AMBASSADOR COLLEGE Bible CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

LESSON 17

Is Obedience to the Ten Commandments Necessary Today?

WOULD *you* like to have eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God?—and have eternal life so that you could *claim* this inheritance?

"Yes, but what must I do," you ask, "in order to receive *eternal* life?"

Another fellow human being of ours has already asked this question of Jesus Christ the living Son of God—the highest Authority—for us. "Master," he asked, "what good thing shall I do, that I may HAVE *ETERNAL LIFE*?" And what was Jesus' instruction? "If thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments*" (Matt. 19:16-17).

KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS, Jesus said!! Are you astonished at this?

Wrong Concept Today

YOU HAVE PROBABLY HEARD that commandment keeping is no longer necessary—that since the old covenant was done away by Christ, the ten commandments have been abolished—"NAILED TO THE CROSS." You also have probably heard that the old covenant *was* the ten commandment law—that the new covenant contains only grace and promises, but NO LAW. Hence, it is argued that since the old covenant has been abolished God's law has also been abolished. "Grace alone is what saves you now," so they say, "but no commandment keeping is necessary."

This teaching would LEAD YOU TO BELIEVE that the LAW of God is HARSH, CRUEL, ENSLAVING—that the fault of the old covenant was with the law, and since *God* gave the law, the fault must have been *His!*

Later, according to this common teaching, Jesus came with a new covenant which had no law, only promises and liberty to do what you please. Certainly there is SOMETHING TERRIBLY WRONG WITH THIS CONCEPT!

Another argument that the laws of the Old Testament are done away and have no authority for us today is that the laws of the Old Testament are a part of the old covenant which God made only with the 'Jews' at Mount Sinai.

HOW WRONG PEOPLE CAN BE! Do you know that many think they are on the right road to salvation, but are actually on the road to destruction? They are WORSHIPPING GOD IN *VAIN*—worshipping Him with NO PROSPECT OF OBTAINING ETERNAL INHERITANCE in the Kingdom of God! Listen to what God says: "Howbeit *in vain* do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the *commandments of men*, For laying aside the *commandments of God*, ye hold the tradition of men . . . [and now note the following especially] . . . Full well ye *reject* the Commandments of God, that ye may KEEP your *OWN* TRADITION" (Mark 7:7-9).

Back to the Faith Once Delivered

Through Jude, God warns: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the *common salvation*, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly CONTEND FOR *THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED* unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares . . . ungodly men, turning the *grace* of God into *lasciviousness*, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 3-4).

Yes, even before the New Testament was com-

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pletely written, ungodly men had crept into the Church to corrupt it—turning *grace* into *lasciviousness.*

And what is "lasciviousness"? It means "license" —unrestrained liberty—abuse of privilege. In other words, license to do what seems *right* in human eyes—according to human *conscience*—though it *disobeys God's* Law! And that is exactly what those ungodly men, even in the first century, did —turned *grace* into unrestrained privilege to disobey God's law! TURNED TO *HUMAN* CONSCIENCE AS A GUIDE! And once introduced, the practice has persisted and spread over the world to this very today!

This present age is a particularly *LAWLESS* AGE! Everywhere, it seems, the spirit of disobedience is sweeping society. From the pulpits you hear that Jesus Christ abolished His Father's Law—that it is not necessary to obey God any longer.

It is time we looked into the Bible to see what it really says. And when we do, let's look through the *entire Bible,* and CONSULT *ALL* THE SCRIPTURES and examples—NOT JUST *PART* OF THEM. Jesus said: "Whoso therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5:19).

No one can gain entrance into God's Kingdom unless that individual first recognizes the authority and rule of God.

We are not to argue with God or use human reason to evade the plain commands of the Scripture. GOD is Supreme Creator and Supreme Lawgiver. He KNOWS WHAT IS BEST for us. He has perfect wisdom and understanding. We can place our confidence in Him and rely on His judgment which He committed to writing for us—in the Bible.

The tendency is to use human reason to sidestep what seems of lesser importance to us. It is so easy for us to say: "I don't see why God would want us to keep this. It SEEMS SO IMPRACTICAL in this modern age. Now here is the way *I* see it." BUT *are* these laws any more impractical today than they were from the beginning?

Notice!

