

## “And The Law Came In Besides ...”

This phrase is taken from a greater context which reads, “*For as through the one man disobedience the man were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. And the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound, but where sin abounded grace did abound more exceedingly: that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*” (Rom. 5:19-21).

It has already been noted that the consequences of both Adam’s sin and Christ’s grace affects the same people. The writer labors this point extensively. By the trespass of Adam the many died; the grace of God abounded to the many (Rom. 5:15). The judgment of one unto condemnation; the free gift came unto justification (Rom. 5:16). Through the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; through the gift of one, righteousness reigned in life (Rom. 5:17). Through the trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation, through the one act of righteousness, the free gift came unto all men to justification of life (Rom. 5:18). We must therefore conclude that the statement that through the one man’s disobedience, the many were made sinners and through the obedience of the one the many shall be made righteous, the same people are under consideration. The many are not made righteous because of the grace of Christ apart from their own will. Conversely, the many are not made sinners because of the disobedience of the one without their own will. These verses teach neither the doctrine of universal salvation nor the doctrine of inherited sin.

“*And the law came in besides ...*” What law? It is correctly pointed out that the article “*the*” is not in the original text, leading some to conclude that he has simply law in mind, not the law Moses gave. We cannot accept this conclusion for the fact that the “*law*” which came in ADDED to an already existent state. That state was that some clearly were transgressors and were “*dead*.” If these already were suffering death as a consequence of Adam’s transgression and their suffering “*death*” was because they, like him, had transgressed God’s law; then added to their already separated state from God, the law came in beside. There was law before the law was revealed and reference to a “*la*” which came in besides is reference to further revelation of law; not the first declaration of it.

“*The law came in besides that the trespass might abound.*” Did God give law solely to make men more guilty of sin? God forbid! But through the law that came in besides, the trespass did abound. How?

Think of it this way. Did it only become wrong for one to murder after the ten commandments were given? Certainly not. Cain murdered his brother. Did he sin? Was it only wrong for men to be guilty of homosexual deeds after the law was revealed? No, for Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed for that sin long before the law. Was it only wrong for a man to commit adultery when the law forbade it? If that were true, explain Joseph's behavior in his rejection of the overtures of Potiphar's wife. The law forbade bearing false witness. Abraham lied before that law as revealed. Was it right for him to lie about the relationship between him and Sarah? All these things were wrong long before the ten commandments. Why? Are some things inherently sinful and this is part of our very being, that we are born with an innate sense of their sinful character? Some think so, but human behavior apart from exposure to the revelation of law denies this. Men have to be TAUGHT that adultery, lying, murder and stealing are sinful. We are not born with that innate knowledge.

Well, then, if "*the law*" is the "*law of Moses*" and it came in besides that the trespass might abound, how did it do that without increasing the number of sin we might be guilty of? I believe the answer is found in the fact that prior to the law of Moses, law was oral, passed from one Patriarch to another. But, with the advent of the Law, Israel was more keenly of the origin of the Law, that it came from God and the gravity of its violation was magnified in their eyes. They had passed from an oral law to a written one, the consequences of offense of which was greatly enhanced in their mind.

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