Finding the Truth: Understanding the Bible

The Law

Purpose:
God's gift to his people to establish their relationship with Him and their relationship with each other. In addition, boundaries were set for their relationships with surrounding culture.

Law In Scripture
1. Laws (plural) – 600+ commandments the Israelites were expected to keep. (Exodus 18:20)
2. Law (singular) – reference to all the laws collectively. (Matthew 5:18)
3. The Book of the Law (singular) referring to the Pentateuch Genesis to Deuteronomy. (Joshua 1:8)
4. New Testament reference meaning the entire Old Testament religious system. (1Corinthians 9:20)
5. Old Testament referenced in New Testament as the interpretation of the rabbis. (Acts 10:28)

The Old Covenant

Written in the form of a "suzerain" treaty
1. Preamble: identifies the parties. (Exodus 20:2)
2. Prologue: brief history of how the parties came to be connected. (Exodus 20:2)
3. Stipulations: individual laws.
4. Witnesses: those who will enforce the covenant (Deuteronomy 4:26, 30:19)
5. Sanctions: Blessings and cursing's (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28-33)
6. Document closure: provision for review (Deuteronomy 17:18-19; 31:9-13)

Relationship of the Old Covenant to the New Covenant
- The Old Testament pointed to Jesus
- Understanding the law in relationship to Jesus
  a. Those laws "fulfilled" in Jesus (sacrifice, priesthood, worship, Sabbath, etc.)
  b. Those laws continued in New Testament (moral law)
  c. Those laws abrogated in New Testament (dietary, circumcision)
  d. Laws located in cultural times

The Form of the Law
- It sets a standard, by example, rather than mentioning every possible circumstance (paradigmatic)
- Apodictic Law
- Casuistic Law

Suggested Reading

HTRTBFAIW: pages 168-186

Key Verse:

Exodus 18:20 *Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave.*

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