The NEWS TODAY IS NEARLY ALL BAD. There's a reason why! Not only do we have war, fear of war, and much strife between *nations,* but we also have strife and competition in *business.* We have quarrels leading to divorce *in the home.* We have a growing younger generation, nervous—and by blowing off steam it gets into all sorts of troubles that we call "juvenile delinquency."

What's the matter with us anyway? Are we *afraid* to stop and look the situation in the face? Do we dare recognize the fact that *we* are bringing all this fear and worry, this heartache, this suffering, this frustrating emptiness on ourselves?

There is a reason, but are you afraid to hear it? Will you *deny* the *true* reason? *Accept* the *truth!*

The Basis of Life

If you find the truth—that GOD Almighty, the Creator, SET IN MOTION INVISIBLE, SPIRITUAL LAWS *FOR OUR HAPPINESS and for our good,* and that all our woes and our troubles are the direct result of our rejection and transgression of those laws—you'll probably say, "But I've been taught that those laws were abolished by Christ!" Or, "Why, that's a religious and theological question that I know nothing about. It has nothing to do with my practical, down-to-earth, everyday life anyway."

You're wrong! It has everything to do with your everyday life. It has everything to do with all the bad news we hear and read about everyday. It has everything to do with the fact that you are restless and discontented, and that you are not happy as you want to be, and would like to be. It has everything to do with today's chaotic world conditions, and with social unrest, with the troubles that you are probably having in your own home!

Yes, you've probably heard that the ten commandments were done away. You've been taught that the ten commandments either are the same as, or a part of, the ritualistic law of Moses, and that they didn't exist until Moses, and that they lasted only until Christ! But *is* this true?

THIS IS NO MERE, IRRELEVANT THEOLOGICAL OR RELIGIOUS QUESTION. THIS IS THE VERY ESSENCE OF YOUR LIFE—your home life, your social life, your business life. It's the very crux question behind world troubles today. Strange as it may seem, the ten commandments have been in full force and effect since human life has existed on this earth!

GOD HAS ORDAINED A LAW—THE SUPREME ETERNAL SPIRITUAL LAW OF *LOVE.* God is *Love!* (I John 4:8.) God and Love

are *inseparable* from each other! God lives completely in accordance with this law. Love!

God has ORDAINED THAT ALL MUST LIVE BY THIS LAW of love—just as He does—if they are to have life—the gift of eternal life. Love toward God and love toward fellow man. That is just what the Spiritual law, THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, is—the first four of these teach *LOVE* TOWARD GOD, AND the last six teach *LOVE* TOWARD FELLOW MAN. THESE TEN *SPIRITUAL* LAWS ARE ONLY THE *TEN POINTS* OF THE ONE SUPREME SPIRITUAL LAW—the One Royal Law that James expounded—THE ROYAL LAW OF *LOVE!* (James 2:8, 10). *Love* is the one and only *Great Spiritual Law.* All other laws only *guide* to its fulfillment. The HOLY SPIRIT FROM GOD Himself ENABLES MAN TO KEEP THIS SUPREME SPIRITUAL LAW in its various points; for the Holy Spirit, when PLACED WITHIN US BY BEGETTAL, causes us to bear the *same* "fruits" that it caused Christ to bear. We, *of ourselves,* are not able.

And what are the "fruits" which will be manifested in our lives by the Holy Spirit working within us? "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22, 23). *Love,* the *fulfilling* of the Royal Law, is placed first. These "fruits" are something to be *desired!*

The ten commandments constitute a *spiritual law* that is inexorable and eternal. A law that is love and the *fulfilling* of which is love—a law that was set in motion for our happiness to produce everything good which we have foolishly denied ourselves. It is time you learned that these TEN COMMANDMENTS are ENTIRELY DIFFERENT and separate FROM THE *RITUALISTIC* LAW OF MOSES which was just a code of *physical* laws—*not* spiritual laws.

Keeping the Law IS Important

Remember, Jesus Himself said, "If thou wilt enter into life," *eternal* life, "keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:16-17).

