

Book of the Covenant

A. Introduction and Overview

The Book of the Covenant, which begins with the Ten Commandments of God, is the most important book of the Holy Bible.¹ This eternal covenant at Mount Sinai is an outgrowth and extension of the LORD's covenant with Abraham and his descendants.² The Abrahamic covenant, the LORD spoke, required wholehearted love, trust, and faithful obedience to Him as their only God and King to receive His covenant blessings and protection.³ From the Beginning, the LORD commanded Abraham and his descendants to faithfully live and walk with Him in obedience, to be blameless by always doing what is good and right, which leads to His great reward and blessings.⁴ The LORD owns the whole earth, and He is the Creator and Possessor of all in heaven and earth.⁵

Moses led the Israelites to Mount Sinai (also known as Horeb), where he first encountered the LORD (Yahweh) at the burning bush.⁶ Atop Mount Sinai, the living Sovereign LORD God of heaven and earth came in His Glory Cloud with His holy angels to proclaim and speak His living oracles - the eternal Book of the Covenant and the Israelites so they could proclaim God's message to all the world as His kingdom of priests and a holy nation.⁷ In their priestly role, the LORD called the Israelites as His firstborn son to become a channel of His grace and goodness to the nations of the world.⁸ The living Sovereign LORD God came and spoke to the Israelites from His Glory Cloud atop Mount Sinai, the eternal Book of the Covenant found in Exodus chapters 20 through 23.⁹ The Israelites saw and witnessed the LORD God Almighty from His Glory Cloud with His holy angels atop Mount Sinai with thundering, lightning flashes, sound of the trumpet, and the dark fiery smoke with the giving of His Ten Commandments and other laws in His eternal covenant - the Book of the Covenant.¹⁰

¹ Exodus 20:1-23:33; see also Deuteronomy 5:6-21; Romans 13:8-10; Ephesians 6:2.

² Exodus 19:5-6; see also Genesis 12:1-3.

³ See e.g., Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:1, 6; Genesis 17:1, 7-14; Genesis 18:17-19; Exodus 15:25-26; Exodus 19:5-6; Exodus 20:6; Leviticus 26:1-13; Deuteronomy 5:10; Deuteronomy 6:5; Deuteronomy 7:9, 12; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Deuteronomy 30:6; Nehemiah 1:5; Psalm 15:1-5; Psalm 37:3-5; Jeremiah 24:7; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 34:30-31; Hosea 2:23; Zechariah 8:8.

⁴ See e.g., Genesis 15:1, 6; Genesis 17:1; Genesis 18:17-19; Genesis 22:18; Genesis 26:4-5; 2 Chronicles 6:14; Psalm 1:3; Psalm 34:12-14; Galatians 6:7-10; Titus 2:14; Titus 3:8, 14; 1 Peter 3:1-12.

⁵ Exodus 19:5; see also Genesis 14:19, 22; Psalm 24:1-2.

⁶ Exodus 19:1-2; see also Exodus 3:1-6, 12.

⁷ See e.g. Exodus 19:5-6; Deuteronomy 4:5-9; Deuteronomy 33:2; Acts 7:38, 53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2.

⁸ Exodus 19:5-6; see also Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 4:22-23; Isaiah 42:1-4; Isaiah 49:6; Isaiah 61:6; Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1; 1 Peter 2:5, 9-10; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10-11; Revelation 20:6.

⁹ Exodus 20:1-23:33; see also Exodus 19:5, 20; Exodus 20:22; Exodus 24:7; Deuteronomy 5:2-4, 24, 26; Nehemiah 9:13; Psalm 115:16; 2 Timothy 3:16.

¹⁰ Exodus 20:18; see also Exodus 19:16-20; Deuteronomy 5:2-4; Hebrews 12:18-20; Revelation 1:10.

The Book of the Covenant, beginning with the Ten Commandments, forms a central core of morality and ethics given from the living Sovereign LORD God. The phrase “Judeo-Christian principles” often heard in American politics refers to the moral principles in the Book of the Covenant.¹¹ Many scholars call the Book of the Covenant the Israelites’ Constitution or treaty with the LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah). Another word for covenant is testament.

In the Book of the Covenant, the LORD expanded and explained the terms of the Ten Commandments by further teaching the people about the dangers and harms of sexual sins, stealing, lying, murdering, and coveting one another’s possessions.¹² The Book of the Covenant discussed and condemned many sins, including the crimes of murder, kidnapping, and dishonoring one’s parents.¹³ The LORD gave specific examples, cases, and situations of how the Ten Commandments apply to everyday relationships with people, property, and possessions. The LORD confirmed His eternal covenant with Israel at Exodus chapter 24.¹⁴ The terms of the eternal covenant (Sinai Covenant) began with the LORD’s Ten Commandments given at Exodus 20:1-17 followed by expanded terms and explanations of the covenant at Exodus 20:22-23:19.¹⁵ Moses read the written Book of the Covenant to Israel, and then he placed the two stone tablets of the covenant (testimony) in the Ark of the Covenant.¹⁶ In the New Testament, John witnessed the eternal Ark of the Covenant with the commandments in the book of Revelation.¹⁷

Christ Jesus our Savior’s Sermon on the Mount and Sermon the Plains are the New Testament parallel to the Book of the Covenant found at Exodus 20:1-23:33. The Beatitudes taught by Christ Jesus in His sermons parallels the Ten Commandments of God given at Mount Sinai (Horeb) teaching the people how to behave and live before His Holy Father - the living Sovereign LORD God of heaven and earth.¹⁸ The LORD not only wants His people to love and worship Him as God and King, but also to love with kindness and mercy one another!

The second half of Exodus chapters 19 through 40 focuses on the events at Mount Sinai (Horeb) and the Law of God given to Moses (Exodus 19:1-24:18), instructions on building the Tabernacle (Tent of Meeting) (Exodus 25:1-31:18; Exodus 35:1-3), the renewal of the covenant relationship (Exodus 32:1-34:35), and the assembling the

¹¹ NIV Essentials Study Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), p. 93.

¹² Exodus 21:1-23:33; see also Matthew 5:21-48; Matthew 19:16-24; Mark 10:17-21; Luke 18:18-22; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:19-23; Ephesians 4:17-5:10; Colossians 3:1-17.

¹³ Exodus 21:12-17; see also Leviticus 24:17-22.

¹⁴ See Exodus 24:1-18.

¹⁵ Exodus 20:1-23:33; see also Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

¹⁶ Exodus 24:7; see also Exodus 16:32-34; Exodus 25:16, 21; Exodus 31:18; Exodus 32:15-16; Deuteronomy 31:9-11, 26; Hebrews 9:4.

¹⁷ See Revelation 11:19.

¹⁸ Matthew 5:1-7:28; Luke 6:20-49; see also Exodus 20:1-23:33.

Tabernacle (Exodus 35:4-40:38). Details of the Israelites' Law came in three places: Mount Sinai (Horeb) starting at Exodus chapter 19 through 40, the entire book of Leviticus, and chapters 1 through 10 of Numbers, and then restated and reaffirmed by Moses on the plains of Moab with the book of Deuteronomy. The book of Deuteronomy repeats and reaffirms many of the LORD's laws given in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. In all, 613 separate commands given by the living Sovereign LORD God through His servant Moses shaped the entire behavior, culture, social, and political lives of Israel and described a life pleasing Him.

As the Great King, the living Sovereign LORD God began His eternal covenant (treaty) at Mount Sinai by speaking and then writing with His holy finger the Ten Commandments (Decalogue, Ten Words) from atop Mount Sinai (the mountain of God or Horeb) on two stone tablets and then placing the eternal covenant inside the Ark of the Covenant.¹⁹ In summary, the Book of the Covenant, beginning with the Ten Commandments, set forth the LORD's spiritual and moral obligations: to wholeheartedly love and honor Him as their only God and Great King, and to love and care for one another with kindness, goodness, and mercy.²⁰ The eternal covenant commanded total and absolute love with obedience and allegiance first to the living Sovereign LORD as God and King, who redeemed and saved Israel and also believers in Christ Jesus by His grace from Satan's darkness and slavery.²¹

The Old Testament prophets Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel described the eternal covenant of God like a marriage with the living Sovereign LORD God as our faithful and loving Husband that wanted to provide providential care, love, and protection for His devoted and pure bride - Israel and later the church of Christ.²² The living Sovereign LORD God promised to be with us, as our Protector and Provider, if we look to Him with faithfulness and obedience to Him and His eternal commandments.²³ Faithful obedience, with wholehearted trust and love, to the living Sovereign LORD God and His holy covenant (commandments) leads to His providential care, protection, a peaceful

¹⁹ Exodus 20:1-17; see also Exodus 16:32-34; Exodus 31:18; Exodus 32:15-16; Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13; Deuteronomy 5:6-22; Deuteronomy 9:10-11; Deuteronomy 10:4; 2 Chronicles 5:10; 2 Chronicles 6:11; Hebrews 9:4.

²⁰ Exodus 20:20; See e.g., Leviticus 19:18, 33-34; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Habakkuk 2:2-4; Matthew 5:21-48; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 7:12; Matthew 9:13; Matthew 12:7; Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 23:23; Luke 6:27-38; Luke 12:31; Romans 12:9-14, 20-21; Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Galatians 5:14; cf. Deuteronomy 5:29; Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8; Habakkuk 2:2-4.

²¹ Exodus 20:1-7; Deuteronomy 5:6-11; cf. Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 3:15-18, 36.

²² See e.g., Isaiah 54:5, 17; Isaiah 61:10; Jeremiah 31:31-32; Ezekiel 16:7-14; Hosea 2:16-20; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:21-33; Revelation 19:7; Revelation 21:2, 9; Revelation 22:17.

