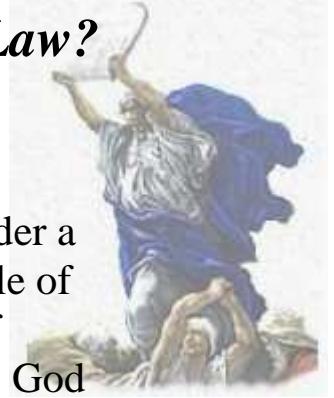




Why did God give man the Law?

*"the strength of sin is the law"
(1 Cor 15:56)*



In America and most of the modern world today we live under a system of government that is most often referred to as a “rule of law” society. Laws and rules are intended for the benefit of everyone. Is this why God send Moses with the Law? Was God concerned primarily with the smooth function of society? Jesus reduced the Old Testament down to two laws: love for God and love for neighbor.

Jesus made the Old Testament simple. He reduced it down to those two simple laws. Thomas Jefferson is likewise well known for his statement concerning the simplicity of government, "Those are governed best who are governed least." Nevertheless, the Jews are quick to claim that Old Testament Pentateuch is composed of six hundred and thirteen laws. Indeed it is true that the Old Testament was one of the pillar documents used during the formation of the United States Constitution.

In this Bible Study we are going to seek an answer to the question, “Why did God send the law?” And secondly, we will ask, “What does God intend for us to do with the Old Testament Law?”

In order to obtain a sufficient answer we will need to drop our own preconceived ideas concerning law. We will need to view the New Testament from the background of the Old Testament and we will need to understand what Jesus said.

Have any of you ever heard the saying, “If God doesn’t judge America he is going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah? We are going to learn through this study that quite contrary, if God were to judge America, He would have to apologize to Jesus!

The sad reality is that if America keeps moving headlong into it’s downward spiral, the nation will end up judging itself! The scripture says, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7). The same is true for a nation; it reaps what it sows.



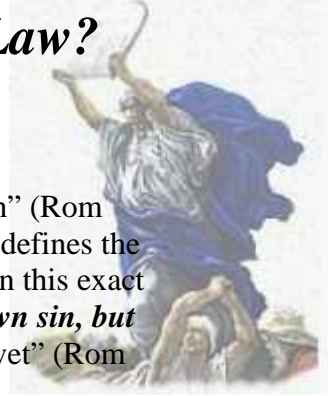
The difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament is more than the blank page between Malachi 4:6 and Matthew 1:1! It is critical that we clearly understand the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Paul said, “And *the*

law is not of faith” (Gal 3:12). If we combine this passage with another of Paul’s



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statements, we are startled to see the result, "for *whatsoever is not of faith* is sin" (Rom 14:23). We just read that law is not of faith; so, can we conclude that the Bible defines the law as sin? Was it Paul's intent to teach that the law is sin? Notice his words on this exact issue, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, ***I had not known sin, but by the law***: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom 7:7). So, the idea is that the law teaches us exactly what sin is!

Paul taught that it is a sin for us to believe that we can serve God based upon keeping the laws of the Old Testament! The Old Covenant and the New Covenant are incompatible! The people served God during the period of the Old Covenant, out of fear; on the other hand, in the New Covenant period, the people are supposed to serve God out of love. These two concepts are distinctly different!

Justification comes by faith not by works! God takes pleasure in us not based upon our own righteousness; instead, he takes pleasure in us based upon Jesus' righteousness, "Therefore being ***justified by faith, we have peace with God*** through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 5:1). Since we are already justified, we should rejoice during the present; right standing with God is not some future reality in the "by and by." God loves us because He is love; not because we are lovely, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, ***while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us***" (Rom 5:8). And, this is not just true for Christians, "and not for ours only, but also for the sins of ***the whole world***" (1 John 2:2).

