

OF THE

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THE law was given twice upon Mount Sinai, but the appearance of the Lord, when he gave it the second time, was wonderfully different from that of his, when at the first he delivered it to Israel.

1. When he gave it the first time, he caused his terror and severity to appear before Moses, to the shaking of his soul and the dismaying of Israel ; but when he gave it the second time, he caused all his goodness to pass before Moses, to the comfort of his conscience and the bowing of his heart.

2. When he gave it the first time, it was with thunderings and lightnings, with blackness and darkness, with flame and smoke, and a tearing sound of the trumpet ; but when he gave it the second time, it was with a proclamation of his name to be merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgressions, and sins.

3. When he gave it the first time, Moses was called to go up to receive it through the fire, which made him exceedingly fear and quake : but when he went to receive it the second time, he was laid in a clift of the rock.

4. From all which I gather, that, though as to the matter of the law, both as to its being given the first time and the second, it binds the unbeliever under the pains of eternal damnation (if he close not with Christ by faith) ; yet as to the manner of its giving at these two times, I think the first doth more principally intend its force as a cove-

nant of works, not at all respecting the Lord Jesus ; but this second time not (at least in the manner of its being given) respecting such a covenant, but rather as a rule or directory to those who already are found in the clift of the rock Christ ; for the saint himself, though he be without law to God, as it is considered the first or old covenant, yet even he is not without law to him as considered under grace ; not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.

5. Though, therefore, it be sad with the unbeliever, because he only and wholly standeth under the law as it is given in fire, in smoke, in blackness, and darkness, and thunder ; all which threaten him with eternal ruin if he fulfil not the utmost tittle thereof ; yet the believer stands to the law under no such consideration, neither is he so at all to hear or regard it, for he is now removed from thence to the blessed mountain of Zion—to grace and forgiveness of sins ; he is now, I say, by faith in the Lord Jesus, shrouded under so perfect and blessed a righteousness, that this thundering law of Mount Sinai cannot find the least fault or diminution therein, but rather approveth and alloweth thereof, either when or wherever it find it. This is called the righteousness of God without the law, and is also said to be witnessed by both the law and the prophets ; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe ; for there is no difference.

6. Wherefore, whenever thou who believest in Jesus, dost hear the law in its thundering and lightning fits, as if it would burn up heaven and earth, then say thou, I am freed from this law, these thunderings have nothing to do with my soul ; nay, even this law, while it thus thunders and roars, it doth both allow and approve of my righteousness. I know that Hagar would sometimes be domineering and high, even in Sarah's house, and against her ; but this she is not to be suffered to do, nay, though Sarah herself be barren ; wherefore, serve it also as Sarah served her, and expel her out from thy house. My meaning is, when this law with its thundering threatenings doth attempt to

lay hold on thy conscience, shut it out with a promise of grace ; cry, The inn is taken up already ; the Lord Jesus is here entertained, and here is no room for the law. Indeed, if it will be content with being my informer, and so lovingly leave off to judge me, I will be content, it shall be in my sight, I will also delight therein ; but otherwise, I being now made upright without it, and that too with that righteousness which this law speaks well of and approveth, I may not, will not, cannot dare not make it my Saviour and judge, nor suffer it to set up its government in my conscience ; for by so doing, I fall from grace, and Christ Jesus doth profit me nothing.

7. Thus, therefore, the soul that is married to him that is raised up from the dead, both may and ought to deal with this law of God ; yea, it doth greatly dishonour its Lord and refuse its gospel privileges, if it at any time otherwise doth, whatever it seeth or feels. "The law hath power over the wife so long as her husband liveth, but if her husband be dead she is freed from that law ; so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man." Indeed, so long as thou art alive to sin, and to thy righteousness which is of the law, so long thou hast them for thy husband, and they must reign over thee ; but when once they are become dead unto thee—as they then most certainly will when thou closest with the Lord Jesus Christ—then, I say, thy former husbands have no more to meddle with thee ; thou art freed from their law. Set the case : A woman be cast into prison for a debt of hundreds of pounds ; if after this she marry, yea, though while she is in the jailor's hand, in the same day that she is joined to her husband, her debt is all become his ; yea, and the law also that arrested and imprisoned this woman, as freely tells her, go : she is freed, saith Paul, from that ; and so saith the law of this land.

The sum, then, of what hath been said is this—The Christian hath now nothing to do with the law, as it thundereth and burneth on Sinai, or as it bindeth the conscience to wrath and the displeasure of God for sin ; for from its

thus appearing, it is freed by faith in Christ. Yet it is to have regard thereto, and is to count it holy, just, and good; which, that it may do, it is always, whenever it seeth or regards it, to remember that he who giveth it to us "is merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth," &c.