

Big Picture Bible Study

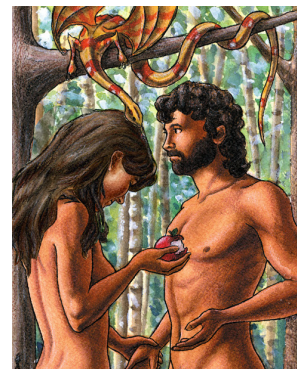
Lesson 03: The Law Applied

GOOD & EVIL: DISCERN BETWEEN THEM VS KNOW THEIR EFFECTS

- **Genesis 3:2-6** “²And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ” ⁴Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.”
- **Genesis 3:22** “²²And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:”

At first Eve knew how to discern between right and wrong—God had been very clear and she could repeat His instructions. But she had a choice to make: follow the word of God, or follow the evidence of her senses.

The moment Eve ate the fruit, she and all her descendants knew sin more and more but could discern between good and evil less and less.



- **Genesis 6:5** “⁵Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
- **Matthew 24:27** “³⁷But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

The process continued and mankind soon was “*only evil continually*.” We had lost our connection to the law of self-sacrificing love. This is what the world will look like in the time of the end.

Grace, Faith and the Law: Understanding the Relationship

- **I John 3:4** “⁴Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.”
- **Romans 3:20** “²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” (see also: **Romans 6:14-15**)
- **Ephesians 2:8-10** “⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

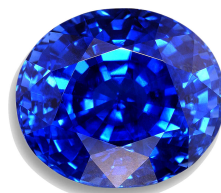
The law is the standard by which all are measured. Grace empowers sinful men to stand blameless before that unchanging standard. It is only through Christ’s blood that this is possible; the law does not have any work in salvation; it only tells us what is right and wrong—the definition of sin.

Salvation comes only by accepting the free gift of grace through faith in Jesus. It is not our works but rather His blood and life that save us.

The eternal Moral Law of Heaven is detailed and written in stone

- **Exodus 24:9-11** “⁹Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, ¹⁰and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. ¹¹But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank.”

74 leaders from Israel meet with God on Mount Sinai to confirm the covenant with a meal. They see an image of God and underneath His feet is a pavement that looks like blue sapphire stone. This is the same thing that Ezekiel saw when he had a similar vision of God (**Eze. 1:26** “*the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone*”; **Eze. 10:1** “*there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne*”).



God's throne is made of some Heavenly material like blue sapphire.

After their meal with God to confirm the covenant as a nation, Moses is called up further still, into the cloud itself, to receive the tablets of stone engraved with the Ten Commandments.

- **Exodus 24:12** “¹²Then the Lord said to Moses, “Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them.” ”

In the Hebrew, when it says, “*I will give you tablets of stone*”, the definite article is implied: “*I will give you tablets of **THE** stone.*” The only stone mentioned is **Exo. 24:10** when it says, “*there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone.*” The same sapphire stone where God stood was where His throne is. God says to Moses, “*Come up to me, my son, and I'll give you two tablets made out of this stone.*”

- **Exodus 32:15-16, 19** “¹⁵And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides; on the one side and on the other they were written. ¹⁶Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets... ¹⁹So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.”



Moses broke the first tablets that were made by God Himself out of blue sapphire taken from the literal throne of God in Heaven!

Both God's throne and the 10C law were made of the same blue sapphire

In the pattern of the earthly Sanctuary, the law was placed in the Ark of the Covenant, beneath the mercy seat, which represented God's throne. The 10C law was to be blue, just like the true law.

- **Numbers 15:38-40** “³⁸Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. ³⁹And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and

remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, ⁴⁰and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God."

The blue threads on their garments were to remind them of the law. Why? Because the law was made in blue stone taken from God's throne.

The harlot of Revelation and the color blue

In the time of the end, this woman represents the counterfeit religious system that will lead deceive all the nations of the world. Notice her attire.

- **Revelation 17:4-5** "The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. ⁵And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."
- **Exodus 28:31-34** "You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. ³²There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear. ³³And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: ³⁴a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe all around. ³⁵And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy place before the Lord and when he comes out, that he may not die."



