

# COLOSSIANS 2:14-17

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THE second chapter of Colossians teaches that the hand-writing of ordinances has been blotted out and nailed to the cross. many produce this scripture as proof that the ten commandments are abolished. We inquire, therefore, Is the hand-writing of ordinances the ten commandments? Let the following facts answer:-

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1. The hand-writing of ordinances is here represented as having been blotted out by the shedding of Christ's blood. If this hand-writing of ordinances is the ten commandments, it follows that the blood of Christ was shed to blot out the prohibition against other gods; the prohibition of graven images; the prohibition of blasphemy; the commandment to hallow the sanctified Rest-day of the Lord; the first commandment with promise; and the prohibitions of murder, adultery, theft, false witness and covetousness! Would the Infinite Law-giver give his own Son to die for such a purpose?

2. But to teach that Christ died to blot out the moral law, is to deny the plainest facts. Because that the law of God which was holy, just and good, condemned the whole human family, and showed that all mankind were sinners, and under its just sentence, God provided a method of redemption by which he could be just, and yet could justify him that believeth in Jesus. This did not consist in sending his Son to destroy the law of the Father; but it consisted in this, that the Son of God should take upon himself human nature, and offer up his own life a ransom for many; thus making the great propitiation through which guilty man may come to God and find pardon for the transgression of his holy law. Rom.iii,19-31; Matt.xx,28; 1Pet.ii,24; Isa.liii,10. Having done this he returned to his Father and became a great High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary before the Ark containing his Father's law.

Whoever, therefore, repents of his transgression, and comes to God through this "Advocate with the Father,"

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may find pardon for all his sins. This view of man's redemption is based on the plainest facts of scripture, and presents the character of God in a light in which mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other. Ps.lxxxv,10,11. Well might Paul exclaim when presenting this great subject, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law."

3. But what is it that is abolished in consequence of the hand-writing of ordinances being nailed to the cross? We answer, Meats, drinks, feast-days, (for this is the literal rendering of the word,) new-moons and Sabbaths, (plural.) Thus upon the very face of this text is found the most decisive evidence that Paul was not referring to the ten commandments. For it is absurd to believe that Paul should speak of the abolition of the ten commandments, and as the consequence of that abolition, should speak of certain unimportant things as having been done away, which, by the way, were never contained in the decalogue. It may be objected, that the decalogue contained the Sabbaths (the word is plural) which are here abolished. We answer, Not so. The decalogue contained but one Sabbath of the Lord. But besides the Sabbath of the Lord, embodied in the fourth commandment, the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus presents four annual Sabbaths, associated with the feasts and new moons of the typical system. The Sabbath of the Lord "was made FOR man," but these Sabbaths connected with the new moons, etc., are said to be AGAINST him. Mark ii,27; Col.ii,14. It is not

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the Sabbath (singular) associated with the precepts of the moral law, that is here referred to, but the Sabbaths (plural) associated with their feasts and new moons. Lev.xxiii,24,32,37-39. The one was made at creation, the others in the wilderness of Sinai.

4. But while it is plainly stated in Col.ii, that the hand-writing of ordinances, or shadow of good things to come, is abolished, it is elsewhere in the New Testament plainly stated that the royal law,

embodying all the ten commandments, is yet in full force. No one can deny this who will carefully read James ii,8-12. And the fact is distinctly stated that the violation of one of the commandments makes the transgressor guilty of all. It follows therefore, that the hand-writing of ordinances, and the royal law of ten commandments, are two distinct codes.

The reasons presented demonstrate the fact that the ten commandments are not referred to in Col.ii. But those who seize this scripture to prove the abolition of the decalogue, generally point with triumph to the expression, "holy day," which occurs in verse 16. "If the term, Sabbath-days," say they, "refers to the ceremonial Sabbaths, [Lev.xxiii,24-39,] the term, holy day, must certainly designate the Sabbath of the fourth commandment." The fact that some, who have the means of knowing better, have applied this expression to the Sabbath, renders it proper that this perversion should be exposed.