²³ Exodus 19:5-6; see also Leviticus 26:3, 11-12; John 14:15-17, 21, 23-24; 1 John 5:3; 2 John 1:6.

life, and long-lasting blessings within the family of God.²⁴ The LORD is good and His mercy endures forever.²⁵

The Book of Covenant instructed Israel and, later, the church, through the Holy Spirit of God, how to wholeheartedly love and worship the living LORD God, and also how to live and behave daily in our human relationships with one another.²⁶ At Mount Sinai, the LORD taught that no one can love and serve Him without also loving and caring for one another.²⁷ In other words, everyone in a relationship with the LORD must also treat other people with goodness, love, and mercy - ethics.²⁸ The Book of the Covenant focused on the people worshiping and honoring the LORD, but also on teaching righteous conduct and good behavior as originally given to Abraham so the people could become His “treasured possession,” “kingdom of priest,” and “holy nation” to reveal and reflect the LORD’s holiness, goodness, and wisdom to the world.²⁹ The New Testament also instructed believers of Christ Jesus to turn away from all malice (hatred), deceit (lies), hypocrisy (falsehood), envy (covetousness and greed), and slander (gossip) as taught initially in the Old Testament covenant.³⁰

The LORD’s appearance with the giving of the eternal Book of the Covenant within His Glory Cloud from atop Mount Sinai was called a Theophany, so the people would always honor and fear Him, but also to keep them from sinning against Him.³¹ The Glory Cloud represented the presence of the living God, and this great Cloud has appeared throughout the Holy Bible, revealing God’s presence, power, and protection.³² After witnessing the LORD’s great appearance from His Glory Cloud (Theophany), the Israelites requested Moses to mediate and speak to them about the LORD’s obligations.³³ Then, the LORD said to Moses and the Israelites face-to-face from His Glory Cloud atop Mount Sinai (Horeb), and He gave them all the commandments,

²⁴ Exodus 23:20-33; see also Genesis 15:1; Leviticus 22:31; Leviticus 26:1-13; Deuteronomy 4:2, 9-10, 39-40; Deuteronomy 5:29, 32-33; Deuteronomy 6:2, 24-25; Deuteronomy 10:12-13, 20-21; Deuteronomy 12:28; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Deuteronomy 32:45-47; Joshua 2:11; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Isaiah 55:3, 6-7; John 14:1, 27; John 16:33; Galatians 6:7-10; 1 Timothy 6:13-15; James 1:22-25; 2 John 1:6.

²⁵ See e.g., Psalm 106:1; 2 Chronicles 5:13.

²⁶ See e.g., Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21; Leviticus 19:11-18; Micah 6:6-8; Matthew 5:1-48; Matthew 19:16-19; Matthew 23:23; Romans 12:1-2, 9-21; Romans 13:8-10; Colossians 3:1-17.

²⁷ Exodus 20:1-17; Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 5:6-21; see also 1 John 4:7-12.

²⁸ See e.g., Matthew 5:21-48; Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:27-38.

²⁹ Exodus 19:5-6; Exodus 20:1-23:19; see also Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 4:5-9; Romans 6:1-2, 12-15; Romans 12:1-2; 9-21; Romans 13:8-14; 1 Timothy 6:11-12; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 2:1-5, 9-10; Revelation 1:5-6; cf. Genesis 17:1; Genesis 18:17-19; Exodus 15:25-26.

³⁰ See e.g., Ephesians 4:17-5:20; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Peter 2:1-5.

³¹ Exodus 20:18-21; see also Deuteronomy 5:22-27; Deuteronomy 6:2; Ecclesiastes 12:13.

³² See e.g., Exodus 13:21-22; Exodus 40:34-38; 2 Chronicles 5:14; 2 Chronicles 7:1-3; Ezekiel 43:1-5; Haggai 2:9; Zechariah 1:16; Zechariah 2:10; Zechariah 8:3; Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 17:5; Acts 1:7-9.

³³ Exodus 20:18-19; see also Deuteronomy 5:5, 23-27.

statutes, and regulations to teach and proclaim to the people to observe and obey wholeheartedly.³⁴

The LORD, by His grace, saved and redeemed the Israelites and later believers in Christ Jesus, so that Israel and believers of Jesus could unite and to reign with Him as His treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a *holy* nation, departing from Satan's deceit and darkness.³⁵ The living Sovereign LORD God is faithful and true, and He called Israel and also believers in Christ Jesus to love and goodness with wholehearted faithfulness and obedience to Him as they proclaimed His holy message and wisdom to the world.³⁶ The prophet Malachi's lasting words commanded the people to remember the Law of God given at Mount Sinai (Horeb) through Moses, because Satan does not want anyone to obey the LORD's holy commandments.³⁷

B. Greatest Commandment

The first and most important rule of the Book of the Covenant is the eternal commandment to **exclusive worship** and honor with wholehearted love and faithful obedience to the living Sovereign LORD God (Yahweh, also known as Jehovah).³⁸ The LORD is our everlasting Covenant God and Savior, and He reigns forever as our only faithful King and Good Shepherd.³⁹ The living Sovereign LORD God is faithful and true, and He never changes from age to age.⁴⁰ The LORD's Name must be eternally honored and respected as holy forever and never used with lies, falsehood, magic, disrespect, or vulgar profanity.⁴¹ The eternal Book of the Covenant commanded the people never to make, bow down to, or worship any gods or idols, whether gods of silver or gods of gold, because these idols are worthless and cannot bring salvation with true peace like

³⁴ See e.g., Exodus 33:11; Numbers 12:5-8; Numbers 14:14; Deuteronomy 5:4-5, 31-32; Deuteronomy 34:10-12; cf. Matthew 5:1-7:29.

³⁵ Exodus 19:5-6; see also Exodus 15:25-26; Leviticus 11:44-45; Leviticus 19:2; Leviticus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:1-2; Deuteronomy 7:6-7; Deuteronomy 14:2; Deuteronomy 26:18; Psalm 135:4; Jeremiah 34:12-13; Nahum 1:7; Malachi 3:17; Romans 12:1-2, 9-14, 20-21; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 Peter 2:1-5, 9-10; Revelation 1:5-6; Revelation 5:9-10.

³⁶ Exodus 19:4-6; see also Deuteronomy 4:5-9; Deuteronomy 7:9; Matthew 5:12-14; Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Timothy 6:10-14; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; 2 Timothy 3:17; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 2:1-5, 9-12; cf. Genesis 12:3.

³⁷ Malachi 4:4; see also Matthew 5:17-20; Matthew 7:12; Revelation 12:17.

³⁸ Exodus 20:22-26; see also Exodus 20:3-7; Leviticus 26:1; Deuteronomy 5:7; Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Joshua 23:11; Joshua 24:19-20; Amos 5:4, 6; Matthew 6:9; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 11:2; Luke 12:31; Romans 1:23, 25.

³⁹ See e.g., Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 10:16; Psalm 23:1; Psalm 115:9-11; Psalm 135:5; Isaiah 6:5; Isaiah 40:28; Isaiah 43:11; Isaiah 45:21-22; Jeremiah 10:10; Lamentations 3:22-26; Hosea 13:4; Acts 14:15; Romans 1:25; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 4:1-11; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 19:6, 10.

⁴⁰ See e.g., Isaiah 49:7; Lamentations 3:23-25; Malachi 3:6; 1 Corinthians 1:9; James 1:17.

⁴¹ Exodus 20:7; Exodus 34:5-7; Leviticus 19:12; Deuteronomy 5:11; see also Matthew 5:33-37; Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2; cf. Exodus 3:14-15; Exodus 6:2, 6-8; Exodus 34:5-7.

the LORD Almighty.⁴² Worshipping other gods is idolatry and leads to God's wrath.⁴³ Only the LORD is our praise, and we must worship, honor, and call upon Him with our whole hearts, souls, minds, and strength.⁴⁴

In fact, the Book of the Covenant commanded the people never to worship nor call on the name of any other gods, and not to even speak of their names.⁴⁵ The LORD is a jealous God and a consuming fire, and He will not tolerate anyone worshipping, honoring, or serving any other gods, heroes, or idols.⁴⁶ The eternal covenant declares that the LORD will not tolerate rivalry or unfaithfulness, as He commands our wholehearted love, reverence, submission, faithfulness, and trust in Him.⁴⁷ Cursed is anyone who carves or worships an idol or god, which is idolatry and covetousness.⁴⁸ The LORD deserves FIRST PLACE in our hearts, minds, souls, and desires with wholehearted allegiance and reverence to Him, and He condemns idolatry (worshipping and sacrificing to other gods) and covetousness (greed, materialism).⁴⁹ Covetousness includes such evil works as complaining, comparing, and ungratefulness.

As the one and true living God of heaven and earth, the LORD (Yahweh) must be obeyed and worshipped because He will not tolerate the worship or dependence upon any other gods, humans, governments, or idols.⁵⁰ The LORD declared that ALL PEOPLE must fear and honor Him, and NO ONE is above the Law of God, including kings and rulers.⁵¹ Only the living Sovereign LORD God has all power over every aspect of creation because the whole earth belongs to Him.⁵² The LORD is transcendent, which means the Creator and King of the Universe is distinct from His creation, and the Holy Bible teaches everyone to worship the LORD and not the things of creation.⁵³ The eternal Law of God declared that the LORD Almighty, who is the Covenant God of

⁴² Exodus 20:23; see also Exodus 20:3-5; Exodus 23:24; Exodus 32:1-4; Exodus 34:17; Leviticus 19:4; Leviticus 26:1; Deuteronomy 4:12, 15-19, 23; Deuteronomy 5:8-9; 2 Kings 17:35; Psalm 97:7; Psalm 115:3-8; Psalm 135:15-17; Jeremiah 25:6; Jeremiah 35:15; Matthew 6:24, 33; Luke 16:13; John 14:1, 27; John 16:33; Acts 14:15; Acts 17:29; Romans 14:17-19; Hebrews 12:14.

⁴³ Exodus 23:33; see also 1 John 5:21.

⁴⁴ Exodus 23:24; see also Exodus 20:5; Exodus 34:14, 17; Deuteronomy 10:12-13, 20-21; Matthew 4:10; Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 4:8.

⁴⁵ Exodus 23:13; see also Deuteronomy 5:7.

⁴⁶ Exodus 20:17, 23; Exodus 22:20; see also Exodus 20:4-6; Exodus 32:8; Exodus 34:14-15; Deuteronomy 4:15-20, 23-24; Deuteronomy 5:9; Deuteronomy 6:15; Romans 1:18, 25, 32.

