



TYPES AND SHADOWS –3 LAWS & FEAST DAYS-STATUTES AND JUDGMENTS

On May 6, 1875, Ellen White published in the *Review and Herald* an article entitled "The Law of God." In this article she gave attention to all of the rules and regulations that God (or Christ) gave to Israel through Moses. She divided these rules and regulations into three classes or categories, not only two, as we might have expected. She emphasized that although some are commonly called the Law of Moses, that "Moses himself framed no law," and that they were all actually given by God (or Christ). She uses the terms God and Christ interchangeably, but emphasizes that Christ was deeply involved in the law-giving experience at Sinai:

"Christ was the angel appointed of God to go before Moses in the wilderness, conducting the Israelites in their travels to the land of Canaan. Christ gave Moses his special directions to be given to Israel."

After having stated that Christ, the Angel whom God had appointed to go before His chosen people, gave to Moses statutes and requirements necessary to a living religion and to govern the people of God, she quotes 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, and continues:

"Christ, who went before Moses in the wilderness, made the principles of morality and religion more clear by particular precepts...."

What are the three kinds of laws, according to her arrangement of them? Two, as we might expect, are the moral law and the ceremonial law. She introduces the moral law, the Ten Commandments, in the first two paragraphs of her article and makes several comments on it later.

Putting these comments together, we can make a list of 10 characteristics which she ascribes to the moral law:

1. It *dates* back to creation. [Emphasis supplied]
2. It *points* back to creation.
3. It was worded to meet the case of fallen intelligences.
4. It was repeated at Sinai, where it was spoken and written by God Himself.
5. It is as unchangeable as God Himself.
6. It is based on love to God and love to man.
7. It is binding upon all men in every dispensation.
8. It will exist through time and eternity.
9. It is not a shadow.
10. It is as enduring as the throne of Jehovah.

This agrees with all that we have understood about the moral law, the Ten Commandments, and so we move on.

Next she introduces the ceremonial law and points out that it is "clear and distinct" from the moral law. From her various comments on the ceremonial law, we can also gather a list of its characteristics as she saw them:

1. It was given by Christ in counsel with God.
2. It was glorious
3. It was given because of man's transgression of the moral law and did not exist from eternity like the moral law.
4. It "consisted in sacrifices and offerings, pointing to the future redemption."
5. The sacrifices and offerings typified Christ.
6. She calls it a law of types.
7. She calls it the law of Moses.
8. She calls it the Jewish law.
9. She calls it "shadowy types" and "a shadowy ceremony of types."
10. She emphasizes strongly that it lasted only to the sacrifice of Christ. Thus unlike the moral law, it had an earthly beginning and an earthly ending.

This, again, agrees with what we have understood. Agreement would probably be without exception among Seventh-day Adventists about these descriptions of the moral law and the ceremonial law.

But what of the third kind of law that she describes? Here, unfortunately, our agreement is not full and complete, without exceptions.

What is the third kind of law that she describes? She calls it *statutes and judgments*, and also sometimes includes it in the more general term, *precepts*. Let us make a list of the characteristics of these *statutes and judgments* as she describes them:

1. Christ gave them to Moses.
2. They were not the Ten Commandments, the moral law, but were given to *guard* it. "These statutes were explicitly given to the Ten Commandments." "...*guarding* the sacred law of God..." [All emphasis supplied.] (They could not be part of the moral law if they were given to guard it.)
3. They were not part of the ceremonial law. "They were not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ."
4. They were to govern the people of God.
5. They were to govern the everyday life.
6. They were for the purpose of protecting life.
7. They made the principles of morality and religion more clear.
8. They specify the duty of man to God and to his fellowman.
9. They clearly and definitely explained the moral law and were enforced by it.
10. They define and simplify the principles of the moral law.
11. They increase religious knowledge.
12. They applied to marriage.
13. They applied to inheritances.
14. They applied to strict justice in business affairs
15. They were to keep the people from following the customs of other nations.
16. They were to be binding upon all men in all ages as long as time should last.

These are the *statutes and judgments*. She tells us that they are not part of the moral law nor yet part of the ceremonial law. They have an explaining, applying and enforcing relationship to the moral law, but

apparently no relationship at all with the ceremonial law. They are not shadowy types, to end at the cross, but will retain their validity as long as time shall last.

Where did she find these statutes and judgments? In Exodus 21:1 and on to 23:11, right after the Ten Commandments in chapter 20.

"Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them." Exodus 21:1 (Compare Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-6, "statues and judgments.")

Exodus Chapter 21:

(Numbers indicate verse where sections begin.)