God *is* spirit—HOLY SPIRIT. It is A SPIRIT OF HOLY SPIRITUAL *POWER.* A power that seems strange to us. Witness its power working through the disciples when it first FILLED THEM ON the day of PENTECOST! "And they," the disciples of Christ, "were all *filled with the Holy Spirit,* and began to speak with *other tongues* as the *Spirit* gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). The whole group of disciples were suddenly able to speak in various other foreign tongues as the *Holy Spirit* of God *enabled them* to do it! Also, when Peter and John cried out to God to fill them with His power, "the *place was shaken* . . . and with *great power* gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of Jesus" (Acts 4:23, 33). They had the "*great power*" of the Holy Spirit within them!

And again, witness the COMPLETELY SINLESS LIFE OF CHRIST—one composed of human flesh the same as we are—HE WAS *BEGOTTEN* of the Holy Spirit just as you and I may now be, if we earnestly desire it. But did Christ say it was *He, himself,* who was able to keep God's law *perfectly?*

Notice what He said!

"I can of mine *own self* do nothing" (John 5:30). But, He said, "the Father that *dwelleth in me,* He doeth the works" (John 14:10). The Father dwelt in Jesus by the Holy Spirit. The *HOLY SPIRIT* manifested *power. That* was the power that ENABLED JESUS TO KEEP GOD'S COMMANDMENTS PERFECTLY.

Did Christ do away with this basic glorious Spiritual Law of Love at His coming two thousand years ago? Was this glorious law, of which the ten commandments constitute its ten points, given to Moses at Mount Sinai only for the "Jews" to keep from that time forward? Did God withhold the glorious ten points of the Royal Spiritual Law of Love—the ten commandments—from the people from the time of Adam to Moses? *Or* did He reveal this way to supreme happiness to them? If God did give the people the ten points of this Supreme Royal Spiritual Law of Love—the ten commandments—were they, *unlike* Christ, *able* to keep it by their *own* power? *Or* is it that the Holy Spiritual *power* to keep God's great spiritual Law of Love had not been offered to man until these "latter days"—after Christ came and paid the penalty of our collective sins that had cut us off from God? Let's learn the truth!

Now you are going to learn the truth about the law out of your own Bible!

We are about ready for the actual lesson. But first, read this instruction!

Final Instruction

This lesson is intended to direct you to the Bible —to help you learn how you can better study the Bible. Here is the METHOD OF STUDY.

Is your Bible in front of you? If not, don't read another word until you GET YOUR BIBLE—or Bibles, if you have more than one translation. Have a good dictionary, a CONCORDANCE if you have one, and your STATIONERY, all placed in front of you on a desk or table.

Remember—you must OPEN your Bible TO EVERY PASSAGE. Never say to yourself, "Oh, I think I know what the Lesson is referring to"—and then pass over the Scripture. You need to "*keep your nose in the Bible,*" so to speak.

You must READ AND RE-READ and THINK OUT EACH PASSAGE you read. MEDITATE ON IT in your leisure time in the following twenty-four hours, and in your time of prayer—before you forget it. *MAKE IT A PART OF YOU!* Don't forget, this is a *Bible Study* Course—not just a study of these words we send you.

Here is the method of making EFFECTIVE NOTES: WRITE down neatly on your paper the SUBJECT OF THE LESSON and underscore it. Next write down the LESSON NUMBER. Then as you come to each QUESTION SECTION, write down its TITLE and, underneath, NUMBER EACH QUESTION as you come to it. FOR EACH question WRITE DOWN THE ANSWER, together with any pertinent ideas that come to your mind.

Be sure also to WRITE OUT THE SCRIPTURE which answers each question. If you have not done so before, begin to do it now. Writing down your material—the answers, and every word of each Bible passage, and any comments you wish to make as you go along—will AID you greatly in *reviewing* and REMEMBERING.

NOW READ THE LARGE TYPE WORDS in this Final Instruction section right down to the end of this section—*pay no attention to the small type.* AND SUDDENLY—YOU HAVE A FLASH REVIEW OF ALL THE IMPORTANT POINTS! These serve as an INDEX, TOO. Simple and effective. You will notice that *all the material in the Lessons is written like this. USE* THE LARGE WORDS FOR THIS PURPOSE!

This lesson, like all others, is extremely important to you. HAVE YOU PRAYED to God that He will give you an understanding of this lesson? If not, don't read any further. Go to a private place, kneel down, and ask Him for the understanding and wisdom so that you may properly grasp and apply the material in this lesson you are about to study!