⁴⁷ Exodus 20:3-7; see also Exodus 34:14, 17; Leviticus 26:1; Deuteronomy 4:24; Deuteronomy 32:16, 21; Joshua 24:19; Psalm 78:58; Matthew 6:9, 33; Matthew 22:37; 1 Corinthians 10:22; James 4:5.

⁴⁸ Deuteronomy 27:15; see also Exodus 20:4, 23; Exodus 34:17; Leviticus 19:4; Deuteronomy 4:16; Deuteronomy 5:8; Psalm 97:7; Ephesians 5:3-5; Colossians 3:5-7.

⁴⁹ Exodus 20:17; Exodus 22:20; see also Matthew 6:24, 33; Luke 12:15, 31; Romans 7:7; Romans 13:9; Hebrews 13:5.

⁵⁰ Exodus 20:3, 20; see also Exodus 22:20; Exodus 23:13, 24, 32-33; Deuteronomy 4:45, 39; Deuteronomy 6:13-15; Deuteronomy 10:20; 1 Samuel 7:3-4; Psalm 86:10; Isaiah 44:6, 8; Isaiah 45:5-6, 18; Isaiah 55:6-7; Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8; 1 Corinthians 8:4, 6.

⁵¹ See e.g., Deuteronomy 17:18-20.

⁵² Exodus 9:29; Exodus 19:5; see also Psalm 24:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:26, 28.

⁵³ Exodus 20:22-26; see also Romans 1:18-25.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is the only true and living God and Creator of heaven and earth.⁵⁴

Even more important, the Holy Bible explains that Christ Jesus is also God and Lord (Yahweh), and that He is One with His Holy Father—the living Sovereign LORD God.⁵⁵ The living Sovereign LORD God with His Son Christ Jesus as One is to receive our exclusive and wholehearted worship and love as God.⁵⁶ The living Sovereign LORD God honors and loves those who love and obey His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus our Lord.⁵⁷ Christ Jesus graciously gave His sinless life and shed His precious blood so that everyone who believes and obeys Him as Lord and Savior receives salvation, redemption, divine peace, righteousness, and new spiritual life from heaven.⁵⁸ The living Sovereign LORD God with His Son Christ Jesus as One is our eternal God and King from the Old Testament into the New Testament and for all eternity, and we must always wholeheartedly love with **full** faith and obedience our eternal God and King!

C. Hired Workers and Servants

Next, the Book of the Covenant discussed the rules on slavery and hired workers.⁵⁹ Slavery and hired workers were a fact of life in the ancient world, and so the Book of the Covenant and later the New Testament writers gave the people proper guidelines and rules for slavery, hired workers, and employment relationships to prevent abuse, harm, and mistreatment towards one another.⁶⁰ In the ancient world, slavery was more indentured servitude - social welfare, so the people could work and not go into poverty, or also to pay off a debt. Still, some enslaved people were also prisoners of war. Some Israelites voluntarily sold themselves or their families to others to pay off debts, taxes, and other financial obligations.⁶¹ Debtors and borrowers are slaves to the lenders and creditors.⁶² The LORD commanded Israel to release fellow Israelites (Hebrews) enslaved people after six years of service - the seventh year is freedom.⁶³ The LORD's

⁵⁴ See e.g., Genesis 1:1-2:25; Genesis 17:1; Exodus 3:14-15; Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 4:35; Deuteronomy 5:7; Deuteronomy 6:4, 14; Isaiah 43:10-11; Isaiah 45:21-22.

⁵⁵ See e.g., Matthew 1:21, 23; Matthew 28:19; Luke 1:35; Luke 2:10-11; Luke 5:20-21; John 1:1-3, 10, 14, 18, 49; John 5:18-19; John 10:30, 36-38; John 13:13; John 14:9-11; John 17:11, 21-23; John 20:28; Romans 1:3-4; Romans 9:5; Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 4:4-5; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:6, 11; Colossians 1:15-19; Colossians 2:9-10; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:1-3, 6, 8; 2 Peter 1:1; Revelation 1:13-18; Revelation 22:13.

⁵⁶ See e.g., Deuteronomy 4:35, 39; Deuteronomy 6:4-6; John 10:30, 36-38.

⁵⁷ See e.g., John 12:46; John 14:21, 23; John 16:27.

⁵⁸ See e.g., John 3:3-8, 15-18, 36; John 10:10; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 10:9-13; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 John 2:1-2; 1 John 4:7-11; Revelation 5:9.

⁵⁹ Exodus 21:1-11; see also Leviticus 25:39-55; Deuteronomy 15:12-18.

⁶⁰ Exodus 21:1-11; see also Leviticus 25:39-55; Deuteronomy 15:12-18; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-4:1.

⁶¹ See e.g., Leviticus 25:39-40; Nehemiah 5:4-5.

⁶² See e.g., Proverbs 22:7.

⁶³ Exodus 21:1-6; see also Leviticus 25:39-43; Jeremiah 34:8-22.

people are not to be anyone's eternal slave.⁶⁴ Also, the LORD commanded the Israelites to provide for their slaves' needs from their wealth once they left slavery to start a new life.⁶⁵ The Israelites were also slaves in Egypt, and the LORD, who is our true Master and Judge of all, wants everyone to love one another and never oppress, abuse, and hurt others, particularly their servants and workers.⁶⁶ Importantly, the Book of the Covenant discussed stealing by also condemning kidnapping and trafficking another human.⁶⁷ The LORD forbids and condemns all forced labor, human exploitation, kidnapping, and human trafficking, as such evil actions lead to death.⁶⁸ According to the Book of the Covenant, kidnappers must be put to death.⁶⁹

Here is the Good News: Christ Jesus came into the world as a humble servant - indeed the Servant - who suffered and died for our redemption.⁷⁰ Christ Jesus, our Savior, has commanded all people to be merciful and willing to forgive others of their debts, just as He and His Holy Father have forgiven our many sins and debts.⁷¹ The living Sovereign LORD God is fair and values all human life, and He does not discriminate, including against hired workers.⁷² Everyone is a son or daughter of God through faith in Christ Jesus, and there is no Jew nor Gentile, enslaved person nor free, neither male nor female; for we are all one in Christ Jesus and all Abraham's seed.⁷³ Christ Jesus our Savior died for ALL PEOPLE everywhere and thus makes the practice of slavery invalid and unacceptable.⁷⁴ Notably, Christ Jesus our Savior was betrayed to death by Judas Iscariot in the New Testament for the price of an enslaved person, thirty (30) shekels of silver, which was the standard price for an enslaved person.⁷⁵

D. Murder and Other Killings

The Book of Covenant and Christ Jesus our Savior further explained and expanded the sixth commandment not to murder by discussing intentional and premeditated killing with anger, hatred, and revenge, and also discussing accidental injuries and killing

⁶⁴ See Exodus 21:2.

⁶⁵ See e.g., Deuteronomy 15:12-18; Proverbs 10:22.

⁶⁶ See e.g., Exodus 20:2; Exodus 21:20-21, 26; Leviticus 19:18; Leviticus 25:42-43, 46, 53; Deuteronomy 5:15; Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:39-40; Acts 10:34; Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1.

⁶⁷ Exodus 21:16; see also Exodus 20:15; Leviticus 19:11, 13; Deuteronomy 5:19.

⁶⁸ Exodus 21:16; see also Deuteronomy 24:7.

⁶⁹ Exodus 21:16; see also Deuteronomy 24:7.

⁷⁰ Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; see also Philippians 2:6-8; cf. Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

⁷¹ See e.g., Matthew 6:12, 14-15; Matthew 18:21-35; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 6:36-38; Luke 11:4; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; cf. Proverbs 19:17.

⁷² See e.g., Deuteronomy 10:17-19; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11; Colossians 3:25; James 2:1; 1 Peter 1:17.

⁷³ See e.g., Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26-29.

⁷⁴ See Galatians 3:26-29.

⁷⁵ See e.g., Matthew 26:14-16; Matthew 27:3-4, 9-10; Luke 22:3-6; cf. Exodus 21:32; Zechariah 11:12-13.

without malice and enmity.⁷⁶ The LORD values ALL human life, and He does not want people intentionally hurting, mistreating, and harming others in anger, bitterness, and revenge.⁷⁷ Because ALL LIVES MATTER, the LORD wanted to assure all humans, from the least to the greatest, were protected and secure from killings at the hands of others.⁷⁸ Human life is patterned after the life of God Himself; therefore, murder and intentional killing are blasphemous and unfaithful acts leading to God's wrath and condemnation.⁷⁹ Cursed is anyone who intentionally kills another person.⁸⁰ Those guilty of premeditated and intentional murder are to be executed - life for life.⁸¹ According to the Book of the Covenant, intentional killing and injuries with premeditation and homicidal harming of others lead to death.⁸² Likewise, Christ Jesus taught that everyone who takes the sword will perish and die by the sword.⁸³ However, the LORD gives refuge and mercy for *accidental* injuries and killing without malice and enmity; however, He requires such injured victims to receive restitution, compensation, and repayment for the losses and pains caused to others.⁸⁴

E. Obedience to Father and Mother

The Book of the Covenant and Christ Jesus, our Savior, further discussed the LORD's fifth commandment to love, care for, and honor one's father and mother.⁸⁵ The LORD's blessings and long life come to those who honor and respect their father and mother.⁸⁶ According to the Book of the Covenant, those who intentionally attack, curse, and strike their parents with anger and hatred lead to God's curses and the death penalty.⁸⁷ Cursed is anyone who dishonors their father or mother because disrespecting one's parents is like disrespecting the LORD.⁸⁸ However, the Holy Bible also condemns parents who abuse, provoke, aggravate, or discourage their children with bitterness,

⁷⁶ Exodus 20:13; Exodus 21:12-14; see also Genesis 4:8; Genesis 9:5-6; Numbers 35:16-34; Deuteronomy 19:1-13; Deuteronomy 21:1-9; Deuteronomy 24:7; Joshua 20:1-9; Matthew 5:21-26; Matthew 19:18; Romans 13:9; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:8; James 2:11.

