

The Ten Commandments

There is a lot of talk today about the Ten Commandments. With the secular world working overtime to remove them from our Court Houses and Schools, many people are scurrying to establish place in society for these divine mandates. James Madison, our fourth President who is known as “The Father of our Constitution” said, “*We have staked the whole of all our political institutions.....according to the Ten Commandments of God.*” Our very own United States Supreme Court has the Ten Commandments engraved upon each door that enters the courtroom itself. As you walk up to the Supreme Court building, engraved on the front façade you will find Moses holding the Ten Commandments. Why all the fuss about this historical, yet religious document?

There is no doubt that the world is pretty much oblivious to the true teachings of the Word of God. A multitude of misconceptions exist concerning the Old and New covenants of the Bible. Most religious people believe that all men are simultaneously obligated to obey both the Old Law of Moses and the New Law of Christ. Which is why many are presently fighting over the removal of the Ten Commandments from the lobby of an Alabama Court House. The widespread opinion that the Ten Commandments are still binding on all men living today often causes a raised eyebrow when someone suggests that they were voided when Christ died on the cross.

The ever-popular Billy Graham once wrote in a newspaper column, “*The Ten Commandments give a concise statement of God’s moral laws and they have never been set aside.*” If Mr. Graham and others are right, that they have never been set aside, then it must also be true that the penalties for violating them are still in effect – namely stoning. The fact of the matter is that we do not need the Ten Commandments to establish concise moral laws given by God. The law of Christ, who is now our “*lawgiver*” has established such laws, which all men living today are bound to obey (James 4:12).

The Ten Commandments – An Old Covenant

To the Jewish people of old, Jehovah considered the Ten Commandments His covenant between Him and the children of Israel, “*and Jehovah spake unto you (Israel) out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of words, but ye saw no form; only ye heard a voice. And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone*” (Deuteronomy 4:12-13). Forty days and nights Moses abode with Jehovah on Mount Sinai after the children of Israel had been brought out of Egyptian bondage. God delivered two tables of stone to Moses, upon which were written the Ten Commandments, called by God the “*Tables of the Covenant*” (Deuteronomy 9:911; Exodus 34:28).

The apostle Paul reminds us that those tables of stone, which were a covenant between God and the children of Israel, have been done away. Instructing the Christians in Corinth, Paul rehearses how Moses received the Ten Commandments referred to as the “*Ministration of death,*” and with veiled face took them down to the people. The purpose of the veil was to hide the fact that the glory of the Ten Commandments was already beginning to fade away. Even today, Jews have hardened their hearts to the fact that God has done away with their law and covenant and replaced it with a new one. They refuse to acknowledge as do others that the Ten Commandments have been done away in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:6-14).

The prophet Jeremiah foretold that the old covenant (Ten Commandments) would go away one day and be replaced by a new covenant – the Law of Christ (Jeremiah 31:31-34). The author of the book of Hebrews wrote to Jews who had converted to Christianity, but were in the process of returning back to the Old Covenant. He told them and us today, “*for if the first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second.....*” (Hebrews 8:6-13). The covenant given at Mt. Sinai to the children of Israel is called the “*Old Covenant*” which was the Ten Commandments with its 603 precepts. The

covenant given to all races of people at Jerusalem on Pentecost is the “*New Covenant*” of which Jesus Christ is its mediator (Hebrews 9:15).

The Ten Commandments was given UNTIL Christ came. Its purpose was to teach us about righteousness. “*But before faith came, we were kept inward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, WE ARE NO LONGER UNDER A TUTOR*” (Galatians 3:23-25).

The Ten Commandments were added because of transgressions, TILL the seed (Jesus Christ) should come (Galatians 3:19, 16).

To Whom, Where the Commandments Given?

When God called Moses to Mount Sinai to receive the Law, which was written upon two stone tablets, the deliverer of the Hebrew people said, “*And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*” (Exodus 20:1-2). Moses continued then to spell out to the Israelites the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17). These were but the beginning of the commandments, statutes and ordinances of God. The grand total of all the commandments given to the people by God through Moses was 613! Given only to the Israelites, God required them to keep every one of His 613 precepts. God told the Hebrew people, “*Cursed be he that confirmeth not ALL the words of this law to do them.*” (Deuteronomy 27:26; Galatians 3:10). Nowhere does the Bible say that the Law of Moses was given to people of today, because we were never in Egyptian bondage!

After the Israelites received ALL the law, God was about to give them a land, which He had promised to their father Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). However the people refused to go after hearing the report from the 12 spies, 10 of which said it would be impossible to take the land (Numbers 13). God punished the children of Israel for their disobedience by condemning them to 40 years of

wandering in the wilderness (Numbers 14:32-34). After a new generation of Hebrew people grew up and they were about to be led into the Promised Land by Moses, it was the Israelites who were told, “*The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not his covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here this day.*” (Deuteronomy 5:2-3). The Old Testament covenant, which includes the Ten Commandments, was made between God and the children of Israel (The Hebrews) – not us. It was a covenant that contained 613 precepts – commonly called “*the Law of Moses*” or “*the Law.*”

The fourth commandment given to the Israelites said, “*Keep the Sabbath Day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee*” (Deuteronomy 5:12-14). Who is Moses speaking to in this verse? Deuteronomy 5:1 tells us it was the children of Israel. Many false teachers today try hard to make the first day of the week (Sunday) a Sabbath day. But try as they might, the Word of God exposes their error. Just ask any Jew today, on what day of the week is the Sabbath Day, and they will tell you it is the seventh day (Saturday). God told the Jewish people of the Old Testament that the Sabbath Day was a SIGN between Jehovah and the children of Israel (Exodus 31:13). It was to be a perpetual or age lasting covenant between God and the Jewish people (vs. 16). Thus, the fourth commandment given to the Jews was only one out of 613 precepts that were required to be kept in order to be blessed by God.

