For in it **the righteousness of God is revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

ROMANS 3:21-22 But now **the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even **the righteousness of God**, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. ...

Jesus Christ took away excuses for sin by revealing the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. In fact, that was a prophetic fulfillment:

ISAIAH 56:1 Thus saith the LORD, keep ye judgment, and do justice: for My salvation *is* near to come, and **My righteousness to be revealed**.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law of God¹³ by revealing the righteousness of God! This was the mystery since the beginning that was finally revealed:

ROMANS 16:25-26 Now to Him [God] who is able to establish you according to my [Paul’s] gospel and **the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery** kept secret since the world began 26 **but now made manifest**, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, **according to the commandment of the everlasting God**, for obedience to the faith—

Why was the Righteousness of God a mystery? Because there are two types of righteousness: that of mankind (like Paul) and that of God. When Paul said “concerning the righteousness which is in the law, [I am] blameless,”¹⁴ he was describing his works of righteousness according to the Law:

ACTS 22:3 “I [Paul] am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught **according to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and was zealous toward God** as you all are today.

What, exactly, did Jesus Christ reveal about the Righteousness of God?

ROMANS 8:7-8 Because **the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please [be in agreement with] God.**

¹² There is a subtle mention in Matt. 6:33 where Jesus said to seek the Righteousness of God.

¹³ Matt. 5:17-18.

¹⁴ Phil 3:5-6. Also Acts 26:4-5; Gal. 1:14.

Jesus Christ revealed that the righteousness of men cannot PLEASE God and falls far short of the Righteousness of God¹⁵. That is what took away the excuses for sin because He made it clear that "there is none righteous,"¹⁶ even people like Paul who lived in strict obedience to the Law of God. When Paul understood this he said, "**when the commandment came [was revealed], sin revived and I died.**" Paul realized he was "sold [as a slave] under sin"¹⁷ through the deception that works of righteousness bring about salvation:

GALATIANS 3:19, 21-23 What purpose then *does* the law *serve*? It [*the Law*] was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. ... 21 *Is* the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For **if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.** 22 But the **Scripture has [concluded] all [mankind] under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given** to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were **kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.**

The challenge for anyone seeking salvation through their own righteous works is that only ONE sin brings death:

JAMES 2:10 For **whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.**

Above all, true righteousness requires perfect obedience to ALL of the Law of God:

PSALM 119:172 My tongue shall speak of Your word, for **all Your commandments are righteousness.**

Everyone has sins of rebellion or deception or both. The righteousness of mankind and the Righteousness of God are two opposing minds. The righteousness of man is rooted in fear of death but the Righteousness of God is rooted in agape love:

ROMANS 13:8, 10 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for **he who loves another has fulfilled the law.** ... 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore **love is the fulfillment of the law.**

1 JOHN 4:16-19 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.** 17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 **There is no fear in love;** but perfect love casts out fear, because **fear involves torment.** But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

¹⁵ Rom. 3:23.

¹⁶ Rom. 3:10.

¹⁷ Rom. 7:14.

The problem with the scribes and Pharisees was that they rejected the Righteousness of God. They were deceived AND rebellious. But Jesus Christ called them hypocrites for sins that were even worse:

MATTHEW 23:13, 15 “But woe to you, **scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For **you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men;** for you neither go in *yourselves*, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. ... 15 “Woe to you, **scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, **you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.**

John the Baptist warned the scribes and Pharisees of the judgment now upon them:

LUKE 3:7 Then he [*John the Baptist*] said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, “Brood of vipers! **Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?**

However, this warning was also part of what Jesus Christ revealed. Not only did He reveal the Righteousness of God but He also revealed the Wrath of God that is in store for those who suppress the TRUTH:

ROMANS 1:18-19 For **the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,** 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them.

This is why Jesus warned people of the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees:

MATTHEW 5:20 “For I [*Jesus Christ*] say to you [*the people*], that **unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees,** you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law of God by revealing that the righteousness of mankind is NOT pleasing to God and cannot bring salvation. For this reason, God had to provide another means for salvation—the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ! And THAT is why baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation—it is the only means by which mankind can be truly righteous under the Law of God!