⁷⁷ Genesis 9:5-6; see also Genesis 4:6-12.

⁷⁸ See e.g., Exodus 20:13; Exodus 21:12-21, 26-32; Leviticus 19:14; Deuteronomy 5:17; Deuteronomy 24:7; Deuteronomy 27:18, 24.

⁷⁹ Exodus 21:12, 14; see also, Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 5:1-2; Leviticus 24:17, 21; Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 5:17; Deuteronomy 19:11-13; Matthew 19:4, 18; Mark 10:6, 19; Romans 13:9; 1 John 3:12-15.

⁸⁰ See e.g., Leviticus 24:17-22; Deuteronomy 27:24-25.

⁸¹ Exodus 21:12-14; see also Numbers 35:16-32.

⁸² See Exodus 21:12-14.

⁸³ See e.g., Matthew 26:52.

⁸⁴ Exodus 21:13; Exodus 21:18-36; see also Numbers 35:10-34; Deuteronomy 4:41-43; Deuteronomy 19:1-13; Joshua 20:1-9.

⁸⁵ Exodus 21:15, 17; see also Exodus 20:12; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 5:16; Matthew 15:4; Matthew 19:19; Mark 7:10; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20; 1 Timothy 5:4.

⁸⁶ See e.g., Deuteronomy 5:16.

⁸⁷ Exodus 21:15, 17; see also Leviticus 20:9-10; Deuteronomy 21:18-21; Deuteronomy 27:16.

⁸⁸ Deuteronomy 27:16; see also Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9; Matthew 15:4.

abuse, and neglect because the LORD commands parents to bring up and train their children in the ways of the LORD with love and godly discipline.⁸⁹

F. Personal Injuries

In addition, the Book of the Covenant outlined various laws on compensation, restitution, and payment for lost wages resulting from bodily injuries and suffering.⁹⁰ Causing pain and injuries to others carries physical or financial compensation to the injured, whether an enslaved person or free, because the LORD cares for ALL people.⁹¹ The covenant provided for penalties and punishments for wrongdoing, emphasizing punishment that fit the crime and stressing restitution rather than vengeance. Moreover, the LORD commanded the punishment to fit the crime by the law courts by providing for the law of retaliation (lex talionis) to prevent barbaric revenge, along with personal retaliation and revenge, because vengeance only belongs to the LORD.⁹² However, the Book of the Covenant and Christ Jesus corrected the abuse of the law of retaliation by requiring the law of love and mercy with forgiveness instead of personal vengeance, and by limiting court punishment so that it was not more severe than the original injury.⁹³

Also, the Book of the Covenant discussed an animal owner's responsibility and compensation for any pain, injuries, or death caused by their negligence and their animals towards others.⁹⁴ Notably, the Book of the Covenant valued and protected animals' lives and their welfare because the LORD's concern for His creation extended to the animal world.⁹⁵ The LORD punished with His wrath anyone who intentionally hurt or abused animals, including bestiality (sex with animals).⁹⁶

G. Protection of Property

Likewise, the Book of the Covenant discussed cases involving loss, damage, and stolen property, and their animals caused by others, whether through criminal intent or negligence.⁹⁷ The Book of Covenant and Christ Jesus, our Savior, forbid stealing, theft, and burglary of others' property and possessions, but encourage diligent work to

⁸⁹ See e.g., Proverbs 22:6, 15; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21.

⁹⁰ See Exodus 21:18-27.

⁹¹ See Exodus 21:18-20, 26-27.

⁹² Exodus 21:23-25; see also Leviticus 24:19-20; Deuteronomy 19:16-21; Deuteronomy 32:35; Romans 12:17-21.

⁹³ Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 25:1-3; see also Matthew 5:38-48; Matthew 6:12, 14-15; Matthew 18:21-35; Luke 6:27-36.

⁹⁴ See Exodus 21:28-32.

⁹⁵ Exodus 23:5, 11; Leviticus 25:6-7; Deuteronomy 22:4, 6-7; Deuteronomy 25:4.

⁹⁶ Exodus 22:19; see also Leviticus 18:23; Leviticus 24:18, 21; Deuteronomy 27:21.

⁹⁷ See Exodus 21:33-22:15.

provide for their families and others in need.⁹⁸ Stealing takes away what the LORD has given to others. The Holy Bible condemns such dark deeds as stealing, theft, shoplifting, defrauding, exploiting, robbery, and burglary.⁹⁹ Everyone's property is to be secure and safe in the land and not subject to theft, fraud, neglect, or corruption.¹⁰⁰ Cursed is anyone who steals another's land and property.¹⁰¹

The Book of the Covenant requires that the unfaithful person responsible for theft repay the owner the value of the property, plus an additional payment for restitution.¹⁰² Likewise, anyone who commits arson by burning another person's property is responsible for paying compensation equal to the value of the property lost.¹⁰³ The Book of the Covenant provides that if a thief is caught in the act of breaking into another's home at night and killed in the process, the person who killed the thief is not guilty of murder, but if the killing happens at sunrise, the defender is guilty of bloodshed.¹⁰⁴ The Holy Bible provides excuses for a thief who steals because he is hungry.¹⁰⁵ Where there is a question of responsibility for loss and damaged property, then the parties are to appear before the LORD's appointed judge to resolve the dispute.¹⁰⁶ When no criminal intent or negligence causes the property loss or damage, no one is held responsible. Notably, Christ Jesus encouraged everyone not to place their faith and hopes in possessions, materialism, or covetousness, but instead to lay up treasures in heaven through the love of God and goodness toward others, where thieves cannot break in and steal.¹⁰⁷

H. Social Responsibility

The Book of the Covenant discussed other various laws about social responsibility towards others.¹⁰⁸ First, the LORD forbids a man seducing and taking advantage of a virgin girl - the loverboy method - by requiring the man to pay the bride's price for the

⁹⁸ Exodus 22:1-15; see also Matthew 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Acts 20:35; Romans 13:9; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12.

⁹⁹ Exodus 20:15; see also Leviticus 19:11, 13; Matthew 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 3:8-14; Luke 18:20; Romans 13:9; Ephesians 4:28.

¹⁰⁰ Exodus 20:15; Exodus 21:33-36; Exodus 22:1-15; Exodus 23:4-5; Leviticus 19:35-36; Deuteronomy 5:19; Deuteronomy 22:1-4; Deuteronomy 25:13-15; cf. Romans 13:9; Ephesians 4:28.

¹⁰¹ See e.g., Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19; Deuteronomy 19:14; Deuteronomy 27:17.

¹⁰² Exodus 22:1-4, 7, 9, 12; see also Leviticus 6:1-7; Proverbs 6:31; Luke 19:8-9.

¹⁰³ See e.g., Exodus 22:6.

¹⁰⁴ See Exodus 22:2-3.

¹⁰⁵ See e.g., Proverbs 6:30.

¹⁰⁶ Exodus 22:8-15; see also Deuteronomy 17:8-9; Deuteronomy 19:17; Deuteronomy 25:1-3.

¹⁰⁷ See e.g., Matthew 6:19-21; Matthew 19:16-29; Mark 10:17-30; Luke 12:33-34; Luke 18:18-30; cf. 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Hebrews 13:5; James 5:1-5.

¹⁰⁸ See Exodus 22:16-31.

seduced girl.¹⁰⁹ No woman is to be taken advantage of, abused, or mistreated.¹¹⁰ The Holy Bible honors the marriage covenant, but the LORD condemns with wrath and forbids adultery, fornication, prostitution, and other premarital intercourse outside the bonds of holy matrimony.¹¹¹ The LORD commanded the people to keep the marriage relationship pure and holy and not twisted with perversion, orgies, and other Satan's dark deeds.¹¹² In addition, witchcraft, mediums, omens, voodoo, spiritists, and sorcery are all condemned by the LORD as such evil practices are idolatry and works of Satan's darkness leading to God's wrath and punishment.¹¹³ These evil works try to manipulate power that belongs exclusively to the LORD God.¹¹⁴ Significantly, the Book of the Covenant commanded the people once again never to blaspheme nor misuse the Name of the LORD, which leads to God's wrath and punishment.¹¹⁵ Also, the covenant commanded the people not to curse, insult, nor speak evil of any of our rulers.¹¹⁶ Likewise, the covenant commanded the people to never withhold our offerings to the LORD from our granaries or vats, nor the firstborn son, along with the firstborn of our cattle and sheep, which belong to the LORD God, but the LORD allowed their redemption.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, the Book of the Covenant commanded the people never to eat meat with blood nor mix blood with baked foods because blood is life and God's people must be holy.¹¹⁸

Notably, the Book of the Covenant addressed various guidelines to prevent the mistreatment and exploitation of the most vulnerable in the world, such as the poor, orphans, foreigners, prisoners, and widows.¹¹⁹ All defenseless and oppressed people - the poor and needy, widows, orphans, prisoners, hired workers, and foreigners - are objects of the LORD's special concern and providential care as noted throughout the

¹⁰⁹ Exodus 22:16-17; see also Deuteronomy 22:28-29.

¹¹⁰ See e.g., Exodus 21:7-11, 20, 26-32; Exodus 22:16-17; Numbers 27:1-11; Numbers 36:1-12; Deuteronomy 21:10-14; Deuteronomy 22:13-30; Deuteronomy 24:1-5; cf. Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Ephesians 5:25-29; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:7-9.

¹¹¹ See e.g., Genesis 2:24-25; Genesis 12:17-20; Genesis 20:1-9; Genesis 39:9; Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:18, 21; Deuteronomy 22:22-24; Deuteronomy 27:20-23; 2 Samuel 11:1-5; 2 Samuel 12:13; Matthew 5:27-30; Matthew 19:4-6, 18; Luke 18:20; John 8:4; Acts 15:19-20, 28-29; Romans 13:9; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 18-18; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3-5, 22-33; Colossians 3:5-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4; Revelation 21:7-8; Revelation 22:14-15.

