A DEEP BIBLICAL & THEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION

Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods Before Me

Its Spirit, Depth, and True Understanding

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> *"And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."*
>
> **— Exodus 20:1–3 (KJV)**

An accessible, plain-spoken study on sovereignty, obedience, human tradition, and what it truly means to belong to the Living God.

All Scripture quotations are taken verbatim from the Authorized King James Version (KJV).

CHAPTER I

Thunder at Mount Sinai: A Change of Ownership

Picture yourself standing in the middle of a vast, sun-baked desert. The fine, heavy dust of the Egyptian brickyards is still caked onto your sandals and worked deep into the hems of your clothes. For four hundred years, you and your ancestors knew only one kind of authority: the sharp crack of the taskmaster's whip and the absolute, unquestioned decrees of Pharaoh. In Egypt, Pharaoh was more than a political ruler. He was an earthly tyrant who claimed to be a living god, and every waking hour of your life belonged to his empire. His laws decided when you woke up, how hard you labored, what you ate, and whether your children lived or died.

Now, after watching the plagues humble Egypt and walking dry-shod through the parted waters of the Red Sea, you are standing with millions of your countrymen at the base of a rugged desert peak called Mount Sinai. Suddenly, the atmosphere changes completely. You are no longer standing before an earthly king who wears gold jewelry and rides in a chariot. You are standing in the wilderness before an entirely different kind of authority—the Creator of the universe.

> *"And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice."*
>
> **— Exodus 19:16–19 (KJV)**

Try to imagine the sheer sensory weight of that moment. The solid granite mountain smoked like a massive iron furnace, shaking violently beneath the crushing presence of the Almighty. Dense storm clouds and thick, impenetrable darkness wrapped around the peak while jagged bolts of lightning split the sky. Meanwhile, the piercing blast of a supernatural trumpet grew louder and louder until the very ground vibrated under everyone's feet. Out of the roaring fire at the summit, the voice of the Almighty tore across the heavens, shattering the silence of the desert and delivering the foundational decree of all creation:

> *“I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”*
>
> **— Exodus 20:2–3 (KJV)**

More Than Statues of Wood and Stone

To the casual modern reader, this opening commandment often sounds like a simple, historical rule meant for primitive ancient tribes—a basic warning against carving statues out of wood, chiseling idols out of stone, or molding calves out of melted gold. Because most people today do not keep small brass figurines on their living room shelves or bow down to carved totem poles, they assume they have effortlessly kept the First Commandment their entire lives.

Yet when we look beneath the surface and examine the true spirit, depth, and theological meaning of this command, we discover something far bigger and far more demanding. The First Commandment reaches miles beyond physical statues. It is an all-encompassing declaration about sovereignty, legal jurisdiction, and absolute lordship. Notice how God introduces Himself right before giving the command: He reminds Israel that He personally pulled them out of Egypt, 'out of the house of bondage.' In simple terms, God is saying: 'Pharaoh used to own you, and you used to live by Pharaoh’s rules. I rescued you. Now I am your King, and you live under My jurisdiction.'

In everyday language, to have a 'god' is to have a Master whose word is final and whose rules govern every breath you take. Therefore, the deep spiritual reality of the First Commandment boils down to a clear, unmistakable truth: you belong to whatever system of law you willingly choose to obey.

> *“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”*
>
> **— Romans 6:16 (KJV)**

The Apostle Paul states this principle with crystal clarity. Obedience is the deciding factor of ownership. Whoever writes the rules you actually live by is your true master—and in the eyes of Scripture, your true master is your god.

CHAPTER II

How Heaven Measures Love and Worship

In our modern world, people tend to think of religion, love, and worship almost entirely in terms of feelings. If a church service features stirring music, emotional prayers, and warm sentiments, people walk away believing they have worshipped God. If someone feels an emotional rush while singing a hymn or says 'I love the Lord' in casual conversation, modern culture accepts that as proof of genuine devotion.