And NOW FOR THE LESSON itself!

Lesson 17

What Sin Is

1. What is *sin?* I John 3:4.

2. And what is the *law?*—did Paul say the *law* says, "Thou shalt not covet"? Rom. 7:7.

COMMENT: The *law* that said, "Thou shalt *not* covet," *taught* the apostle Paul what was *sin. And that is the tenth commandment.* (Ex. 20:17.) So the law that taught that principle *is one of the ten commandments!* The violation of these and their principles is *sin!*

3. Is SIN—THE VIOLATION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS and their principles—a thing that works against our own best interest? Rom. 6:23.

COMMENT: People have NUMEROUS IDEAS ABOUT WHAT SIN IS. People often lean to the idea that it is a thing to be desired. To illustrate, in Hollywood—the movie capital of America—several years ago, there was in a number of newsstands, a book titled *How to Sin in Hollywood.* Visitors from all over the world would come to Hollywood and would buy that book. Actually, the book was quite harmless, giving names of restaurants and such, most of which were without any entertainment. But the point is that sin always SEEMS to be the forbidden fruit that is most GLAMOROUS AND that would be most DESIRABLE if some unfair God had *not* denied it to us. That seems to be what human beings think of sin. But—here you learn that "the *wages* of sin"—the thing you *earn*—the thing you bring upon yourself—is death! A shorter and unhappier life here, and eternal oblivion in the hereafter, if it is persisted in.

Happy Way Must Be Revealed!

1. Did Paul say he would *not have known* what sin is except the *law* had pointed it out to him? Rom. 7:7.

COMMENT: You DON'T *KNOW* WHAT IS RIGHT and what is wrong WITHOUT IT BEING *REVEALED.* Even the apostle Paul would not have known what sin was if the law had not told him. Human nature will not teach you. Human nature has evil in it. As Paul says, "I HAD NOT KNOWN LUST." That is, he would not have known that lust was wrong or evil; he *didn't have such instinctive knowledge*—"*EXCEPT THE LAW HAD SAID,* THOU SHALT NOT covet."

COMMENT: Do you realize that when you were born *you didn't know one thing?* Do you realize that *you were NOT BORN WITH INSTINCT* like the dumb brutes? Dumb brutes don't have to "know." They don't have to be taught a law to know what to do; they don't have to learn about a law that they can receive and accept in their minds and that will show them what to do to be happy, and what not to do to avoid suffering. Animals are just dumb brutes which God has equipped with instinct. They live as the Creator originally designed them in the beginning.

But you and I are made *after God's image*. We were put here as free moral agents for the purpose of *producing character*—holy, righteous, spiritual character. Unlike in the dumb brutes, God is still designing, fashioning, us. GOD is *reproducing Himself*—CREATING HIS CHARACTER WITHIN US, and He has given us a *mind* like He Himself has, except our minds are limited. Our minds are fallible, subject to making mistakes, but God's mind is infallible and unlimited—that's the *only* difference.

2. Did the apostle Paul say that THE LAW—the ten commandments and their principles – is SPIRITUAL? Rom. 7:14.

COMMENT: But Paul said he was *carnal. We* are *carnal.* He was fleshly and material. So are you. We all are. But THE LAW is a *spiritual principle*, and it *REGULATES YOUR HAPPINESS*—IN A *SPIRITUAL* MANNER.

3. Does not Paul say the LAW IS HOLY, JUST AND GOOD? Rom. 7:12. Remember this! It is very important!

COMMENT: That isn't what you have been taught today, is it? Many people have been reared in the belief that the law is *unholy*, that it is altogether *wrong*, and that Christ had to do away with it.

But you want HAPPINESS. You want to be happy above all things. Everyone does. You want to lead a life that is pleasing and pleasant. You would like to lead a LIFE that is just full and ABUNDANT and *INTERESTING*—as a matter of fact, a little bit EXCITING all the way along, wouldn't you? And you want a life where everything is PLEASANT, where there is no pain or suffering.

You don't want a life of boredom. You don't want a life of sorrow, pain or suffering. You want a *happy* life, and you would LOVE to feel well, JOLLY and JOYFUL – happy ALL THE TIME.

