

CHAPTER D14

EXPEDIENCY

IN CHRIST: SEALED FROM THE LAW

Something very important happened when we got saved. Christ's substitutionary death made it legal for us to reckon our old man to be dead, which freed us from the law that bound us to our husband, Satan (**Ro 7:3,4; Ga 3:13**), and allowed us to marry Christ. Again, what happened that was so important? We were freed from the law. What did that accomplish? It legally got us out of our marriage to Mr. Death. You see, the law is what bound us to Satan, which meant we couldn't legally marry Mr. Life because that would be adultery. Not being able to marry Christ and receive everlasting life meant, because we are mortal, we would die as mortals without hope of being freed from that curse. The law tied us to Satan, which kept Christ away (because a woman can only have one husband), which condemned us to die.

How did we manage to be bound to Satan? Adam and Eve. At first they were not bound to the Devil, they were free from the law, and were sinless because sin is not imputed when there is no law over us (**Ro 5:13**). But then they gave themselves to the Devil (which was the legal transaction that brought in the law), and then consummated the sin. They were now bound to Mr. Death, so they were denied access to the tree of life, and that made them and us mortal – bound to death.

The law requires us to die. Christ did not come to destroy that law (that will not happen until **Re 20:14; 21:4**), He came to fulfill it (**Mt 5:17**). That means He came to satisfy its requirement for death by dying in our place. Those who think we are under the law (and should be circumcised, keep the sabbath, keep the feasts, not eat unclean food, etc.) have missed what happened when we got saved and have missed the reason Christ *had to die in our place*: He freed us from the law *that bound us to our husband, Satan*. That's why the most obvious thing that happened legally as a result of Christ's death on the cross was the removal of the saints from Abraham's bosom in Satan's kingdom and their relocation to God's kingdom in the third heaven. Here's the point: If we are still under the law we are still legally married to Satan and therefore *cannot* be legally espoused brides of Christ (Ro 7:3,4)! The law is the problem – if we weren't freed from it we were also never legally freed from our union with Satan. Being *sealed* (**Ep 1:13**) from the law teaches us two things. First, the law that binds us to Satan still exists, otherwise being sealed from it wouldn't be necessary. Second, being sealed from the law means it is good *and necessary* to escape the law because the law binds us to the Devil. But because being "sealed" is a legality, not a reality, we must walk circumspectly or we'll break the seal (**Ep 1:13,14; Ga 5:16,18; Ro 8:1,4,14**).

Salvation legally removed us from a strictly legal situation and put us in a family situation. We are now members of Christ's household and are governed not by the law, but by the Lawgiver. We must stay in His good graces. If your children break the law by dirtying their diapers, not mowing the lawn, or sassing you, do you throw them out of your family? No, because they're not under the law, they're under the lawgiver, they're under grace. And as long as your children, who continue to disobey you occasionally, remain in your good graces they will be favored by being allowed to remain under your roof. But if they do not eventually mature and obediently conform to your rules, they fall out of favor and can be cast out. However, the fact that they are allowed to break laws and the fact that their transgressions are forgiven indicate *they are not under the law but under grace*. It means they are in the same situation as Christians. All of God's people when they get saved go from being under the law where there is *no forgiveness*, to being under grace where confession, atonement, and forgiveness *are* possible. Do you know why there is no provision in God's word for the unsaved to have access to confession, forgiveness, atonement, and mercy? Because there is no mercy under the law; the law only *condemns*. Mercy is available only to those who get out from under the law by getting saved. *None of God's people in the Old Testament was under the law*. If ye had known what **Mt 12:7** meaneth, ye would not have thought they were.

Mt 12:7 and **Ho 6:6** say, "If you had understood that I wanted *mercy* (grace), and not *sacrifice* (law), you would not have *condemned* (something that only happens under the law) the *guiltless*." The *guiltless* are Christians under grace who are reckoned to be sinless. **Mt 12:1-13** and places like **Lk 13:10-17; 14:1-6** show that even God's people in the Old Testament were not under the law. David ate the shewbread, which was not lawful, and was "blameless" and "guiltless" even though sin is transgression of the law! How could David be *guiltless*? There is only one way for that to be possible: **Ro 4:15b; 5:13b; 6:14**, etc. Which means the saints in these examples were *not* under the law. Notice each example says something like "on the sabbath", "into the house of God", and "in the temple", thus stressing that these people are "in Christ" because they are members of His household (**He 3:6**), members of His body (**Ep 5:30; 1 Co 12:12-27**), and branches on the Vine (**Jn 15:5**). At salvation Christians *become* the house and temple of God (**1 Co 6:19; 2 Co 5:1,2; 6:16**) and enter into His rest (**He 4:3**) from the law because under His roof as His brides the marital bed is undefiled (**He 13:4**). Just as all sex acts are lawful between marrieds, so are all things lawful for Christians (**1 Co 6:12; 10:23**) because those who are in Christ are sealed from the law and are under grace.

