

Opening Scripture Reading/Prayer:

Exodus 31:12-17

The Sabbath

¹²And the Lord said to Moses, ¹³“You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you. . . .’ ¹⁶Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. ¹⁷It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.”

Isaiah 58:13-14

¹³“If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath,
from doing your pleasure on my holy day,
and call the Sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the Lord honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;
¹⁴then you shall take delight in the Lord,
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Isaiah 66:22-23

²²“For as the new heavens and the new earth
that I make
shall remain before me, says the LORD,
so shall your offspring and your name remain.
²³From new moon to new moon,
and from Sabbath to Sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
declares the LORD.

Opening Message:

Exodus 20:8-11

⁸“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Sabbath

Secular Weekday Name: **Saturday**

Hebrew "Name": **Shabbat**

Hebrew Meaning: **Rest**

Secular Weekday Name, Hebrew “Name”, Hebrew Meaning: Sunday, Yom Reeshone, First Day; Monday, Yom Shavnee, Second Day; Tuesday, Yom Shlee shee, Third Day; Wednesday, Yom Revee ee, Fourth Day; Thursday, Yom Khah mee shee, Fifth Day; Friday, Yom Ha shee shee, Sixth Day; Saturday, Shabbat, Rest.

Everlasting Covenant

The Sabbath

¹²Then the LORD said to Moses, ¹³“Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations (everlasting covenant) to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy.

¹⁴“Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it is to be put to death; those who do any work on that day must be cut off from their people. ¹⁵For six days work is to be done, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day is to be put to death. ¹⁶The Israelites (striven with God and with men and have prevailed – one who crosses over from this world to the next) are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. ¹⁷It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever (everlasting covenant), for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.” **Exodus 31:12-17**

New Heaven Sabbath

“²²As the new heavens and the new earth that *I make will endure before me,*’ declares the LORD, ‘so will your name and descendants endure. ²³From *one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,*’ says the LORD.” **Isaiah 66:22-23**

Walk as Jesus Walked

“⁶Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.” **1 John 2:6**

“When the **Sabbath** came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. ‘Where did this man get these things?’ they asked. ‘What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing?’” **Mark 6:2**

“He (*Jesus*) went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the **Sabbath day** *he went into the synagogue, as was his custom* (as is his wont). He stood up to read,” **Luke 4:16**

“*[Jesus Drives Out an Impure Spirit]* Then he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the **Sabbath** *he taught the people.*” **Luke 4:31**

“And **beginning with Moses** and all the Prophets, **he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.** ²⁹ but they urged him strongly, saying, ‘Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.’ So he went in to stay with them.³⁰ When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?’” **Luke 24:27**

“For if you believed **Moses**, **you would believe me**; for he wrote of me.” **John 5:46**

Jesus Lord of the Sabbath

“For the *Son of Man* is **Lord of the Sabbath.**” **Matthew 12:8**

And if Christ be the *Lord of the sabbath*, it is fit the day and all the work of it should be dedicated to him. By virtue of this power Christ here enacts, that works of necessity, if they be really such, and not a pretended and self-created necessity, are lawful on the sabbath day; and this explication of the law plainly shows that it was to be perpetual.

The Catechism

Recall the ceremony with which God made known His Law, containing the blessing of the seventh-day Sabbath, by which all humanity is to be judged. Contrast this with the unannounced, unnoticed anticlimax with which the church gradually adopted Sunday at the command of “Christian” emperors and Roman bishops. And these freely admit that they made the change from Sabbath to Sunday.

In the *Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, we read:

Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea, (AD 336) transferred the gravity (solemnity) from Saturday to Sunday...

Q. Why did the Catholic Church substitute Sunday for Saturday?

A. The Church substituted Sunday for Saturday, because Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday, and the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles on a Sunday.

Q. By what authority did the Church substitute Sunday for Saturday?

A. The Church substituted Sunday for Saturday by the plenitude of that divine power which Jesus Christ bestowed upon her!