YOU COULD HAVE A LIFE LIKE THAT. Everyone could.

This *entire world* could be like that—*if* we only *understood* the *way!*

God Almighty in His great *love* for humanity set a law in motion. That law was *designed* to produce just that kind of life in *you!* God is creator not only of matter—solid matter, liquid matter and gaseous matter, as we know it—but God is also Creator of *force* and of *energy* and of *every power* and of *every law*. The laws of physics, the laws of chemistry, every law that is in motion and is energized. Do you realize that God Almighty also created a *spiritual law?* That *spiritual law regulates your happiness.*

BUT YOU'RE *NOT* LIVING THAT WAY. YOU'RE *BREAKING THAT LAW* and that law has been breaking *you* for a long time, because that's precisely what happens.

That law is merely love. It's THE WAY OF LOVE. It's the way that love should be expressed —love toward God and love toward neighbor.

People think the law—the very thing that points out to us the way to *avoid* unhappiness—is wrong. But it is this very same law that shows them *how* to avoid unhappiness. Yet they think they want to do away with the law. Does this make sense? They seem to think the words that reveal the law of God to us in the Bible should be removed from it. What was Paul's attitude? Let us see.

4. Did Paul say the law is sin? Rom. 7:7. Or did he say it is a help? Same verse. Paul found the law to be a help!

Commandments in Force before Moses

The TEN COMMANDMENTS WERE FIRST MADE KNOWN TO ADAM IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN. Why? So that people from the very beginning could know what sin is! That is the very law that he broke in the "original" sin. *Every one* of the ten commandments was then in full force and effect. That is just how important they are! It was a *sin* to transgress any of these commands even between the time of Adam and Moses. Let us understand.

1. Was the LAW *IN FORCE FROM THE VERY TIME OF ADAM?* Examine: Is *sin* imputed where there is no law? Rom. 5:13.

COMMENT: Where there is no law, there naturally is no penalty for a violation. Everything stands as though there were no law or penalty. We know that "the WAGES OF *SIN* IS DEATH" (Rom. 6:23). Romans 5:13 here plainly tells us that there is no imputing of the *death penalty* for sin—transgression of the law—*if* there is *no law.*

2. But do we find that death *did* reign—that the DEATH penalty was IMPUTED because of sin —beginning with the very time of Adam? Rom. 5:14. Then there must have been a *law* from the time of Adam, must there not? Same verse.

COMMENT: So we see that Adam *did sin!* He could not have *sinned* had there been no *law*. How plain that the law was there. All have sinned. "*ALL* have *sinned*, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). The very first human being—Adam—found it to be in existence, and it is here to this day, for "*all* have sinned"!

COMMENT: The law of God existed *from the beginning*. GOD INSTRUCTED ADAM AND EVE IN THE LAW—the way by which they could live profitably and abundantly by living their lives according to it—on the very next day after He created them. That is, He instructed them on the Sabbath.

3. Doesn't this show that the law was GIVEN FAR EARLIER THAN those who believe it was

first given to Moses at Mount Sinai REALIZE? Rom. 5:14. Note the words "Adam *to* Moses." Didn't Adam *precede* Moses? Same verse.

COMMENT: Some people erroneously believe that there was no law given until the time of Moses. How wrong they are!

Man Has to Be Instructed

EVERY ONE OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS *WAS IN EXISTENCE* DURING THE TIME OF ADAM. It was *sin* to break any one of them *before* the time the law was given to Moses at Mount Sinai. Man has to be instructed. FROM THE VERY TIME GOD CREATED THE FIRST MAN, Adam, HE HAS INSTRUCTED HIM. Notice:

1. Did God place man in the Garden of Eden at man's creation? Gen. 2:8. And then did God give His permission to man to do something? Verse 16.

COMMENT: God gave His permission. He is Supreme Ruler.

2. But now notice what God says immediately after this. Gen. 2:17. Is it not INDULGING IN A *MIXTURE* OF GOOD ACTIONS AND EVIL ACTIONS that GOD WARNS AGAINST? Same verse.

COMMENT: Here again we see that God is Supreme Ruler. God is giving orders. He is teaching. The man *didn't know*. He had to be told. He had to be *taught* and *instructed*. Here *is* that instruction —that command.