But isn't **1 Jn 1:8-10** contradicted by **1 Jn 3:9** because we really are under the law and can sin? There are no contradictions in the Bible; there are only gaps in our understanding of it. Those verses are referring to the struggle between our old man (who is only *reckoned* to be dead) and the new man and illustrate the family situation. When the Christian sins by carnally yielding to the old man he goes to Daddy and apologizes and asks for forgiveness. So from a legal standpoint as long as the sinner stays in Daddy's good graces he is reckoned to be sinless because the law is nothing, Daddy is everything. And Daddy took care of the law for us.

But in **1 Co 6:12** and **10:23** isn't the "all things are lawful" contradicted by "but all things are not expedient" because we really are under the law and can sin when we transgress it? No. But I realize why you've never figured any of this out: You don't believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible, inerrant word of God. Therefore, instead of accepting the fact that there are no contradictions in Scripture, you've ignored/rejected anything in it that contradicted the denominational doctrines you've accepted as authoritative. If you had faith in God you would have studied His Book to find out where your *church* went wrong when it contradicted the inerrant word of God! Get thee behind me, Satan! You need to accept the Biblical teaching that you are reckoned to have died on the cross with Christ – and the law doesn't apply to dead men. You also need to understand what "expediency" is, and what fornication means. We'll examine expediency in this chapter and fornication in the next.

EXPEDIENCY: THE LAW UNDER GRACE

When David and his men were hungry and couldn't find food anywhere, they disregarded the law and went into the temple, took the shewbread, and ate it (Mt 12:4). The priests ignored the Fourth Commandment and profaned the sabbath in order to serve God and the faithful (Mt 12:5). And even if a man's ass fell into a hole in the ground on the sabbath, he'd haul his ass out of there (Lk 14:5). Why was it OK for them to ~~violate the law~~, to sin, to ignore or bypass the law in those situations? Because it is lawful "to do well" (Mt 12:12), even if that involves temporarily ignoring the law.

Now take the above examples and apply 1 Co 6:12 and 10:23 to them in order to figure out why the unlawful was suddenly lawful. It's because it was *expedient* in those situations to ignore the law in order to do good. Notice in the dictionary the definition of expediency has to do with the accomplishment of an objective (which in these examples is the doing of good for Christians or the church) without any regard for the legality or rightness of the act. In other words if you combined 1 Co 6:12 with Mt 12 you could properly read 1 Co 6:12 as, "For a Christian all things are lawful as long as he does well." In effect we are talking about situation ethics. (Forgive me for using the word "ethics" when I am trying to help you understand that ethics should be repugnant to Christians because they are of pagan origin and are secular in their formation and content. *Our* concern, on the other hand, is simply whether or not something is a sin; we despise ethics. I use the term situation ethics here only in an effort to be clear about expediency.)

The Old Testament Christians were not under the law because, like all of God's children, they were under grace. But because denominational traditions have assigned various meanings to grace, we must be careful when defining it. Grace is conditional favor; we stay in God's favor as long as we "do well." That definition obviously fits the "all things are lawful as long as they are expedient" teaching in 1 Co 6:12 and 10:23, but does it fit the strict Old Testament law? Mt 12 says yes. In fact, to find out what meaning God wanted us to get out of the law and the prophets read **Mk 12:28-34; Mt 7:12; 12:12; 22:36-40**. And that's why I earlier crossed out "violate the law" and "sin": I wanted you to see that, although sin is transgressing the law, the overriding meaning of the law makes the events of Mt 12 examples of *obedience* to the law rather than violations of it! If love for God and His people is your overriding motivation you will keep the letter of the law most of the time, but sometimes, as in the above examples, that same love may cause you to sidestep the letter in order to obey the intent of the law. That is expediency.