—Rev. Peter Geiermann, C.S.S.R., (1946), p. 50.

The convert's catechism of Catholic doctrine First published in 1957 Subjects Conversion, Religious education of adults Edit The convert's catechism of Catholic doctrine This edition was published in 1957 by Herder in St. Louis, Mo.

In *Catholic Christian Instructed*,

Q. Has the [Catholic] church power to make any alterations in the commandments of God?

A. ...Instead of the seventh day, and other festivals appointed by the old law, the church has prescribed the Sundays and holy days to be set apart for God’s worship; and these we are now obliged to keep in consequence of God’s commandment, instead of the ancient Sabbath.

—The Catholic Christian Instructed in the Sacraments, Sacrifices, Ceremonies, and Observances of the Church By Way of Question and Answer, RT Rev. Dr. Challoner, p. 204.

<https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05075b.htm>

In 1737 Bishop Challoner published "The Catholic Christian instructed in the Sacraments, Sacrifice, Ceremonies, and Observances of the Church by way of question and answer.

Catholicism and the Ten Commandments

3. “Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.”

The Jewish celebration of Sabbath (*Shabbat*) begins at sundown on Friday evening and lasts until sundown on Saturday. Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christians go to church on Sunday, treating it as the Lord’s Day instead of Saturday to honor the day Christ rose from the dead.

Luke 3:7–8

“John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.’”

Catholic Church Admits They Made the Change

Was the Sabbath changed from the seventh day of the week to the first day?

How It Happened...

Yet for nearly 2,000 years now, millions of Christians have worshiped on Sunday. So was the Sabbath changed from the seventh to the first day of the week? Let’s look at the “yes” now.

“The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath” (Luke 6:5). Here Jesus staked His claim and forbade anyone to meddle with the Sabbath. Yet He knew there would be those who would claim the power to change God’s Law. Through Daniel he warned of just such a man. Describing a “little horn power” (Daniel 7:8), Daniel says, “He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws” (Daniel 7:25). Paul made a similar prediction: “Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God, or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God” (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, 7).

Paul warned that this blasphemy was already at work, and that it would come not from an outside influence, but from *within* the church (2 Thessalonians 2:7, Acts 20:28-30). Sure enough, not long after Paul’s day, apostasy appeared in the church.

About 100 years before Christianity, Egyptian Mithraists introduced the festival of Sunday, dedicated to worshiping the sun, into the Roman Empire. Later, as Christianity grew, church leaders wished to increase the numbers of the church. In order to make the gospel more attractive to non-Christians, pagan customs were incorporated into the church’s ceremonies. The custom of Sunday worship was welcomed by Christians who desired to differentiate themselves from the Jews, whom they hated because of the Jews’ rejection of the Savior. The first day of the week began to be recognized as both a religious and civil holiday. By the end of the second century, Christians considered it sinful to work on Sunday.

The Roman emperor Constantine, a former sun-worshiper, professed conversion to Christianity, though his subsequent actions suggest the “conversion” was more of a political move than a genuine heart change. Constantine named himself Bishop of the Catholic Church and enacted the first civil law regarding Sunday observance in A.D. 321.

On the venerable day of the sun let the magistrate and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country however, persons engaged in agricultural work may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain growing or for vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. —Schaff’s History of the Christian Church, vol. III, chap. 75.

Note that Constantine’s law did not even mention Sabbath but referred to the mandated rest day as a “the venerable day of the sun.” And how kind he was to allow people to observe it as it was convenient. Contrast this with God’s command to observe the Sabbath “even during the plowing season and harvest” (Exodus 34:21)! Perhaps the church leaders noticed this laxity as well, for just four years later, in A.D. 325, Pope Sylvester officially named Sunday “the Lord’s Day,” and in A.D. 338, Eusebius, the court bishop of Constantine, wrote, “All things whatsoever that it was the duty to do on the Sabbath (the seventh day of the week) we (Constantine, Eusebius, and other bishops) have transferred to the Lord’s Day (the first day of the week) as more appropriately belonging to it.”