The priests of God were to dress in four colors: blue, scarlet, purple and gold. The harlot in Revelation was dressed in almost identical colors: scarlet, purple and gold. The only one she is lacking is blue, which represents the law. So this unfaithful church in the end of time will appear to believe in Jesus' sacrifice (**RED**), in Jesus' royalty as our King (**PURPLE**) and in Jesus' riches that He has in store for us (**GOLD**), but they will not follow Jesus' law (**BLUE**). This is a key part of our study together: using Bible symbols to know the truth and recognize the enemy's deceptions.

The counterfeit is designed to look like the original. (color blue: Psa. 19:1)

The First and Second Stones: A Beautiful Parallel

The astounding and unimaginable love and mercy of God shines through in this story like few others. Look at the symbolism: God takes these holy and precious stones from the very presence of His existence, taken from the very hardware of His throne in Heaven. He condescends to write His Law upon them in details that the degenerated race of man will understand and be able to apply to their lives that have been marred with the sins and addictions of their own freewill choices. He gives His holy Law written with His holy finger upon these holy sapphire stones taken from His holy throne and He gives them to Moses the representative of God's people on Earth. And what is the first thing that Moses does with them? He breaks them.

Is it much different for us? We go to God and ask Him to write His Law upon our hearts and the moment He does, we break it and cast it upon the mountainside like Moses and the Israelites. Let us not too quickly judge, for they were affected by the Egyptian culture of pagan idol worship just as much as we are affected by the modern culture of materialism, comfort and pleasure.

- **Exodus 34:1, 4-5** “¹And the Lord said to Moses, “Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke... ⁴And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. ⁵And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.”

He tells Moses that He will give him His Law again, written on another set of stones, only this time they are not stones taken from His Heavenly throne. They are regular, ugly, cold, grey stones in comparison with those holy and beautiful blue sapphire ones. Nonetheless, the parallel is outstanding: even when we break the holy stones of the Law from God’s throne, He will take the ugly stones of our lives and still write His Law upon them and therefore makes the holy.

In our lives, God created each of us in His image. We received faulty genetics from our parents and were born into sin and each one of us have sinned and fallen short of the requirements of God’s Law. The Blue Stone has been broken, smashed against the mountainside. But God will still take our ugly, beat up, earthy grey lives and write His Law upon our hearts and make us holy.

- **Proverbs 7:1-3** “¹My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. ²Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. ³Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.”

THE TRUE MEANING OF THE LAW: 10 WAYS TO UNDERSTAND LOVE

How can we know for sure that the 10C are the same thing as the Moral Law of Heaven? Basically, how can we know which “commandment” or law in scripture is most important and still needs to be followed under the new covenant? Jesus is asked a similar question and notice His response.

- **Matthew 22:35-40** “³⁵Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” ” (Mark 12:28-31)



Jesus answers the question directly; He says the first commandment is “**Love God in true LOVE**” (Deu. 6:5) and the second is to “**Love others in true LOVE**” (Lev. 19:18). Clearly, love is that great commandment that was in Heaven before sin and will remain in Heaven after sin. So then the question is: how do we love? What does it look like? We find the answer all throughout the Bible.

- **II John 1:6** “⁶This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.”
- **I John 5:3** “³For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”

The Ten Commandments are the details of the Moral Law; they are how we can understand the Law of Self-Sacrificing Love in our sin.

Unchanging: God's Character and Moral Law

- **Malachi 3:6** "For I am the Lord, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob."

There is much symbolism in the placement of the 10C stones under the Mercy Seat. The oneness of God's law is paralleled through the comparison of His character with the mandates of His law; they are the same! God is love; it is not that He loves, but rather that He IS love. It is the definition of His character. Likewise, the law is simple: LOVE. God's character (LOVE) does not change and neither does His law (the description of His unchanging character). The same **Law of Self-Sacrificing LOVE** that was written upon the throne of God when Lucifer rebelled in Heaven and was detailed out into 10C to be placed beneath the Mercy Seat of the Ark, will still be the law after sin is destroyed.



