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Deuteronomy 15:12-23
The Lord Your God Redeemed You
April 11, 2021

¹² "If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. ¹³ And when you send him away free from you, you shall not let him go away empty-handed; ¹⁴ you shall supply him liberally from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your winepress. From what the LORD your God has blessed you with, you shall give to him. ¹⁵ You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this thing today. ¹⁶ And if it happens that he says to you, 'I will not go away from you,' because he loves you and your house, since he prospers with you, ¹⁷ then you shall take an awl and thrust it through his ear to the door, and he shall be your servant forever. Also to your female servant you shall do likewise. ¹⁸ It shall not seem hard to you when you send him away free from you; for he has been worth a double hired servant in serving you six years. Then the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

¹⁹ "All the firstborn males that come from your herd and your flock you shall sanctify to the LORD your God; you shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. ²⁰ You and your household shall eat it before the LORD your God year by year in the place which the LORD chooses. ²¹ But if there is a defect in it, if it is lame or blind or has any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God. ²² You may eat it within your gates; the unclean and the clean person alike may eat it, as if it were a gazelle or a deer. ²³ Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it on the ground like water.

The verses today are broken into two separate concepts. The first is that of the Hebrew slave, which is followed by the law of the firstborn of the flock and herd.

As we saw from an example in the last passage (the Shemitah), it is fashionable to take portions of the Law of Moses and try to inject them into the modern world, as if God is still working out His precepts under the law in our lives today.

If this were so, there ostensibly should be such books dealing with the same things from all of the other passages as well. But curiously, nobody is writing books like that about Hebrew slaves or the disposition of the firstborn animals.

The reason for this is that these things do not find their substance in the world today. Rather, the reality of them is found solely in Jesus Christ and in our relationship to Him. The world at large has nothing to do with the Law of Moses. Our only connection to it at all is in our relationship to Him.

It is man's natural desire to place himself into the redemptive narrative in relation to his current time and place. Since Christ ascended, people have done this. They have inserted the Roman Empire into it, they have inserted England or America into it. And so on.

And one would be hard-pressed to find a single generation of scholars that did not write as if the book of Revelation or the coming of Christ was dealing with their specific timeframe. It is problematic but it is our human nature to want it to be so.

Instead, He has given us the overall picture of what is coming. However, He has reserved most of the details for Himself. Our futile attempts at filling in the blanks are counterproductive at best.

Text Verse: *“And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’” Acts 1:7, 8*

It might seem like an odd text verse for a sermon from Deuteronomy, but it is used here to remind us that we have a job to do. That job will end when the Lord returns for us. In the meantime, we are to work on the conversion of others, make disciples, and be witnesses to what we know.

And the fact is that the more we know about the Law of Moses, the more we will understand God’s workings in redemptive history and how it all points to the Person of Jesus Christ. That is absolutely certain. In the passage today are all kinds of things that will increase our knowledge, firm up our doctrine, and help us to better understand what God has done.

For example, it is often argued whether salvation is eternal or not. Verses are used, or misused, to justify one stand or another, but we have already seen – numerous times and right out of the law itself – which is correct. We will see that again today.

God provides typology so that we can be more assured in our doctrine because of what that typology presents. The two will always work harmoniously together. Let us be sure of this and let us be grounded in our faith.

Great things, such as the doctrine of eternal salvation are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Servant Forever (verses 12-18)

¹² **“If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman,**

This law follows after what was given in Exodus 21:1-11. Due to its being placed immediately after the giving of the Ten Commandments and the law of the Earthen Altar, it is obviously an important point.

There are some differences between what is stated here and what was given in Exodus 21, especially the more detailed words concerning the rights of the female in that previous

passage. Here in Deuteronomy, it uses the feminine form of the word “Hebrew,” *ha’ivriyah*. This is found only here and in Jeremiah 34:9.

In Exodus, there are rights and protections for the female that was brought into a state of betrothal within the household. This passage here doesn’t refer to that, but only speaks of a Hebrew man or woman who has been sold into bondage. That is seen in the next words...

