

PHILIPPIANS: OVERCOMING BROKEN DREAMS GOD'S WAY
"Part VII: Living In Joyous Liberty From The Mosaic Law"
(Philippians 3:1-9)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

A nationally known Evangelical teacher promotes a belief akin to that of Seventh-day Adventism: he believes Christians who are saved by grace must observe the Mosaic Law in their *Christian lives*:

(1) On the one hand, Seventh-day Adventism teaches a Christian is freed from the "ceremonial law" but is bound by the Ten Commandments for **living**. In *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .*, p. 244, we read: "While Christ's death ended the authority of the **ceremonial** law, it **established** that of the **Ten Commandments**."

(2) This idea is close to what a nationally known Evangelical teacher, Bill Gothard asserts. In his "booklet", "The Place of The Old Testament Law in the Life of the New Testament Believers," p. 7, he states: "**Paul vehemently objected to...[a] perversion of the Gospel and harshly rebuked those who taught it. However, in the center of his letter, he writes a phrase that provides balance to his message and reaffirms the practical benefit of the Mosaic Law. The phrase is, the man that doeth them shall live in them'--Gal. 3:12...The encouragement to live by the moral instruction of the Old Testament Law - not for salvation, which is only through the work and blood of Christ, but for the discovery and enjoyment of true life, is further confirmed in both the Old & New Testament.**"

According to witnesses, because of this belief, this Evangelical teacher affirms **Christians** must heed sundry Mosaic Laws, **some** of which are (a) **circumcision** as a **moral duty**, (b) abstaining from intimacy between spouses for various days and lengths of time (cf. Lev. 12:1-8; 15:19; 18:19 et al.) and not wearing clothes that mix different kinds of fibers. [This information came from **two** Internet **sources** to heed Mtt. 18:16b re: credibility of assertions: (1) "www. egroups.com/files/Gothard, p. 2, 3, 5 & 10 of 96"; (2) "www. rapidnet. com/jbeard/bdm/exposes/gothard/general.htm, p. 4, 7, 13 & 14 of 17".]

So, must we who trust in Christ for salvation be required to live under the Mosaic Law as both Seventh-day Adventism and this nationally known Evangelical teacher say, or not? **WHY?!**

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section as follows . . .)

Need: "*Various authorities push the need for me as a Christian to observe at least some of Moses' Laws. All sorts of very practical issues on matters like clothing, circumcision, marital conduct, etc. come into play here, so how am I supposed to respond to this, and WHY?!*"

- I. **Paul called Christians in ALL of HISTORY to protect their joyful liberty from oppressive Mosaic Law legalism, Phil. 3:1-2, 4-6:**
 - A. He began a call for believers to rejoice *in the same context* of preserving them safe from harm, Philippians 3:1a,b.
 - B. A key concern is noted in Paul's order to "Beware" (KJV) of "**dogs**", "evil workers" and "**mutilators** of the flesh" (NIV,, Philippians 3:2.
 - C. These dangerous people were Judaizers in Paul's day:
 1. Paul's term "**dogs**" was used by **Jews** who saw **Gentiles** as ritually unclean animals like dogs were, Bible Know. Com., N.T., p. 659.
 2. Also, the term "**mutilators** of the flesh" reveals Paul spoke harshly of **Jews** who tried to impose **physical circumcision** on Gentile Christians for **religious** reasons, compare Acts 15:1-2; Gal. 2:3-5.
 3. Thus, Paul used "dogs" and "mutilators" critically of the Judaizers to show how **unacceptable they** were before **God** for their errors!
 - D. Though these dangerous people were **Jews** in **Paul's era**, his alarm warns of **anyone TODAY** who teaches we must heed the Mosaic Law:
 1. **Most** of Paul's words in Phil. 3:4-6 dealt with his Hebrew heritage:
 - a. In showing how wrong was the belief that Gentiles needed to heed the Mosaic Law to please God, Paul revealed how he had **rejected** his **own undiluted** Hebrew heritage to that end, 3:4, 7.
 - b. He implied though many had become proselytes to Judaism, Paul was **born** a Hebrew, circumcised the 8th day, Phil. 3:5a.
 - c. He was of the tribe of Benjamin, a tribe respected for being the only other tribe to remain faithful to David's tribe during the division of the Kingdom, 3:5b; Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 146.
 - d. He was a Pharisee, a group so theologically accurate even **Jesus** commended its **doctrines**, Matthew 23:2-3; Philippians 3:5c.
 - e. Paul had been a **dedicated** Pharisee, afflicting Christians, 3:6a.
 2. Yet, Paul's **last** description of his former lifestyle in 3:6b applies directly to **anyone TODAY** who promotes the keeping of the Mosaic Law in order to please God (as follows):
 - a. Regarding "legalistic righteousness" in the Mosaic Law, Paul claimed he had been "**faultless**", Philippians 3:6b NIV.