The apostle Paul told Christians in the first century who were being instructed by Jews to keep the Law of Moses, “*ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace*” (Galatians 5:4). Anyone today, who believes they must keep the Ten Commandments is required to keep ALL 613 precepts of that law and covenant (Galatians 5:3). Paul says that if you desire to be justified by the Law of Moses, you are fallen from the grace of God, which is in Jesus Christ. You can’t have it both ways. Either you obey the Old Covenant given to the Jews, or you obey the New Covenant given to Jews and Gentiles.

The Ten Commandments An Insufficient Covenant

Sadly, most religious people believe that they must keep at least nine of the Ten Commandments in order for God to be pleased with them. Be advised, although the Ten Commandments are not now in force, nor were they ever given to the Gentiles, they were perfect for the fulfilling of God's eternal plan and purpose. But God NEVER intended for them to remain in force forever (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Those stone tablets that established a covenant relationship between God and the children of Israel have been superseded by a NEW and BETTER covenant (Galatians 3:23-25; Hebrews 8:6-14). Why were the Ten Commandments together with the remaining 603 precepts insufficient as a covenant?

First – There is no mention of Christ's blood in that covenant. Animal blood as required by the Old Covenant could not remove the sins of men (Hebrews 10:4). But, didn't God say there could be no remission of sins without the shedding of blood? Yes He did (Hebrews 9:22). But it is only through the blood of Jesus Christ that we are redeemed (1 Peter 1:18-19). No where do the Ten Commandments mention the saving blood of Christ or how we can contact it unto salvation!

Second – There is no mention of the Gospel as being God's plan of redemption. In John 3:1-7 a man by the name of Nicodemus was told by Jesus of the new birth, "*Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he CANNOT enter into the kingdom of God.....ye must be born again.*" Where do you find it stated in the Old Covenant that one MUST be born again to enter God's kingdom? The answer is NOWHERE. There is no water whatsoever in the Ten Commandments. False teachers such as Billy Graham who push the Old Covenant like the no water approach to salvation, because it is easier to deal with in their crusade invitations. But God is not worried about "easier," He demands that we obey Him alone (Acts 5:29). The Holy Spirit through Peter said water baptism is what now saves us (1 Peter 3:21; Mark 16:16; John 3:5).

Third – There is no mention of the church of Christ. The fact of the matter is, if the Ten Commandments are all we need to please God, and then it would be safe to say that we don't need Jesus, the cross, His shed blood, resurrection or His teachings.

Remember that we have been given a New Covenant (Testament) under which all men living today are bound to keep. Only the New Covenant requires our being added to the church of Christ by God in order to be saved (2 Timothy 2:1, 10; Galatians 3:27). The Old Covenant says nothing about this, nor does it require it.

Fourth – There is no mention of the work of the church. The primary purpose of the Lord's church is to seek and save the lost (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 19:10). Christ commissioned His disciples to go into the entire world and preach the gospel, making more disciples. The church is also expected to edify the saints and help all who are in need (Romans 14:19; 15:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24; Galatians 6:10; Titus 2:14; 1 John 3:17). Nowhere can these things be found in the Old Covenant. We must turn to the New Covenant to discover the things necessary to fulfill the heavenly mission of the church.

Fifth – There is no mention of the worship of the church. Where in the books of Exodus to Deuteronomy would we find the things that relate to the worship of the church? Would we find the Lord's Supper there? Singing of spiritual hymns, or giving of our means every first day of the week? These things are no where to be found in the Old Covenant between God and the children of Israel. When Jesus met the woman at the well of Samaria, did He instruct her to seek the Old Testament Law as to how she and others were to worship God? No, Jesus told her that true worshippers shall worship God the Father in spirit and in truth (John 4:1-26). Only from the pages of the New Covenant (Testament) can anyone learn about worshipping God in spirit and in truth.

Conclusion: The first reaction when hearing that we are no longer under the Ten Commandments is to say, "then it is alright to kill, steal, commit adultery, worship idols, etc." Just

because we are not bound to obey the Old Covenant given to the Jews of long ago, does not grant anyone the right to live immorally. Keep in mind that the State of Texas was once its own republic with laws and a constitution. But once it became a State of the United States of America, its former laws became obsolete and were replaced with state laws and a state constitution. So it is with the Ten Commandments (Old Covenant).

God has replaced it with a BETTER covenant! All based on a BETTER high priest (Jesus Christ), a BETTER deliverer (Jesus Christ), a BETTER sacrifice (Jesus Christ), a BETTER hope, a BETTER promise, and a BETTER promised land (Hebrews 8:6; 9:23; 7:19,22; 10:34; 11:16,35, 40; 12:24). Because there has been a change in the Priesthood (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1), the Holy Spirit has said that it was necessary to change the law (covenant) (Hebrews 7:12).

Jesus summed up the Old Covenant in two commandments, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself*" (Mark 12:30-31). If you obey these two, you will not kill, steal, commit adultery, worship idols, etc. We ask you to think about it – honestly.

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the Scriptures?
Concerning.....*

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