12 (con’t) is sold to you and serves you six years,

The repeating pattern of six leading to a seventh is seen again here. God created six days and then rested. The Sabbath called for six days of work and then rest. There were to be six years of harvesting and then a seventh year of having the ground lay fallow. There were to be six years where debts were acceptable, but they were to be released on the seventh. And so on. In this case, there is six years of servitude for the Hebrew or Hebrewess...

12 (con’t) then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.

The cycle completes with the granting of freedom. God created and then was free from His labors, man worked, and then was freed from his labors, and so on. Here, there is a time of servitude, and then a mandated release from that state.

The word is *khophshi*. It was introduced in Exodus 21 and it has not been used since then. It is an adjective signifying free, or liberty. It is debated as to whether this means a full six years of work and then freedom, or if the person was to be freed in the Hebrew year of release which is a rotating seven-year period.

If the latter, it would mean they were to be released whether they had been slaves for any time up to six years. When the year of release came, release was to be granted. In other words, a Hebrew could serve *no more* than six years at the outside.

There is nothing specific to justify this interpretation. One must suppose this, but there is nothing to disprove it. And more, the year of release that we looked at last week specifically referred to the event. This does not. It states six followed by the seventh without any qualifiers. This is true each time the precept is mentioned.

Leviticus 25 is more detailed concerning slavery, such as noting that a slave can be redeemed from that state at any point. If not redeemed during that time, he was to be released at the seventh year.

However, Leviticus 25 also detailed what is known as the Year of Jubilee. Every Hebrew slave, with but one exception, was to be released in the fiftieth year *regardless* of how many years he had been a slave.

It would make no sense to mention that provision while not specifically speaking of the same during the seven-year cycle. Thus, the Hebrew slave was to work six and be freed on the seventh. The only exception is the Year of Jubilee. It is this exact provision, and the failure to abide by it, that brought about the Lord's wrath in Jeremiah –

Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ¹³ “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, ¹⁴ “At the end of seven years let every man set free his Hebrew brother, who has been sold to him; and when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you.” But your fathers did not obey Me nor incline their ear. ¹⁵ Then you recently turned and did what was right in My sight—every man proclaiming liberty to his neighbor; and you made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name. ¹⁶ Then you turned around and profaned My name, and every one of you brought back his male and female slaves, whom you had set at liberty, at their pleasure, and brought them back into subjection, to be your male and female slaves.”” Jeremiah 34:12-16

Because of their failure to uphold this provision of the law, the Lord promised He would judge them, saying –

“You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim liberty to you,’ says the LORD—‘to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! And I will deliver you to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth.”” Jeremiah 34:17

¹³ And when you send him away free from you, you shall not let him go away empty-handed;

It is obvious that after six years of slavery, if a person who had originally been sold into slavery because of poverty was set free with no provision, that person would immediately have to sell himself into bondage once again. This was not to occur.

The idea here follows after the Sabbath cycle. In the giving of the Ten Commandments, the Lord said, “Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it” (Exodus 20:11). And more to the point, in the initial giving of the Sabbath, it said –

“And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.” Exodus 16:5

In other words, the Lord did not just take care of the people for six days and then tell them to rest on the seventh without any provisions. Rather, He provided *before* the Sabbath so that in their time of release from work, they would be well supplied. The same is true with the seventh year Sabbath of the land –

“And if you say, ‘What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?’ ²¹ Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. ²² And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest.” Leviticus 25:20-22

This precept was seen in the previous sermon as well. Verses 9 and 10 presuppose that the people are to be gracious enough that the year of release will be a time of increase for the one who was given that release. Hence, Moses instructs for the released slave that...

¹⁴ you shall supply him liberally

There is a stress in the words: *haaneq taaniq lo* – “As a necklace, you shall necklace him.” It is a new verb in Scripture, *anaq*, meaning to serve as a necklace. It is found these two times and then once in the Psalms, where it says –

“Therefore pride serves as their necklace;
Violence covers them like a garment.” Psalm 73:6

The symbolism, then, is that of the owner heaping up all kinds of goods upon the person so that he will have a new start to life after his years of bondage. This is an addition to the law at Sinai. When the law was first given, it said, “*If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing*” (Exodus 21:2).

Instead of simply going out without paying for his freedom, exactly the opposite was to be the case. He was to go out necklaced with abundance. Moses says these goods are to be...

