

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 19.-*Of the Law of God.*

III. Beside this Law, commonly called Moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a Church under age, Ceremoniall Laws containing severall typical Ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits¹; and partly, holding forth divers instructions of moral duties². All which Ceremonial Laws are now abrogated, under the New Testament³.

Question 1.—*Was God pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a Church under age, ceremonial laws containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings and benefits?*

Answer.—Yes. Gal. 4:1-3. It contained also an elaborate system of symbols, wherein spiritual truths were significantly set forth by outward visible signs, the vast majority of which were types, or prophetic symbols, setting forth the person and work of Christ and the benefits of his redemption.

That the ceremonial law introduced by Moses was typical of Christ and his work is taught throughout the New Testament, and especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb. 9; Heb. 10:1. It was declared to be a “shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.” The tabernacle and its services were “patterns of things in the heavens,” and figures, types, of the true tabernacle, into which Christ has now entered for us, Col. 2:17; Heb. 9:23, 24. Christ is said to have effected our salvation by offering himself as a sacrifice and by acting as our high priest, Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:11, 12, 26, 28; 13:11, 12. That the coming of Christ has superseded and forever done away with the ceremonial law is also evident from the very fact just stated—that its ceremonies were types of him, that they were the shadows of which he was the substance. Their whole purpose and design were evidently discharged as soon as his real work of satisfaction was accomplished; and therefore it is not only a truth taught in Scripture, Heb. 10:1-14; Col. 2:14-17; Eph. 2:15, 16, but an undeniable historical fact, that the priestly work of Christ immediately and definitely superseded the work of the Levitical priest. The instant of Christ’s death, the veil separating the throne of God from the approach of men “was rent in twain from the top to the bottom,” Matt. 27:50, 51, thus throwing the way open to all, and dispensing with priests and their ceremonies forever.

Question 2.—*Do they partly hold forth diverse instructions of moral duties?*

Answer.—Yes. 1 Cor. 5:7; 2 Cor. 6:17; Jude 23. The very fact that the gospel is taught by way of typical ordinances shows forth that it carries also under its shadows the form of gospel obedience—as displayed throughout numerous references by the apostles, 2 Cor. 8:15 compared with Ex. 16:16-18.

Question 3.—*Are all the ceremonial laws abrogated under the New Testament?*

¹ Heb. 9; Heb. 10:1; Gal. 4:1-3; Col. 2:17.

² 1 Cor. 5:7; 2 Cor. 6:17; Jude 23.

³ Col. 2:14, 16, 17; Dan. 9:27; Eph. 2:15, 16.

Answer.—Yes. Col. 2:14, 16, 17; Dan. 9:27; Eph. 2:15, 16. Therefore, the Judaisers err maintaining that all the ceremonial laws remain in their former strength and vigour, and are obliging to believers under the gospel, and not abrogated or disannulled by Christ. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because Christ has abolished the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, that he might gather together both Jews and Gentiles, into one new man, Eph. 2:14, 15; Col. 2:14. Note, that the apostle here speaks of all believers, both of the Jews and Gentiles, as of one man: Because they being all under Christ the head, as members of one spiritual body, are made up as one renewed man. 2.) Because the apostle says, Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath day: All which are shadows of things to come. But the body is of Christ, Col. 2:16, 17. This verse is a conclusion of the apostle's foregoing discourse against ceremonies, and things commanded by the ceremonial law, which by the coming of Christ are abolished. He calls them in ver. 17. a shadow of things to come, but the body, he says, is of Christ; that is, the thing signified, is of Christ: For all the shadows of the Old Testament had respect to Christ and his benefits, by whose coming they also have had an end, John 1:17; Gal. 3:4, 5. 3.) Because the apostle says, Believers are dead with Christ, from the rudiments of the world: that is, from the ceremonial commands, as is evident from the context. Why, he says, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? that is, as if your life and happiness, consisted in these outward worldly principles, but suffer yourselves to be burdened by such teachers, with human institutions and ordinances. The apostle indeed, in these last words, is reasoning against the institutions and ordinances of men; from this medium, which is an argument from the greater to the lesser, if ye be dead with Christ from the ceremonies of the law, instituted in the Old Testament, by God himself, much more are ye free from the institutions and ordinances of men, which are only grounded upon their own good pleasure, Col. 2:20, 21; Gal. 4:10, 11. 4.) Because the apostle affirms, that the observation, and using of circumcision, cannot consist with true faith in Christ, now after the gospel is fully published. And he exhorts the Galatians to abide in their liberty purchased by Christ, and not to submit themselves to the yoke of Mosaical ceremonies, Gal. 5:1, 2. 5.) Because those teachers, who pressed the believing Gentiles, to be circumcised and to observe the law of Moses—the ceremonial law—were condemned by the council of apostles, Acts 15:24. 6.) Because ceremonial commands are neither of the law of nature, nor are they enjoined to believers under the gospel, as things moral, Heb. 7:12. 7.) Because these appointed ceremonies, were figures only of things to come, imposed upon the Jews until the time of reformation; but taken away by Christ, Heb. 9:9-12 and Heb. 10:9. wherein it is said, He taketh away the first, namely, all sorts of propitiatory offerings which were used in the Old Testament, to settle the second, namely, his obedience to the will of the Father. 8.) Because they were given to the Israelites to fore-signify, and represent Christ and his death, and to be marks of difference between them, and the unbelieving nations, Col. 2:17; Eph. 2:14. Now, since Christ has suffered death, and the Gentiles are called, all these ceremonies which did fore-signify his death, and made that difference, must of necessity cease. 9.) Because the temple of Jerusalem, to which the ceremonies were restricted, is destroyed, and can never be rebuilt, Matt. 24:1, 2; Heb. 7:23, 24.