- b. Since the word "faultless," *amemptos* is also used in Phil. 2:15 to speak of blamelessness in *life*, Paul revealed His **application** of the Law to life had been so **total**, he could say the application made him **externally righteous!** (Bib. Kno. Com., N.T., p. 660)
 - c. Yet, Paul's writings reveal such deeds of the Mosaic Law were powerless **both to justify** as well as to **sanctify** one's *lifestyle as a CHRISTIAN*, cf. Rom. 3:38 re: **justification and** Galatians 3:3 (Bible Knowledge Com., N.T., p. 597) for **Christian living**.
 - E. Paul's call to rejoice in the context of guarding against such legalism urges believers to guard their **joy of liberty** in *Christ* as they **lived free** from **oppressors** who **pushed Moses' Law upon them!**
- II. **Now, Paul felt this way about heeding ANY PART of Moses' Law:**
- A. Some teach the Christian is free from the "ceremonial" segments of Moses' Law, but that the "Ten Commandments" are still binding in jurisdiction for today, cf. Seventh-day Adventists Believe, p. 244.
 - B. Yet, in Colossians, Paul noted Christians were **NOT** under **EITHER** the so-called "ceremonial" laws **OR** the "Ten Commandments":
 - 1. Paul claimed we are not subject to the dietary laws or the keeping of holy days, what some call "ceremonial" laws, Col. 2:13, 16a, b.
 - 2. He also there named the "Sabbath" rule as one not required, and that rule is in the "Ten Commandments" Col. 2:13, 16c; Ex. 20:8!
 - 3. Thus, **Paul** viewed the Mosaic Law in its **ENTIRETY** as a code of **jurisdiction** that **no** Christian must **heed!** (Rom. 7:1-6)
- III. **Hence, Paul testified he himself totally abandoned keeping all of Moses' Law, seeing his sterling Hebrew heritage and pre-Christian life as REFUSE so as to win Christ and His righteousness by faith, and that whether it applied to salvation OR living, Phil. 3:7-9.**

Application: (1) *To attain freedom from the condemnation of the Mosaic Law, we believe on Christ as Savior from sin, Rom. 3:28. (2) To MAINTAIN experiential liberty in living, we (a) lean upon the indwelling Holy Spirit for Christ to live out HIS upright lifestyle THROUGH us (Gal. 2:20; 5:16). (b) We then GUARD ourselves from influence by "legalists" and their legalistic teachings that we might live REJOICING in our LIBERTY from that Law in Christ!*

Lesson: (1) *ALL who believe in Jesus Christ for salvation are FREE from ALL parts of the Mosaic Law both to be SAVED as WELL as to LIVE righteously before God! (2) Thus, all believers are to BEWARE of Mosaic Law "legalists" and their errant "legalism" that entrap one into oppressive bondage so as to live JOYFULLY in LIBERTY before God! >*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

We alluded Galatians 3:12 where a noted Evangelical has taught the verse suggests Christians are to heed the Mosaic Law. The verse reads: "The man who does these things will live by them" (NIV) Based upon this verse, this teacher instructs: "**The encouragement to live by the moral instruction of the Old Testament law-not for salvation, which is only through the work and blood of Christ, but for the discovery and enjoyment of true life, is further confirmed in both the Old and New Testament passages.**" (Loc. cit.)

In light of Philippians 3:1-9, we respond to him as follows:

(1) The Apostle Peter, at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15:10, in speaking on the issue of making Gentile converts to Christ be circumcised to heed the Mosaic Law, said: "**Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"** Peter thus **noted no** one *could* keep the Law, and so **should NOT have to TRY** to do so!

(2) In the very context of Galatians 3:12 which is used by this Evangelical teacher to say we are under the law, Paul says in Galatians 3:10-11: "**For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.**"

Dallas Seminary's commentary at Gal. 3:12 says: "Only perfect performance could win divine approval under the Law, **but since that was NOT achievable the Law could only condemn a person ... and cause him to cast himself on God in faith.**" (Ibid., p. 598)

(3) Speaking of circumcision in Galatians 5:2-3, Paul wrote: "**Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.**"