¹¹² Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18; Leviticus 18:6-23; Leviticus 20:10-21; Deuteronomy 22:13-30; see also Malachi 2:15; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 13-18; 1 Corinthians 7:1-15, 38; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Timothy 4:3; Hebrews 13:4.

¹¹³ Exodus 22:18; Exodus 23:13; see also Exodus 20:3; Leviticus 19:26, 31; Leviticus 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 1 Samuel 28:3-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:7-8; Revelation 22:14-15.

¹¹⁴ See e.g., Exodus 7:11-12; Deuteronomy 18:10.

¹¹⁵ Exodus 22:28; see also Leviticus 24:11-16.

¹¹⁶ Exodus 22:28; see also Ecclesiastes 10:20; Acts 23:4-5.

¹¹⁷ Exodus 22:29-30; Exodus 23:15-16, 19; see also Exodus 4:22; Exodus 13:1-2, 11-15; Exodus 34:19-20; Numbers 3:12, 41, 45; Numbers 8:15-18.

¹¹⁸ Exodus 22:31; see also Exodus 23:18; Exodus 34:25; Leviticus 17:10-16; Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 12:23-25; Deuteronomy 15:23; Acts 15:19-20, 28-29.

¹¹⁹ Exodus 22:21-27; see also Isaiah 58:6-11; Matthew 25:34-40; Hebrews 13:1-3.

Holy Bible.¹²⁰ The LORD commands everyone to care for those in need. Notably, Christ Jesus, our Savior, taught that His final judgment will be based on how we treated and cared for “the least of these” during our time on earth, as our treatment of others reveals whether we are really righteous.¹²¹ Christ Jesus has commanded His followers to be givers.¹²² No one, however disabled, poverty-stricken, or powerless, is to be oppressed and abused but to be cared for and treated with equality, goodness, and fairness.¹²³ The LORD watches over and protects the defenseless, widows, foreigners (refugees), orphans, and other vulnerable people of society.¹²⁴ Likewise, the LORD commanded the people never to exploit, mistreat, or abuse the poor, widows, orphans, and the fatherless, which brings God’s wrath and punishment.¹²⁵ The widow, the orphan, the poor, hired servants (workers), and the foreigner are defenseless and helpless, and the LORD God becomes their protector, provider, and defender of those who harmed and hurt them, but He blessed those who blessed and cared for the least of these in society.¹²⁶ The LORD commanded the people never to hurt or curse the deaf nor put a stumbling block in front of the blind.¹²⁷ Cursed is anyone who leads the deaf and blind astray and who denies justice to foreigners (aliens), orphans, and widows.¹²⁸ In addition, the Book of the Covenant forbids charging excessive financial interest (usury) and taking collateral away from our fellow neighbors, the poor, foreigners, and others in need, because the LORD is merciful and filled with compassion to all people who cry out and seek Him.¹²⁹ In fact, Christ Jesus our Savior taught the people to help and give to those in need who are hurting and to those who wish to borrow from you.¹³⁰ The eternal commandment of Christ Jesus our Lord is to love one another and be good to others with kindness and mercy - the least to the greatest.¹³¹

¹²⁰ See e.g., Exodus 22:21-27; Exodus 23:6-12; Leviticus 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 14:29; Deuteronomy 16:11, 14; Deuteronomy 24:17-22; Deuteronomy 26:12-13; Psalm 10:14, 16-18; Psalm 68:5-6; Psalm 82:3-4; Psalm 146:5-9; Isaiah 1:17, 23; Isaiah 10:2; Jeremiah 7:6; Jeremiah 22:3; Zechariah 7:8-10; Malachi 3:5; Matthew 6:24-34; Luke 12:22-34; Romans 15:26; Galatians 2:9-10; 1 Timothy 5:3-5; Hebrews 13:1-3; James 1:27; James 2:1-7; James 5:4.

¹²¹ Matthew 25:31-46; see also Daniel 12:2.

¹²² See e.g., Luke 6:34-36; 2 Corinthians 9:6-10.

¹²³ Exodus 22:21-27; Leviticus 19:14, 33-34; Leviticus 25:17, 35-36; Deuteronomy 23:19; Deuteronomy 24:6, 12-15, 17; Deuteronomy 27:18-19; cf. Isaiah 1:17, 23; James 1:27.

¹²⁴ See e.g., Psalm 146:9.

¹²⁵ Exodus 22:22-24; see also Deuteronomy 10:18-19; Deuteronomy 24:14, 17; Psalm 68:5; Psalm 146:9; Zechariah 7:8-10; Malachi 3:5; Luke 18:1-7.

¹²⁶ See e.g., Leviticus 19:9-10, 13-14; Deuteronomy 14:28-29; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Deuteronomy 24:14-22; Psalm 10:17-18; Proverbs 21:13; Proverbs 22:16; Jeremiah 7:6-7; Jeremiah 22:3; Ezekiel 22:29; Malachi 3:5; Matthew 25:31-46; James 1:27; James 5:4; 1 John 3:17.

¹²⁷ See e.g., Leviticus 19:14.

¹²⁸ Deuteronomy 27:18-19; see also Exodus 22:21-22; Exodus 23:9; Leviticus 19:14, 33; Deuteronomy 10:18-19.

¹²⁹ Exodus 22:25-27; Exodus 34:5-7; see also Leviticus 25:35-37; Deuteronomy 23:19-20; Deuteronomy 24:6, 10, 12, 17; Psalm 15:5; Joel 2:12-13; Jonah 4:2; Matthew 5:45; Luke 6:35-36; Romans 13:10.

¹³⁰ See e.g., Matthew 5:42-43; Matthew 22:37-40; Luke 6:30-34; Luke 10:25-37; 1 John 3:17.

¹³¹ Matthew 7:12; Matthew 9:13; Matthew 12:7; Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 23:23; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:25-27; John 13:34-35; John 15:12, 17; see also Romans 13:10; Galatians 5:14; Hebrews 13:1-3; James 2:8 cf. Leviticus 19:18.

The Book of the Covenant discussed the issue of immigration and commanded the people never to mistreat, abuse, or oppress foreigners (aliens) in any way but to treat all people, including foreigners and refugees with goodness, fairness, and kindness.¹³² Father Abraham was an immigrant when the LORD God commanded him to leave his family in Ur, located in ancient Mesopotamia, and come to the land He promised - Israel-Palestine (Canaan).¹³³ The Israelites were once foreigners and enslaved people in Egypt, until the LORD delivered the Israelites from bondage and slavery.¹³⁴ Thus, Israel opened their borders to anyone who wished to become part of the covenant community of God. Many foreigners, including Rahab (Joshua 2:1-21; Joshua 6:23-25), the Gibeonites (see Joshua 9:1-27), and Ruth (see Ruth 1:16; Ruth 4:11-13), found a home and identity among God's people - the Israelites.¹³⁵ In fact, Christ Jesus' family included both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews), and He, along with His disciples, welcomed all people into God's Kingdom family through faith in Him.¹³⁶

I. Mercy and Justice

The Book of the Covenant called for justice, mercy, equality, and fairness with truth and integrity towards all people, whether rich or poor.¹³⁷ Christ Jesus instructed His disciples never to neglect the weightier matters of the Law of God: justice, mercy, and faith.¹³⁸ The living Sovereign LORD God and His Son Christ Jesus commanded the people to always give honest testimony and factual statements under oath with fairness and truth, and never pass along false rumors, lies, gossip, or swear falsely.¹³⁹ The Book of the Covenant commanded the people never to tell lies or spread a false report, and never to help a guilty person by being a lying and vengeful witness.¹⁴⁰ In other words, the LORD does not want His people joining hands with Satan and his wicked workers of darkness.¹⁴¹ The living Sovereign LORD God is Truth and Justice, and He called all people to follow His good ways by walking and living in truth with integrity, equality,

¹³² Exodus 22:21; Exodus 23:9; see also Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 10:18-19; Psalm 146:9; Zechariah 7:8-10; Malachi 3:5; Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31.

¹³³ Genesis 11:31; Genesis 12:1-3; see also Acts 7:2-6; Hebrews 11:8.

¹³⁴ Exodus 22:21; Exodus 23:9; see also Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6, 15.

¹³⁵ See also Matthew 1:5.

¹³⁶ See Matthew 1:1-16; John 1:12-13; Acts 10:1-11:30; Galatians 3:26-29; Revelation 7:9-17. This author acknowledges that everyone must consider economic needs, criminal and safety concerns related to immigration, and the need to balance compassion for the poor and refugees, labor justice, and security.

¹³⁷ Exodus 23:1-9; see also Exodus 18:25-26; Deuteronomy 1:17; Hosea 6:6, Micah 6:6-8; Matthew 23:23.

¹³⁸ Matthew 23:23; see also Hosea 6:6; Amos 5:24 Micah 6:6-8; cf. James 1:27.

¹³⁹ Exodus 23:1-3, 6-8; see also Leviticus 19:11-16; Deuteronomy 19:15-21; Psalm 120:2; Proverbs 12:19; Proverbs 16:11; Proverbs 23:23; Proverbs 24:26, 28; Matthew 5:33-37; Matthew 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9.

¹⁴⁰ Exodus 23:1-3; see also Exodus 20:16; Deuteronomy 5:20; Deuteronomy 16:19-20; Psalm 101:5.