This word is translated from *hoorte*, which occurs twenty-seven times in the Greek Testament. Twenty-six times it is rendered, in our version, *feast*, and once, viz., Col.ii,16, it is rendered *holy day*.

Matt.xxvi,5. they said, Not on the *feast* day.

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xxvii,15. at that *feast* the governor was

Mark xiv,2. they said, Not on the *feast* day,

xv,6. Now at that *feast* he released unto

Luke ii,41. at the *feast* of the Passover.

42. after the custom of the *feast*,

xxii,1. the *feast* of unleavened bread

xxiii,17. release one unto them at the *feast*.

John ii,23. at the Passover in the *feast* day,

iv,45. at Jerusalem at the *feast*: for they also went unto the *feast*.

v,1. there was a *feast* of the Jews:

vi,4. a *feast* of the Jews, was nigh.

vii,2. the Jews' *feast* of tabernacles was

8. Go ye up unto this *feast*: I go not up yet unto this *feast*;

10. went he also up unto the *feast*,

11. Jews sought him at the *feast*,  
14. about the midst of the *feast*.  
37. that great day of the *feast*,  
xi,56. he will not come to the *feast*?  
xii,12. were come to the *feast*,  
20. to worship at the *feast*:  
xiii,1. before the *feast* of the Passover,  
29. need of against the *feast*;  
Acts xviii,21. by all means keep this *feast*  
Col.ii,16. or in respect of an *holy day*,

It is thus rendered by several lexicons:

"Heorte, a feast or festival, holiday." *Liddell and Scott Robinson's*  
Lexicon gives the same. "A solemn feast, public festival, holy day."  
*Greenfield*.

Col.ii,16 is thus rendered in different versions:-

"Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink or in  
respect of a festival day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbaths." -  
*Donay Bible*.

"Wherefore, let no one judge you in meat, or in drink, or in  
respect of a festival, or a new moon, or of Sabbaths." - *Macknight*.

"Let no man therefore judge you in food, or in drink, or in  
respect to a holy day, or the new moon, or the Sabbaths." - *Whiting*.

"Let none therefore judge you in meat, or drink, or in respect of  
a feast day, or of the new moon, or of Sabbath days." - *Wesley*.

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"Let no one therefore call you to an account about meat and  
drink, or with respect to a festival, or a new moon, or Sabbaths." -  
*Wakefield*.

It is therefore manifest that the Apostle used this word to  
designate the Jewish feasts - the abolition of which he here teaches.  
The Sabbaths and the feast days of the Jewish ritual expired with  
that ritual; but the Sabbath of the Lord, hallowed before the fall,  
abides, with the other precepts of the moral law, throughout  
duration. J.N.A.

The two Tills of Matt.v,18.

THE perpetuity of every jot and tittle of God's law is supported by the use of two *tills*. 1. *Till heaven and earth pass*. This is quite strong, and carries the mind to a period of time which is still in the future. On this, I think there can be no disagreement. 2. *Till all be fulfilled*. Here is the disputed ground. We are told that this reaches only to the crucifixion. That Christ fulfilled all the law, and nailed it to his cross. But I should think it most natural to reserve the stronger expression for the final one. Let us read the text to suit the views of our opponents. According to their interpretation, the Lord wished to assure his hearers that no part of the law would pass, till the crucifixion, which was nearly three years and a half in the future. Then it would stand like this. After cautioning the people not to think he had come to destroy the law or the prophets, he would say, *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till three years and a half.*

It has often been shown, that to fulfill a *law* is to

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obey it, not to abolish it. But leaving this point, I remark that the subject of discourse includes something besides the law, namely, the prophets. He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law *or the prophets*: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." He came in fulfillment of the prophecies. But have *all* the prophecies been fulfilled? Nay verily. Heaven and earth must not only pass, but new heavens and earth must be created before *all* is fulfilled. The prophet Isaiah says, "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me saith the Lord." This must be fulfilled before even the fourth commandment of the law can pass.

I conclude, then, that the second *till* is the stronger of the two. The first reaches to the passing of the present heavens and earth; the second, not only to the making of the new heavens and earth, but to the unlimited extent of their duration. R.F.C.