

Study for the Month of January 2012

Knowledge of the Law Before Sinai

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It has been claimed and repeated so long, so often, by so many respected theologians and ministers in mainstream Christianity that the Ten Commandments or the Decalogue was known and given only at Mt. Sinai to Moses, and therefore was only intended for the ancient Israelites and the Jewish people.

The New Testament Christian, they say, since after Calvary, is “no longer under the law but under grace,” and that “the law was nailed to the cross,” which law they aver, using so many self-contradicting arguments apparently sustaining their own interpretations of the Bible, was the Ten Commandments, the moral law, not the ceremonial law or the Mosaic law. And yet they lament, decry, and even lambast in their pulpits the corruption, immorality, violence, and the rapidly-deteriorating state of society and the churches.

But increasingly, flip-flopping political candidates on the campaign trail of the Social Conservatives and Right-wing are now openly playing to and for the Evangelical vote. They may not be aware but the preachers and theologians of these churches and denominations are themselves flip-floppers, too. They are now zealously promoting and crusading for a “return to our Judeo-Christian values” which allegedly include having prayer restored in schools, including public schools, a militant (that has at times become deadly by fanatics) against abortion rights and same-sex marriage, and yes, **a return to keeping *their* version of the Ten Commandments** and to have it conspicuously posted in public places such as public schools and government offices—as though by doing so it would change the *hearts* of the voters and the nation-at-large, and make them godly, which is not the same as self-righteous.

The once-antinomian, “grace only Christian” has suddenly become a Ten Commandments advocate! Their version of the Ten Commandments still numbers ten and still follows the *numbering* arrangement as God wrote it with His own finger, in contrast to that of the Roman Catholic Church which numbers ten but has made the fourth the third, and entirely removed the second which forbids worshipping of images, and split the tenth into two, in order to make it still “ten.”

But the Christian mainstream denominations who are advocating a return to keeping the Ten Commandments, advocate all *but* one: the fourth commandment. (The apostle says if you break one, you break all, showing the Decalogue to be a unit. James 2: 10). This commandment, which found right in the middle of the ten—the only one that clearly identifies *who* God-Creator is, *how* He created the heavens and earth, and *when*, has been strangely abbreviated into simply, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” Their “sabbath day,” like the rest of the Christian world, the biggest of which is the Roman Catholic Church, is the *first day* of the week, *Sunday*, not Saturday, the seventh day of the week. But the fourth commandment clearly says: “Remember *the* Sabbath day

to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but *the seventh day* is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work. Thou nor thy son nor thy daughter nor thy manservant nor thy maid servant nor thy cattle nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in *six days* the Lord created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord *blessed* the Sabbath day and *hallowed* it.”

The three things God did on and *for* the seventh day that ended His six days of creation, which He did not do on and for the other days of the week were: He *rested*, *blessed*, and *hallowed* it. The word *hallowed* also means “sanctified; set apart.” For what reason? It was and is the Creator’s only appointed *weekly memorial* of creation and the mark of His authority as the Creator. In the revealed drama of the ages of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, that begun in heaven, will culminate on earth on the twin issues of (a) worship (b) obedience—what day on which to worship, and to whom will obedience be rendered to. See Revelation 14: 6-12; cf. Daniel chapters 3 and 6.

It is without a doubt that the reason for these strange contradiction of the Scriptures and common sense, and the rapidly—evolving developments is that they either have not read, or worse, intentionally avoid studying and understanding the three angel’s messages of Revelation 14—which are God’s last, merciful warning messages to all the churches and the world will ever hear---before earth’s probation ends. Since the Scriptures are the best expositors of themselves, we will investigate this claim and see whether it will stand its closest scrutiny.

The anchor verses of this month’ study, one from the Old and the other from the New, are the following:

Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest the right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments. Neh. 9: 13.

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. James 1: 25.

The central pillar and foundation truth of the Sanctuary or temple services in the type was to present the Messiah to the people—the Israelites first, as the chosen people—in order for them to present Him to the world, and perpetually keep Him and His work before their eyes and minds. This is the thought that Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote:

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”
Rom. 10: 4.