PURPOSE OF BAPTISM:

Baptism is the miracle of God in which a sinner 1) DIES according to the judgment for sin in the Law of God, 2) is FORGIVEN by God through the remission of sin in the blood of Jesus Christ, 3) is IMPUTED with the Righteousness of God, and, 4) is RAISED to live in a state of sinlessness under the Righteousness of God. Baptism transforms a lawbreaker into a law-keeper so that they are “freed from sin” and now “under grace!”

So what changed with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? His sacrifice brought complete remission or removal of sin¹⁸. Animal sacrifices brought forgiveness of sin in the Law of Moses but there was no REMISSION—cancellation—of sin:

ACTS 13:39 “and by Him [*Jesus Christ*] everyone who believes is justified from all things **from which you could not be justified [judged to be righteous] by the law of Moses.**

Because there was no remission of sin with animal sacrifices, there was always a “reminder” of sin:

HEBREWS 10:1-4 For **the law [of Moses]**, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, **can never with these same sacrifices,** which they offer continually year by year, **make those who approach perfect.** 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For **the worshipers, once purified,** **would have had no more consciousness of sins.** 3 But **in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins** every year. 4 For **it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.**

Everyone can recall some of their sins so what does it mean not to have anymore consciousness or reminder of sins? It is not about past memories, it is how someone PURPOSES and LIVES their life. There are two opposing minds: one is according to the “Law of Sin & Death” and the other is according to the “Law of Righteousness,”¹⁹ also called the “Law of the Spirit of Life”:

ROMANS 8:2 For **the law of the Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus has made me free from **the law of sin and death.**

ROMANS 10:4 For Christ *is* the end of **the law for righteousness** to everyone who believes.

The Law of Sin Unto Death is living by our own righteousness and the Law of Righteousness Unto Life is living by the Righteousness of God. The Law of Sin is “**our** righteousnesses [*that*] are like filthy rags”²⁰ with a judgment of death and the Law of Righteousness is “the righteousness of **God**”²¹ with a judgment of life. There is one Law but two different RIGHTEOUSNESSES with two different JUDGMENTS.

Before the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, sins were forgiven by the blood of animals²² because “according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no *forgiveness.*”²³ However, animals cannot sin so they cannot bear sin to the grave. There is forgiveness because blood covers sins but the

¹⁸ Matt. 26:28; Luke 1:77; Acts 2:38; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 10:18; et al.

¹⁹ Also Rom. 9:31.

²⁰ Isa. 64:6.

²¹ 2 Cor. 5:21.

²² Lev. 4, especially verses 20, 26, 31, 35.

²³ Heb. 9:22.

mind of the sinner still lives according to his own righteousness. There is a cost for the animal that is sacrificed but no price paid for sin.

In contrast, Jesus Christ was a human being capable of sinning. He bore the sins of mankind into the grave because He was sinless. He was a vessel empty of His own sins into which God placed the sins of mankind²⁴. There is forgiveness through His blood and the mind of the sinner is changed to live according to the Righteousness of God. There is no cost to sinners for that sacrifice but a heavy price was paid for the remission of sin so there is a debt that is owed, which can never be repaid.

Paul often used the analogy of bondage and slavery when discussing the Law of God, sin and righteousness, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For example, he personified sin as a slave master who has the power (1 Cor. 15:56) to kill those enslaved to it (Rom. 7:9). His epistles to the Corinthians used the backdrop of slavery because that was something quite familiar to them. This is why he portrays the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the purchase price for slaves:

1 CORINTHIANS 6:20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Even though sins were forgiven by animal blood, the sinner was still owned by the slave master called sin. However, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ purchases someone enslaved to sin and they become a bondservant to a new Master—God. In ancient Israel, someone who could not repay a debt became a bondservant of the one to whom it was owed. However, the debt owed to God for being ransomed from sin can never be repaid. That is why someone is a bondservant to God their entire life.