Instead of the humble lives of persecution and self-sacrifice led by the apostles, church leaders now exalted themselves to the place of God. “This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world” (1 John 4:3).

The Catechism

Recall the ceremony with which God made known His Law, containing the blessing of the seventh-day Sabbath, by which all humanity is to be judged. Contrast this with the unannounced, unnoticed anticlimax with which the church gradually adopted Sunday at the command of “Christian” emperors and Roman bishops. And these freely admit that they made the change from Sabbath to Sunday.

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In *An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine*,

- Q. How prove you that the church hath power to command feasts and holy days?
A. By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church.
Q. How prove you that?
A. Because by keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the church’s power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin; and by not keeping the rest [of the feasts] by her commanded, they again deny, in fact, the same power.
—Rev. Henry Tuberville, D.D. (R.C.), (1833), page 58.

In *A Doctrinal Catechism*,

- Q. Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?
A. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her. She could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.
—Rev. Stephen Keenan, (1851), p. 174.

In the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*,

The Church of God has thought it well to transfer the celebration and observance of the Sabbath to Sunday!
—p 402, second revised edition (English), 1937. (First published in 1566)

In the *Augsburg Confession*,

They [the Catholics] allege the Sabbath changed into Sunday, the Lord’s day, contrary to the decalogue, as it appears; neither is there any example more boasted of than the changing of the Sabbath day. Great, they say, is the power and authority of the church, since it dispensed with one of the ten commandments.
—Art. 28.

God warned that a blasphemous power would “seek to change times and laws,” and the Catholic Church openly admits doing it, even boasts about it. In a sermon at the Council of Trent in 1562, the Archbishop of Reggia, Caspar del Fossa, claimed that the Catholic Church’s whole authority is based upon the fact that they changed the Sabbath to Sunday. Does this not fulfill the prophecies of Daniel and Paul?

“For centuries millions of Christians have gathered to worship God on the first day of the week. Graciously He has accepted this worship. He has poured out His blessings upon Christian people as they have sought to serve Him. However, as one searches the Scriptures, he is forced to recognize that Sunday is not a day of God’s appointment... It has no foundation in Scripture, but has arisen entirely as a result of custom,” says Frank H. Yost, Ph.D. in *The Early Christian Sabbath*.

Let us ask the question again: Was the Sabbath changed from the seventh day of the week to the first? The Bible is clear: “And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy” (Genesis 2:3). “Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy” (Exodus 20:11). If God intended for another day to become the Sabbath, He must have removed the blessing from the seventh day and placed it on the day which was to replace it. But when God bestows a blessing, it is forever. “... You, O Lord, have blessed it, and it will be blessed forever” (1 Chronicles 17:27). “I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot change it” (Numbers 23:20). Your birthday, a memorial of your birth, can’t be changed, though you may celebrate it on a different day. Neither can the Sabbath, a memorial of creation (Exodus 20:11), be changed, though some may celebrate it on a different day.

God instructed Moses to construct the earthly sanctuary, all its furniture, and the ark according to “the pattern” he was shown. (Exodus 25:9, 40) The ark was called the “ark of the covenant” (Numbers 10:33, Deuteronomy 10:8, Hebrews 9:4), and the “ark of the testimony” (Exodus 25:22), because in it Moses placed the tablets of stone on which God wrote His Law. (Exodus 25:16, 31:18) John, in Revelation 11:19, describes the scene before him when “the temple of God was opened in Heaven.” John saw the ark of the covenant in the heavenly sanctuary. David wrote, “Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens” (Psalms 119:89). It is safe to assume that God’s Law remains, contained within the ark of the covenant in the heavenly sanctuary.

When God says, “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God” (Exodus 20:10), that ends all controversy. We cannot change God’s Word for our own convenience. “But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve” (Joshua 24:15).