When we open the pages of the Bible, however, we find a completely different standard. In God's economy, love and worship are never measured by emotional highs, sentimental music, or mere lip service. Scripturally, love and worship are measured strictly, concretely, and exclusively by explicit obedience. Words are cheap, and emotions change with the weather, but what you actually do with your hands, your time, and your choices reveals who sits on the throne of your life.

> *"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."*
>
> **— 1 Samuel 15:22–23 (KJV)**

Look closely at that final phrase from the prophet Samuel: 'stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.' Refusing to obey God's clear instructions is placed in the exact same category as bowing down to a pagan idol! Why? Because when you stubbornly choose your own way over God's way, you have elevated your own judgment above the Almighty's judgment. You have made yourself—or whoever taught you to ignore God—the supreme authority.

Obedience as a Marriage Covenant

When you keep the commandments, statutes, and judgments of the Most High, you are physically demonstrating in real time that He is your active Creator and King. Your practical, day-to-day compliance with His law is the ultimate, tangible act of worship that binds you to Him. Far from being a cold, joyless checklist of rules, God's law was designed as the formal marriage covenant between God and His people.

Think about how an earthly marriage works. A husband and wife enter into a binding covenant of exclusive loyalty. A spouse cannot claim to love their partner while routinely breaking their marriage vows and living according to the wishes of other lovers. In the exact same way, walking diligently in God's statutes set Israel apart from every other nation on earth. Obeying His law meant remaining completely faithful to the divine Husband; breaking His law or adopting alternative rules from surrounding nations meant committing spiritual adultery.

> *"And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us."*
>
> **— Deuteronomy 6:24–25 (KJV)**

Moses made this wonderful truth plain to the entire nation. Notice that God did not give His statutes to burden humanity or make life miserable. He gave them 'for our good always, that he might preserve us alive.' And notice how Moses defines righteousness: not as a vague feeling inside your chest, but as observing to do all the commandments before the LORD our God, exactly as He commanded.

Jesus Christ Confirms the Exact Same Standard

Many people today mistakenly assume that the New Testament relaxed this requirement or replaced obedience with mere sentiment. Yet when Jesus Christ walked the earth, He reinforced the exact same spirit with unmistakable authority. He stripped away every ounce of modern confusion regarding what it means to love God and belong to His household:

> *"If ye love me, keep my commandments. ... He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."*
>
> **— John 14:15, 21 (KJV)**

There is no room for misunderstanding in the words of Jesus. He draws a straight, unbroken line between loving God and keeping His commandments. In fact, just a few verses later, Jesus states the flip side of that coin just as bluntly:

> *"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."*
>
> **— John 14:23–24 (KJV)**

The Apostle John later echoed this exact teaching in his letters to the early believers, leaving zero doubt that genuine faith and obedience are inseparable:

> *"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."*
>
> **— 1 John 2:3–6 (KJV)**

To truly have the Almighty as your God means His Word holds the final, absolute, and unappealable say over your entire life—your moral choices, your everyday diet, your business honesty and finances, your family relationships, and how you spend your time. Simply put: if His law does not govern your life, He is not your God.

CHAPTER III

The Great Trap: When Human Tradition Becomes Your God

Once we grasp that keeping God's law makes Him our personal God, we are forced to confront the flip side of that coin. The inverse of this truth is sobering in its simplicity, yet it is the exact trap into which the vast majority of humanity has fallen.

Think about it logically: if obeying God's law proves that God is your Master, then forsaking God's law in order to follow the traditions, statutes, and social customs invented by human beings makes those human institutions your actual god. There is no neutral ground in the spiritual realm. You are always following someone's standard.

When a society, a religious denomination, a family, or an individual sets aside divine law and replaces it with human decrees, they are not merely making a harmless cultural adjustment. In the eyes of heaven, they are committing literal idolatry. Without ever carving a wooden statue or kneeling before a stone altar, they have shifted their reverence, their trust, and their ultimate allegiance away from the Creator and placed it squarely upon the creature.