David ate the shewbread, committed adultery, and was a multiple murderer. The Pharisees and Matt Seven, however, kept the law. Based on being a doer of the word we'd ordinarily say David was the one who went to hell, but the Lord says David was the one who went to heaven. That helps us understand something about Christianity. We like to say, "We should be doers of the word, not hearers only." But the Pharisees and Matt Seven show that being a doer of the word will not get you into heaven. (I'm talking about the selfish focus on the letter of the law rather than the selfless, loving focus on the spirit of the law.) Why? Because of what Mk 12:28-34; Mt 7:12; 12:12; 22:36-40 reveal to us: Our works must be the result of an inner, true love for God in accordance with His word. The Pharisees' works were the result of their carnal old man trying to justify himself. If you got to know them well you'd see that every now and then they'd say or do something subtle that most people wouldn't pick up on. The mature Christian, however, having pure motives, would notice something wrong because a mature Christian would never say or do something like that because it's phony and hateful. I'm not talking about sins like gossip, adultery, and multiple murder. David had problems with the old man like we all do, but as a Christian he was open, honest, and even naive. (As I matured I was surprised at how much I found in Christianity that doesn't belong: Fear, bitterness, deceit, manipulation, politics, phoniness, pride, selfishness, disinterest in the Bible, and widespread worldly shallowness.) David allowed the Bible to mold him into the kind of person God wants to have around Him. David was genuinely full of a motivating love for the Lord and His word, therefore his trouble with sin could be forgiven and he could move on and grow. The Pharisees were full of a genuine love for self. They were carnal. Because of that their trouble with sin could not be forgiven. Matt Seven and the Pharisees in hell are filled with bitter resentment toward God. They constantly review their long list of works in order to verify that they are in hell unjustly. They are still focused on self. Carnal Christians cannot see or understand this because they don't have eyes that see and ears that hear. Proper Christians do, and they don't like Pharisaical behavior; it's not the way we're supposed to be. If we'll work with the Lord to *become* the kind of person we're supposed to be, we'll do the works and grow in understanding as a result. Carnal Christians do the works and don't grow in understanding. That's why Matt Seven is clueless at Judgment. If we become the kind of Christians who walk with the Lord because we agree with Him, we'll be His sheep. If we maintain an inner reserve of self we'll only think we're His sheep and won't understand why we're not. Proper Christians understand expediency. Pharisees don't, and will either reject it or abuse it. This topic allows us to eventually understand that David went to heaven because *he was a doer of the word* in accordance with Mk 12:28-34; Mt 7:12; 12:12; and 22:36-40. The Pharisees and Matt Seven, in spite of their long list of good works, were not doers of the word. Let's be righteous Christians on the inside like David.

Now let's look at a modern example of how you, a person who is in Christ, in the temple, in the marital bed, sealed from the law, under expediency (which is the law under grace), can do *well* by "breaking" the law. Suppose, as our example, that you know according to the Bible we shouldn't celebrate **Xmas**. You know Xmas is a Satanic celebration adopted by the Roman Catholic Church to "honor" Christ even though Christ has ordered us not to use pagan celebrations to honor Him – not only because He hates them, but also because He has commanded us to honor Him by doing only those things He specifically orders (**Dt 12:30-32**). And let's suppose your wife and kids are carnal/immature Christians who place some value on their carnal opinions and Reason. And let's also assume they are Enlightened and liberated, which makes them your equals, which gives them the prerogative to argue with you:

Wife: "But it can't be pagan and bad because to me the lights on the tree are reminders that we are to be lights shining in a dark world!"

First child: "And the green tree, like, reminds me of the green pastures the Good Shepherd leads us to. And I need the tree to remind me of that!"

Second child: "It's not just the tree but the entire season that means so much to me: The presents represent the gift of life; the burning Yule log is the fires of hell; the ashes from the Yule log on my forehead on Ash Wednesday remind me of 'ashes to ashes'; the mistletoe reminds me that **Christians are supposed to greet each other with a kiss (Ro 16:16; 1 Co 16:20; 2 Co 13:12; 1 Th 5:26; 1 Pe 5:14; Ge 45:15; Ex 4:27; 2 Sa 20:9; Lk 7:45; Ac 20:37; Mt 26:49; Ps 2:12; Mt 25:40)**; the Easter bunny reminds me of the Old Commission to be fruitful and multiply; the colored chicken eggs remind

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me that the cock crowed thrice; the rosary beads remind me of different prayers; the candles, the statues, and crossing myself remind me...”