All of this occurs at baptism when someone is ransomed from death²⁵ as a slave of sin and becomes a bondservant of God. This requires a change in the heart and mind (consciousness) from living by our own righteousness to living by the Righteousness of God:

HEBREWS 9:13-14 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

How is the CONSCIOUSNESS changed? By the indwelling of His Holy Spirit:

ROMANS 8:4, 10 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the [Holy] Spirit. ... 10 And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the [Holy] Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Through baptism, a person shifts their conscience from their own self-righteousness to the Righteousness of God by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. God said that He

²⁴ Isa. 53:12; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:24.

²⁵ Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6.

“dwells with him” through the Holy Spirit “to **revive** the spirit of the humble, and to **revive** the heart of the contrite ones.”²⁶ The word *revive* means to bring back to life. He brings back to life through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and baptism. Sin is death so He also blots out their sins forever²⁷:

ISAIAH 43:25 “I [*the LORD*], even I, am He **who blots out your transgressions** for My own sake; and **I will not remember your sins.**

How are they blotted out? They were taken to the grave of Jesus Christ. This is why there is no remission of sin with animals—only Jesus Christ could bear our sins²⁸ to the grave. Everyone imputed with the Righteousness of God is SINLESS. Sin cannot coexist with the Righteousness of God by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

What many fail to consider or understand is that the Law of God defines both sin and RIGHTEOUSNESS. That is why those “under law” and those “under grace” are subject to the same Law of God. If people still sin, then the Law of God still exists! If God is still righteous, then the Law of God still exists! In fact, Scripture proves the Law of God applies to everyone—including those who are BAPTIZED:

1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-21 For since I [*Paul*] am free from all I can make myself a slave to all, in order to gain even more people. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew to gain the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though **I myself am not under the law [of sin]**) to gain those under the law. 21 To those free from the law I became like one free from the law (though **I am not free from God’s law** but under the law of Christ) to gain those free from the law.

If the Law of God was ‘done away in Christ’, then Paul would be free from it; however, he clearly said “I am **not free from God’s law.**”

So why is the Law of God called the Law of Grace for those who are baptized? First, understand that all judgment, whether it is judgment for death or eternal life, is according to WORKS. What?!? How can that be when Scripture clearly says “by grace you have been saved ... **not [by] works?**”²⁹ Obviously, those under the judgment of the Law of Sin rely upon their works for righteousness. It is also absolutely true that those who are baptized into the Law of Righteousness seek salvation by faith, not works. However, works are still required for salvation but it is God who does the WORKS³⁰:

PHILIPPIANS 2:13 for **it is God who works in you** both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

All workers expect to receive wages³¹. The works of mankind are unrighteousness that produces sin where the wages are death. Those who are baptized are imputed

²⁶ Isa. 57:15.

²⁷ Also Ps. 103:12.

²⁸ Heb. 9:28.

²⁹ Eph 2:8-9.

³⁰ Also John 6:28-29; 1 Cor. 12:6; Rev. 15:3.

³¹ Luke 10:7; 1 Tim. 5:18.

the Righteousness of God so that salvation is no longer by their works but through faith in the WORKS of God to justify them and make them RIGHTEOUS:

ROMANS 4:5-6 But **to him who does not work but believes on Him [God]** who justifies the ungodly, **his faith is accounted for righteousness**, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

Salvation is not by our works, which are “dead works;”³² but by the works of God! What are the wages for works of righteousness? Eternal life. But since salvation is no longer by works of mankind, they do not receive those wages. If wages were due, they would be paid to God because they are His works³³.

The works of God perfect His righteousness and agape love in us³⁴. That is why we are under the Law of Grace—the benevolent love of God that motivates Him to give us the GIFT of eternal life³⁵. It is an AMAZING grace because: 1) no one can repay the debt owed for being ransomed from death by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, 2) it is God who does the works, and 3) salvation is a gift! All who are baptized are now waiting for God to finish His works:

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 All Scripture *is* ... for instruction **in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete**, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

EPHESIANS 4:13 **till we all [... become] a perfect man**, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

NOTE: The perfection of the Righteousness of God in those who are baptized unto salvation is by His works alone. However, Good Works are also required for salvation because **“faith without [good] works is dead”**—Jas. 2:17. Good Works do not bring about righteousness because they are not works for SALVATION, they are works of FAITH³⁶ done for the benefit of others. They reflect the perfection of agape love in us by the works of God. Salvation is only by works of God but Good Works are required because they are a consequence of God working in us. Good Works earn a reward, not salvation.