1. Laws for men servants.
7. For women servants.
12. For manslaughter.
16. For stealers of men.
17. For cursers of parents.
18. For smiters.
22. For a hurt by chance.
23. For an ox that goeth.
33. For him that is an occasion of harm.

Exodus Chapter 22:

1. Of theft.
5. Of damage
7. Of trespasses
14. Of borrowing
17. Of fornication
18. Of witchcraft
19. Of bestiality
20. Of idolatry
21. Of strangers, widows, orphans
25. Of usury
26. Of pledges
28. Of reverence to magistrates

Exodus Chapter 23:

1. Of slander and false witness
3. Of justice
4. Of charitableness
12. on—(returns to the sabbaths, feasts, etc.)

Beginning with verse 12, the topic shifts back to the sabbaths, feasts and related things. These do not typify anything. They are not types and shadows. These statutes sometimes fall short of New Testament ideals, but are far in advance of other nations of that time. For example, the "man-servant" (or slave) in other nations had no rights. He could be killed by his master. Under Hebrew law a "man-servant" (or slave):

1. Could not serve longer than six years—then he was free.

2. Was still "Thy brother." Deuteronomy 15:12
3. Was not to go away empty. Deuteronomy 15:13-14
4. In the year of Jubilee, all went free regardless of term of service.

We must look for the principles of these statutes. We could make some modern comparisons. For example, Ellen White recommends that young girls should be taught how to harness horses. In our time she would say, no doubt, they should be taught how to change a tire on a car. We do not have an ox to gore someone, but what about our dog, horse, or car? The principle of not letting them do damage to someone else still applies. These, of course, are not found in the ceremonial law.

Ellen White writes that these are not "shadowy types." As we look them over, we recognize that this is true. There is nothing about them that points forward to the sacrifice of Christ, as the types and shadows do.

Now we come to a crucial question. We have seen several statements that define the types and shadows as sacrifices and offerings and affirm that they ended at the cross of Christ, when "type met antitype." But what about the days upon which these sacrifices and offerings were celebrated? They are called sabbaths. Should we still honor and observe them as holy days, sabbath days, even though we do not make sacrifices?

Perhaps we can find the answer in two ways. **According to Colossians 2:14-17, which Ellen White refers to in her discussions, the ceremonial sabbaths are shadows, just as the sacrifices are shadows:**

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the *sabbath days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

Clearly then, according to Paul, *the days are shadows.*

Second, we remember that the same law that establishes the sacrifices also establishes the days, and the law, the ceremonial law, is done away. This is the message of Colossians 2:14-17 and of Ephesians 2:11-15. It is also the message of many references in Ellen White's writings.

"There are two distinct laws brought to view. One is the law of types and shadows, which reached to the time of Christ, and ceased when type met antitype in His death." *Signs of the Times*, July 29, 1886

"The Jewish ceremonial law has passed away." *Review and Herald*, October 10, 1899

"If Adam had not transgressed the law of God, the ceremonial law would never have been instituted." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 230

"While the Saviour's death brought to an end the law of types and shadows, it did not in the least detract from the obligation of the moral law." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 365

"When Jesus at His ascension entered by his own blood into the heavenly sanctuary to shed upon His disciples the blessings of His mediation, the Jews were left in total darkness to continue their useless sacrifices and offerings. The ministration of types and shadows had ceased." *The Great Controversy*, 430

"His lessons to His disciples are received by all who would become His disciples, to the end of time. These lessons discharge His followers from the bondage of the ceremonial law, and

leave them the ordinance of baptism to be received by repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as the only One who can take away sin." *Review and Herald*, June 21, 1898

"When type met antitype in the death of Christ, the sacrificial offerings ceased. The ceremonial law was done away." *Review and Herald*, June 26, 1900

"After Christ died on the cross as a sin offering, the ceremonial law could have no force." *Lift Him Up*, 147

"Peter here referred to the law of ceremonies, which was made null and void by the crucifixion of Christ." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 194

"Many in the Christian world also have a veil before their eyes and heart. They do not see to the end of that which was done away. They do not see that it was only the ceremonial law which was abrogated at the death of Christ." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 239

"This ritual law, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be performed by the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings were to cease. It is this law that Christ 'took...out of the way, nailing it to His cross.' Colossians 2:14." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 365

"But there is a law which was abolished, which Christ 'took out of the way, nailing it to His cross.' Paul calls it the 'the law of commandments contained in ordinances.' This ceremonial law, given by God through Moses, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be binding upon the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. **Then all the sacrificial offerings and services were to be abolished. Paul and the other apostles labored to show this, and resolutely withstood those Judaizing teachers who declared that Christians should observe the ceremonial law.**" *Signs of the Times*, September 4, 1884

There would seem to be no reason for doubt that the ceremonial law is passed away, according to Ellen White. If we put together the various expressions that she used to describe its passing, we are left with no doubts. She writes that the ceremonial law of types and shadows is ended, ceased, has no force, has passed away, is null and void, is abrogated, was nailed to the cross and has been abolished.