Before we were born-again, we didn't study the Bible; before we were born-again, we didn't spend time in prayer; before we were born-again, we simply didn't focus on any kind of God's type of righteousness! Nevertheless, at that time in our lives God gave us His greatest gift. The question is, "Why now that we are focused upon Him do we try to tie our performance to His love for us?"

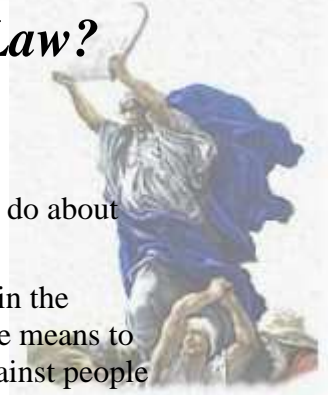
If grace saved us when we were sinners, then now that we are Christians grace should be that much more effectual in our lives, "where sin abounded, ***grace did much more abound***" (Rom 5:20). Paul wrote, "***As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus*** the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col 2:6). God loved us enough to save us when we were sinners (*sin was our condition when we originally received him; sin, therefore should not somehow reject us.*) Should we not much more expect him to love us now, even when we occasionally sin! We should ***never*** live in any form of condemnation, "There is therefore now ***no condemnation*** to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). The point is that we did not obtain righteousness because of our righteous performance; instead, we were born into sin, likewise, we were born into the righteousness of God.

Essentially, the Bible teaches that sin came through of Adam. This means that sin entered into this world totally apart from our performance, "Wherefore, as ***by one man sin entered into the world***, and death by sin; and ***so death passed upon all men***, for that all have sinned" (Rom 5:12). We became sinners at our birth because of Adam! Therefore, it is important that we do not get confused about our nature; we are not sinners because we sin,



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we sin because we are sinners! The question is, "So what was God supposed to do about human sin?"

God did not hold sins against people until the law came, "until the law sin was in the world: but *sin is not imputed when there is no law.*" (Rom 5:13-14). To impute means to charge to one's account. In essence God's displeasure with sin was not held against people until Moses came with the law! Now don't get me wrong, God was not pleased with sin; but, neither was He angry with people because of their sin!

We need to realize why God put Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden. Some falsely believe that Adam and Eve were put out of the Garden of Eden because God is a Holy God, and a Holy God cannot fellowship with unholy people. However, that is not why God put them out of the Garden. Notice what the Bible says were the words of God, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, *to know good and evil*: and now, *lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever*: 23 Therefore (The reason that they were put out of the Garden of Eden was because they disobeyed, they were put out



because they could not eat of the tree of life and live forever as a sinner.) the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden" (Gen 3:22-23). God did not want man to live forever under a sinful nature!

Imagine what the world would be like today if Adolph Hitler were still alive. Now include in your imagination every evil person who has lived during the last 6,000 years. What would the world be like? Essentially, death is a

merciful act. Death literally puts people out of their misery! If you would like to know more about why God created the "Law of Sin and Death," we suggest that you order the *Rivkah Ministries*, Bible Study entitled, "*There is a way that seems right*"

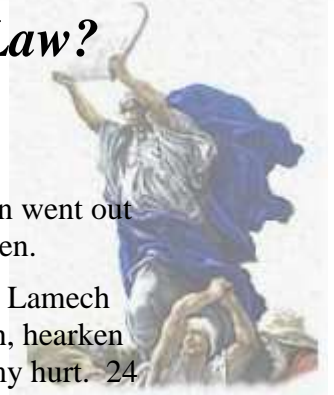
<http://www.rivkah.org/PDFs/030109.pdf> for more information. You may obtain a copy of that study and/or the sound file from <http://www.Rivkah.org>.

God cursed Cain after he killed his brother Abel; God told him, "When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. 13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. 14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. 15 And the LORD said unto him, Therefore *whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the*



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LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. 16 And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

Several generations after Cain (*while he was still alive*) a great grandson named Lamech had the following to say, "Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for **I have slain a man** to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. 24 **If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold**" (Gen 4:23-24). Essentially, Lamech justified himself by comparing his offense with his great grandfather Cain! However, the Scripture teaches that this kind of justification is very foolish, "they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor 10:12). Like the proverbial frogs in a pot of hot water where the temperature continues to rise; if they were to compare themselves among themselves they would say, "Well he's not dead yet and I can certainly withstand the heat better than he, so I must be okay."