Those who are baptized are no longer slaves of sin who are forced to labor for their righteousness but slaves of God who does the works of salvation. Since God does the works, He has given them REST:

HEBREWS 4:3, 4, 10 For **we who have believed [and are baptized] do enter that rest**, ... 4 For He [God] has spoken in a certain place of the seventh *day* in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”; ... 10 For **he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works** as God *did* from His.

³² Heb. 6:1.

³³ Also John 9:3; Acts 2:11; 15:17-18; Eph. 3:7; Phil. 2:13;

³⁴ Eph. 2:10; 2 Tim. 3:17; 1 John 2:5; 4:12, 17-18.

³⁵ Rom. 5:15-18; et al.

³⁶ 1 Thess. 1:3.

The Law of Grace refers to the remission and forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, justification by the works of God, and eternal life that is freely given:

ROMANS 4:5-8 But **to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness**, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man **to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works**: 7 “Blessed are those **whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered**; 8 Blessed is the man **to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.**”

And there it is. Before Jesus Christ came in the flesh, “sin was in the world but there was no **accounting [reckoning]** for sin.”³⁷ During those times, “God had **passed over the sins** that were previously committed.”³⁸ That is why Jesus Christ had to reveal that righteousness unto salvation is only possible with God. It also brought judgment into the world—beginning with the house of God³⁹—and God now “commands all men everywhere to repent.”⁴⁰ The sacrifice of Jesus Christ that makes salvation possible is proof of the immeasurable agape love and amazing grace (benevolence) of God.

Finally, there are two more points. First, the example of the Law of the Husband was not only an analogy of those who are released from the judgment for sin by baptism into the death of Jesus Christ, it also portrayed a new marriage:

[NET 2.1] ROMANS 7:4b ... **so that you could be joined [in marriage] to another**, to the One [*Jesus Christ*] who was raised from the dead, to bear fruit to God.

Being “joined to another” is an obvious reference to Jesus Christ:

2 CORINTHIANS 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I [*Paul*] **have betrothed you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.**

Betrothal of a couple was the same commitment as marriage in those days so they came under the Law of the Husband. Baptism is the means by which people are betrothed to a new Husband⁴¹—Jesus Christ; the Son of God.

Second, the death of Jesus Christ solved another problem—the promise of God to remarry the Ten Tribes of Israel whom He divorced⁴²:

HOSEA 2:2, 16, 19-20 “Bring charges against your mother [*Israel*], bring charges; for **she is not My wife, nor am I [the LORD] her Husband!** Let her put away her harlotries from her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; ... 16 “And it shall be, in that day,” says the LORD, “**that you will call Me ‘My Husband,’** and no

³⁷ Rom. 5:13. Also Acts 14:16.

³⁸ Rom. 3:25.

³⁹ 1 Pet. 4:17.

⁴⁰ Acts 17:30.

⁴¹ Matt. 25:1-13.

⁴² Jer. 3:8, 14.

longer call Me [‘Baali’] ... 19 “**I will betroth you to Me forever**; yes, **I will betroth you to Me** in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; 20 **I will betroth you to Me** in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD.

The prophets of old were confounded because God divorced the Ten Tribes who had run off with pagan gods. But He also promised that He would again marry the Ten Tribes; however, the Law of the Husband prevented it. God could only marry the Ten tribes after divorcing them if He died and the prophets could not imagine that the eternal, self-existing God dying. When Paul understood that the God who died was Jesus Christ, he rejoiced because ALL Israel could at last be rejoined unto Him:

ROMANS 11:23-33 And **they [Israel] also**, if they do not continue in unbelief, will **be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again**. ... 26 And so **all Israel will be saved**, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ... 33 **Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!

The Bible is greatest love story of all. It is works of agape love by God in His begotten children. His works will bring about the joy yet to come:

1 PETER 1:6-9 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, **you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls**.

And that, brethren, is something to always be abundantly thankful for:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:56-57 The sting of death *is* sin, and the [power] of sin *is* the law [*of Moses*]. 57 But **thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ**.

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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