The word “end” here is the Greek *telos*, “to set out for a definite point or goal; the point aimed at a limit, i.e., by implication, result; the conclusion of an act or state (termination, literal, figuratively, or indefinite); result (immediate, ultimate, or prophetic); purpose.”- *Strong’s Greek Dictionary*. According to the context, Webster defines it as “the object aimed at in any effort; purpose.”

Everything in the law in precept and principle, in one form or another, was but a means of the God, the Lawgiver, towards a great end of object, and that end or object was Jesus Christ, the Law in the flesh. “He was to be through everything; He was the central object of all the Godhead’s original plans and purposes. As Paul says:

All things were created by Him, and *for* Him. And He is before [preeminent] before all things, and by *Him all things consist*. It pleased the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell.” Col. 1: 17-19.

For in Him dwelleth *all the fullness* of the Godhead bodily.” Ch. 2: 9.

THE NEED FOR A SAVIOR

What was the cause and reason that mankind needs a Messiah, a Redeemer, a Deliverer—meaning Jesus Christ? The answer is simple—sin. The one problem of this world, the universe, and heaven itself is not death; it is sin, the transgression of God’s law. Everything else after it by way of pain, suffering, sorrow, and death are but its curse; its consequences; and “the wages of sin is death.” Adam and Eve, the father and mother of mankind sinned; and through them, their posterity, mankind, and the whole world or Earth, originally the kingdom God created for them, became involved in its consequences and ruin. As Paul says:

Wherefore, as by one man is entered into the world, and *death by sin*; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (*In whom all sinned*, margin). Rom. 10:4.

The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6: 23.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Rom. 3: 23.

With the entrance of sin into the world, the whole world and all mankind became involved in sin, thus, the whole world needed deliverance from sin, its power, and its terrible consequences and “wages.” Thus the glorious promised:

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3: 16.

GOD’S OWN DEFINITION OF SIN

1. Many attempts have been made by *sinners*, to define, actually to redefine sin. But only God, the Law giver can define it. We find the answer in the following passages:

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; *for sin is the transgression of the law.*” 1 John 3: 4.

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom. 3: 20.

Because the law worketh wrath: for where *no law is, there is no transgression.*” Rom. 4: 15.

For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law.” Rom. 5:13.

Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law.” Rom. 7: 7.

It is clear then that God’s definition of sin is “the transgression of the law.” Therefore, without transgressing the law there can be no sin. But we are also told that “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Rom. 3: 23. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” Isa. 53: 6. “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” 1 John 1: 9.

2. The next matter to consider is, Which law is it that which defines sin? And which was it that man Adam, and everyone else after has transgressed? The apostles Paul and James provide the answers:

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust [what it meant or included], except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. Rom. 7:7.

But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced by the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he [*the law*, margin] that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. James 2: 9-11.

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Rom. 3: 19.

These texts clearly show that the law which defines sin is that which reveals what sin is, the transgression of which caused the fall of Adam and Eve, and through them the entire human race. This law is the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, the Moral Law, the Law of God.

WHEN WAS THE LAW FIRST KNOWN?

It is true that we do not have in specific record that Adam and Eve received the Decalogue in its specific details *as* did Moses, but it is clear from the Scriptures already cited that they had to be acquainted with it. Moreover, in addition to the verses given, the gospel prophet said:

Thy *first father* hath sinned, and thy teachers transgressed against Me.” Isa. 43:27.

As to who this “first father” or “first man” was, we read the Sacred Record:

“And so it is written, *the first man* Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” 1 Cor. 15: 45.

The *first man* is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.” 1 Cor. 15: 47.

From the inspired definitions thus far given we conclude that although not all the details of the Decalogue were given to Adam and Eve, they knew them nevertheless. F.C. Gilbert says that “even the Talmud specifies certain commands that Adam had received, which certainly shows that there was a general belief among the Israelites that Adam had a knowledge of God’s law.” The Talmud says:

“Concerning six things the first Adam was commanded---against idolatry, against blasphemy, against adultery, against robbery, and concerning the administration of judgment. Although we have these things given to us only through Moses our master orally, and reason naturally leans that way, yet from the direct words of the law, it doth not appear that they were commanded.”—“*Hilchoth Melachim*,” chapter 9, section I.