We know that the whole pre-flood world finally became totally given over to sin, "GOD saw that **the wickedness of man was great in the earth**, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart **was only evil continually**. 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and **it grieved him at his heart**" (Gen 6:5-6). Now understand, God was not mad at the evil in the people; instead He grieved because of their debauchery.

Since Lamech is representative of a type of the people of that age, let's notice one of their greatest problems. They were comparing themselves among themselves; they said, "Well this is not so bad, since God did not stop Cain from his murder then He won't hold my killing against me either, especially since my actions were more justifiable! (*This is the first "justifiable homicide" in the Bible.*) In essence,

since God did nothing to restrain evil the people took His inaction as tacit approval of their own way. Lamech became righteous unto himself. God had to place a restraint upon sin; He did it in two ways. First he greatly reduced their life expectancy from 900+ to 120 years; secondly, several generations later He sent the law! However, the law was intended only to be a temporary measure!

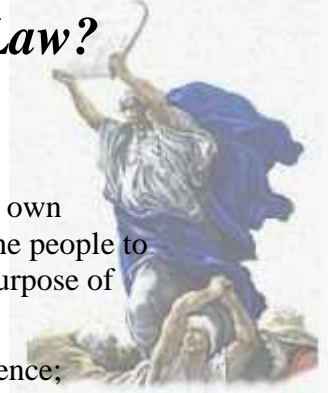


We must learn how to separate or distinguish the differences between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. We cannot fit or force the Old Covenant law into the covenant of grace, "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved" (Matt 9:17).



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By God doing nothing to condemn Cain's murder of Abel, Lamech justified his own murder of another! Therefore, God had to introduce law; He had to introduce the people to the knowledge of sin, **"I had not known sin, but by the law"** (Rom 7:7). The purpose of the law is to show humanity how deadly sin is!

We have observed how Cain's murder of Abel resulted in a relatively light sentence; however, later, when the Law of Moses showed up, it is obvious that the consequences for sin were greatly increased; notice some of the consequences:

- "A man also or woman **that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard**, shall surely be put to death: **they shall stone them with stones**: their blood shall be upon them" (Lev 20:27);
- "**he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD**, he shall surely be put to death, and **all the congregation shall certainly stone him**" (Lev 24:16);
- "while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, **they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day**. 33 And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation . . . 35 And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: **all the congregation shall stone him with stones** without the camp" (Num 15:32-35);
- "And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is **a murderer**: the murderer **shall surely be put to death**" (Num 35:17);
- "**If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son**, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother . . . And **all the men of his city shall stone him with stones**, that he die" (Deut 21:18-21);
- "But if this thing be true, and **the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel**: 21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and **the men of her city shall stone her with stones** that she die" (Deut 22:20-21).

Under Moses' Law, people were put to death for seemingly small issues such as rebellious children; loss of virginity; and, picking up sticks on the Sabbath. In today's modern society most of these transgressions would practically be commonplace!

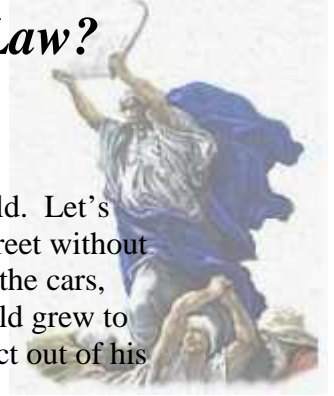
So what was the difference? Why did God allow Cain to "get away with" murder and yet God's law put to death a man for picking up sticks on the Sabbath? Is God merciful, or is He vengeful? Surely God is not capricious and changing from one instant to the next. Will the real God please stand up? Is God somehow schizophrenic? NO! God did not give the law to people so they could keep it and earn their way into His graces; instead, He gave the law to bring the people out of the deception of their own rationalization and self-righteousness. The people needed to learn that their own standard of righteousness was not according to God's standard of righteousness!