> *"Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods... What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."*
>
> **— Deuteronomy 12:30–32 (KJV)**

Look at the brilliance and severity of God's warning in Deuteronomy 12. God specifically forbade His people from looking at how surrounding nations worshipped their gods and saying, 'Let's borrow those customs and use them to worship the LORD!' God explicitly declares, 'Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God.' And He seals the instruction with a strict boundary: 'What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.'

The Deceptive Veil of Religious Heritage

Throughout the entire Bible, God fiercely and consistently condemns this substitution of human customs for divine commands. Why does Scripture warn against it so frequently? Because human traditions rarely look evil on the outside. On the contrary, human traditions usually wear a beautiful, respectable disguise. They wrap themselves in the warm blanket of religious heritage, family nostalgia, community consensus, and 'the way we have always done things.'

In this way, man-made traditions act as a deceptive veil, masking outright rebellion against heaven under the appearance of piety and cultural normalcy. Every time we choose a man-made rule for living over a plain command of Scripture, we are making a bold declaration: we are saying that human beings have a higher right to govern us than Almighty God does.

> *“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.”*
>
> **— Acts 5:29 (KJV)**

The apostles understood that whenever human authority—whether political, cultural, or religious—collides with the clear Word of God, a choice of gods is taking place. You cannot serve both.

CHAPTER IV

The Prophets’ Warning: Lip Service vs. True Loyalty

Centuries after Israel stood trembling at Mount Sinai, the nation drifted steadily away from the pure simplicity of God’s law. They did not necessarily stop claiming to believe in God. The temple in Jerusalem was still busy, prayers were still recited, and religious ceremonies were still performed with great pomp. Yet beneath the surface, a fatal substitution had occurred.

Isaiah’s Diagnosis of a Hollow Religion

The prophet Isaiah looked directly at the spiritual condition of his people and diagnosed the exact disease. Outwardly, Israel looked deeply religious. Inwardly, their daily lives were governed by human rules and cultural consensus rather than divine revelation. Through Isaiah, the Almighty exposed the fraud:

> *“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.”*
>
> **— Isaiah 29:13–14 (KJV)**

Read those words again carefully: 'their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.' That single phrase summarizes the tragedy of counterfeit religion across every generation. People genuinely think they are honoring God because they follow the religious rules

handed down by priests, pastors, scholars, or cultural elders. They speak respectful words about God with their lips, yet their actual blueprint for living comes from human instruction manuals rather than the mouth of God.

Jeremiah's Warning Against Heathen Customs

The prophet Jeremiah sounded the exact same alarm. He watched his countrymen eagerly absorb the popular holidays, social statutes, and seasonal customs of the surrounding pagan empires. Because those customs were colorful, widely celebrated, and deeply ingrained in society, the people saw no harm in adopting them. Jeremiah delivered a blunt, uncompromising rebuke from heaven:

> *"Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain..."*
>
> **— Jeremiah 10:2–3 (KJV)**

God's verdict on human customs that do not originate from His Word is summed up in one devastating word: 'vain'—meaning empty, hollow, worthless, and deceptive. No matter how ancient a tradition may be, no matter how many millions of sincere people celebrate it, and no matter how charming it appears on the surface, if it did not come from the mouth of God, it carries zero divine authority.

Later, the prophet Ezekiel recorded God's repeated plea to Israel in the wilderness—a plea that echoes down to every single reader today:

> *"But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God."*
>
> **— Ezekiel 20:18–20 (KJV)**

Notice the direct contrast God draws: do not walk in the human statutes inherited from your fathers; walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and hallow My sabbaths so that you may

know that I am the LORD your God. Whose statutes you walk in determines who your God actually is.

CHAPTER V

Jesus Unmasks the Pharisees: 'In Vain Do They Worship Me'

When Jesus Christ came into the world, He did not confront irreligious atheists. His sharpest, most blistering confrontations were with the most respected religious leaders of His day—the Pharisees and the scribes. Over generations, these religious elites had built a massive, intricate web of man-made bylaws, 'fence-laws,' and oral traditions (known as the tradition of the elders). They claimed these extra rules were meant to honor God, and they loudly boasted of their devotion to the Almighty.