E. G. White renders it even clearer:

“Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; *its precepts were written in their hearts*. When man fell by transgression, the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience. The promise of a Savior was given [Gen. 3: 15], and sacrificial offerings pointing forward to the death of Christ as the great sin-offering were established. But had the law of God never been transgressed, there would have been no death, and no need of a Savior; consequently there would have been no need of sacrifices.

Adam taught his descendants the law of God, and it was handed down from father to son through successive generations [Adam lived up to 930 years, Gen. ____]. But notwithstanding the gracious provision for man’s redemption, there were few who accepted it and rendered obedience. By transgression the world became so vile that it was necessary to cleanse it by the flood from its corruption. The law was preserved by

Noah and his family, and Noah taught his descendants the Ten Commandments. As men again departed from God, the Lord chose Abraham, of whom He declared, ‘Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.’ Gen. 26:5.”- *Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 363.

WITHOUT LAW THERE IS NO SIN

Since sin is the transgression of any of the Ten Commandments, and, as Paul says, “where there is no law there is no transgression,” and that “*by* the law is the knowledge of sin,” it is self-evident that *before* ancient Israel could understand and appreciate the plan and work of salvation of the gospel, as revealed in the Sanctuary and its ministrations, they must first understand the *consequences* of sin. Therefore it became necessary that God proclaim literally in thunder tones in Mount Sinai this law—“the great divine detector and informer of sin”!

It must be remembered that during the sojourn and eventual slavery of Israel to Egyptian bondage, they had largely lost sight of the knowledge of God and the Decalogue. Because of their long and constant mingling with Egyptian heathenism and idolatry, Egypt being the original symbol of atheism, they well nigh lost all knowledge of the God in heaven, particularly His law which was originally entrusted to them as a people and nation to be its *keepers*, or preservers of a knowledge of it by precept and example. This, in fact, was one of the main reasons He delivered them in a signal manner from this Egyptian bondage. Notice what the psalmist wrote:

“He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them. . . . And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness: . . . *that they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws.* Praise ye the Lord.” Ps. 105: 37-45.

See Exodus 19: 1-25. E. G. White wrote in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, “The Law Given to Israel” chapter 27, pp. 303-4:

“Soon after the encampment at Sinai, Moses was called up into the mountain to meet with God. Alone he climbed the steep and rugged path, and drew near to the cloud that marked the place of Jehovah’s presence. Israel was now to be taken into a close and peculiar relation to the Most High,---to be incorporated as a church and a nation under the government of God. The message to Moses for the people was:---

Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle’s wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, *if* ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant [this covenant is the Ten Commandments, Deut. 4:13, etc], *then* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. Exo. 19: 4-6.

“Moses returned to the camp, and having summoned the elders of Israel, he repeated to the divine message. Their answer was, ‘*All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.*’ Thus they entered into a solemn covenant with God, pledging themselves to accept Him as their ruler, by which they became, in a special sense, the subjects of His authority.”

NOTE: How about us? Have we entered into the same covenant with God? If not, when? And for those who have already entered into the covenant to keep God’s commandments, are you *honoring* that sacred covenant by living up to its precepts and principles? If not, then you are disqualifying yourself from the peculiar and exclusive relationship with God on this account, and denying yourself of the special blessings bestowed upon faithful covenant-keepers. Don’t you think its high time to speedily repent and return to your allegiance to God?

“Again their leader [Moses] ascended the mountain; and the Lord said unto him: ‘Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever.’ When they met with difficulties in the way, they were disposed to murmur against Moses and Aaron, and accuse them of leading the hosts of Israel from Egypt to destroy them. The Lord would honor Moses before them, that they might be led to confide in his instructions. *God purposed to make the occasion of speaking His law a scene of awful grandeur, in keeping with its exalted character. The people were to be impressed that everything connected with the service of God must be regarded with the greatest reverence.* . . .