Through the law, God set the bar so high that nobody was able to keep it, "As it is written, **There is none righteous, no, not one**" (Rom 3:10). Man had to learn that he must stop trying and start trusting! Man needed to learn that any form of law keeping is a problem.



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Let's take an analogy of a mother who is trying to teach safety to her young child. Let's suppose that several times she had to paddle her child because he crossed the street without looking both ways. In time, the child learned to look both ways, not for fear of the cars, instead, the child looked both ways to avoid getting a paddling. Finally, the child grew to be a man, would the man look both ways for fear of a spanking or would he react out of his maturity in order to avoid the potential danger?

Paddling in the life of a child keeps them from danger and from mischief. So too is the law! Indeed, Paul wrote, "the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor 15:56). Most people falsely assume that the law was given so that humanity could break the dominion of sin. That is completely incorrect!

The law was given to strengthen sin! Sin has completely defiled humanity and all of humanity is guilty of sin. James wrote, "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and **yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all**" (James 2:10). The law is just like a huge glass window at the grocery store. It doesn't matter if you throw a small rock through the window or drive a Mack-truck through the window; in either case the window is broken! In the same way, it doesn't matter if you are a better sinner than I am. Who wants to be the best sinner that ever went to hell?

Just like the grocery store window we have all sinned and broken the law. It didn't matter if it was with a small rock or a large truck, both broke the window! Sin has beaten all of us! And, especially when it comes to sinning, it would be foolish for us to compare ourselves among ourselves! God does not grade on a curve! According to law, any sin makes us a sinner. So why then did God make the law? To condemn all of us forever? NO! God made the law to convict us of sin! As long as we were comparing ourselves among ourselves we eventually end up with the following attitude: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:11-12).

This is why Paul wrote, "the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor 15:56). The law essentially brings out the sin in the people, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor 3:6). Paul added that the law was essentially a, "**ministration of death**, written and engraven in stones" (2 Cor 3:7). The law condemned and yet it "was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away" (2 Cor 3:7). If the ministration of death brought glory, "How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? 9 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory" (2 Cor 3:8-9).

God does not want us to live in condemnation, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). We have observed that the law does not give life; instead, it is death. For us to think: God loves us; and God answers our prayers; and God moves in our lives; based upon our performance is death! Nevertheless, most Christians would agree with the sentiment, "If I am living in sin, God won't answer my



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prayer; God won't use an unholy vessel!" This kind of thinking is performance based thinking! What we need to realize is that God doesn't have any other kind of vessel to use! The moment that we start comparing our selves among ourselves, we get into trouble!

Through the law, God has raised the bar so high that humanity has to just give up and say, "I can't keep it! I give up trying!" Paul described the end result, "Now we know that what



things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: **that every mouth may be stopped**, and **all the world may become guilty** before God" (Rom 3:19). Through the law God stopped every mouth! Why? Why did God want to make man guilty and stop every mouth? Paul continues, "Therefore **by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified** in his sight: **for by the law is the knowledge of sin**" (Rom 3:20). We understand sin because of the law! The law

makes sin plain. Keeping the law does not give us relationship with God! Indeed, the law makes it turn out that, "**the world may become guilty before God.**"

It goes further! Paul makes it clear that the law cannot make us just, "Therefore **by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified** in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom 3:20). The law only gives us the knowledge of our sin. Humanity is only left to conclude that they are sunk by trying to keep the law!