¹⁴¹ Exodus 23:1; see also Psalm 1:1; Psalm 26:4-5; Proverbs 4:14, 1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14.

fairness, equal justice, and honesty towards Him and one another.¹⁴² Because He is Truth and Justice, the LORD commanded everyone to be given a fair trial and equal access to the courts without bias, prejudice, and inequality.¹⁴³ The Holy Bible promises that those who lie and spread falsehood will not escape punishment because lying and falsehood are abominations to the LORD.¹⁴⁴ In addition, the LORD commanded the people to never deny justice and equality to the poor, never charge anyone falsely with lies, and never sentence an innocent or blameless person to death.¹⁴⁵ Cursed is anyone who accepts payment to kill an innocent person.¹⁴⁶ Likewise, the LORD forbids and condemns taking bribes, kickbacks, and other corrupt deeds to pervert and distort truth, fairness, and honesty.¹⁴⁷ Satan and his false prophets and other evildoers are liars, deceivers, gossipers, and tricksters, and the LORD does not want His people following Satan's falsehood, dark deeds, and lies, which lead to destruction and death.¹⁴⁸ The new heavens and new earth will not have liars, murderers, and other Satan's evildoers who selfishly bring hurt and harm to others.¹⁴⁹ The LORD has commanded all people to help and love one another and treat one another with honesty, mercy, and fairness, even our enemies.¹⁵⁰

J. Ceremonial Laws

Finally, the Book of the Covenant discussed the various ceremonial requirements. The covenant required the people to work diligently, sow the land and fields, and gather the harvest for six (6) years, but in the seventh year (sabbatical year), the people were to give the land a holy rest to renew and refresh.¹⁵¹ During the seventh year, the people were to let the land rest and recover, but also to allow the poor amongst the people to harvest whatever grows on their land, vineyards, and olive groves, and then leave the rest for the livestock and wild animals to eat.¹⁵² Likewise, the covenant commanded a weekly Sabbath rest with holy worship and to stop all ordinary work on the seventh day, allowing the people, the animals, the livestock, and the workers to rest and be

¹⁴² Exodus 20:16; Deuteronomy 5:20; Deuteronomy 32:4; see also Psalm 9:8-10; Isaiah 65:16; Jeremiah 9:23-24; Zechariah 8:16-19; John 1:14; John 4:24; John 14:6, 17; John 17:17; 1 John 5:20.

¹⁴³ Exodus 23:6-8; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17; Deuteronomy 10:17-18; Deuteronomy 16:18-20; Deuteronomy 17:8-13; Deuteronomy 19:15-21.

¹⁴⁴ See e.g., Proverbs 6:16-19; Proverbs 12:12; Proverbs 19:5, 9; Proverbs 24:28.

¹⁴⁵ Exodus 23:6-7; see also Exodus 20:13, 16; Ephesians 4:25.

¹⁴⁶ Deuteronomy 27:25; see also Exodus 23:8.

¹⁴⁷ Exodus 23:8; see also Deuteronomy 10:17; Deuteronomy 16:19; Deuteronomy 24:17; Proverbs 15:27; Proverbs 17:8; Proverbs 18:16; Proverbs 19:6; Proverbs 21:14; Proverbs 24:23-25.

¹⁴⁸ See e.g., Genesis 3:1-6, 13; Exodus 21:14; John 8:44; Romans 6:16, 23; Ephesians 5:6-12; 1 John 3:8-12; Jude 1:6; Revelation 19:20; Revelation 20:10.

¹⁴⁹ See e.g., Psalm 15:1-5; Psalm 24:3-5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3-5; Revelation 21:7-8; Revelation 22:14-15.

¹⁵⁰ Exodus 23:4-5; see also Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 22:1-4; Proverbs 25:21; Matthew 5:21-48; Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:37-40; Luke 6:27-38; Luke 10:25-37; Romans 12:9-14, 20-21; Romans 13:10.

¹⁵¹ Exodus 23:10-11; see also Leviticus 25:1-7; Leviticus 26:34-35.

¹⁵² Exodus 23:11; see also Leviticus 25:1-7.

refreshed.¹⁵³ The LORD made the Sabbath for humankind, from the least to the greatest, for spiritual, mental, and physical restoration.¹⁵⁴ Notably, Christ Jesus, our Savior, as well as the Apostle Paul, honored the Sabbath by regularly worshipping and attending services at the synagogue.¹⁵⁵ Here is Good News: Christ Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath, providing everyone with Sabbath rest, spiritual recovery, nourishment, and salvation (healing) for those who look to Him with faithful trust and obedience as Lord and Savior.¹⁵⁶ In addition, believers of Christ Jesus worship on Sunday, the first day of the week, as the Lord's day or Sabbath, to rejoice and celebrate Christ Jesus's resurrection and the peaceful rest He gives to everyone who looks to Him with trust and faithful obedience.¹⁵⁷

Moreover, the LORD commanded the men (males) to celebrate three annual festivals to Him each year at the Tabernacle (later the Temple).¹⁵⁸ First, the people were to celebrate in early Spring (Aviv) the Feast of Unleavened Bread and eat bread without yeast for seven (7) days to celebrate their Passover from Egyptian slavery.¹⁵⁹ Christ Jesus died as the sacrificial Lamb of God on the Cross during Passover to redeem (ransom) and save everyone through faith in Him from Satan's death, disease, and destruction.¹⁶⁰ Second, the men were to celebrate the Festival of Harvest (Festival of Weeks) and bring the LORD the first fruit of their crops and harvest.¹⁶¹ This festival was later called the Festival of Pentecost and is celebrated today as Shavuot (or Shabuoth).¹⁶² Finally, the people were to celebrate the Festival of the Final Harvest at the end of the harvest season, when they harvested the crops, and to celebrate Israel's wilderness wandering, where Israel lived in temporary shelters following the Exodus from Egypt.¹⁶³ This festival was also known as the Festival of Ingatherings (Booths) and later renamed the Festival of Shelters or Festival of Tabernacles; today it is celebrated

¹⁵³ Exodus 23:12; see also Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 16:22-26; Exodus 20:8-11; Exodus 31:12-17; Exodus 34:21; Exodus 35:2-3; Leviticus 19:3, 30; Leviticus 23:3; Leviticus 26:2; Deuteronomy 5:12-15.

¹⁵⁴ See Mark 2:27; cf. Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:14; Colossians 2:16.

¹⁵⁵ See e.g., Matthew 4:23; Matthew 13:54; Mark 1:21; Luke 4:15-16; Acts 13:5, 14; Acts 14:1; Acts 17:2, 10; Acts 18:4, 19; Acts 19:18; cf. Hebrews 10:25.

¹⁵⁶ Matthew 11:28-30; Matthew 12:8; Mark 2:27-28; Luke 6:5; see also John 4:10-14; John 6:31-35, 47-48, 51; Hebrews 4:4; 1 John 5:3.

¹⁵⁷ Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; see also Psalm 95:7-11; Matthew 11:28-30; Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; John 14:1, 15-17, 21, 23, 27; John 15:7; John 16:22-24, 33; John 20:1; Hebrews 3:7-4:13; Revelation 1:10.

¹⁵⁸ Exodus 23:14-19; see also Exodus 34:18-26; Leviticus 23:4-44; Numbers 28:16-29:40; Deuteronomy 16:1-17.

¹⁵⁹ Exodus 23:15; see also Exodus 12:14-20; Exodus 13:4-5; Exodus 34:18; Leviticus 23:4-8; Numbers 28:16-25; Deuteronomy 16:1-8.

¹⁶⁰ See e.g., Matthew 20:28; Matthew 26:17-29; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-20; John 1:29, 36; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 2:24.

¹⁶¹ Exodus 23:16; see also Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 23:15-22; Numbers 28:26-31; Deuteronomy 16:9-12.

¹⁶² See Acts 2:1; Acts 20:16.

¹⁶³ Exodus 23:16; see also Exodus 20:2; Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 23:33-43; Numbers 29:12-39; Deuteronomy 16:13-17.

as Sukkot (or Succoth).¹⁶⁴ The LORD commanded the people to bring the very best of their first harvest - first fruits to the house of God.¹⁶⁵ However, these festivals became a problem for Israel to observe once they were dispersed and scattered throughout the world from the Tabernacle (later the Temple), which was destroyed in 586 BC and then again in 70 AD. In Israel's history, the people did not celebrate these annual festivals with care.¹⁶⁶

K. Promises of the LORD's Presence and Blessings

After giving His holy covenant, the living Sovereign LORD God made eternal promises to the people. First, the LORD promised to send His holy Angel (divine messenger) before His people to protect them on their journey and lead them safely to the place He had prepared for them.¹⁶⁷ The LORD commanded the people to obey and never rebel against His holy Angel because His Name was in the Angel.¹⁶⁸ The Angel of the LORD would go ahead of Israel to protect them and also lead Israel into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob - Israel-Palestine (Promised Land).¹⁶⁹ Once again, the LORD reminded the people that He is the only true and living God, and only He must be obeyed and worshipped.¹⁷⁰ The LORD promised that our exclusive worship with wholehearted love and faithful obedience to Him, by also humbly doing what is good and right, would bring His abundant blessings, victory over enemies, long life, fertile lands, children, peace, answered prayers, and salvation (healing).¹⁷¹ Everyone who loves the LORD and keeps His holy commandments receives blessings and grace from Him, as well as generational blessings for their children.¹⁷² The living Sovereign LORD God blesses those who diligently seek and obey Him with faithful love.¹⁷³ Even more, the LORD becomes the Defender and Protector of those who love Him and walk with

¹⁶⁴ See e.g., Nehemiah 8:13-17; Zechariah 14:6; John 7:2, 37-39.

¹⁶⁵ Exodus 23:19; see also Exodus 22:29; Leviticus 23:9-14.

¹⁶⁶ See e.g., 2 Kings 23:21-23; 2 Chronicles 35:1-19.

¹⁶⁷ Exodus 23:20; see also Genesis 16:7; Exodus 3:2; Exodus 13:15; Exodus 14:19; Exodus 32:34; Acts 7:30.

¹⁶⁸ See Exodus 23:21.

¹⁶⁹ Exodus 23:22-23; see also Genesis 12:6-7; Genesis 13:12-17; Genesis 15:18-21; Genesis 28:13-15; Genesis 48:3-4; cf. Joshua 5:13-15.

¹⁷⁰ Exodus 23:24-25; see also Exodus 15:26.

¹⁷¹ Exodus 23:25-31; see also Exodus 15:26; Exodus 19:5-6; Exodus 20:3-7; Leviticus 26:1-13; Deuteronomy 5:10; Deuteronomy 6:4-6 13-18; Deuteronomy 7:9-16, 22-26; Deuteronomy 10:12-13, 20-21; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; 2 Chronicles 6:14; Micah 6:6-8; Matthew 4:10; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 23:4; Luke 4:8; Luke 12:31; John 14:1, 13, 15, 21, 23-24, 27; John 15:1-7, 10-12, 17; John 16:23; Acts 10:34-35; Galatians 6:7-10; 1 John 2:3-5, 14; 1 John 5:3.