Jesus saw right through their carefully crafted religious veneer. In a dramatic confrontation recorded in the Gospel of Mark, the Pharisees criticized Jesus' disciples for not following their man-made ritual hand-washing tradition before eating. Jesus turned the tables completely and unmasked the spiritual reality of what they were doing:

> *"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."*
>
> **— Mark 7:6–9 (KJV)**

Pause and let the weight of Jesus' words sink in. By elevating their own human traditions above the raw, unadulterated commandments of God, these outwardly pious leaders were not worshipping the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at all. Jesus exposes an unbending spiritual law that governs all worship:

- **1. Worship through human rules is empty:** 'In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.' You cannot worship the true God using rules invented by human beings.

- **2. Keeping human tradition requires rejecting God:** 'Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.' Whenever a human tradition competes with a command of God, keeping the tradition automatically pushes God's command off the throne.
- **3. Tradition empties God's Word of power:** Just four verses later in Mark 7:13, Jesus adds that they were 'Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.'

Think about the profound implication of what Jesus is teaching here. Worship is defined by obedience to the lawgiver. Therefore, if the rule you are obeying was written by men, your worship is directed entirely to the men who wrote it—even if you slap God's name onto the label! Calling a man-made practice 'Christian' or 'biblical' does not transform its origin. As Jesus warned in the Sermon on the Mount:

> *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*
>
> **— Matthew 7:21–23 (KJV)**

In the King James Bible, the word 'iniquity' literally means lawlessness—living without regard for God's law. Even people who invoke the name of 'Lord, Lord' and perform impressive religious activities are rejected if they refuse to actually do the will of the Father as revealed in His commandments.

CHAPTER VI

The Apostles' Warning to the Early Church

After Jesus ascended to heaven, the apostles carried this exact same message into the growing congregations across the Roman Empire. As new believers came out of pagan backgrounds and entered the faith, they faced intense pressure from two sides: pagan philosophies from the Greek and Roman world, and man-made religious regulations from human teachers.

The Apostle Paul wrote urgently to the believers in Colossae, warning them never to let anyone rob them of their allegiance to Christ by pulling them under human dogmas,

cultural philosophies, or worldly traditions that sound deeply spiritual on the surface but carry zero authority from heaven:

> *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."*
>
> **— Colossians 2:8 (KJV)**

Notice the exact contrast Paul draws: 'after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.' Those two paths never merge. Later in the very same chapter, Paul presses the point even harder, asking why believers who have died with Christ to the world's systems would ever submit themselves to man-made rules and human religious decrees:

> *"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"*
>
> **— Colossians 2:20–22 (KJV)**

Paul specifically identifies the trap: 'after the commandments and doctrines of men.' Human beings love to invent rules that look impressive, ascetic, or culturally respectable—rules about what you can touch, taste, or celebrate—while quietly sidestepping the actual commandments of God. Paul warns that all such human inventions are perishable and spiritually hollow.

In the same spirit, when Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness and offered all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for bowing down to him, Jesus quoted directly from Deuteronomy to establish the permanent rule of allegiance for every believer:

> *"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."*
>
> **— Matthew 4:10 (KJV)**

Notice how worship and service are welded together: 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' You cannot worship God in your mind while serving the customs, rules, and expectations of men in your daily actions.

CHAPTER VII

Spiritual Citizenship: Whose Law Defines Your Life?

To bring all of these threads together into one crystal-clear picture, consider how citizenship works in everyday life. Suppose you move to a specific country. You live within its borders, earn money in its currency, buy its goods, pay taxes to its treasury, and obey its civil statutes every single day. Regardless of what passport you might keep tucked away in a drawer from another land, your daily actions prove which government holds active jurisdiction over you. You are a functioning subject of the government whose laws you obey.

