

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE



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Handling the Law and the Promises in the Old Testament – Study #6

Christians have struggled for centuries on how we should relate to the Laws of the Old Testament.

- The Law was not created as a means for attaining eternal life, even though it was given as a great benefit for the Nation of Israel.
- All the Law was first and foremost, theological.
- All Scripture is applicable to New Testament believers, acknowledging that there are principles from the Law that apply to believers lives today.
- The following chart highlights primary elements of the Law.

Relational (Civil/Moral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slavery • Women • Children, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We view these through contemporary eyes/perspective. • These were actually morally revolutionary for the times.
Food (Dietary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pork • Camel • Seafood (without scales & fins) • Rabbit • Vultures • lizards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to carry diseases and/or allergies in arid climates. • Not profitable for raising in dry climates (i.e. Pigs need water). • Foods used as sacrifices in pagan religions.
Blood (Ceremonial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life “essence” • Sin • Forgiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sacrificial system becomes the typology for the sacrificial death of Christ. • Shows seriousness of sin.
Other Religions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Against 2 types of seed, or 2 types of material • Tattoos • Baby goats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pagan religion and practice sought to ‘control’ gods through magic, etc. • This is ‘transactional’ religion. • God wanted his people to stand apart in ‘holiness.’
Material Blessings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land • New wine, grain, oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material blessings were conditional on keeping the covenant. • It taught the people the sovereignty of God.

The Law for the Church

Jesus and the Law	Jesus redefined 'clean' and 'unclean' by what comes out of a person, not what touches them or goes in.	It's not what goes into your body that defiles you; you are defiled by what comes from your heart... And then he added, "It is what comes from inside that defiles you." ²¹ For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. ²³ All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you." Mark 7:15; 20-23
	Jesus even modified some laws	"You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. ⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. ⁴⁷ If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. Matt. 5:43-47 (See also Matt 5:31-42)
	Jesus intensified some laws	"You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.' ²² But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell. Matt. 5:21-22 (See also Matt 5:27-30)
	Jesus removes some laws altogether	It's not what goes into your body that defiles you; you are defiled by what comes from your heart." Then Jesus went into a house to get away from the crowd, and his disciples asked him what he meant by the parable he had just used. ¹⁸ "Don't you understand either?" he asked. "Can't you see that the food you put into your body cannot defile you? ¹⁹ Food doesn't go into your heart, but only passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer." (By saying this, he declared that every kind of food is acceptable in God's eyes.) Mark 7:15-19
The Apostles and the Law	Peter's vision removed the dietary law from the Gentiles	"No, Lord," I replied. 'I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure or unclean.' ⁹ "But the voice from heaven spoke again: 'Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean.' ¹⁰ This happened three times before the sheet and all it contained was pulled back up to heaven. Acts 11:8-10
	Paul stated that circumcision and the Jewish Law no longer applies	When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. Col. 2:11
	The old Law is obsolete because of the New Covenant	When God speaks of a "new" covenant, it means he has made the first one obsolete. It is now out of date and will soon disappear. Heb. 8:13
Modern Believers	We are only obligated to fulfill those laws explicitly renewed by the 'Law of Christ'	² Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. Gal 6:2
	Two Great Commandments serve	"Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵ And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. Deut. 6:4-5

	as the 'sum of the Law' as defined by Jesus	“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD. Lev. 19:18
	To say the OT is 'Law' and the NT is 'Grace' is incorrect. Believers of both are saved by faith through grace alone	And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith. Gen. 15:6 Now, is this blessing only for the Jews, or is it also for uncircumcised Gentiles? Well, we have been saying that Abraham was counted as righteous by God because of his faith. Rom. 4:9
	Still, we cannot dismiss the OT Law as totally irrelevant. Many useful principles still apply. The Law is God's word <u>to us</u> is not a command <u>for us</u>	“Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. ¹⁸ I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. ¹⁹ So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. Matt. 5:17-19

- Do not expect material blessings for a righteous life. Covenantal blessings were for national Israel, not individuals.
- Jesus instituted the New Covenant at the Passover meal before his crucifixion.

After supper he took another cup of wine and said, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you. Luke 22:20

- The New Covenant passages in the NT are: 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb 8:8; 8:10, 13; 9:15; 10:16; 12:24.

“This is the new covenant I will make
with my people on that day, says the LORD:
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds.” Heb. 10:16

- Since Jesus fulfills the OT Law, as we obey Jesus, we are fulfilling the OT Law and covenant.
- Lastly, Jesus did give one new commandment:

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. John 13:34