“On the morning of the third day, as the eyes of all the people were turned toward the mount, its summit was covered with a thick cloud, which grew more black and dense, sweeping downward until the entire mountain was wrapped in darkness and awful mystery. Then a sound of a *trumpet* was heard, *summoning* the people to meet with God; and Moses led them forth to the base of the mountain. From the thick darkness flashed *vivid lightnings*, while peals of thunder echoed and re-echoed among the surrounding heights. ‘And mount Sinai was altogether in a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.’ ‘The glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount’ in the sight of the assembled multitude. And ‘the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder.’ So terrible were the tokens of Jehovah’s presence that the hosts of Israel shook with fear, and fell upon their faces before the Lord. Even Moses exclaimed, ‘I exceedingly fear and quake.’ Heb. 12: 1.

“And now the thunders ceased; the trumpet was no longer heard; the earth was still. There was a period of solemn silence, and then the voice of God was heard. Speaking out of the thick darkness that enshrouded Him, as He stood upon the mount, surrounded by a retinue of angels, the Lord made known His law. Moses, describing the scene, says: ‘The Lord came from Sinai, and rose from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousand of saints [angels]; from His right hand went a fiery law *for* them. Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in Thy hand; and they sat down at Thy feet; and everyone shall receive of My words.’ Deut. 33: 2, 3.

“Jehovah [Jesus in the New Testament] revealed Himself, not alone in the awful majesty of the Judge and the Lawgiver, but as the compassionate Guardian of His people: ‘I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.’ Exo. 20: 2. He whom they had *already known* as and their guide and deliverer, who had brought them forth from Egypt, making a way for them through the sea, and overthrowing Pharaoh and his hosts, who had thus shown Himself to be above all the gods of Egypt---He it was who now spoke His law.

“The law was not spoken at this time exclusively for the benefit of the Hebrews. God honored them by making them the guardians and keepers of His law, but it was to be held as a sacred trust for the whole world. The precepts of the Decalogue are adapted to all mankind, and they were given for the instruction and government of all. Ten precepts, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, cover the duty of man to God and to fellow man; and all based upon the great fundamental law of love. ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.’ Luke 10: 27; Deut. 6: 4; Lev. 19:18. In the Ten Commandments these principles are

carried out in detail, and made applicable to the condition and circumstances of man.” – *Ibid*, pp. 304, 305.

This is exactly the same divine Covenant-promise with its provisions, thus, *conditions* that the Apostle Peter, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, re-echoed when he wrote his epistle to the New Testament Church, that is, to the faithful ones who have been called out of the darkness of ignorance, false teachings and traditions, worldliness, and the sins of appetite indulgence, presumption, and the love of the world and the things of the world.” They are reminded that they, like Abraham of Old, are not citizens of this world, preparing to live in this world, but “strangers and pilgrims” of sinful earth. He wrote:

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that *ye should* shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: which in times past were not a people, but now are the people of God; which had not obtained mercy (*margin*, received), but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as *strangers and pilgrims*, abstain fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” 1 Pet. 2: 9-11, K.J.V.

EGYPT: A TYPE OF SIN AND ATHEISM

After their miraculous deliverance from physical servitude and slavery in the Exodus, capped by God raining down ten plagues upon the Egypt of the proud and blasphemous Pharaoh, the Israelites obtained a degree of appreciation of their deliverance. But God not merely was concerned with their emancipation from physical slavery to their Egyptian masters. He wanted to deliver them from sin—the spiritual Egypt! Indeed the Bible tells us that there is a spiritual Egypt as well as a literal one.

And their dead bodies [the “two witnesses,” the Old and New Testaments] shall lie in the street of the great city, which *spiritually* called Sodom and Egypt.” Rev. 11: 18.

NOTE: The foregoing verses refer specifically to the prophetic time period of three and a half days (years) when atheistical France officially declared war on the Bible and conducted the *auto da fe*, the public burning of the Bible, outlawing of all religions and any and all forms religious literature during the French Revolution, 1793-1787, declaring that there is no god and that *reason* is god, and presented a well-known opera dancer as its symbol, parading her in their parliament and on the streets. This clearly demonstrates *the spiritual nature of a literal thing*.