3. And what is the penalty—what can be expected —when one "eats"—partakes—of a mixture of good and evil? Gen. 2:17.

COMMENT: "The WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH." The very fact that God said, "In the day that *thou* eatest thereof . . ." shows that man was *allowed* to do it, that the MAN was a *FREE MORAL AGENT*, that the man himself had to MAKE the CHOICE. God designed that you and I *choose* whether we will obey His law or not.

Animals don't make a choice. Animals have instinct. Animals are usually contented. We have our "contented cows." But we don't have many contented people. You know why?

Cows don't make any choice. God simply ordained that they should live in a way that they would be contented. But God *ordained* that you and I *must* make a choice. And if we CHOOSE the *RIGHT WAY* to live, according to the law that God set in motion to produce happiness and contentment and a *full, THRILLING, ENJOYABLE* LIFE, we can have it. But, if we are going to CHOOSE to live the *OTHER WAY*, we're going to have SUFFERING, SORROWS and curses—that's what we've elected to do.

The First Lie and the First Sins

1. God, the Creator, lovingly warned man that if he partakes of *evil* things he shall *surely die* (Gen. 2:17). But what did the DEVIL SAY? Gen. 3:1-4. Note especially verse 4.

COMMENT: "You shall *not* surely die"—there is the *first lie* that we have any historical record of. It was *not* told by a man but by the *devil*. "YOU WILL NOT SURELY DIE." "You're an *immortal soul*." Or "You have an immortal soul that won't die." That's what the *devil* said.

2. What else did the devil say in respect to this? Gen. 3:5. Note especially the words, "For God *doth know*."

COMMENT: In other words, the devil said God knows better than that you will surely die if you partake of things both good and evil; God's been lying to you. That's what he wanted the woman to believe.

3. And then what did EVE do? Gen. 3:6. And did her husband PARTAKE OF THE FRUIT too? Same verse. Here was the *FIRST HUMAN SIN!*

COMMENT: Analyze exactly what happened. *God* is the One we *obey*. Do you realize that's one of the definitions of God? Whoever you obey is your God. It might be your slavishness to your automobile. Maybe it's an actual idol. Whatever it is, that's your god.

Adam and Eve had another god in place of the true God—THEY BROKE THE FIRST COMMANDMENT, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:3). Also, they BROKE the FIFTH by *dishonoring their only Parent*. How? The genealogy of Christ goes back *to Adam who was the "son of God,"* because God *created* him. Adam was the son of God by a direct creation.

Adam not only dishonored his only parent, but he also BROKE the *TENTH* commandment. There was *lust* when the woman saw that it was good for food and desired to make one wise—vanity, egotism and pride entered into her heart.

Lust is what causes a person to have an inordinate desire to have something that is not legal. Lust causes one to *steal* and Adam and Eve BROKE the EIGHTH commandment by *stealing* what was not theirs.

Four of the ten commandments were broken in the original sin. And in other ways EVERY ONE OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS WERE ACTUALLY BROKEN IN THE VERY FIRST SIN.

4. Did Adam and Eve have children?—what were the names of these two sons that they had? Gen. 4:1, 2. What did Cain do? Verse 3. What did Abel do? Verse 4. Was Cain's offering—Cain's act—*acceptable* to God? Verse 5. If one does well—does the things God wishes—the deeds of such a one are

acceptable to God, are they not? Verse 7, first nine words. But if one does things which are *not* acceptable to God, what "lies" at one's door—*sin?* Verse 7.

5. Did Cain, in jealousy, *SLAY* ABEL? Verse 8. SIN—things not acceptable—bring *punishment*. God *punished* Cain—verse 13.

COMMENT: MURDER WAS A *SIN* – FROM THE VERY BEGINNING!

COMMENT: When God asked Cain, "Where is thy brother?" Cain replied, "I know not" (Verse 9). But Cain *did* know. He knew that his brother was dead. He *LIED* and broke another of the commandments. That was *sin*, too.

Cain BROKE the *SIXTH* and *NINTH* COMMANDMENTS. *Every one* of these COMMANDMENTS was known from creation, because God had *REVEALED* them TO ADAM. Adam had no other way of knowing the working of the laws. He thus revealed them to mankind at that time. But HUMANITY HAS REJECTED THEM.