¹⁷² See e.g., Genesis 15:1, 6; Exodus 15:25-26; Exodus 20:6; Deuteronomy 5:10; Deuteronomy 6:5; Deuteronomy 7:9, 12; 2 Chronicles 6:14; Nehemiah 1:5; Jeremiah 7:22-23; Daniel 9:4; Matthew 6:33; Luke 12:31; John 14:15-17; 1 John 5:3; 2 John 1:6.

¹⁷³ See e.g., Hebrews 11:6.

Him in faithful obedience to the covenant.¹⁷⁴ No weapon that comes against God's holy people will prosper, and the LORD continually protects us with His love and mercy.¹⁷⁵

Our obedience to the LORD's covenant does not earn salvation, because salvation comes by repentance and love, with faith and belief in the living Sovereign LORD God and His Son, Christ Jesus, with our whole hearts, souls, and mouths, as our only God and King.¹⁷⁶ The Holy Bible is clear that the living Sovereign LORD God knows our inner hearts, and He accepts and saves all people by giving His Holy Spirit to everyone who trusts and loves in Him and His Son, Christ Jesus, by faithful obedience in Him and His Son, Jesus.¹⁷⁷ Our love and faithful obedience to Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior make us righteous (justified) and forgiven before His Holy Father - the living Sovereign LORD God.¹⁷⁸ The entire Holy Bible requires and commands everyone - Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles) to live by faith and wholehearted love to the living Sovereign LORD God and His Son Christ Jesus first and foremost, and love for one another.¹⁷⁹ However, our obedience to the Ten Commandments and the LORD's other covenant instructions is our daily response of faith and trust in the LORD's merciful grace, love, and forgiveness for all our sins through His Son Christ Jesus.¹⁸⁰

L. Covenant Confirmation and Covenant Meal

Once the living Sovereign LORD God gave His eternal Book of the Covenant to Moses and the Israelites, He invited Moses and several Israelite leaders to come up Mount Sinai (Horeb) to confirm the covenant and also enjoy a covenant meal with Him.¹⁸¹ Moses and his brother Aaron, along with Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu, and seventy elders of the Israelites, came up Mount Sinai to worship the LORD.¹⁸²

Then, Moses came to the people, and he announced all the words and laws spoken by the living LORD from Mount Sinai, and the people promised to obey the LORD's covenant commandments and statutes.¹⁸³ Moses wrote all the eternal words of the LORD given at Mount Sinai from His Glory Cloud into the Book of the Covenant.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁴ See e.g., Exodus 15:2-3; Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalm 18:1-2, and Psalm 59:17; Psalm 91:2.

¹⁷⁵ See e.g., Isaiah 54:17; Romans 8:31-39.

¹⁷⁶ See e.g., Genesis 15:6; Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Habakkuk 2:2-4; Matthew 22:37; John 3:16-18, 36; Romans 5:6, 8; Romans 6:4-5; Romans 10:9-13; Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-10.

¹⁷⁷ Acts 10:34-36, 44-47; Acts 11:17-18; Acts 15:8-11; Romans 5:1-2; Galatians 2:15-20; see also Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:2-4; Romans 1:16-17; Ephesians 2:8-10.

¹⁷⁸ See e.g., Romans 1:16-17; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 6:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 3:6-9, 24.

¹⁷⁹ See e.g., Genesis 15:6; Deuteronomy 6:4-17; Habakkuk 2:4; Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 3:11; Galatians 5:14; Hebrews 11:1, 6; Hebrews 10:38.

¹⁸⁰ See e.g., John 17:23; Romans 8:37.

¹⁸¹ Exodus 24:1-11.

¹⁸² Exodus 24:1-2; see also Exodus 6:23; Exodus 28:1; Leviticus 10:1-2; Numbers 11:16-17.

¹⁸³ Exodus 24:3, 7; see also Exodus 19:8.

¹⁸⁴ Exodus 24:4; see also Deuteronomy 31:9.

Then Moses built an altar to the LORD at the foot of Mount Sinai and surrounded it with twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve sons of Jacob.¹⁸⁵ Moses sent young men of Israel to offer burnt offerings and sacrifice peace offerings to the LORD.¹⁸⁶ Moses took half of the blood from the offerings and placed it in a basin, but Moses sprinkled the other half of the blood on the altar.¹⁸⁷ Then Moses took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people, who once again promised to obey.¹⁸⁸ Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people to confirm the covenant the LORD had made with them, because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.¹⁸⁹ Next, Moses and his brother Aaron, along with Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu and seventy elders of the Israelites, came up Mount Sinai and they saw the living Sovereign LORD God, where they enjoyed a covenant meal with Him.¹⁹⁰ This covenant meal with the LORD foreshadows the Lord's Supper (Eucharist) with Christ Jesus and His twelve disciples, which celebrated the new covenant and the Passover meal ratified and confirmed by Christ Jesus's sacrificial death and precious blood at Calvary.¹⁹¹

Next, the LORD invited Moses alone to meet Him on the top of Mount Sinai so He could give Moses the tablets of stone with the Law of God and commandments that He had written with His finger so Moses could teach the people.¹⁹² Moses arose and took his assistant Joshua with him, but Moses alone went up Mount Sinai to meet with the LORD inside His Glory Cloud.¹⁹³ Before ascending into the Glory Cloud, Moses left his brother Aaron and also Hur in charge to lead the people and resolve their disputes.¹⁹⁴ Then, the fiery and mighty Glory Cloud with the LORD rested on Mount Sinai for six days, and on the seventh day the LORD called Moses into His Glory Cloud.¹⁹⁵ Moses stayed inside the Glory Cloud with the LORD atop Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights.¹⁹⁶

M. Obedience to God

¹⁸⁵ Exodus 24:4; see also Genesis 28:18; Genesis 35:9-13, 23-26; Exodus 1:1-7.

¹⁸⁶ Exodus 24:5; see also Exodus 18:12.

¹⁸⁷ Exodus 24:6; see also Hebrews 9:18.

¹⁸⁸ Exodus 24:7; see also Hebrews 9:19.

¹⁸⁹ Exodus 24:8; see also Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 10:16; Hebrews 9:20, 22.

¹⁹⁰ Exodus 24:9-11; see also Genesis 32:30; Exodus 19:21; Exodus 33:20; Ezekiel 1:26-28; John 1:18; John 6:46; 1 Corinthians 10:18; Revelation 4:3.

¹⁹¹ Matthew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-20; see also Jeremiah 31:31-34; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

¹⁹² Exodus 24:2, 12; see also Exodus 31:18.

¹⁹³ Exodus 24:13, 15; see also Exodus 19:9, 16-17; Exodus 32:17; Deuteronomy 4:10-12, 36; Hebrews 12:19, 25.

¹⁹⁴ Exodus 24:14; see also Exodus 17:10, 12.

¹⁹⁵ Exodus 24:16-17; see also Exodus 16:10; Exodus 33:18; Deuteronomy 4:36; Deuteronomy 9:3.

¹⁹⁶ Exodus 24:18; see also Matthew 4:2.

The living Sovereign LORD God is the Lawgiver and Judge, and He alone determines and sets the standards of what is morally right and wrong.¹⁹⁷ Ultimately, the LORD is the trustworthy source of moral guidance, and He holds everyone accountable for their actions, whether good or bad.¹⁹⁸ Even in Genesis, the LORD established a standard of righteousness and goodness, and He called for the people to walk with Him in obedience.¹⁹⁹

The living Sovereign LORD God gave the most comprehensive listing of His moral and holy standards at Mount Sinai, with the giving of the Book of the Covenant, which included the Ten Commandments of God. The Book of the Covenant required the people's wholehearted obedience and faithfulness to Him because of His gracious deliverance and redemption from bondage and slavery.²⁰⁰ The LORD promised the people His Holy Presence with abundant blessings as they walked in obedience to Him and His eternal covenant.²⁰¹ Everyone who keeps the commandments of God keeps his soul and finds life.²⁰² Sadly, disobedience and rebellion against the LORD lead to disease, depression, death, and separation from the LORD.²⁰³

The Book of the Covenant is foundational to godly living and divine wisdom, and to understanding the rest of the Old Testament through the teaching of the holy prophets and Christ Jesus our Savior's teaching in the New Testament.²⁰⁴ All the Holy Scriptures are spoken and breathed by the living Sovereign LORD God to teach everyone good and godly living.²⁰⁵ These Old Testament teachings are good and holy for our daily guidance and instruction for living.²⁰⁶ Even more important, the Old Testament teachings all point to Christ Jesus our Savior.²⁰⁷ Our faith in Christ Jesus does not void the Law of God but establishes the Law of God within our hearts - everyone must live by faith in God.²⁰⁸

In the Book of the Covenant, the living Sovereign LORD God commanded the people to wholeheartedly pay close attention and obey Him and His covenant instructions, and

¹⁹⁷ See e.g., Isaiah 33:22; Hebrews 12:23; James 4:12.

¹⁹⁸ See e.g., Deuteronomy 6:2; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Matthew 12:35-37.

¹⁹⁹ See e.g., Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 4:7-10; Genesis 5:22-24; Genesis 6:8-9; Genesis 9:3-6; Genesis 17:1; Genesis 18:17-19; Genesis 26:5; Genesis 39:7-9; cf. Exodus 15:25-26.

²⁰⁰ Exodus 20:1-23:33; see also Deuteronomy 4:13.

²⁰¹ Exodus 23:20-33; see also Leviticus 26:3-13; Deuteronomy 28:1-14.

²⁰² See e.g., Proverbs 19:16; Luke 8:21; Luke 10:25-28; Luke 11:28.

²⁰³ Romans 6:17, 23; cf. Genesis 2:6-17; Genesis 3:1-24; Romans 5:12.

²⁰⁴ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; see also Genesis 18:17-19; Deuteronomy 4:5-9; Deuteronomy 30:19-20; Job 28:28; Psalm 19:7-10; Psalm 119:98-99; Proverbs 1:7.

