

Love

How It Fulfills the Law

Are the Ten Commandments replaced by love? Did the Messiah come to teach that we no longer have to obey the Ten Commandments, but merely show love in our life? Did He do away with the Ten Commandments? What does the New Testament teach on this pivotal subject?

The visitor seemed amused that we should be teaching anything about the Ten Commandments. "Don't you know the laws were done away at the cross?" he asked incredulously. "They were only for the Jews anyway, and we are under grace."

Then he added, "If you believe in the New Testament, then you must preach love, for the Savior did away with the law and said we are to love the Father and our neighbor and on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," he beamed.

Perhaps you have been told this same thing by well-meaning people who feel enlightened, not obligated to obey anything in the Old Testament, sincerely believing that they are not burdened by any law. Their interest is in the New Testament only and they emphasize the grace and love of our Savior.

The Meaning of Love

The source of love is from our Heavenly Father Yahweh who *"so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16)

John declares that Yahweh is the source of all love, and also writes: *"He that loves not knows not Yahweh; for Yahweh is love."* (1 John 4:8)

Two distinct words for love appear in the Bible. The Greek word *phileo* means "to have ardent affection and feeling." The other word, *agapao*, means "to have esteem, high regard," more than a fleeting feeling. *Agapao* is the word usually used in referring to our love for Yahweh.

Let us take a closer look at the verses that deal with love for the Father and for our neighbor. Did the Savior really mean that through love we can disregard the law? Can love of itself fulfill the law? Or is there yet a deeper meaning overlooked by many here? Does the proper love direct our actions toward a specific goal? Are the Ten Commandments still in effect? Read on.

Love Yahweh with All Our Heart

Having silenced the Sadducees who did not believe in a resurrection nor in the spirit world, the Savior was then subjected to a ploy. A Pharisee (Mark refers to him as a Scribe), posed the loaded question, *"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"* (Mat. 22:36).

Evidently it was an effort to test His knowledge of the law, or to ascertain His perceptiveness. Perhaps it was because some Jews held that the law of greatest importance was the law of sacrifice; others, that of circumcision; others, washings and purifyings.

They had divided the law into greater and smaller commandments. The Law here referred to was the law given by Moses, recorded in the first five books of the Bible known as the Pentateuch.

Mark's Evangel says the Savior introduced His response by referring to the *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4-5, "*Hear, O Israel: Yahweh is our Elohim, Yahweh is One: and you shall love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength,*" Mark 12:29-30, TSS.

The First and Great Commandment

We are to love Yahweh with all our being above all other things. We cannot keep His Commandments unless we are aware of His perfect holiness, His nature and perfection and His right to command. We are to submit our intellect to His will, to love His righteous precepts more than the decisions of our own mind.

"This is the first and great Commandment," said our Savior. It is the first and greatest of all; not necessarily first in order of time, but of importance; greatest in dignity, in excellence, in extent and duration. It is the fountain of all others. We must be in humble awe of Him before we accede to His wishes.

If our love and admiration toward Almighty Yahweh is proper and right, then our love toward His creation will reflect a right and proper attitude. We must first recognize His awesome power, which gives us respect for Him, His wishes, His goals, His views and His creatures.

By loving Yahweh we will respect and observe the first five commandments, which deal with our relationship to Yahweh. *"For this is the love of Yahweh, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."* (1 John 5:3). Yahshua Himself said, *"If you love me, keep my commandments."* (John 14:15)

Law Toward Our Fellow Man

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself," continued the Savior. *"On these two Commandments hang all the law and the prophets."*

The second similarly has the importance, dignity, purity, and usefulness of the first. The Savior did not really introduce a new commandment, for it is found in the law of the Old Testament:

"You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I [am] Yahweh." (Lev. 19:18)

This concept deals with our relationships with our fellow men, which are exemplified by the last five of the Ten Commandments.

It is an important point that there are Ten Commandments that are the basic building blocks of all Yahweh's law. These Ten Commandments can be divided into two basic groups; the first group of five focus on Yahweh; the final five on our human relationships. He gave us Ten Commandments, one for each finger of our hands.

Ten Fingers, Ten Commandments

Let us review the Ten Commandments as found in Deuteronomy 5:6-16:

I. I am Yahweh your Elohim, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other elohim before Me.

II. You shall not make to yourself a graven image, nor any likeness of anything that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall not bow down to them, or serve them; for I Yahweh your Elohim am a jealous EL, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and the fourth generation of them that hate me and showing mercy to thousands of them that love Me and keep My Commandments.

III. You shall not make wrong use of the name of Yahweh your Elohim: for Yahweh will not leave unpunished the man that misuses His name.

IV. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Yahweh your Elohim commanded you. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your Elohim: in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant may rest as well as you. And you shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your Elohim brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Yahweh your Elohim commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

V. Honor your father and your mother as Yahweh your Elohim commanded you; that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you, in the land which Yahweh your Elohim gives you. TSS.

Left Hand Serves Yahweh

These five commandments should go on the left hand, because in these five we serve our Heavenly Father Yahweh, and with the right hand are those by which we serve our fellow man.