¹⁴ (con’t) from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your winepress.

The words here follow after those of the previous chapter in the tithing verses –

“And you shall eat before the Lord your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always.”
Deuteronomy 14:23

It is certain that if the man had a Hebrew slave, a part of that slave's work would involve care of these things. Thus, the owner benefited from the labors of the slave. As this was the case, the slave should be cared for from those labors as well. This is certainly the case because Moses next says...

14 (con't) From what the LORD your God has blessed you with, you shall give to him.

This follows from the next verse of Chapter 14 which said, "*when the Lord your God has blessed you.*" The Lord has blessed the owner through the slave. His work has brought increase, and so it is right that he should be weighed down with a portion of that after his six years of labor. And there is a specific reasoning behind this that Moses once again brings up...

15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you;

The idea of having been slaves in Egypt, and having been redeemed from there by the Lord, has been repeated numerous times already in Deuteronomy, but it is also poignantly stated elsewhere as well. In Leviticus 25, the underlying basis for the law of release from slavery is explicitly stated –

"For the children of Israel are servants to Me; they are My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 25:55

A Hebrew slave is ultimately a servant of the Lord. Therefore, they were to be released to their rightful Master after their time of servitude. As Moses says...

15 (con't) therefore I command you this thing today.

al ken anoki mesvekha eth ha'davar ha'zeh ha'yom – "upon thus I command you the word the this today." In other words, the command rests upon the truth that they were once slaves and the Lord redeemed them.

Again, and again, everything comes back to the fact that they were slaves and that they were redeemed. Thus, the law is justified in mandating these things. However, there may be a slave that doesn't want his freedom...

16 And if it happens that he says to you, 'I will not go away from you,' because he loves you and your house, since he prospers with you,

In these words, Moses sums up the previous law which was more expansive. From Exodus 21 –

“If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. ⁴ If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out by himself. ⁵ But if the servant plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’” Exodus 21:3-5

The slave is content, disposed towards both his life and those who he tends to, and his soul is prospering. If so...

¹⁷ then you shall take an awl and thrust *it* through his ear to the door,

An extra step is overlooked here from Exodus 21. It is a step which is presupposed based on the former command –

“then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.” Exodus 21:6

Having him brought before the judges was a future protection for both the slave and the owner. There in Exodus, rather than “to the judges,” the Hebrew says to take him *el ha’elohim*, or “to the God.” The Greek translates that as *pros to kriterion Theo*, or “to the judgment of God.” In the end, it is God who will see the act and accept it. The wording is specific.

Once he was brought before God, the action was then to be performed. This is the second and last use of *martsea*, or awl, in Scripture. It comes from *ratsa*, meaning to bore or pierce. With this, it says *v’nathathah b’azeno u-badelet* – “and give in his ear and in the door.”

In this, the words “ear” and “door” are parallel. The two are tied together as if they have become one.

¹⁷ (con’t) and he shall be your servant forever.

v’hayah lekha eved olam – “and will be to you servant forever.” The change is made, and it is permanent. The mark is a witness to the permanent ownership. This rite, repeated from Exodus 21, is given to picture our position in Christ.

It is accepted that this boring through the ear is what is being referred to in Psalm 40. That is a messianic psalm which speaks of Christ’s work –

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire;
My ears You have opened.

Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.

⁷ Then I said, "Behold, I come;

In the scroll of the book it is written of me.

⁸ I delight to do Your will, O my God,

And Your law is within my heart." Psalm 40:6-8

That is cited in Hebrews 10. However, Hebrews modifies the psalm just enough to show us that Christ's work *is* what is being pictured. There, it says –

"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,

But a body You have prepared for Me." Hebrews 10:5

Instead of "*My ears You have opened,*" it says "*a body You prepared for Me.*" The ears are being used in parallel with the entire body. Thus, the opening of the ear in the psalm refers to Christ's crucifixion. Because of His work, He is the Door of salvation –

"Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." John 10:7, 8

The slave wanting to stay with his owner, who is then united to him by uniting to the door, is a picture of our proclamation before God of receiving the work of Christ.

