

Chapter 49

The place of the law in true heart conversion

"To Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. ... The law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect" (Galatians 3:16,17).

Was the law given to put discouragement into the hearts of the people? No. Go back to Abraham, and we shall see what else was taught by the giving of the law.

There was a promise to Abraham of a righteous inheritance. God had pledged His own existence that there should be righteous men--whose righteousness should be equal to the righteousness of the law.

But here was the law in awful majesty. There could be no righteousness gotten out of it. Now put two things together: the law is so holy that no man can get any righteousness out of it; but God had sworn that there should be men who would have all the righteousness that it demands. Therefore the very giving of the law showed the people that there must be another way of getting that same righteousness.

The One who gave the law was the One who brought them out of Egypt, who swore to Abraham that he and his seed should be righteous through Christ. So there was a super abundance of grace. That is acted out every time there is a sinner converted. Before his conversion he has not realized the sinfulness of his sins. Then the law comes in and shows him how awful those sins are, but with it comes a gentle voice of Christ in whom there is grace and life.

Shall we go about mourning and sighing, saying our sins are so great that God cannot forgive? It is God who shows us our sins. By His

law, He drives the sins home to our hearts and then that sin abounds in the proportion that it should. It was small in our eyes before; but He makes us see it as He sees it. No matter how great are the sins, there is grace much more than enough. [1]

Note:

Waggoner, General Conference Bulletin, 1891,
No. 9.