- Emily Thomsen

<https://www.sabbathtruth.com/free-resources/article-library/id/916/catholic-church-admits-they-made-the-change>

Let’s Review the Conclusion of Last Week’s Reading, “The Ten Commandments”:

Exodus 20:1-2

The Ten Commandments

¹ And God spoke all these words, saying, ² “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

I AM G-D YOUR G-D, WHO HAS BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT (20:2)

Would it not have been more appropriate for G-d to say, “I am G-d... who created the heavens and the earth”?

But G-d the creator is the G-d that Israel shares with the rest of creation. At Sinai, G-d did not speak to us as the author of nature, but as the executor of the miraculous Exodus. **For at Sinai we forged a covenant with G-d in which we pledged to surpass all bounds of nature and convention in our commitment to Him, and He pledged to supercede all laws of nature and convention in His providence over us.**

(The Chassidic Masters)

Exodus 20:3-6

³ “You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third

and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Exodus 20:7

⁷ “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain”, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

2 Corinthians 3

Ministers of the New Covenant

¹ Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? ² **You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all.** ³ And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

⁴ Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, ⁶ who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Ezekiel 36

The Lord's Concern for His Holy Name

¹⁶ The word of the Lord came to me: ¹⁷ “Son of man, when the house of Israel lived in their own land, **they defiled it by their ways and their deeds. Their ways before me were like the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual impurity.** ¹⁸ So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it. ¹⁹ I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries. In accordance with their ways and their deeds I judged them. ²⁰ But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, **they profaned my holy name**, in that people said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord, and yet they had to go out of his land.’ ²¹ But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came.

I Will Put My Spirit Within You

²² “Therefore say to the house of Israel, *Thus says the Lord God:* It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. ²³ And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. ²⁴ I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶ **And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.** ²⁷ **And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.**

Exodus 20:8-11

⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Exodus 20:12-18

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ ²² But I say to you **(the Spirit of the Law)** . . . *Matthew 5*

¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

¹³ “You shall not murder.

¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ “You shall not steal.

¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.”

¹⁸ Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid^[1] and trembled, and they stood far off ¹⁹ and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.”

AND MOSES DREW NEAR TO THE THICK DARKNESS WHERE G-D WAS (20:18)

There are three types of darkness: the “heavy darkness” of the Covenant Between the Pieces (Genesis 15:17); the “tangible darkness” of the ninth plague in Egypt (Exodus 10:22); and the “thick darkness” at the giving of the Torah. (Rabbeinu Bechayei)

Meeting with God at the Foot of the Mountain

Standing at the foot of the mountain on the third day, the people of Israel met with God, as He descended with thunder, lightening, thick clouds, and the loud sound of the **shofar** (ram’s horn).

The whole mountain was covered with smoke, since God came with fire, as it is written, “The Lord is a consuming fire.” (*Deuteronomy 4:24*)

It was such a fearsome sight that the people trembled and told Moses,

“You, speak with us, and we will listen. *But don’t let God speak with us, or we will die.*” (*Exodus 20:19 [16]*)

Exodus 20:20-23

²⁰ Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.” ²¹ The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

Laws About Altars

²² And the Lord said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: ‘You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven.’ ²³ You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold.

Exodus 20:24

²⁴ An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. **In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless (more of – be fruitful and multiply – an opening for more) you.**

Keeping His commandments is how we show our love for God. His commandments provide a guide for a healthy, happy, productive, and harmonious life in relationship with God and with other people.

“For this is love for God, to keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” (*1 John 5:3*)

Jesus has not set us free from sin so that we can live lawless lives. The Word of God even warns that our prayers may not be heard if we are walking in blatant disobedience to God’s laws.

“One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.” (*Proverbs 28:9*)

The law of God guards our relationships. The first tablet containing the first five of the Ten Commandments deals with our relationship to God. The second set of five commandments deals with our relations with our neighbor. That is why Jesus said that loving God and loving our neighbor sum up the commandments. (*Matthew 22:37–40*)

The God of Israel is not an impersonal “force,” but a God of love who becomes intimately involved with the affairs of mankind to save, rescue, redeem and deliver. This is the God who is worthy of our love and devotion, and no one else.