The slave willingly gave up his freedom and his rights in one economy and transferred them to another. When he was a free man of Israel, he was bound to the Law of Moses. As Paul shows in Galatians, the law is bondage. It is what shows us our sin and it is what condemns us. The law is not freedom; it is bondage, as both Paul and Peter say again and again in the New Testament –

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage." Galatians 5:1

The very thing that we think is freedom is, in fact, only another type of bondage. But for the slave of his master, it is *his master* who was bound to the law and the slave is bound to his master *under the law*. It is a picture of Christ fulfilling the law on our behalf. He is the Master, we are His slaves, and we are crucified with Him. As Paul says in Galatians 2:19-21 –

"For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. ²¹ I

do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

But there was always the chance that the master might have forced his slave to remain in bondage against his will. Who could tell if no public affirmation of his intent was made known? This is why Exodus specifically said that he had to be taken *el ha'elohim*, or “to the God.”

The affirmation is one which is voluntarily made and openly witnessed. The ownership is not forced but willingly accepted. This is an obvious picture of the free-will of man in his voluntary surrender to the Lord in the presence of “the God.” The picture is clear – we who are in Christ are free from the law because He fulfilled it on our behalf. As Paul says -

“For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord’s freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ’s slave. ²³ You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.” 1 Corinthians 7:22

And this position we possess is, as this verse says, *olam*. Here in Deuteronomy, we have a picture of the doctrine of eternal salvation. The picture given to us in the law tells us all we need to know. We are His servants forever! And that means any who come to Him...

17 (con’t) Also to your female servant you shall do likewise.

This is an obvious reference to Paul’s words in Galatians –

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28

With the picture of Christ complete, Moses now continues with words concerning the Hebrew who has served his time...

18 It shall not seem hard to you when you send him away free from you;

lo yiqsheh b’enekha – “No hard in your eyes.” The master was not to view the matter as any burden at all in letting the slave have his freedom. And the reason goes in two directions at once. The first is backwards to what has been...

18 (con’t) for he has been worth a double hired servant in serving you six years.

ki mishneh sekar sakir avadekha shes shanim – “For double the hire of the hireling serving you six years.” In other words, the owner saved the cost of paying a hired laborer. Because the slave wasn’t paid, he was worth twice as much to him.

As a point of context, the words of Isaiah 16:14 are not what is being referred to here –

“Within three years, as the years of a hired man, the glory of Moab will be despised with all that great multitude, and the remnant will be very small and feeble.” Isaiah 16:14

Jewish interpretation of this is that a hired servant was to be for no longer than three years, and thus the Hebrew slave would be worth twice that. That is not at all what Isaiah is saying. He is referring to a hired man counting the days for his pay, and that no work would be done without proper wages.

In other words, Isaiah’s prophecy was spoken and there would be no delay. The same thought is expressed again in Isaiah 21:16. The second direction of Moses’ words concerns the future...

^{18 (con’t)} **Then the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.**

Not only had the past been good to the master because of the free labor, but in being gracious to the slave upon his departure, the Lord would take note and bless him into the future.

As a point of theology, when viewing slavery as the consequences of sin (and sin coming through a violation of law), these words provide instruction. The people of God have been redeemed from that life. Thus, we are to then interact with others as redeemed sinners rather than righteous saints. It is why the master was to treat his Hebrew slave so generously.

And the limitation on the length of bondage, that of six years, certainly makes a picture of man’s bondage to the devil. The Bible shows that all people are born under his power. Our sin is inherited. John says that *“He who sins is of the devil” (1 John 3:8)*.

As all have sinned, then all are born under the devil’s power and authority. But the good news is that Jesus came to correct this. When we call on Christ, we move from the bondage of the devil to being servants of a new Master.

The six years of slavery, followed by the seventh year of freedom, surely forms a double picture. First, it looks to our time before coming to Christ and then the freedom we have in Him. This follows in picture from the six days of work followed by the seventh day of Sabbath rest.

Secondly, it is a picture of the six thousand years of man, living in the world of sin from the time of the fall. That is to be followed by the final thousand years called the millennium. It is a time where Christ will rule over all the nations. It is a time of liberty from the yoke of the devil and rest in Christ.