Let's engage in another ridiculously hypothetical satiation: Suppose a disturbed man were to go into a church with a 150-foot ceiling and say, "I am going to kill everyone that cannot touch the ceiling when they jump up." Some may happen to jump higher than the others; but, nobody is going to be able to reach the ceiling! Not even if you are Michael Jordan will you be able to reach the 150-foot ceiling. This means that everybody is dead! Notice that the man did not say, "I am going to let the person who jumps the highest remain alive."

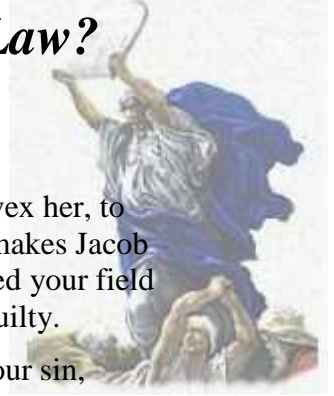
While that analogy is silly; it is nevertheless trustworthy; nobody is going to be able to perfectly keep the law! God made the law beyond our human capacity to keep it. It is intended to bring us to the point where we say, "I just can't make it! 'God be merciful to me a sinner' (Luke 18:13)!" Like the paddling of a child so they learn to look both ways, the law as only intended to be a temporary measure, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, **till** (*This word means until! Therefore it means that it is temporary!*) the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Gal 3:19).

Through the law, God had to put a limit on sin! Notice how the law even made those born before the law into sinners, "The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover" (Lev 18:9); this law makes father Abraham (*who married a half*



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sister) a sinner! Notice further, "Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time" (Lev 18:18); this law makes Jacob (*who married two sisters*) a sinner! You likewise would be a sinner if you sowed your field with mixed seed or if you wore clothes with mixed fabric! The law makes us guilty.

However, as a result of Jesus' coming, God does not deal with us according to our sin, "God was *in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses* unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor 5:19). The law commands death but Jesus commands life. God wants us to serve him; however, He wants us to serve Him out of Love not out of fear! Since, "the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor 15:56); it is stupid for anybody to sin because their deeds eventually catch-up with them! However, we don't need to live in sin, "For *sin shall not have dominion over you*: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom 6:14).

We need to understand the basics of the Gospel, "the gospel of Christ: for *it is the power of God*" (Rom 1:16). The Gospel (*which is the power of God*) is literally Good News! It is good news that we are forgiven through the blood of Jesus! It is **not** good news for us to find out that we are the scum of the earth because of our sin! It is Good News that the curse has been broken, "For as many as are of the works of the law are *under the curse*" (Gal 3:10). However, Galatians 3:13 says that, "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law.*"

Do we really understand that it is a sin to try to relate to God based upon our own performance or goodness? Righteousness is a fruit and not the root of our salvation! We do not have to try to do something in order to get accepted by God; instead, because we have already been accepted by God we naturally will do good!

There is a definite difference between faith and legalism! "*Is the law then against the promises of God?* God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal 3:21). The law brings death and grace brings life!

The law made everyone guilty; "But *the scripture hath concluded all under sin*, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But *before faith came, we were kept under the law*, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ*, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal 3:22-25).

Torah
תּוֹרָה

The Hebrew word "Torah" (תּוֹרָה) is from the Hebrew root, (*yara*) (יָרָה) which means "to shoot," such as shooting an arrow in order to hit a target. The emphasis of (*yara*) is on "hitting the mark." Thus, (*Torah*) is teaching that "hits the mark" especially with regard to God and His standard of righteousness. (*Torah*) should be thought of not as "law," but "teaching" or "instruction."



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We discover this same truth when we take a look at the origins of the ancient Hebrew letters. Those ancient letters form the word (*Torah*); In ancient Hebrew they would picture a representation of a hand that performs work. The closed hand represents the idea of work, throw, make, etc. The meaning is a "working hand." Next the head of a man is represented as the top of the body. It can also mean the top or head of anything such as the body, time, mountaintop, rank, etc. This letter can also represent a man. The English pronunciation of this letter is an "R."