F. C. Gilbert says:

“Had the Israelites realized their need of a Savior *from sin*, there never would have been that *continuous murmuring* among them that always existed. Exo. 15: 23, 24; 16: 2, 3; 17: 2, 3; Ps. 78: 17, 40, 56. For they would have appreciated the Lord and His salvation, because of His constant power manifested in their behalf. But simply regarding their help from God as *mere temporal benefits*, when everything did not come as they wished, and instantly at that, they were all ready to murmur.

“Therefore the necessity on the part of God to give them His law in order that they might see *the sinfulness of their sins*, and thus learn to appreciate the Lord as their Deliverer from sin, as well as their Friend in time of physical necessities.

“That they must have known God’s law and commandments *before* they were given on Mount Sinai, is evident from what we read in the first part of the Pentateuch before the Decalogue was given. (see *c*). We will here enumerate some of the laws for the benefit of the reader; but before doing this, we wish to notice what the Lord said to Abraham:

‘Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.’ Gen. 26: 5; 18:19.

“It is therefore evident that God must have given Abraham laws, commandments, and statutes, which were well known to the patriarch, and these he kept. Concerning the commands of God which were known and *in operation before* the Decalogue was given on Sinai, we have the following record:

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

“Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments.’ ‘And they gave to Jacob all the *strange gods* which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.’ Gen. 35:2-4.

“And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor; *and they served other gods.*’ Joshua 24: 2.

NOTE: Even back then it was a sign of idolatry, and thus sinful to be wearing earrings, among other almost countless forms of idolatry. It is strange and sad indeed that most Christians, and even members of the remnant church claim that God “changeth not” and is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” find ways to justify the use of earrings and all kinds of jewelry and adornments today, during the investigative judgment in heaven where the lives of His people are passing in review! Instead of God, they are glorifying self.

“Now if this command on Mount Sinai was its first introduction, how then does it appear that they were apprised of it at the time of the flood, and in the days of Jacob? Moreover, how could it have been wrong for them to have *other gods*, if there were no law that forbade such things? And where there is no law there is no transgression. Rom. 4: 15. It is evident, however, that Jacob regarded it a *sin* to have strange gods in the dwellings of his family. This, then, being true, it naturally follows that he must have been informed of the fact, and must have known the sinfulness of violating the first commandment of the Decalogue, which was *afterwards* given to the children of Israel on Sinai.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

“And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel has stolen the *images* which were her father’s. . . . Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them into the camel’s furniture, and sat upon them [hiding them].’ Gen. 31: 19-34.

“We see then that Laban [] was a violator of this second precept by having images; for if there had been no precept against them, why should his daughter have taken them, that her father might not worship them. It is evident from the history of Laban that he was not follower of the true God; hence he was an idolator. He violated God’s law and served and worshipped images. We can see, then, the second commandment was known at this time.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

“This commandment of the Decalogue warns against profanity, the taking of the name of God in vain [one of the most prevalent of sins in these last days]. We know from experience of the antediluvians that they were a very profane people, as through their conduct the earth was literally teeming with violence. Gen. 6 :5. But we have the record of at least one person who violated this commandment, and who in the Scriptures is called a *profane person*:

“And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.’ Gen 25: 31-33.

And the apostle Paul, in commenting on this experience of Esau, says:

“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau.” Heb. 12: 16.

“As a result of his course and conduct, he failed to get the blessing of God, though he sought it with many tears. Heb. 12: 17. Surely he must have known the terrible sin of violating the third commandment; for sin is not imputed where there is no law. And since he could find no favor, because of this wicked course of his, it is evident the sin of that blasphemous conduct must have been very great.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

“This commandment, as all are aware, is concerning the Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week. It is often said that this Sabbath day was given to the Jews, hence it is Jewish. But we will observe that, according to the teachings of Moses, this institution was in existence *before there was a Jew*:

“And it came to pass, on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that *which the Lord hath said*, Tomorrow is the rest of the Sabbath of the Lord. . . . And Moses said, Eat that today: for today is a Sabbath unto the Lord: today ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the *seventh day, which is the Sabbath*, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, *How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath*, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.’ Exo. 16: 22-29.