*I was a slave to the law which only pointed out my sin
I couldn't meet its expectations though I tried and tried
But in my place the Lord Jesus, the victory did win
Now my yoke is light and easy because for my sin He died*

*And so, with Him I desire ever to stay
As His slave, may I forevermore remain
May the joy of serving Him begin right now, today
I give up my freedom to sin and receive heavenly gain*

*My Master is tender and caring; to Him I will cleave
For all of eternity in His presence I will stay
All that I was asked to do was just believe
And now, life under my Master gets sweeter each day*

II. The firstborn of the herd and flock (verses 19-23)

¹⁹ “All the firstborn males that come from your herd and your flock you shall sanctify to the LORD your God;

Of these firstborn, Exodus 22:30 says, “It shall be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me.” Deuteronomy 12:6 then instructed the people to eat the firstborn in the place the Lord chooses.

What this obviously means is that the animal was to be set apart as holy on the eighth day, regardless as to when it was actually eaten. From the eighth day they were sanctified and set apart for when they traveled to where the tabernacle resided. During that time, however long it might be...

¹⁹ (con't) you shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock.

The animal already belonged to the Lord because of His claim on all the firstborn of man and beast. This was first as a memorial of having spared the firstborn of Israel while taking the firstborn of Egypt – of both man and livestock.

Secondly, it typologically anticipates Christ and those in Him, as it says in Romans 8:29 that He is “the firstborn among many brethren.”

These animals were sanctified to Him, and they were therefore not to be used for ordinary purposes. Nor could they be dedicated in a vow to the Lord (Leviticus 27:26). One cannot

dedicate something to the Lord that already belongs to Him. Of them, Moses now repeats the general thought already seen three times in Deuteronomy...

²⁰ You and your household shall eat *it* before the LORD your God year by year in the place which the LORD chooses.

This is perfectly in accord with the previous verses of 12:6, 12:17, and 14:23. At the time when the tithes were dedicated, so were the firstborn to be eaten.

The term “year by year” speaks of the pilgrim feasts which came around at the set times each year. But before eating them, they had to first be sacrificed and offered to the Lord –

“But the firstborn of a cow, the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar, and burn their fat as an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the Lord. ¹⁸ And their flesh shall be yours, just as the wave breast and the right thigh are yours.” Numbers 18:17, 18

The animal was not worked or sheared for personal gain. Instead, it was sacrificed to the Lord, a sacred portion belonging to the priest (and which both priest and portion picture Christ), and the rest was then eaten by the family in the presence of the Lord in joy and rejoicing. However, Moses next provides an exception...

²¹ But if there is a defect in it, *if it is lame or blind or has any serious defect*, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

Though not stated, we can assume that the rule of the firstborn surely still applies in this situation. The animal was to be sanctified to the Lord and neither worked nor sheared. However, it was not to be sacrificed to Him if it had a defect. Offering any animal to the Lord that possessed a defect would destroy the typology of the pure and undefiled Christ who offered Himself to the Lord. Of such a defect...

²² You may eat it within your gates; the unclean and the clean *person alike may eat it, as if it were a gazelle or a deer.*

Saying, “You may” gives the impression that it could be otherwise. However, being a firstborn, and probably not to be worked or shorn, this is more likely a command, “You shall.” Either way, this refers back to Chapter 12 –

“However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, whatever your heart desires, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, of the gazelle and the deer alike.” Deu 12:15

The firstborn that bore a defect was to be eaten as a common animal, within the gates and without first being presented to the Lord as a sacrifice. But, like all animals at all times...

***23 (fin) Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it on the ground like water.**

raq, eth damo lo tokel, al ha'aretz tishpekenu kamayim – “Only! It’s blood no you shall eat; on the ground you shall pour it like water.” With minor exceptions, the words are almost identical to Deuteronomy 12:16.

As was then noted, to eat the blood is to assimilate into oneself something that belonged to the Lord alone because the life is in the blood. It is considered an act of idolatry to use it in any other way than designated by Him. If blood was not used in the rites of the tabernacle, it was to be poured out and covered with earth.

When it was used in the temple rites, it typologically anticipated Christ. When it was poured out and covered with the dust, as is explicitly stated elsewhere, that also typologically anticipated Christ. Either way, to eat the blood was to destroy the typology, and thus, like presenting a defective animal for sacrifice, was also forbidden.