It would seem strange to believe that although she argued so forcefully that the ceremonial law had passed away, nevertheless the feast days, the ceremonial sabbaths, that were established by that law yet remain. Such a position would need to be sustained by very strong evidence, since it would contradict Paul's statement that **these sabbaths are "shadows" (Colossians 2:17). And those who advance this proposition should also present a clear explanation as to why Ellen White did not lead the church to observe the feast days while she was alive.**

But no such strong evidence is offered. Instead, we are led to Ellen White's May 6, 1875 article on "The Law of God," and in particular this paragraph:

"In consequence of continual transgression, the moral law was repeated in awful grandeur from Sinai. Christ gave to Moses religious precepts, which were to govern the every-day life. These statutes were explicitly given to guard the Ten Commandments. They were not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ. They were to be binding upon man in every age as long as time should last. These commands were enforced by the power of the moral law, and they clearly and definitely explained that law."

We are asked to believe that the words "these statutes" in this paragraph are a reference to the feast days of the ceremonial law. This would seem to be a grievous misunderstanding of the intention of the writer.

Our first question would be: How could these words enforce the feast days of the ceremonial law without enforcing the sacrifices of the ceremonial law?

Second, why should we ignore her statement that these statutes are *not* "shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ?"

Third, why should we ignore her own definitions and descriptions of the statutes and judgments?

There are five passages in Ellen White's article in which she discusses the statutes and judgments. Let us place them all together and examine them.

"The **statutes** and judgments specifying the duty of man to his fellow-men, were full of important instruction, defining and simplifying the principles of the **moral law**, for the purpose of increasing religious knowledge, and of preserving God's chosen people distinct and separate from idolatrous nations.

"The **statutes** concerning marriage, inheritance, and strict justice in dealing with one another, were peculiar and contrary to the customs and manners of other nations, and were designed of God to keep his people separate from other nations. The necessity of this to preserve the people of God from becoming like the nations who had not the love and fear of God, is the same in this corrupt age, when the transgression of **God's law** prevails and idolatry exists to a fearful extent. If ancient Israel needed such security, we need it more, to keep us from being utterly confounded with the transgressors of **God's law**. The hearts of men are so prone to depart from God that there is a necessity for restraint and discipline.

"In consequence of continual transgression, the **moral law** was repeated in awful grandeur from Sinai. Christ gave to Moses religious precepts which were to govern the everyday life. These **statutes** were explicitly given to guard the **Ten Commandments**. They were not **shadowy types** to pass away with the death of Christ. They were to be binding upon man in every age as long as time should last. These commands were enforced by the power of the **moral law**, and they clearly and definitely **explained that law**.

"Christ, the Angel whom God had appointed to go before his chosen people, gave to Moses **statutes** and requirements necessary to a living religion and **to govern the people of God**.

"God graciously spoke his **law** and wrote it with his own finger **on stone**, making a solemn covenant with his people at Sinai. God acknowledged them as His peculiar treasure above all people upon the earth. Christ, who went before Moses in the wilderness, made the principles of morality and religion more clear by **particular precepts**, specifying the duty of man to God and his fellow-men, for the purpose of protecting life, and guarding the **sacred law of God**, that it should not be entirely forgotten in the midst of an apostate world.

"Christ, to enforce the will of His Father, became the author of the **statutes and precepts** given through Moses to the people of God."

A relationship between the "statutes and judgments" and the moral law is stated eight times. No relationship to the ceremonial law is suggested.

All the way through this discussion she relates the statutes and judgments to the moral law and never to the ceremonial law. Their purpose is made so clear as to require no comment. And let us note in her last paragraph a reference to the mistaken practices of the Jewish people.

"They attach as much importance to shadowy ceremonies of types which have met their antitype, as they do to the law of Ten Commandments...."

When we remember that the Jewish people honor the feast days but make no sacrifices, we are forced to the conclusion that these feast days are the "shadowy ceremonies of types" to which she is referring.

Let us heed the appeal of Paul in Galatians 5:1: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."