6. Was *IDOLATRY* committed *BEFORE* the time of ABRAHAM? Josh. 24:2.

COMMENT: Here were people before Abraham's time—his forefathers worshipping idols, which was A *SIN*—a transgression of the *law*. No wonder we are told in the Bible that "DEATH," because of *sin*, "REIGNED FROM ADAM TO MOSES" (Rom. 5:14). The *law* was there and working.

7. Was idolatry committed in the generations AFTER Abraham TOO? Gen. 35:2.

COMMENT: JACOB was Abraham's *grandson.*

8. Did God command the generation of this grandson's time to put away their strange gods? Gen. 35:2. What did they do with these idols, hide them? Verse 4.

COMMENT: It was *sin* to *worship idols* and they had them in their own hands.

The Third and Fourth Commandments Broken Also

1. What is the THIRD COMMANDMENT? Ex. 20:7.

COMMENT: To TAKE GOD'S NAME *IN VAIN* is profanity. It is *profaning* the name of God.

2. Did God tell Moses and the rest of the Israelites that the heathen who had possessed the promised land in *generations previous to the time of Moses* had been doing *many abominations?* Lev. 18:1, 27. What was one of these abominations? Verse 21, last half. Did God say these other nations had *defiled themselves and the land* because of this? Verses 24 and 27. Then taking the name of God in vain was a sin, wasn't it? (Review previous question, number 1.)

COMMENT: The law—the third commandment—was being VIOLATED here. Taking the name of God in vain was a sin *BEFORE MOSES' TIME.*

3. What is the FOURTH COMMANDMENT? Ex. 20:8. Is it a day on which all should rest? Verse 10. Did God rest on that day after He had finished creating the earth? Did God tell Moses to have the people keep—rest on—the Sabbath? Ex. 16:23.

COMMENT: God here commanded Moses to have these people keep this SABBATH day *weeks* before they came to Mount Sinai where the law was given to Moses.

4. Why did God command this?—was it to *prove* whether they could walk in His *law* or not? Ex. 16:4. Note the word "law."

COMMENT: Here God is referring to the Sabbath law that was ALREADY IN EFFECT at that very time! And this was weeks BEFORE SINAI!

5. Did some disregard God's command to pick up a double portion of manna on the sixth day and decide in advance that they would go out and *work* at gathering manna on this seventh day —the *Sabbath* day—God had commanded them to *rest?* Verse 27.

6. Then what did God say to Moses? Ex. 16:28. Notice this in particular—did GOD just confine his REBUKE to the PEOPLE REFUSING TO KEEP this one command He had given a few days before, or did He call attention to ALL HIS *COMMANDMENTS* AND *LAWS* they had been breaking? Same verse. Remember, all this conversation was going on weeks *BEFORE* God *RESTATED* His LAWS TO MOSES AT SINAI.

COMMENT: The Sabbath was *already* the law of God at that time, as well as the other commands and laws to which He referred.

The Fifth, Seventh and Eighth Commandments

1. What is the FIFTH COMMANDMENT? Ex. 20:12. Do we find a retribution—a curse—falling on one who broke this law *LONG BEFORE THE TIME OF SINAI?* Let's examine. Did Noah become drunk? Gen. 9:20, 21. Did Shem and Japheth refrain from DISHONORING their PARENT by looking upon his nakedness while he was in this condition? Verse 23. But did Ham, the father of Canaan, on the other hand, dishonor his parent Noah by looking on his nakedness? Verse 22. As a result, what *CURSE* FELL UPON CANAAN, Ham's son? Verse 25.

COMMENT: *Dishonoring a parent was a sin* and a curse was pronounced in those days.

2. What is the SEVENTH COMMANDMENT? Ex. 20:14. Was it also IN EFFECT and known long *BEFORE* God gave the law to MOSES at

Mount Sinai? Let us consider. When Joseph was in Egypt serving the Egyptians, what improper advances did the wife of Potiphar, his master, make to him? Gen. 39:1,2,7. Did Joseph refuse? Verse 8. Why? Verse 9. Did Joseph say it was *sin?* Same verse.