Though not all of the details were explained in the passage today, because they have been explained several times in the recent past, everything about these twelve verses in this passage points to God’s workings for us in Jesus Christ.

Paul, as a Pharisee and one who was completely educated in the law, saw this perfectly. Hence, he calls the law a shadow of which Christ is the Substance. Paul lived out his life fulfilling this law as best he could. But when Christ came, He missed the fulfillment of the typology.

However, with the coming of a great light and a voice from heaven, it all started to come into focus. He was able to take all of that knowledge he had been endowed with, and he was able to then say, “I see how this is fulfilled in Him.”

As this is so, he then realized the purpose of it all. The countless details, the many years under the law, the call of the prophets, and the coming of Christ... It was all to show that God had kept His promises.

From the Lord’s words in Genesis 3 concerning the Seed of the woman, to His loving utterance on the Mount of Transfiguration – *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”* – right up to the words of the Lord on the cross, *“It is finished,”* everything was pointing to God’s work in Christ. And this includes all of the Law of Moses.

Paul saw that and he turned from his self-centered hopes for righteousness to the imputed righteousness of God in Christ. From that awakened standpoint, he spoke out concerning the law. It was a tool, a pointing arrow, a tutor, and a revealer of what God was doing and would do.

Paul and the other apostles never spoke against the law, although they were certainly accused of having done so. Rather, they confessed that the law had a purpose, and that purpose was now fulfilled. To speak against the law would be no different than to speak against the prophet Isaiah who was a prophet under the law.

However, these men learned to situate the law in its proper place, showing that it was only a steppingstone to a higher, richer, and more glorious place where we can sit at the feet of the Redeemer of mankind and revel in what He did with the law – living it out perfectly, fulfilling it, and then setting it aside through a better and surer covenant based upon a better and surer hope.

If you have not come to that realization yet, I pray that today will be the day. In your feeble attempts at meriting righteousness through the observance of the law, you are – exactly and nothing less – saying to God, “I will do it on my own. I don’t need Jesus. I’ve got this one.”

I pray that you will find proper perspective concerning this law – this marvelous treasure of wisdom and understanding – by finding in it the Person of Jesus Christ. And then, it is my prayer that you will set yourself aside, believe that God has done it all for you, and submit to that fact by simply trusting in Christ, and in Christ alone, for your salvation. In this, you will become an acceptable receptacle for the dwelling of God’s Holy Spirit.

May it be so, and may it be today. And may all of God’s people say, Amen.

Closing Verse: *“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20*

Next Week: Deuteronomy 16:1-8 He is our Lamb, and to Him we do applaud... (A Passover to the Lord your God) (49th Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Lord Your God Redeemed You

“If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman
Is sold to you and serves you six years, such he may do
Then in the seventh year
You shall let him go free from you

And when you send him away free from you
You shall not let him go away empty-handed
You shall supply him liberally from your flock
From your threshing floor, and from your winepress
-----be sure this is clearly understood

From what the LORD your God has blessed you with
You shall give to him; pay careful heed to what I say
You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt
And the LORD your God redeemed you
-----therefore I command you this thing today

And if it happens that he says to you
‘I will not go away from you;’ such he does do
Because he loves you and your house
Since he prospers with you

Then you shall take an awl
And thrust it through his ear to the door – a bit ouchy I surmise
And he shall be your servant forever
Also to your female servant you shall do likewise

It shall not seem hard to you
When you send him away free from you
For he has been worth a double hired servant
-----in serving you six years
Then the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do

“All the firstborn males that come from your herd and your flock
You shall to the LORD your God sanctify
You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd
Nor shear the firstborn of your flock; these rules you shall apply

You and your household shall eat it before the LORD your God
Year by year in the place which the LORD chooses; take it there
But if there is a defect in it, if it is lame or blind
-----or has any serious defect
You shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God; of this beware

You may eat it within your gates
The unclean and the clean person alike may eat it, as if it were
-----a gazelle or a deer
Only you shall not eat its blood
You shall pour it on the ground like water; and so
-----the Lord Your God you shall fear

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...