In the spiritual realm, the exact same law of jurisdiction applies without a single exception. Your true spiritual citizenship is always defined by whose law you actively obey.

Think honestly about what this means for any person claiming to follow the Bible. You cannot logically claim the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as your God if the governing rules of your everyday life are dictated by the shifting opinions of human politicians, ancient pagan traditions dressed up in religious clothing, or the latest social norms of modern culture. Saying 'God is my King' while obeying a completely different set of laws is a contradiction in terms.

> *“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”*
>
> **— Luke 6:46 (KJV)**

Jesus’ question cuts straight to the heart: why call someone 'Lord'—which literally means sovereign Master and Ruler—if you refuse to do what He says? Calling God 'Lord' while ignoring His commandments is like calling a judge 'Your Honor' while tearing up his court order right in front of the bench.

How We Accidentally Coronate Man in the Place of God

Whenever we bow to laws, holidays, religious rituals, or social practices invented by human beings—especially those that directly contradict or cleverly work around the plain text of Scripture—we have performed a spiritual coronation. We have taken the crown off the head

of the Almighty and placed it squarely upon the head of man. Without ever realizing it, we have broken the very first of the Ten Commandments: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'

Let us look at how clear and consistent the entire Bible is on this point, from the first book of Moses to the final chapter of Revelation:

> *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”*
>
> **— Ecclesiastes 12:13 (KJV)**

> *“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”*
>
> **— 1 John 5:2–3 (KJV)**

> *“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”*
>
> **— Revelation 14:12 (KJV)**

> *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”*
>
> **— Revelation 22:14 (KJV)**

From Genesis to Revelation, there is never a moment where God’s people are defined by human tradition. In the very last book of the Bible, the saints who endure to the end and gain the right to the tree of life are explicitly identified as those who 'keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.'

CHAPTER VIII

An Undivided Heart: Returning to the King of Kings

The spirit of 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me' demands nothing less than an absolute monopoly on our obedience. Almighty God does not share His throne with Pharaoh, with ancient pagan customs, with church councils, with political parties, or with popular opinion. He does not accept second place, nor does He accept a divided loyalty where we give Him Sabbath morning sentiment while giving human traditions the rest of our week.

> *"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*
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> **— Joshua 24:14–15 (KJV)**

Joshua's challenge to Israel stands before every one of us today: 'Choose you this day whom ye will serve.' Notice that Joshua did not ask them to pick a religious label; he asked them to choose whom they would serve—whose rules they would obey and whose household they would belong to.

Practical Steps to Walk Out the First Commandment

To truly have the Most High as our God requires courage, honesty, and a willingness to examine our lives under the bright light of Scripture. It calls us to take clear, practical steps:

- **Test every tradition against Scripture:** Never assume a religious holiday, doctrine, or social custom is approved by God simply because it is popular, ancient, or practiced by devout people. Open the Bible and ask: 'Did God command this, or did men invent it?'
- **Strip away the vanity of human traditions:** Whenever you discover a practice or belief that comes from human tradition rather than the Word of God—especially one that replaces or contradicts a biblical command—have the courage to lay it aside.
- **Embrace the Word as your supreme legal authority:** Approach the Scriptures not as a collection of nice suggestions, but as the living constitution of your King. Let

God's Word govern your speech, your ethics, your family life, your diet, your rest, and your worship.

- **Replace emotional lip service with steady obedience:** Remember that true worship is not a fleeting emotional spark that fades when the music stops. It is an unwavering, day-by-day loyalty expressed through doing what the King commands.

> *"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. ... Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."*
>
> **— Psalm 119:1–4, 105 (KJV)**

Standing at the foot of Mount Sinai, Israel learned a truth that time can never erase: salvation from bondage is always followed by a change of masters. God did not rescue us from the slavery of sin and the tyranny of this world so that we could invent our own rules or bow to the traditions of men. He rescued us so that we might belong wholly to Him—walking in His light, governed by His righteous statutes, and giving Him the undivided obedience that belongs to the King of Kings alone.