Commandments 1-5: understanding true LOVE for God. Commandments 6-10: understanding true LOVE for others.

The Difference Between the Ceremonial Laws and the Moral Law

- **Deuteronomy 10:2** "And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; and you shall put them in the ark."

This law tells us that we are sinners like a mirror shows our faults. It was written by God in stone and was placed inside the Ark of the Covenant, under the mercy seat (symbol of God's throne). This is the same law against which Lucifer rebelled in Heaven; it is the same law that will be after sin is destroyed and will reign forever as it always has—it is just the definition of God's character: LOVE.

The Moral Law—the 10C—is of eternal duration; it defines sin.

- **Deuteronomy 31:24-26** "So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying: "Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there as a witness against you;" "

This law tells us the remedy for and the process of removing sin. It was written by Moses in a book and was placed beside the Ark of the Covenant, within the Most Holy Place (God's throneroom).

The Ceremonial Law is of temporary duration; it defines the remedy for sin.

The Mosaic Law can be easily identified by the context. It is always associated with the service of the Sanctuary: sacrifices, offerings, purifications, holy days and circumcision, and others. With each mention of law, we must look at the verse contextually to see to which one it is referring.

Once Jesus died on the Cross and became our sacrifice, fulfilled the holy feasts and finished our purification, the Ceremonial Law was no longer needed to point out the remedy; Jesus IS the remedy for sin.

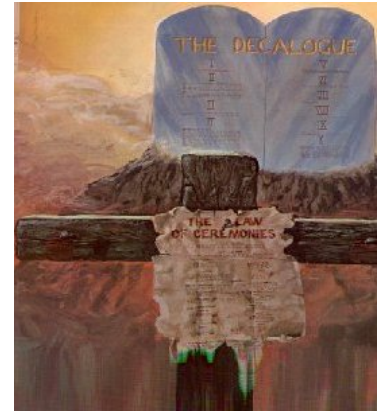
In the time of the end, those who are righteous will be characterized as still following the same law of Heaven: the moral law that has been detailed out into 10 applicable commandments.

- **Revelation 14:12** "Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

The End of the Ceremonial Law: The Death of Jesus

- **Matthew 27:51** “⁵¹Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,”

The Sanctuary on earth is a window into the grand movements of the plan of salvation, so the symbolism of the torn veil is earthshattering! When the earthly veil was torn, it points to a transition in the actual separation between humanity and the all-consuming fire of God’s presence—the same Shekinah glory that would kill the high priest if he ever entered behind the veil with unconfessed sins on his heart. How are we not all destroyed!?



- **Hebrews 10:19-20** “¹⁹Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,”

We may have BOLDNESS to enter the Most Holy Place because Jesus Christ died as the sacrificial Lamb for the whole world; He was resurrected to life and now stands as the Veil between the presence of God and us until we are transformed at the Second Coming. Though the veil had been torn, the Jews did not recognize the most cataclysmic event in history as they continued to sacrifice animals whose blood can never take away sins and whose symbolism was misinterpreted.

The tearing of the veil signified that the Sanctuary services—all the offerings, sacrifices, feasts and cleansing rituals—were no longer needed. Jesus was He to whom they had always pointed, anyway.

The Endurance of the Moral Law: the Ten Commandment

From Genesis to Revelation, all the righteous followed the commandments of God. For Adam, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, they did not yet have the full 10C, but they followed the direct voice of God. Once the 10C were given there was a clear codification of what that was to look like.

Legitimacy and Endurance of the 10C: Old Testament evidence

- **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14** “¹³Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all. ¹⁴For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”
- **Isaiah 8:20** “²⁰To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Legitimacy and Endurance of the 10C: New Testament evidence

- **Matthew 5:17-18** “¹⁷Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”
- **James 2:8-13** “⁸If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well; ⁹but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. ¹¹For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”

- **Romans 3:30-31** “²⁷Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. ²⁹Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” (remember also **Ephesians 2:8-10**)
- **John 14:15** “¹⁵If ye love me, keep my commandments.”
- **I John 2:3** “³Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.”