This Weeks Reading Begins with:

Why does the Bible permit slave owners to beat their slaves?

Exodus 21:20–21 says, “Anyone who beats their male or female slave with a rod must be punished if the slave dies as a direct result, but they are not to be punished if the slave recovers after a day or two, since the slave is their property.” Why did the Mosaic Law allow for slave owners to beat their slaves? The obvious answer is that, in the social structure of ancient Israel, physical punishment was considered the appropriate response for acts of disobedience and rebellion. The text does not specifically say that the corporal punishment has to be for some form of disobedience; however, based on the larger Old Testament context, it is safe to assume that slave masters were not allowed *carte blanche* authority to do whatever they wanted to their slaves. In Exodus 21, slave owners are limited in what they can do: if the master goes too far and the slave dies, the master will be punished. If the Old Testament Law is followed consistently, then the punishment for the slave owner might even include the death penalty for murder. Of course, if a master beats his slave and the slave is unable to work for some time, the master has punished himself by losing the work he might have received from the slave. The implication here is that it is in the master’s best interest not to be too severe.

Exodus 21:20–21 is certainly troubling to people with modern sensitivities. Modern people in the free world have come to view autonomous personal freedom as the highest form of good and anything that curtails personal freedom as the ultimate evil. People may be tempted to read a

passage like Exodus 21:20–21 and charge God with moral evil. Such charges need to be challenged, for slavery is not the only area where modern sensitivities and biblical guidelines clash—abortion and homosexuality are two other flashpoints. The danger on this issue is that most Christians would agree that slavery is morally reprehensible.

There are two distinct approaches in formulating an answer to why the Bible allows for slavery, and the outcome will be determined by what a person accepts as the authority. The first approach goes something like this:

*Slavery is morally reprehensible in all situations.
The Bible allows slavery.
Therefore the Bible is an unreliable moral guide.*

In this case, current moral sensitivities are the authority, and the Bible is measured against those sensitivities.

The second goes something like this:

*The Bible is a reliable moral guide.
The Bible allows slavery.
Therefore slavery cannot be morally reprehensible in all situations.*

In this case, the Bible is the final authority, and modern thinking about right and wrong has to be adjusted to accommodate what we find in the Bible.

Slavery has been a fact of human existence for almost as long as the human race has been in existence. Physical punishment to enforce compliance has been part of slavery for just as long. Corporal punishment has also been used in situations other than slavery. For example, physical chastisements were commonly employed as punishment for crimes committed and for the enforcing of discipline in the military. We are not so far removed from the time when brutal physical punishment was administered and accepted by almost everyone as legitimate. In the British Navy, flogging for disobedience or insubordination was common until the mid-19th century, and caning was used until the mid-20th century. In some places, such as Singapore, caning is still an official form of punishment for certain crimes.

The Bible does not forbid slavery, nor does it demand that every slave owner who wants to please God must immediately emancipate his slaves. Instead, the Bible at every turn calls for a treatment of slaves that would have been more humane than any found in the culture at large. The very idea that a master could be punished in any way for killing a slave would have been scandalous at the time Moses gave the Law. The culture at large made no attempt to grant slaves any rights. Slaves in Egypt or Moab, for example, were afforded no such protection.

Earlier in the same chapter, kidnapping for the purpose of slavery is condemned and the death penalty enjoined: “Anyone who kidnaps someone is to be put to death, whether the victim has been sold or is still in the kidnapper’s possession” (Exodus 21:16). (Ironically, the death penalty is another area where modern people assume their moral sensitivity is superior to God’s!) Furthermore, we must not make the mistake of equating slavery in ancient Israel with antebellum slavery in the United States. If the biblical dictates regarding slavery, including the regulations found in Exodus 21:16, 20–21, had been enforced in Western nations in the 1800s, then slavery in the United States would have been very different.