Remember the lesson of the altar *Ed* (page H3-1); it doesn't matter what something may or may not remind somebody of; what matters is glorifying God by obeying Him. Many Christians celebrate these pagan rituals out of ignorance – they don't know the practices are pagan and they don't know the Bible. (The latter is worse and is one of the quickest ways to spot an apostate.) Others who know the above often use their carnal Reason to justify the pagan practices they prefer and condemn the rest. Halloween and Catholic practices (such as some of the ones mentioned above) are the most common scapegoats for these hypocrites. For example, they'll sneer at the Catholic Church for having adopted pagan practices to honor Christ while they ignore the fact that they do the exact same thing with Xmas! No Christian who thinks “Christ should be kept in Christmas” can say anything bad about Catholic rosaries, wafers, etc., without condemning himself as a certified hypocrite. But in the next breath you'll hear them condemn Halloween because it is a pagan practice that *hasn't* been adopted or “Christianized” by the church to honor Christ. (Those who know the Bible a little better sometimes say they avoid Halloween because it doesn't satisfy the Christian requirements of **1 Co 10:31** and **Co 3:17**, which is a valid point.) We are so full of lip service, hypocrisy, contradictions, and *self* in Christianity that we're blind.

But anyway, as you listen to your family's increasing hysteria as they point out that the world *needs* them to celebrate a Christ-oriented Xmas to counter the evil commercialization of Baby Jesus' birthday, you realize this growing mutiny is a result of their immaturity and your own inability to yet rule well over your household. And you are afraid too much compliance with the word of God all at once would actually hinder your family's growth (**Ge 33:13; 1 Co 3:1-3**) – which is a wise thing to consider. So you accept and shoulder your responsibility for the well-being of your flock and make a decree by the authority God gave you as head of household that Xmas will continue to be celebrated until some future date when your flock is ready to be weaned. You have discussed it with God, you know Xmas is wrong, but your family is weak and you are going to let them eat the shewbread until they are stronger. This is all for the glory of God because you are furthering the cause of Christ by knowing when mercy and understanding are called for (Mt 12:7), you are learning when it is expedient to sidestep the law, and you are growing in your understanding of responsibility and authority as you prepare yourself and your family to *rule and reign* with Christ over your Gentile subjects forever.

Expediency means pleasing the higher authority, the Lawgiver, Christ, not the lesser authority of the law. It is important to understand the difference; the Pharisees didn't – they thought we were under the law and required to serve it. We're not; we're under Christ and are required to serve Him. The law was not made to rule us, it was made to serve us (**Mk 2:27**), to help us put together some of the pieces in order to better understand how to serve God in accordance with the Bible. The Pharisees thought they were going by the Bible but they weren't because they failed to take it literally and failed to apply it by putting the pieces, here a little and there a little, together. As a result they only saw contradictory, disjointed pieces of Scripture from which they derived contradictory and inconsistent doctrines. If we don't properly study the Bible we, too, will fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

Expediency should govern the actions of Christians since they are not bound by any laws except the spirit and intent of the law, which is an overriding, all-encompassing motivation of love for God and the brethren (Mk 12:29-34). Most of the time, like David, you will go by the Book. Sometimes, like David, you will sin by not going by the Book. And perhaps sometimes, like David, you will find it necessary to please God by temporarily sidestepping His Book (which, as we saw, is actually *obeying* the Bible).

Take all of that into consideration as you go through your Christian walk. When you, to use our earlier example, are confronted by family members who desperately want to cling to Xmas, and all with one voice about the space of two hours cry out the seasonal ritualistic chant, “Jesus is the reason for the season! Jesus is the reason for the season!” (because they don't know the quote comes only from tradition – they still think it's in the Bible...*somewhere*), you must evaluate the situation. You will note their insubordination, lack of discipline, clamoring, brazen lack of Scriptural shamefacedness, their carnality, their lack of any real submission to the authority of the Bible when it runs contrary to their wishes, the dominating influence of self and society over the word of God, the chaotic willfulness, independence, rebellion, and lack of Scriptural order and harmony, and the absence of the dedication that accompanies a consuming devotion to the cause of Christ, and you will correctly conclude that Xmas is the least of your problems. When you decide to authorize their celebrating Xmas it is because you've concluded they will not profit from more heavy-handed action in this case and at this time. By doing the *expedient* thing you are helping them grow. How? By not alienating them with a type of discipline and authority that will foster resentment in them (**Ep 6:4**) toward Christianity because they are too immature to appreciate, understand, and respect what you are doing. *They* will be pleased and relieved by your decree, but *you*, on the other hand, will feel the burden of responsibility as you face a difficult task in today's Enlightened society.