The letter (*yod*) is derived from a picture of the hand of a man performing a man's work is the Hebrew word "YaR" this word is the first two (*rightmost letters below left*). Next, we derive the Hebrew word, "YaReH." This root word begins with the parent root "YaR;" the word finishes with a vowel "eH" after the first two letters (*left side*). This root word has the specific meaning of the "throwing of the hand of man."



There are two classic Hebrew words formed from the basic root "YaReH;" (*see below*).



and



The first Hebrew word is, "*MoWRaH*" which is a noun and is made by adding a (*mem*) to the front of the word (*as seen above left*). When the first letter of the root is a (*yad*) and a prefix (*in this case a mah*) is added, the (*yad*) is replaced by the vowel (*waw*) (*ow sound*). The Hebrew word *Moreh* means, "one who throws from the hand." This can be pictured as an "archer" who throws the arrow, or a "teacher" who throws the finger in the way the

student is to go (👉). On the other hand the Hebrew word, "*ToWRaH*" is formed in the exact same fashion except that a (*Taw*) is placed at the front of the word instead of a (*Mah*) (*see above right*). This produces the Hebrew word (*Torah*); *Torah* is (*what is thrown by the Moreh*). This can be the "arrow" from the archer or the "direction" (*teachings and instructions*) from the teacher. Therefore, the true Hebraic understanding of "*Torah*" is not law, but rather "instruction" and "teaching" such as a father would provide for his children.



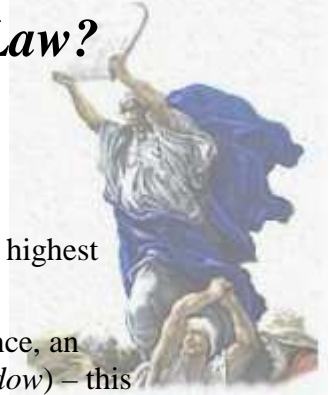
From the pictorial meaning of the Hebrew letters we can easily conclude that the "*Torah*" is intended to give instruction. However, the Hebrew letters also each have a literal meaning as follows:

- (*Tav*) Literal Meaning: a sign, a cross
Symbolic Meaning: a covenant, to seal



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- (Vav) Literal Meaning: nail Symbolic Meaning: "and", to add, to secure
- (Reysh) Literal Meaning: head Symbolic Meaning: person, the head, the highest
- (Hey) Literal Meaning: window, fence Symbolic Meaning: to reveal

If the meanings of each letter in the word "*Torah*" is combined to make a sentence, an amazing truth is revealed: Tav (*cross*) + Vav (*nail*) + Reysh (*head*) + Hey (*window*) – this could result in the following sentence: (To) a cross, (is) nail (ed); the highest, is revealed! Or if one wants to keep the literal “head” for Reysh, they would get: “**Nailed** to a **cross**, at his **head**, it is **revealed**.” This is reminiscent of what was written “Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.” (Matthew 27:37).

The New Testament teaches that we belong to Christ, “And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal 3:29). Since we are Christ's then in the spirit we are identical to Jesus and God looks on our hearts (*spirit*). The Old Testament monitored performance! The law continues to tell you, “your wrong;” “you missed I;” “you're no good;” but, Jesus comes along and offers us right standing with God!

The net result is that we live holier under grace than we did under the law! Religion tries to get people to “tow the mark;” Rom 7:5 “For when we were in the flesh, the motions (*actions*) of sins, **which were by the law**, did **work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death**” (Rom 7:5). The law brought death, “But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit” (Rom 7:6).

So why did God give the Law? And, is the Law intended to be sin? “**What shall we say then? Is the law sin?** God forbid. Nay, **I had not known sin, but by the law**” (Rom 7:7). We understand sin because of the law.

God never gives us what we deserve; instead, He gives us what Jesus deserved! However, the only way we can get what Jesus deserved is through faith, “But that **no man is justified by the law** in the sight of God, it is evident: for, **The just shall live by faith**” (Gal 3:11).