No Longer Under The WRONG Law

- **Romans 8:1-4** “¹There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”
- **Romans 8:16-17** “¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

By choosing Christ Jesus to stand in our place, we do not have to be under the Law of Sin and Death! This means that we can claim the title of “**sons and daughters of God**” with Jesus!

- **John 8:10-11** “¹⁰When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, ‘Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?’ ¹¹She said, ‘No one, Lord.’ And Jesus said to her, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.’ ”

We SURRENDER at the cross and are covered with His blood. His perfect life stands substitute for ours. We are washed in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and begin a CHANGED life from then on.

Freedom of Choice: We Are Not “Once Saved, Always Saved”

- **Galatians 2:16-18** “¹⁶knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. ¹⁷But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.”
- **Ezekiel 18:21-22, 24** “²¹But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²²None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live... ²⁴But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.”

God will never force us to follow the law of life and LOVE; He will honor our choice to return to a sinful life and reject His grace (and break His heart).

THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD COMMANDMENT: THE SABBATH

Within the Christian world, few areas of the Bible are as poorly understood as the Sabbath. It has been painted as a burden that only legalists keep. It is seen merely as “a day of worship,” as a remnant of Judaism, and as not being part of the new covenant. Sadly, this could not be further from the truth. To truly understand the Sabbath, we must start right at the beginning.

- **Genesis 2:1-3** “¹Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ²And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”

In the perfect environment of Eden, God rested on the seventh day and hallowed it specifically for mankind to have as a memorial of Creation. Notice that this happened before sin and nowhere in the story does God call it a day of worship; rather, it is a day that God specifically set aside and determined to be holy—an action that no human can change. Jesus confirms this by saying:

- **Mark 2:27-28** “²⁷And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.” ”

Jesus claims to be Lord of the Sabbath, a title He never applies to the temporary services of the Sanctuary. The annual Sabbath feasts were also declared to be holy, but God connected these especially to the Sanctuary, so they were also affected by the symbolic tearing of the Temple’s veil. The weekly, seventh-day Sabbath remains God’s signature for mankind as the Creator of all things. In the culture of the Israelites where Baal, Ashtoreth, Dagon, and Osiris all competed, God points to the Sabbath as “the sign” for the world to see and therefore be able to recognize His loyal people.

- **Ezekiel 20:19-20** “¹⁸But I said to their children in the wilderness, ‘Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. ¹⁹I am the Lord your God: Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them; ²⁰hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.’ ”

Further still, the Hebrew word, אוֹת “*oth*,” literally means a sign, a banner or a distinguishing mark. So the Sabbath is God’s mark in our lives like a flag that flies over our heart that says, “*I BELONG TO YAHWEH*.” Similarly, the rainbow was a “sign” for Noah; circumcision was a “sign” for Abraham; Passover was a “sign” for Moses; the budded staff was a “sign” for Aaron and the high priesthood; but the Sabbath was a “sign” instituted at creation before sin for the entire human race. Clearly, the institute of the holy Sabbath originally had nothing to do with Israel or Judaism. Also, notice how the Israelites were reminded of the Sabbath they had forgotten in Egypt before the 10C were given:

- **Exodus 16:23** “²³Then he said to them, “This is what the Lord has said: “Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.’ ” ”

This is 4 chapters before God spoke the 10C in fiery majesty. His voice boomed out from atop Mount Sinai and with His own voice He declared that what He had made holy in Creation was to remain holy for all time as a part of the details of His holy law. Notice how the Sabbath was linked inexorably not to Israel, not to the old covenant, but rather to creation:

- **Exodus 20:8-11** “⁸Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹For in six days

the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

As evening fell, during that first meeting of Adam and Jesus, it was also the first Sabbath. The first hours that mankind shared with God were on the Sabbath, and God used this special memory in particular when He detailed out His law, reminding His children of that tender, first moment. He rested not because He was tired but because He found rest in His relationship with man. This is what He still wants from each one of us. Later, after the 40 years of wandering, when Moses is repeating to the next generation of Israelites what had happened to their parents, He brings up the 10C and links the Sabbath not just with creation but also with the promise of redemption:



- **Deuteronomy 5:12-15** “¹²Observe the Sabbath day, **to keep it holy**, as the Lord your God commanded you. ¹³Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. ¹⁵And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and **the Lord your God brought you out** from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”

God’s design is for the Sabbath to serve as a weekly date when we leave our cares of the world where they are and spend time remembering God as our creator, remembering those first moments when He sat with Adam and Eve and explained to them the nature of His LOVE, and also remembering how He has promised to redeem us and not leave us to die in our sins. This is not a day of mandated worship, but a day that has been made holy by God, for us.



The Sabbath was designed by God to be a special time for us to spend with Him contemplating how He has created us and redeemed us.

The Enduring Sabbath: The New Covenant and Spiritual Israel

The nature of **LITERAL ISRAEL** was designed to have a wall of separation with the rest of the world. The people of God were at enmity with the people of the world. Circumcision was the “sign” and the Sanctuary was the way, but after the death of Jesus, all are now members of the same body.

- **Ephesians 2:14-16** “¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, **the law of commandments contained in ordinances**, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.”

The only law that was abolished was “*the law of commandments contained in ordinances*” or the ceremonial law. That is the point of the new covenant after the death of Jesus. The 10C law is no

longer kept in the Sanctuary, apart from the world; the entire sacrificial system is abolished forever! We are now individual Temples of the Holy Spirit and the law is written upon our hearts.

- **I Corinthians 3:16-17** “¹⁶Do you not know that **you are the temple of God** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”
- **Hebrews 8:10** “¹⁰For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

There is no longer enmity between Israelite and Gentile. Now anyone can claim Jesus' blood and be a part of SPIRITUAL ISRAEL!

This is the very essence of the gospel: all have fallen short, but all may claim the blood of Jesus. No longer is Israel a specific people, but anyone who chooses the life of a CHRISTian. Notice how Paul points this out, using the legal language of the Sanctuary:

- **Colossians 2:13-17** “¹³And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. ¹⁶So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”

The whole purpose of the earthly Sanctuary was to have a substitutionary animal sacrifice as a shadow of the true Sacrifice to come (Jesus). The essence of the process of forgiveness was in the *cheirographon*, the record of sins that was yearly taken away, cleansing the Sanctuary, to be placed on Jesus' shoulders in Gethsemane and Calvary. This is the Greek word here translated as “*handwriting of requirements*.” The only thing that was nailed to the cross was the system of forgiveness that kept a record of sins! Paul is clear that the feast days, monthly sacrifices, seasonal rituals, and yearly celebrations of the Sanctuary are all from the old covenant.

- **Galatians 4:9-10** “⁹But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? ¹⁰You observe days and months and seasons and years.”
- **Hosea 2:11** “¹¹I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.”

The prophet Hosea even prophesied that this would happen saying that all the Sabbaths that were contextually connected to the Sanctuary would cease. Christ fulfilled the ceremonial law. The entire Sanctuary system was a shadow of things to come, but Jesus is the antitype; He is the substance. Remember, that all of those Sabbath days were not the same as the seventh-day Sabbath that was given to Adam and Eve. Remember that they were added “*beside the sabbaths of the Lord*.”

- **Leviticus 23:37-38** “³⁷These are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: ³⁸**Beside the sabbaths of the Lord**, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the Lord.”

The Enduring Sabbath: Jesus, the Apostles, and the New Church

It is true that some Christians today have missed the point of the Sabbath and keep it for a legal act and not in LOVE. Jesus rejected the Pharisees who did this exact thing by healing on the Sabbath.

But he still honored the Sabbath and made it His custom to go into the synagogue on the Sabbath, recognizing that it was a holy day, set aside for study, prayer, and sharing what God has done.

- **Matthew 12:11-12** “¹¹Then He said to them, “What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? ¹²Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” ”
- **Luke 4:16** “¹⁶So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And **as His custom was**, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.”