Note that in Acts 7:56 Stephen was being stoned, and looking steadfastly into heaven he saw the glory of Yahweh with Yahshua standing at His right hand. The Savior then has His left hand out to Yahweh the Father, and His right hand out to His saints. Colossians 3:1 also discloses that the Savior is seated on the right hand of Yahweh. Interestingly, Yahshua's right hand is out to us just as the Father's right hand is out to Him. An interesting Bible study is that of Yahweh's right hand or right arm by which He accomplishes His will.

Right Hand of Fellowship

On the right hand, with which we serve our fellow man, we find there are five Commandments given in Deuteronomy 5:17-21:

VI. You shall not commit murder.

VII. You shall not commit adultery.

VIII. You shall not steal.

IX. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

X. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's."

These last five commandments deal with our earthly relationships.

In Galatians 2:9 Paul relates, "*And when they perceived the grace that was given to me, Jacob and Cepha and John, they also were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision.*" (TSS)

The Critical Fifth Commandment

The Fifth Commandment is pivotal, for it can also fit our obligations toward our human parents. We are to be honorable and respectful in our relationship with those who bore and reared us. Furthermore, young children should be taught to be obedient to their earthly father and mother who want only what is ultimately best for their children.

However, there is also the important spiritual aspect, in which the Fifth Commandment certainly ties in with the left hand and better fits our relationship with Yahweh. The Bible shows we have both a spiritual Father and a spiritual mother.

Our Spiritual Father, 'Mother'

We are told by Yahshua to consider Yahweh as our Heavenly Father in the so-called "Master's prayer," Matthew 6:9, "*Our Father Which art in heaven.*" Paul refers to Him as "Abba, Father," Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6. Yahweh is indeed our spiritual Father. He is the Master Designer of this universe and through Him all life has its source.

Jerusalem in Judea, Palestine, was always considered the place where proper worship of Yahweh took place. Yahweh Himself chose Jerusalem, where Solomon built the Temple. It must be remembered that Yahshua told the woman at the well that the time was coming when worship would not be at Mount Gerizim nor in Jerusalem. He said Yahweh was spirit and worship was to be in spirit and in truth.

Spiritual Jerusalem (which comprises the body of believers, the true Assembly) is regarded as a figurative woman—our "mother." Paul refers to this in Galatians 4:26, where he writes: *But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is the mother of us all.* This heavenly city of Jerusalem is referred to in Hebrews 12:22, where it is called "*the city of the living Elohim.*" The woman in Revelation 12 is the mother of a remnant which keep the Commandments of Yahweh.

It is the same city which Abraham sought in his sojourn on earth, a city with foundations whose builder and maker is Yahweh. The "mother" is in the King James Bible known as "the Church," which is more correctly "the called-out ones," the spiritual body, the Assembly.

Thus, we learn of our Heavenly Father through His word, the Bible, and becoming a part of the Assembly, we grow by association with others, Ephesians 4:8-12.

It is clear the Bible promises long physical life upon this earth to those who are obedient to their parents. How much more will blessings be given to them who are obedient to the Heavenly Father. He and our "Ekklesia" mother, comprise our spiritual parents! Eternal life is the promise for obedience to our Heavenly Father.

Yahshua Gave Gifts to Mankind

Paul reveals the Assembly is given spiritual guides for *the perfecting of the saints, to the work of ministering, to the building of the body of Messiah till we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of Yahweh, to a full grown man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Messiah,* Ephesians 4:12-13, TSS.

Love is indeed the fulfilling of the law. A deep, dedicated love for Yahweh will allow His Spirit power to motivate and guide us in our daily lives. If we have the love for Him, then we will have respect for His word and regard His Son's sacrifice for our sins as something to be greatly treasured.

Our lives will reflect a holy living so that we will not tarnish the dwelling place of the Spirit of the Most High, our physical bodies: "*Know you not that you are the Temple of Yahweh, and [that] the Spirit of Yahweh dwells in you?*" (1 Cor. 3:16)

Five Commandments on each hand are a reminder every day, every step of the way as we journey to the Kingdom.

Commandment Keeping = True Love

Yahshua said, *"If you love Me, keep my Commandments,"* John 14:15. Love for Yahweh will generate a love for our fellow man; a disciplined life, doing good to all men, especially those of the household of faith, Galatians 6:10.

Paul clarifies this point: *"Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For this, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, you shall not steal, You shall not covet, and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love works no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law,"* Rom. 8-10. Paul here reviews the right hand Commandments.

Yahshua clearly stated, concerning His Father's Commandments, *"Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfill,"* Matthew 5:17. The Savior came to fill up or complete the law to its highest intent and meaning, which He did as an example for us to follow. He showed His love to the Father through His obedience, and we are to walk in His footsteps. Because heaven and earth are still here, we know that His laws remain in effect. Yahshua said so in the next verse: *"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled"* (Mat. 5:18).

Acts 5:32 says the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey (love) Yahweh. John confirms this in 1John 3:23-24: *"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Yahshua the Messiah, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keeps his commandments dwells in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us."* (1John 3)

Yahshua promised the gift of the Spirit for obedience in John 14:15-16: *"If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."*

Significantly, the first fruit of the workings of Yahweh's Spirit in an individual is LOVE! *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."* (Gal. 5:22-23) The converted individual genuinely expressing these qualities in his life will not be breaking the law; he will have the Holy Spirit within!

We show our love for Yahweh by keeping all ten of His Commandments. In doing so we obey Him and serve our fellow man, which is the fulfilling of the law.

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