The regulations regarding slaves in Exodus 21, far from being inhumane, would have been far more humane and protective of the slave in Israel than in any of the surrounding nations.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/beating-slaves.html>

Revelation 3

To the Church in Laodicea (Church of Human Rights – Man’s Rights Above God’s Rights)

¹⁴“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s creation.

¹⁵“I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may

see. ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. ²¹ The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²² He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Hebrews 8

Jesus, High Priest of a Better Covenant

¹³ In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

new covenant (2537. kainos)

Definition

new, fresh

Usage: fresh, new, unused, novel. (Renewed)

2537 *kainós* – properly, *new in quality* (innovation), *fresh* in development or opportunity – because “not found exactly like this before.”

a. as respects form: recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn (opposed to *παλαιός* old, antiquated): **new, which as recently made is superior to what it succeeds**

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

new.

Of uncertain affinity; new (especially in freshness; while *neos* is properly so with respect to age -- new.

see GREEK *neos*

3501. neos

Usage: (a) young, youthful, (b) new, fresh.

HELPS Word-studies

3501 *néos* – *new* (“new on the scene”); **recently revealed or “what was not there before” (TDNT), including what is recently discovered.**

2. new: 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 12:24; **equivalent to born again**, ἄνθρωπος (which see 1 f.), Colossians 3:10. (Synonym: see *καίνος*, at the end.)

figuratively, regenerate

Hebrews 8

Jesus, High Priest of a Better Covenant

¹³ In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

first one obsolete (3822. palaiós)

a. to make ancient or old, the Sept. for *הָלַךְ*; passive **to become old, to be worn out**, the Sept. for *הָלַךְ*, of things worn out by time and use, as *βαλάντιον*, Luke 12:33; *ἱμάτιον*, Hebrews 1:11 (cf. Psalm 101:27 (); Deuteronomy 29:5; Joshua 9:19 (); Nehemiah 9:21; Isaiah 50:9; Isaiah 51:6; Sir. 14:17). passive *τὸ παλαιούμενον*, that which is becoming old, Hebrews 8:13 (Plato, *symp.*, p. 208 b.; Tim., p. 59 c.).

b. to declare a thing to be old and so about to be abrogated (abolished): Hebrews 8:13 (see *γηράσκω*, at the end).

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

decay, make obsolete.

From *palaios*; to make (passively, become) worn out, or declare obsolete -- decay, make (wax) old.

3820. palaios

Usage: old, ancient, not new or recent.

2. no longer new, worn by use, the worse for wear, old

Definition of *(the) worse for wear*

: in worse condition after doing or experiencing something

Hebrews 8

Jesus, High Priest of a Better Covenant

¹³ In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

growing old is ready to vanish away

Hebrews 8:4

⁴ Now if he were on earth, he would **not be a priest at all**, since there are **priests who offer gifts according to the law**.

2409. hierous

Definition: a priest

Usage: a priest, one who offers sacrifice to a god

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

priest, high priest.

From *hieros*; a priest (literally or figuratively) -- (high) priest.

3761. oude

Definition: and not, neither

Usage: neither, nor, not even, and not.

3761 /oudé ("neither indeed," "nor indeed") introduces a statement that is negated *factually* and *deductively* (it occurs 137 times in the NT). That is, the negation rules out (invalidates) the statement that precedes it, and what naturally extends from it. This is analogous to the following: Because 100 is not enough, then neither are 90, 80, or 70 because they are all included in 100. Thus if "A" (100 in the previous example) is invalid, so is what *necessarily follows* (statement "B" – 90, 80, 70).

generally **neither**

3551. nomos

Definition: that which is assigned, usage, law

Usage: usage, custom, law; in NT: of law in general, plur: of divine laws; of a force or influence impelling to action; of the Mosaic law; meton: of the books which contain the law, the Pentateuch, the Old Testament scriptures in general.

3551 *nómos* – law. **3551 (*nómos*)** is used of: a) the Law (Scripture), with emphasis on the first five books of Scripture; or b) any *system* of religious thinking (theology), especially when *nomos* occurs *without* the Greek definite article.

