

God's First Giving of the Law was about Simple Obedience

To begin we need to get the chronology right. First of all there was only one law given to man and that was in Genesis 2:16 which was:-

"And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

Rising from this are the seven Noahide laws that according to the Talmud's interpretation of Gen 2:16 were given to Adam in the Garden of Eden. The 7th law according to Jewish tradition was added after the flood.

- 1 Prohibition of Idolatry
- 2 Prohibition of Murder
- 3 Prohibition of Theft
- 4 Prohibition of Sexual immorality
- 5 Prohibition of Blasphemy
- 6 Prohibition of eating flesh taken from an animal while it is still alive
- 7 Establishment of courts of law



The Ten Commandments date to c.1424bc after the Israelites left Egypt. Faithfulness to god is emphasised



Then came the man-made Mitzvah laws setting out punishments and controlling every aspect of life that meant helping others was impossible due to it being seen as breaking the law, for example working on the Sabbath

Then came the Babylonian Exile c. 587 BC that lasted approx. fifty years. This was seen by the prophets as being due to the nations disobedience, so when the people returned to Jerusalem greater emphasis was placed on the study of the law until the Jews became "the people of the book." This intensive study resulted in an increasing body of traditions that came to be regarded as no less binding than the law itself. Scribes, professional students and exponents of the law and traditions were needed to prescribe exact regulations for every occasion. Sadly in their meticulous care over details of tradition the scribes sometimes forgot the more fundamental concerns of the law itself (Mark 7:1-13; Mark 3:4-5; Matthew 23:23) – Source: "Handbook to the Bible" published by Lion.

When we consider God's commandment we realise the spirit of God's Law which we see below has been broken in all its aspects. "love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and Prophets" (Mat 22:37-40)



What Jesus said about the Mitzvah secular laws

"These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men." Matthew 15:8-9

"they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit." Matthew 15:14.

Jesus said to them, "why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?" Matthew 15:3

For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. Mar 7:8-13

The Apostle Paul

The apostle Paul makes it very clear that the Old Testament way of salvation was the same as the New Testament way, which is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. To prove this, Paul points us to Abraham, who was saved by faith: "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

So what can we say about Abraham? What did he learn about faith? This is what Romans 4:1-3 says, "If Abraham was made right by the things he did, he had a reason to boast about himself. But God knew different. That's why the Scriptures say, "Abraham believed God, and because of this he was accepted as one who is right with God." (ERV)

Again, Paul quotes the Old Testament to prove his point in Genesis 15:6, "Abram believed the LORD, and because of this faith the Lord accepted him as one who has done what is right." (ERV) Abraham could not have been saved by keeping the Mitzvah law because he lived long before they were written by the Levite Priests!

As Paul wrote in Colossians 2:8 "Beware lest anyone rob you through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ."

Paul continued to warn us about the man-made Mitzvah law which can cause us to place more importance on our own works rather than on the finished work of Christ writing in Col 2:14-16,

"Because we broke God's laws, we owed a debt--a debt that listed all the rules we failed to follow. But God forgave us of that debt. He took it away and nailed it to the cross. He defeated the rulers and powers of the spiritual world. With the cross he won the victory over them and led them away, as defeated and powerless prisoners for the whole world to see. So don't let anyone make rules for you about eating and drinking or about Jewish customs (festivals, New Moon celebrations, or Sabbath days)."