What shall we say then about expediency? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? You can abuse expediency in order to “justify” sin. One man, who knows women are to be silent in church and are not to preach/teach (women being silent in church is covered on page D30-4), uses expediency to justify allowing his wife to ignore those commands. His rationale is that she's a good speaker/teacher! Therefore her preaching/teaching is “expedient” because it's “for the good of the church.” That kind of self-serving wresting of the Scriptures is, sadly, all too common among Christians. That's when verses like Ge 33:13 don't apply, and verses like **Ep 5:11** and **1 Ti 5:20**, which are very unpopular in this effeminate era, should be obeyed. To this guy all Old Testament Christians should have routinely eaten the shewbread “for the good of the church” because bread is nutritious. David only did it once because the “all things are lawful as long as they are expedient” doctrine is to be exercised only in emergencies when there is no viable alternative. The Old Testament saints could rescue livestock from ditches on the sabbath, but that doesn't mean routine work was allowed. And just because you may have exercised your emergency authority by allowing your family to celebrate Xmas doesn't mean your neighbor can justify Xmas by saying, “Anything that gives Baby Jesus free publicity is good!”

All of this requires maturity and understanding acquired from the Scriptures. For example, since it is now OK to eat pork because unclean food was “an Old Testament thing”, shouldn't it also be OK to celebrate Xmas since **Dt 12:30-32** is “an Old Testament thing?” Yes and no. Yes, if it is a necessary expedient to help weak brethren (**Ro 14:1-3,5,6,13-15,17,19-21**). No, if your love for God has grown to the point where nothing else really matters to you except trying to please Him by doing everything the way *He* wants it done. If you like pork, eat it, because **Le 11:4** was set aside by **Mk 7:18,19** and **Ac 10:12-15**. If you like pagan celebrations in “honor” of Christ, though, you'll have a hard time justifying Xmas because Dt

12:30-32, which has to do with authority and Who is the deciding Head and who is the obedient servant, has never been set aside by anything in the Bible – it’s *still* the way God feels about it. So, if you are weak and getting rid of Xmas would seem like blasphemy to you, the expedient thing would be to keep it. If you are strong, the expedient thing would be to get rid of it so the brethren can see a living example of someone who exists only to please God by making sure the Bible really is the *only* authority in all things you believe and all things you do. (This is not to say all Christians who do not celebrate Xmas are strong Christians.)

LEGALITY VS. REALITY

The law is a good deal because it allows us to be legally reckoned dead to it. That not only means we can be legally espoused to Christ, it means legally the law doesn’t apply to us. That allows us to make stupid mistakes as young Christians and it allows us to sidestep the law when it threatens to hinder the cause of Christ. But the fact that we still must *confess our sins* and *obtain forgiveness for them* means, while we can *legally* reckon ourselves to be free from the law, the law actually still exists. The law, in fact, is so real that if we don’t obtain forgiveness for our sins we will be put away as impure fornicators. All of that is commonly understood. But let’s look at the marital side of the coin instead of the sin side.

Just as we are only legally reckoned to be dead to the law and free from sin, so are we only legally reckoned to be dead and freed from our union with the Devil. This has implications for both Christians who “lose it” and those who faithfully endure to the end.

When a Christian becomes an unfaithful slut and is put away by Christ as a fornicator, that Christian is no longer in Christ and is no longer legally sealed by His substitutionary death from the law. The slut is cast away and is no longer under grace – he’s under the Law! That means he now has to answer to the Law (not the Lawgiver) for his sins. And the Law demands death for sin. The slut is also legally Satan’s wife again, and is in deep doo-doo because the only way to be freed from a consummated union is for death to do them part. Both Satan and the slut, however, have everlasting life. Therefore, the only way out is for Christ to die, have His death apply to the slut in order to free him from Satan, and birth a new spirit body that can become espoused to Christ. Alas, Christ already did all of that for the slut once, and He will not do it a second time (**He 10:10,18,26; Jn 13:7-10**). Therefore, the slut, with no way to be freed from his union with Satan, will pay the wages of sin with the second death in the lake of fire.

The faithful Christian who endures to the end finds himself in a different situation. When he dies his mortal body is buried and rots in the ground while his soul and other body go to the third heaven. Being in the third heaven, however, isn’t the end of his problem because he is still only *legally* espoused to Christ, because Christ’s death only *legally* freed him from Satan – but not actually. But, you ask, doesn’t the mortal old man now rotting in the grave mean the Christian is now actually freed by his own real death from bondage to Satan? No, for several reasons:

First, our sinful bodies are not acceptable offerings for sin. Therefore they cannot get rid of the law that binds us to Satan.