3551 /*nómos* ("law") then can refer to "the Law," or "law" as a general principle (or *both simultaneously*). The particular sense(s) of **3551 (*nómos*)** is determined by the *context*.

Exodus 21

Laws About Slaves

21 "Now these are the rules that you shall set before them. ² When you buy a Hebrew slave,^[b] he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. ³ If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. ⁴ If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out alone. ⁵ But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' ⁶ then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall be his slave forever.

⁷ "When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. ⁸ If she does not please her master, who has designated her^[b] for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has broken faith with her. ⁹ If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. ¹⁰ If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. ¹¹ And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

¹² "Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. ¹³ But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. ¹⁴ But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

¹⁵ "Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁶ "Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

¹⁷ "Whoever curses^[c] his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁸ "When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but takes to his bed, ¹⁹ then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

²⁰ "When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be avenged. ²¹ But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be avenged, for the slave is his money.

²² "When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. ²³ But if there is harm,^[d] then you shall pay life for

life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

²⁶ “When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. ²⁷ If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.

Ephesians 6

Bondservants and Masters

⁵ Bondservants,^[a] obey your earthly masters^[b] with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, ⁶ not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. ⁹ Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master^[c] and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Colossians 3

Rules for Christian Households

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. ²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. ²² Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters,^[a] not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵ For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

Colossians 4

Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

It has recently come upon me that I can believe in the Lord with all my heart, soul, and mind, but there is a key piece missing in my walk with Christ. As a child of Christ and as a servant of Christ, I realize that I need to serve Him. In addition, to believing in Him with all my heart, soul, and mind; I need to serve Him in the same spirit as well.

For example, [James 2:17](#) says, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

Here are 12 bible verses that directly use one of the words "serve", "servant", and "service" as an indicator of the significance of applying beliefs with good works.

1. Deuteronomy 11:13

" And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul."

2. Joshua 24:15

" And if it seem evil unto to you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

3. Psalm 2:11

" Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."

4. Matthew 6:24

" No man can serve two masters:for either he will hate the one, and love the other ; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

5. John 12:26

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour."

6. Hebrews 9:14

"How much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

7. Isaiah 42:1

"Behold thy servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him : he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles."

8. Matthew 20:27

" And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

9. Matthew 25:21

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'"

10. Romans 6:17

"But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. "

11. 1 Corinthians 9:19

"For though I be free from all men, yet I have made myself servant."

12. Philippians 2:7-8

"rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!"

<https://www.theodysseyonline.com/12-bible-verses-about-serving-the-lord>

Romans 6

Slaves to Righteousness

¹⁵What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves,^[c] you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

²⁰For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²²But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Luke 17

Temptations to Sin

And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin^[a] are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! ²It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.^[b] ³Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, ⁴and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.”

Increase Our Faith

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!” ⁶And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.

Unworthy Servants

⁷“Will any one of you who has a servant^[c] plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’? ⁸Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly,^[d] and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink’? ⁹Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? ¹⁰So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants;^[e] we have only done what was our duty.’”

Luke 10:17-24, Matthew 11:25-30

Cause for Rejoicing

Luke 10:17-20

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

And the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

Come to Me, and I Will Give You Rest

Matthew 11:25-30, Luke 10:21-24

Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”

At that very time **He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit,**¹ and said, "I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes. Yes, Father, for thus it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you,² and learn from Me,³ for I am gentle and humble in heart; and **YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.**⁴ For My yoke is

¹ **He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit.** Jesus was probably shouting and leaping in the air with joy.

² **Take My yoke upon you.** Trust Me and let Me direct you.

³ **Learn from Me.** Let Me show you what is good for you and pleasing to God.

⁴ **YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.** Jeremiah 6:16, "This is what the LORD says: 'Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.'"

easy, and My load is light." And turning to the disciples, He said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them."