“From these texts we learn that the Sabbath at this time was not a new institution; neither *could* it have been new three months after when it was given on Mount Sinai. The Lord here repeats the statement that the people *refuse to obey* His commandments and laws. So it is evident the people must have had these laws, and certainly must have known them. How could the Lord charge them with violating His law, if they had never heard anything about it? But God says that He had already told them, and they were apprised of it. Is there any command previously given to this effect? We find its record in the second chapter of the Bible, and several times in Exodus. (d) At creation God made the Sabbath institution. Gen 2: 1-3. He gave it to Adam, the first man, the father of the race. From him it was to be handed down to all his posterity, to be guarded sacredly as a treasure from Heaven. Jesus says this same thing to the people:

“The Sabbath was made for man.” Mark 2: 27.

“Certainly this must have included Adam, the first man. We thus see clearly that this command was known to the people before it was proclaimed amid the thunders of Sinai.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

“This commandment, as everyone knows, must have been in force before the giving of the law at Sinai; or how could the conduct of Jacob’s sons in selling Joseph to the Midianites, be considered sinful against their father? Gen 37: 27, 28. They abused their brother; they falsified to their father (Gen. 37: 32, 33); they certainly failed to give honor to their parents. They knew it was wrong at the very time they were doing it; but because of their jealousy they sold him. Gen. 37: 4, 8, 11. If there was no law against disobedience to parents; if there was no command that parents should be respected, then certainly these sons of Jacob had committed no sin against their father, even though they had wronged their brother. *For where no law is there is no transgression*. But they knew it

was wrong; the Bible speaks of it as sinful (Gen. 50: 16-20; Acts 7: 9); the results show that their course was an evil one.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

“Very little needs to be said touching the enforcement of this commandment before the days of Sinai. The first family violated this command in its literal language. Cain slew his brother, the Book of Genesis tells us. Gen. 4: 8. John says he killed his brother. 1 John 3: 12. Cain was a murderer. The Lord accused him of this deed (Gen 4: 10, 11), and for this he was punished. Cain himself said that his punishment was greater than he could bear. Gen. 4: 13.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

“We might give much proof that the knowledge of this command, and its violation as being sin. Gen. 34: 1, 2, 31. Just one case to the point, and this must suffice. When Joseph was repeatedly tempted by his mistress to betray the sacred trust of his master, he said: ‘How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?’ Gen. 39: 9. He evidently knew that the law against adultery was in force; and should he commit the terrible wickedness, he was aware that it would be sinning against God. But sin is the transgression of the law; and the law which declares sin, is generally known as the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments. Joseph therefore must have known of this fact. The Israelites, who knew all about this experience of Joseph, might have known this, too, and have found deliverance from this sin, even as Joseph did.

THE EIGHTH, NINTH, AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS

“These three commands were all in force, as they were violated by Joseph’s brothers; by Jacob, when he stole the blessing; by Abraham, when he twice falsified concerning his wife.

“Thus we have shown that every one of the Ten Commandments must have been and was in force, before God have them to the Israelites. This knowledge, however, the people lost; hence, in order to awaken their consciences to what sin was, to reveal to them their sinful course of conduct, and to prepare them for the salvation there was to be revealed to them in the services and ministrations of the sanctuary, He declared to the basis of His government,---His own wonderful law. When they once knew this and then violated it, they would be liable to its penalty,---death. Then realizing their lost and undone condition without any Deliverer from the consequences of their guilt, God would reveal to them the truths of the Messiah and of the great salvation which He should give them, as portrayed in the work of the sanctuary. Every part of this service would teach them some phase of healing from sin; in everything they had presented to them, they would find deliverance from the bondage of evil. They must see the awfulness of sin, then they would have the remedy, when they realized they had committed trespass against the Lord.” – F.C. Gilbert, *“Why The Law Was Given on Sinai,” Practical Lessons For The Church of Today*, pp. 376- 387.

Once more:

“Ten precepts, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, cover the duty of man to God and his fellow men; and all based upon the great fundamental principle of love. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” Luke 10: 27; Deut. 6: 4, 5; Lev. 19: 18. In the Ten Commandments these principles are carried out in detail, and made applicable to the conditions and circumstances of man.” – *Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 304.