

# What Law Was Broken?

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | May 15, 2009



Dear Dr. Jennings: I have been mulling over the premise that Adam broke the law of love, and the 10 commandments were added later (taken from your notes for quarterly lesson on sin).

I would submit that Adam and Eve knew God's perfect law of love in the form of the ten commandments at least after they fell. "Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts. . . If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall . . . (if) they would have kept God's law in mind, . . . there would have been no necessity for **IT** to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone." (PP, 363, 364).

In terms of the premise that the 10 commandments are not applicable among the angels in heaven; would it be fair to say the *principles* of the 10 are applicable in heaven. For example, honor your mother and father, the principle behind this command is respect authority; don't commit adultery, the principle is loyalty. "God's claims are the same. The principles of His government are the same. For all proceed from Him "with whom is not variableness, neither shadow of turning. James 1:17" (PP, 373).

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Thanks for emailing to further explore this topic. My emphasis is to point out that the law upon which God's government is built, which was broken by angels in heaven, which Adam and Eve violated in Eden and which, when broken, results in death (unless remedied) is the law of love. And from this law God crafted the 10 Commandments as a distillation of the law of love uniquely designed for humans on earth. God provided the 10 Commandments as a diagnostic instrument to expose our sinful hearts and terminal condition and as a hedge of protection to prevent self-destruction. Such a "tool" was not needed prior to sin, thus my point was the 10 Commandments, as written on stone, were not always in existence, but the Law of Love, upon which the 10 Commandments are based was, and always will be, in existence because it emanates from God who is love. And the law of love is the basis for all life and all creation. Evidence for this position includes:

The eternal law of God is love:

- Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:37-40
- Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. Romans 13:10
- The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:14
- If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. James 2:8

The 10 Commandments are a diagnostic instrument and only intended for those who are sick in sin and were added after the fall:

- Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. Romans 3:20
- Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Romans 5:12,13
  - The law was given sometime after Adam sinned, yet Adam broke the law - what does this mean? Adam broke the law of love and later, because of mankind's need, God distilled down the law of love into 10 Commandments to help diagnose how sick in sin we are.
- What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come... So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Galatians 3:19, 24
  - What law was added? All written law but especially the 10 Commandment moral law.
  - "I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments." {1SM 233.1}
- We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that law is made not for the

righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. 1Timothy 1:9-11

- The law is not for the righteous, why? Because the righteous have accepted their sick condition, opened their heart to Christ and the law of love is written on the heart (Heb 8:10). The righteous, in their humble dependence upon Christ, are spiritually healthy and no longer need the 10 Commandments to diagnose sinfulness in them, but the wicked need the law to diagnose their terminal condition and convict them of the need for Christ to heal them.
- Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does. James 1:23-25

In summary, God is love. From God emanates the Law of Love which is the principle of other centered giving and beneficence upon which all life is constructed to operate. Prior to sin there was no need for a written law to diagnose or expose where the law of love was broken. After sin God wrote the 10 Commandments as a tool to expose in humanity our defective hearts and minds, how out of harmony with the Law of Love we are. When the Law of Love is again perfectly written in our hearts and minds (Heb 8:10) the 10 Commandments will no longer be needed, not because they are invalidated, but because there will be no further sinfulness for the 10 Commandments to diagnose.

Thanks again for the opportunity to further explore God's character of love.