COMMENT: REMEMBER, WHERE THERE IS NO LAW *SIN* IS NOT *IMPUTED.* But here we see that Joseph *did* know this law and he knew that sin *would* be imputed. *ADULTERY* WAS A *SIN* hundreds of years *before the physical law of Moses.*

3. What is the EIGHTH COMMANDMENT? Ex. 20:15. Did Jacob, who lived long before the ten commandments were given at Sinai, know that it was a SIN to steal? Gen. 30:33. Notice the word "stolen."

COMMENT: Jacob knew and understood the meaning of the word "steal." Stealing was a sin in those days the same as now.

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

1. God forbids the bearing of false witness—LYING—in one of His ten commandments (Ex. 20:16). But was EVEN RIGHTEOUS ABRAHAM, who lived long before Mount Sinai, able to keep this command perfectly?—who did Abraham tell King Abimelech that his wife Sarah was when Abraham was passing through the king's country? Gen. 20:2.

COMMENT: Abraham *was lying.* Sarah, his *wife,* was his *half*-sister; but, nevertheless, the intent was all wrong. It was a lie. Abraham BROKE the NINTH COMMANDMENT.

2. Did God prevent King Abimelech from marrying Abraham's wife and thus unknowingly commit adultery with her? Gen. 20:3, and first part of verse 4. Did God say that had Abimelech committed ADULTERY it would have been A *SIN—transgression against the law?* Verse 6.

COMMENT: How plain it becomes that the law was in existence from Adam.

3. What about COVETING?—is it the last of the ten commandments? Ex. 20:17. Were the people BEFORE THE FLOOD BREAKING THIS COMMANDMENT? Gen. 6:1-3,5. Does God say, through the inspired Psalms, that the *wicked* are those who *forsake* His *law?* Psa. 119:53. Then weren't these people forsaking God's *law?* Verse 5. Note the word "wickedness."

COMMENT: The "sons of God"—in the sense that God is the *creator*-father of human beings because He formed man of the dust of the ground and air—were lusting after, *coveting,* and taking wives that were not good for them. They were in this way striving against God. God classified them among the wicked of those days—among those who were breaking the law He had revealed to Adam and Eve at the very beginning. They were breaking the *tenth commandment* against covetousness. And it was this improper action of theirs that He was denouncing.

4. Now here comes THE CLINCHER. Did ABRAHAM, who lived *between* the time of Adam and Moses, HAVE A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S COMMANDMENTS? Gen. 26:5. And God's STATUTES? Same verse. And God's LAWS? Same verse. How did Abraham learn all these things? Note the word "voice."

COMMENT: The people before the time of Moses were much better informed about the Spiritual law of God than is generally admitted today.

Summary

Yes, EVERY ONE OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS was IN EXISTENCE FROM THE CREATION. It was a sin to break any of them between the time of Adam and Moses. God's LAW is holy, just, and good. It is GOOD, and it is GOOD FOR YOU. It is ETERNAL.

The knowledge of the law and its keeping was JUST AS NECESSARY FOR THE WELL-BEING AND HAPPINESS of the people BEFORE the time of MOSES AS it was AFTERWARD, or is *today!* That is *why* we have just seen that the Spiritual Law existed from the *beginning—before* the time of Moses. The ten commandments constitute the SPIRITUAL LAW that is ETERNAL and INEXORABLE. It is a LAW THAT IS LOVE AND the *FULFILLING* OF WHICH IS LOVE. It is a law that God set in motion for man's happiness to produce everything good which man foolishly denies himself.

MAN HAS DESPERATELY NEEDED THE *WORKING* OF THE LAW WITHIN HIS MIND FROM THE BEGINNING. Man desperately needs his *actions* to conform to the Spiritual Law of Love, composed of its ten commandments, at all times. God has created man a creature of *choice.* Man can earnestly *choose* to *desire* with all his might that this law be fulfilled by him at all times—or he can choose *not* to.

The *choice* to *desire* this is *yours.* But the actual *having* of the Royal Law of Love being fulfilled by you does not lie within *your* power. It lies *only* within the power of God! Only if you desire this power *intensely* enough will God give you, as a free gift, His own *Holy Spirit* which will enable you to keep this Royal Law—enable you to fulfill this marvellous Law in its spirit and intent at all times! The Royal Law of Love SHOULD NOW BE BEING FULFILLED WITHIN *YOU!* What are you going to do about it?