Furthermore, we must not make the mistake of equating slavery in ancient Israel with antebellum slavery in the United States. If the biblical dictates regarding slavery, including the regulations found in Exodus 21:16, 20–21, had been enforced in Western nations in the 1800s, then slavery in the United States would have been very different.

The regulations regarding slaves in Exodus 21, far from being inhumane, would have been far more humane and protective of the slave in Israel than in any of the surrounding nations.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Beating-slaves.html>

Exodus 21

²⁸ “When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. ²⁹ But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰ If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him. ³¹ If it gores a man's son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. ³² If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels^[c] of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

Laws About Restitution

³³ “When a man opens a pit, or when a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, ³⁴ the owner of the pit shall make restoration. He shall give money to its owner, and the dead beast shall be his.

³⁵ “When one man's ox butts another's, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and share its price, and the dead beast also they shall share. ³⁶ Or if it is known that the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not kept it in, he shall repay ox for ox, and the dead beast shall be his.

²² ^[1] “If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. ² ^[b] If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt for him, ³ but if the sun has risen on him, there shall be bloodguilt for him. He^[c] shall surely pay. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. ⁴ If the stolen beast is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he shall pay double. ⁵ “If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets his beast loose and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best in his own field and in his own vineyard.

⁶ “If fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, he who started the fire shall make full restitution.

⁷ “If a man gives to his neighbor money or goods to keep safe, and it is stolen from the man's house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. ⁸ If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's property. ⁹ For every breach of trust, whether it is for an ox, for a donkey, for a sheep, for a cloak, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, ‘This is it,’ the case of both parties shall come before God. The one whom God condemns shall pay double to his neighbor.

¹⁰ “If a man gives to his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep safe, and it dies or is injured or is driven away, without anyone seeing it, ¹¹ an oath by the LORD shall be between them both to see whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's property. The owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution. ¹² But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. ¹³ If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence. He shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

¹⁴ “If a man borrows anything of his neighbor, and it is injured or dies, the owner not being with it, he shall make full restitution. ¹⁵ If the owner was with it, he shall not make restitution; if it was hired, it came for its hiring fee.^[d]

Laws About Social Justice

¹⁶ “If a man seduces a virgin^[e] who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price^[f] for her and make her his wife. ¹⁷ If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the bride-price for virgins.

¹⁸ “You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

¹⁹ “Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.

²⁰ “Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the LORD alone, shall be devoted to destruction.^[g]

²¹ “You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. ²² You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. ²³ If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, ²⁴ and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

²⁵ “If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him. ²⁶ If ever you take your neighbor’s cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, ²⁷ for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.

²⁸ “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

²⁹ “You shall not delay to offer from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. ³⁰ You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

³¹ “You shall be consecrated to me. Therefore you shall not eat any flesh that is torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

23 “You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. ² You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, ³ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit.

⁴ “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. ⁵ If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him.

⁶ “You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. ⁷ Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. ⁸ And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

⁹ “You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

Laws About the Sabbath and Festivals

¹⁰ “For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, ¹¹ but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

¹² “Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.

¹³ “Pay attention to all that I have said to you, and make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips.

¹⁴ “Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. ¹⁵ You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. ¹⁶ You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. ¹⁷ Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.

¹⁸ “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.

¹⁹ “The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God. “You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

Conquest of Canaan Promised

²⁰ “Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. ²¹ Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

²² “But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

²³ “When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, ²⁴ **you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces.** ²⁵ You shall serve the LORD your God, and he^[a] will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you. ²⁶ None shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. ²⁷ I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. ²⁸ And I will send hornets^[b] before you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you. ²⁹ **I will not drive them out from before**

you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. ³⁰ Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land. ³¹ And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates,^[c] for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. ³² You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. ³³ They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”

The Covenant Confirmed

24 Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. ² Moses alone shall come near to the LORD, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.”

³ Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the rules.^[a] And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do.” ⁴ And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. ⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” ⁸ And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

⁹ Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹ And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

¹² The LORD said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.” ¹³ So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴ And he said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them.”

¹⁵ Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶ The glory of the LORD dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷ Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸ Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.