

THE LAW IN GALATIANS

Two Significant Statements
By Ellen G. White

“Sunnyside”, Cooranbong [Australia]
June 6, 1896

“‘The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.’ (Gal. 3:24) In this Scripture the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

“An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord’s message through Brethren (E.J.) Waggoner and (A.T.) Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.

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“The law of Ten Commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.

“We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin men separate themselves

from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.

“The law is an expression of God’s idea. When we receive it in Christ it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin. ‘Great peace have they that love thy law; and nothing shall offend them’--cause them to stumble.

“There is no peace in unrighteousness; the wicked are at war with God. But he who receives the righteousness of the law in Christ is in harmony with heaven. ‘Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.’” Letter 96, 1896 (Parentheses supplied)

(SIGNED) Ellen G. White

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(THIS LETTER WAS ADDRESSED TO URIAH SMITH AND G C TENNEY, JOINT EDITORS OF THE REVIEW AND HERALD, AND SENT TO URIAH SMITH’S GRANDSON’S HOUSE IN BATTLE CREEK. ACCORDING TO WHITE ESTATE FILES, SEVEN COPIES WERE MADE BUT NO RECORD IS NOW AVAILABLE OF WHERE THEY WENT EXCEPT THAT G C TENNEY WROTE BACK THAT HE HAD RECEIVED THE LETTER AND SHARED THE MATERIALS WITH URIAH SMITH. AS FAR AS THE WHITE ESTATE IS AWARE, THE MATERIAL HAS NOT BEEN COPIED ANYWHERE AND WAS NOT PUBLISHED UNTIL IT WAS RELEASED IN 1952)

“Sunnyside” Cooranbong, N.S.W., June 6, 1896

Elder Uriah Smith,
Battle Creek, Mich.

Dear Brother:-

The enclosed pages present a few points which were opened to Sister White last night, and which she wished sent to you. She has for some days been suffering from the effects of cold and overwork, and is to-day unable to read or write. The matter was written out as she presented it. We sent some copies

of articles and letters by the S.F. mail, which Sister White desires you to read; but as we were not certain that you were in Battle Creek, they were addressed to Elder Tenney, with directions that he read and forward to you.

Yours in the work,

(signed) M. Davis

Oakland, California ?

Cir. 1900

“I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of Ten Commandments.

“Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. The death of Abel was in consequence of Cain’s refusing to accept God’s plan in the school of obedience, to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, typified by the sacrificial offerings pointing to Christ. Cain refused the shedding of blood, which symbolized the blood of Christ to be shed for the world. This whole ceremony was prepared by God, and Christ became the foundation of the whole system. This is the beginning of its work as the schoolmaster to bring sinful human agents to a consideration of Christ, the foundation of the whole Jewish economy.

“All who did service in connection with the sanctuary were being educated constantly in regard to the intervention of Christ in behalf of the human race. This service was designed to create in every heart a love for the law of God, which is the law of His kingdom. The sacrificial offering was to be an object lesson of the love of God revealed in Christ--in the suffering, dying victim, who took upon Himself the sin of which man was guilty, the innocent being made sin for us.

“In the contemplation of this great theme of salvation we see Christ’s work. Not only the promised gift of the Spirit, but also the nature and character of this sacrifice and intervention, is a subject which should create in our hearts elevated, sacred, high ideas of the law of God, which holds its claims upon every human agency. The violation of that law in the small act of eating of the forbidden fruit brought upon man and upon the earth the consequence of disobedience to the holy law of God. The nature of the intervention should ever make man afraid to do the

smallest action in disobedience to God's requirement.

“There should be a clear understanding of that which constitutes sin, and we should avoid the least approach to step over the boundaries from obedience to disobedience.

“God would have every member of His creation understand the great work of the infinite Son of God in giving His life for the salvation of the world. ‘Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.’ (1 John 3:1)

“When he sees in Christ the embodiment of infinite and disinterested love and benevolence, there is awakened in the heart of the sinner a thankful disposition to follow where Christ is drawing.” Manuscript 87, 1900

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1. Is it really possible that the actions of our own brethren prevented the falling of the latter rain?
2. Could Satan have really been the winner at Minneapolis in 1888?

This document has been recently prepared and republished by Theological Crossroads, a religious non-profit corporation seeking to advance the knowledge of the truth. These documents have played such an important role in the history of the SDA Church that many have wanted to review and consider for themselves what happened in 1888 at the General Conference held at Minneapolis.

If you have any questions or would like to obtain a copy of this document please contact:

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