Second, mortal death is merely a legality; it’s not real death, as the resurrections of Lazarus, Christ, and others who came back from “death” proved. Only the lake of fire, which alone is permanent and inescapable, is real death.

Third, things that are mortal are, being temporary, insignificant. That’s why the Bible makes it clear that God promised no real estate for an everlasting possession to a mortal Abraham. No mortal can have anything lasting to do with something or someone who is everlasting. That is why, in order to be espoused to Christ we must be born again; we must have everlasting life. Here’s what we learn from that: Satan has never had any intention of marrying, and has never married, any mortals. Mortals can’t serve him – unless he can create a tree of life. Therefore, our old man is merely a picture of our new man. Neither Christ nor Satan wants our old man. Both kings want to be served forever by *the church*, by *souls* in their second bodies, not by mortals! Our physical body only typifies our marriage to Satan because it is carnal and fallen. The only significance of our temporary old man is that’s where the battle is fought. (No battle is fought in unsaved people. They are not Satan’s wives because, without everlasting life, they aren’t qualified to marry him. Therefore they cannot serve him for eternity and they cannot follow him to the lake of fire.)

Since we are married to Satan, doesn’t that mean our being married simultaneously to Christ makes Him an adulterer? Remember, only our consummated union with Satan is real; our union with Christ is merely a legality, because *espousal* is a temporary legal condition, and *consummation* is a permanent state of reality/finality. (That’s why **Ro 7:4** is worded the way it is: *We are espoused to Him and we should be consummated* – but the consummation hasn’t happened yet.) Our old man *represents* the body (wife) of Satan even though he wants our new man; and our new man represents the body (wife) of Christ. But neither body is any good without the soul. And while we have two bodies, we have but one soul. God gave us Bible doctrine so our souls would learn to subdue and rule our evil carnal bodies. Satan gave us philosophy to convince our souls that our carnal body’s Natural Reason is good and pleasing to God. Christ and the Devil are fighting over our souls because our new man’s spirit body will go with the soul. Satan wins if we live as if our mortal man matters. Christ wins if we, by faith, live as if only our new man matters.

The faithful Christian in the third heaven, therefore, joins the saints who have gone before us in watching you and me (**He 12:1**) to see if we’ll endure to the end or if Satan will prevail over the church...because they can’t make it without us (**He 11:39,40**). If Satan wins, to the victor go the spoils (**2 Sa 16:22**) and we all remain Satan’s brides to serve him forever. If Christ wins, we *still* can’t marry Him because He won’t commit adultery by marrying Satan’s wives. And we faithful saints have no way to terminate our marriage to Satan because we have everlasting life and, as victors, won’t be thrown into the lake of fire. That’s why Satan must die in the lake of fire to free us from our marriage to him. Satan’s real death, therefore, *must* happen *prior* to the marriage supper of the Lamb that we may turn our legal espousal to Christ into a real marital bond.

Many people believe the marriage supper of the Lamb will happen prior to Christ’s Second Coming. They base that on a belief that the events in Revelation are written chronologically – even though they admit that may not be the case. They make much of the fact that the marriage supper is mentioned in **Re 19:7-9**, Satan is cast into the lake of fire in **Re 20:10**, and in between is the mention of various events such as the Second Coming and the Millennial Reign. However, as we’ve seen in chapter D4, *The Gap*, the Bible is often far from chronological and requires us to study to show ourselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the word, here a little and there a little.

If those events *are* written chronologically I am obviously wrong about all this legality vs. reality business. I’ll be fascinated by and happy with events no matter how they unfold. But the known order of past historical events supports my position. The Old Testament saints, for example, were captives in Abraham’s bosom for thousands of years because, as Satan’s

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brides, they could not legally be removed by God from Satan's Kingdom of Heaven and taken to His Kingdom of God. Because of **Ro 7** Christ's death on the cross was first needed to make them legally dead (long after their mortal bodies were in the grave!) in order to free them from their union with Satan. Even though Calvary made them as ready to marry Christ as they'll ever be, they are still "captives" and "prisoners of the Lord" (**Ep 4:1,8-10**) two thousand years later. I think – from a warfare perspective – Calvary was a devastating blow to Satan. General Satan had his prized harem captive in his kingdom one minute, and the next it had been led captive to a location in God's kingdom by General Jesus: Two generals fighting over us, the spoils of war. To the victor go the spoils. The point is, even the saints now in captivity in the third heaven cannot marry Christ until He wins the war and sends Satan to the lake of fire.