Jesus never abolished the Sabbath; instead, He very carefully taught His disciples and listeners how it was to be observed. He even referenced the Sabbath in the context of the destruction of Jerusalem, which did not happen until 70 AD, well into the new covenant church:

- **Matthew 24:15-20** “²⁰And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.”

The apostles also kept the Sabbath for the duration of their ministries. Paul, for example, when he traveled to Antioch, went into the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath and preached to both the Jews and the Greeks present. The Jews did not all agree and watch what happens:

- **Acts 13:42-44** “⁴²So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. ⁴³Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. ⁴⁴On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God.”

Paul, the new covenant evangelist, was a Sabbath-keeper. Even to the Gentiles, the Greeks, he made sure to keep the Sabbath. If there was ever a time to teach that the 10C law of God had been abolished, or nailed to the cross, or that it had been only a shadow like the Sanctuary, this would have been the time. But instead, he gets the entire town together on the Sabbath day again! In fact, once Paul went to Corinth to stay for nearly two whole years, look at his habit with both Jews and Greeks alike:

- **Acts 18:4** “⁴And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.”

The Sabbath is mentioned 59 times in the New Testament, and always with the same respect and title as it had in the Old Testament, from the day of creation until the day of Revelation: “the Sabbath day.” There is not a single word anywhere in the entire New Testament about a change, abolition, or removal of the holy blessing and sanctification that God placed on the seventh day. And although many do not notice due to the translation, there IS a verse in the Bible where Paul overtly says that there still remains a Sabbath-specific rest for the true people of God to keep:

- **Hebrews 4:4-6, 9-10** “⁴For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”; ⁵and again in this place: “They shall not enter My rest.” ⁶Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience... ⁹There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.”

Paul quotes the scriptures in his letter to his fellow Jews, showing how God declared the seventh-day as a “Sabbath Rest,” and that some of God’s people must enter into that **κατάπαυσις** *katapausis*

(rest, resting place/habitation). However, since their ancestors did not obey and therefore missed out that there remains a **σαββατισμός** *sabbatismos* (a Sabbath-specific rest) for the true people of God. In English, the concept is watered down, but in Greek, the point could not be clearer. Paul was saying that the Jews had never fully understood the Sabbath, but that the concept was still there for them to enjoy, for those who are the true people of God, must enter into that *sabbatismos*, spiritually resting in the habitation of God, on the seventh day Sabbath He made holy.

And just as important, the prophet Isaiah gives the capstone to our discussion on the Sabbath by showing that we will continue to celebrate the memorial of creation and redemption even once we go to Heaven:

- **Isaiah 66:22-23** “ ‘²²For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,’ says the Lord, ‘so shall your descendants and your name remain. ²³And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and **from one Sabbath to another**, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,’ says the Lord.”

Many references could be cited to show the importance of the seventh-day Sabbath, but we will focus on two main facts: 1) God made it holy and asked us to keep it holy, and 2) God wrote it into the 10C with His own finger as a forever statute. **That is enough for me.**

The Enduring Sabbath Footnote: The First Day of the Week

In the New Testament, the first day of the week is mentioned only 8 times (*Mat. 28:1; Mar. 16:2; Mar. 16:9; Luk. 24:1; Joh. 20:1; Joh. 20:19; Act. 20:7; I Cor. 16:2*): the first six all reference Jesus' resurrection; the one in Acts references a long sermon that Paul began when the church was having dinner as the first day of the week was just beginning at sundown—but they were assembled on the Sabbath; and the one in Corinthians is Paul directing the Corinthian church to wait until the first day of the week to take up a collection to send to needy brethren, thereby respecting the Sabbath.

- **Matthew 28:1-2** “¹Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ²And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.”
- **Mark 16:1-4** “¹Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. ²Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. ³And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” ⁴But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large.”
- **Mark 16:8-11** “⁸So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. ⁹Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. ¹⁰She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.”
- **Luke 24:1-4** “¹Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ²But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ³Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.”
- **John 20:1-2** “¹Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” ”
- **John 20:19-20** “¹⁹Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.”
- **Acts 20:7-8** “⁷Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. ⁸There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together.”
- **I Corinthians 16:2** “¹Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: ²On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. ³And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.”