²⁰⁵ See e.g., 1 Timothy 6:10-11; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21.

²⁰⁶ See e.g., Psalm 19:7-10; Romans 7:12, 14.

²⁰⁷ See e.g., Luke 24:25-27, 44-47; John 5:39; Acts 13:27; Romans 1:2-4; Hebrews 1:1-3.

²⁰⁸ Romans 3:31; see also Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:2-4; Romans 1:16-17.

also teach them to their children.²⁰⁹ The living Sovereign LORD God commanded the people to love and obey Him from our hearts and also walk and live in all His holy and pleasing ways, which leads to His blessings and an authentic life with divine peace.²¹⁰ The covenant commanded the people not only to worship the true and loving God but also to treat others rightly (ethically).²¹¹

The eternal covenant at Mount Sinai focused on how the people must live, walk, and conduct themselves as God's holy people, as the LORD initially commanded Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel).²¹² To become God's "treasured possession," "kingdom of priests," and "holy nation," the people must keep and obey the living Sovereign LORD God's covenant requirements.²¹³ Love and faithful obedience to the LORD's commandments would reflect their wisdom to the whole.²¹⁴ All parts of our daily lives are an expression of our obedience to the living Sovereign LORD God of heaven and earth.

N. Christ Jesus and the Book of the Covenant

In the New Testament, Christ Jesus is Jewish because He descended from Father Abraham and King David from the tribe of Judah.²¹⁵ Christ Jesus was known by His disciples as a Rabbi, which means Teacher.²¹⁶ During His public ministry, Christ Jesus taught with authority because He was filled with the Holy Spirit as the Word of God incarnate (human flesh).²¹⁷ Christ Jesus followed the Jewish faith during His public ministry, because He regularly attended the synagogue, attended Jewish festivals including Passover and Hanukkah, and He often quoted from the Old Testament.²¹⁸

Christ Jesus discussed and reaffirmed the moral standards of the Book of the Covenant in His great Sermon on the Mount and Sermon on the Plain.²¹⁹ In His teaching, Christ Jesus called the people to seek and love His Holy Father - the living Sovereign LORD God and righteous living with mercy, fairness, and faith, which will lead to God's

²⁰⁹ Exodus 23:13; see also Deuteronomy 4:9; Deuteronomy 5:1, 32-33; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Deuteronomy 10:12-13.

²¹⁰ See e.g., Leviticus 26:3-13; Deuteronomy 5:33; Deuteronomy 8:6; Deuteronomy 10:12-13; Deuteronomy 11:1, 22; Deuteronomy 26:17; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Deuteronomy 30:16; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Jeremiah 7:23; Micah 6:8; John 14:15-17, 21, 23-24.

²¹¹ Exodus 20:1-17; see also Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:37-40.

²¹² See e.g., Genesis 15:6; Genesis 17:1; Genesis 18:17-19; Genesis 26:5.

²¹³ See Exodus 20:1-23:33; cf. Exodus 19:5-6; 1 Peter 2:1-5, 9-10.

²¹⁴ See Deuteronomy 4:5-8.

²¹⁵ See e.g., Matthew 1:1, 16-17; Romans 9:5; Revelation 5:5; Revelation 22:16.

²¹⁶ See e.g., Matthew 1:1, 16-17; Matthew 26:18, 25, 49; Mark 4:38; Mark 9:5; Mark 11:21; Mark 14:45; Luke 21:7; John 1:38, 49; John 3:2; John 4:31; John 6:25; John 9:2; John 11:8, 28; John 13:13.

²¹⁷ John 1:1; see also Matthew 7:28-29; Matthew 13:54; Mark 1:21-22; 1 John 1:1; Revelation 19:13.

²¹⁸ See e.g., Matthew 4:4, 7, 10; Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 1:21; Luke 4:16; John 10:22; cf. Deuteronomy 6:13, 16; Deuteronomy 8:3.

²¹⁹ See Matthew 5:1-7:29; Luke 6:20-49.

blessings as initially echoed from the Old Testament.²²⁰ In His sermons, Christ Jesus called and commanded everyone to turn away from hatred, lies, hypocrisy (falsehood), envy (covetousness and greed), sexual sins, murder, and slander (gossip), and seek His Holy Father and to live righteous and good lives.²²¹ Christ Jesus condemned the Pharisees for following their oral laws and traditions of men because they disobeyed the commandments of God given in the Book of the Covenant.²²²

Since the Old Testament, the living Sovereign LORD God has repeatedly sent His holy prophets to warn and encourage the people to repent by turning from wicked and evil living, following other gods, and turning wholeheartedly to Him with faithful obedience, love, and mercy and goodness towards others.²²³ Christ Jesus inspired these Old Testament prophets.²²⁴ The LORD wrote His eternal covenant on stone tablets in the Old Testament, and His covenant brought life and was holy, spiritual, and good because it addressed misconduct such as idolatry, theft, lying, sexual misconduct, and murder.²²⁵

Here is the Good News: the living Sovereign LORD God, through our faithful obedience to His Son, Christ Jesus, has now given us His Holy Spirit and empowered us from *within* to obey Him and His eternal covenant by writing His covenant on *our hearts*, not on stone tablets.²²⁶ The first covenant written by the LORD on stone tablets was unable to change the evil human heart.²²⁷ Sadly, all humans were born into sin with a sinful nature because of Adam and Eve's rebellion in the Garden of Eden; therefore, they have difficulty obeying God and His covenant.²²⁸ The Old Testament prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel predicted the living Sovereign LORD God would internalize the Torah by writing the covenant on the people's hearts and minds through His Holy Spirit - a spiritual transformation.²²⁹ The holy prophets of the Old Testament predicted the new covenant and the spiritual change by the LORD from inside out by the Holy Spirit of God so that the people could obey Him and His eternal covenant commands - the internal

²²⁰ Matthew 6:33; Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 23:23; Luke 10:25-37; Luke 12:31; see also Exodus 15:25-26; Deuteronomy 6:17-18.

²²¹ Matthew 5:21-48; Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 15:16-20; Matthew 19:16-19; Mark 7:20-23; see also Romans 12:1-2, 9-21; Romans 13:8-14; Ephesians 4:18; 1 Peter 1:2, 14-16, 22; 1 Peter 2:1-5.

²²² See e.g., Matthew 15:1-20; Mark 6:1-23; cf. Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Proverbs 30:5-6. The Jewish Mishnah included the tradition of the elders and many other oral laws (extra-biblical traditions) created by the Jews, but these laws were not included in the Book of the Covenant.

²²³ See e.g., Isaiah 1:15-17, 23; Isaiah 55:1-7; Jeremiah 4:1-4; Jeremiah 7:22-25; Jeremiah 26:3-6; Ezekiel 18:4, 30-32; Hosea 6:6; Joel 2:13-14; Amos 5:4, 6; Habakkuk 2:4; Zephaniah 2:3; Matthew 3:2; cf. Exodus 19:5-6.

²²⁴ See e.g., 1 Peter 1:10-11; 2 Peter 1:21; Revelation 19:10.

²²⁵ See e.g., Psalm 19:7-10; Romans 7:10, 12.

²²⁶ See e.g., John 16:5-11; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:33, 36; Acts 5:32; Romans 8:1-2, 5-14; 2 Corinthians 3:5, 16-17; Galatians 5:1-26; Hebrews 8:8-13; cf., Jeremiah 31:31-34; Jeremiah 32:39-40.

²²⁷ See e.g., Romans 8:3; Hebrews 7:18.

²²⁸ See e.g., Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12-19.

²²⁹ See e.g., Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26-27.

Torah.²³⁰ The Holy Spirit is God and part of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Spirit).²³¹ Importantly, the Holy Spirit is the life-giving power of God that gives believers in Jesus new life and empowers them from heaven to obey the LORD and His eternal covenant from the inside out, within their hearts.²³² By His Holy Spirit, the Old Testament prophets predicted the new covenant brought in by Jesus the Messiah (Christ) would create a new heart and new divine spirit inside believers through repentance and faith in Him so they can live according to the LORD's covenant - His will.²³³

In the New Testament, Christ Jesus our Lord becomes the great Mediator and High Priest between His Holy Father and humans, who speaks His Holy Father's words, and everyone must obey Christ Jesus and His teachings.²³⁴ The words and commandments of Christ Jesus were the teaching of His Holy Father - the living Sovereign LORD God of heaven and earth.²³⁵ Initially, the prophet Moses, and later the priests and the holy prophets in the Old Testament, fulfilled the role of mediator between the LORD and the people.²³⁶ Christ Jesus is the Great Prophet predicted in the Old Testament, and EVERYONE must listen to and obey His teachings and prophecies, as He brings blessings to the world.²³⁷

Christ Jesus died and was crucified on the Cross to receive our penalties, shame, and curses from the Law of God through our faithful obedience to Him as Lord and Savior.²³⁸ Believers of Jesus receive the blessings of Abraham from Genesis and also the Holy Spirit of God that empowers believers to obey the Law of God from our hearts - from the inside out through repentance and faithful obedience to Christ Jesus.²³⁹ Like all other sins, the LORD readily offers forgiveness and mercy to everyone who repents by turning from Satan's evil-doing and confesses their sins with a true heart, desiring to sin no more and to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior.²⁴⁰ Here is more Good News: Christ Jesus gives peace, joy, and everlasting life from the Holy Spirit of God to everyone who believes in Him with faithful obedience.²⁴¹

²³⁰ Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 11:19-20; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Ezekiel 37:24-27; see also Hebrews 8:8-13.

²³¹ See e.g., Psalm 51:11; Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14.

²³² See e.g., John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5. Read more about the Holy Spirit at John chapters 14 through 16 and Romans chapter 8.

²³³ See e.g., Jeremiah 24:7; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Jeremiah 32:39-40; Ezekiel 11:19-20; Ezekiel 18:30-32; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Ezekiel 37:24-27; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; cf. 2 Chronicles 7:13-15.

²³⁴ Matthew 17:5; John 1:14-18; John 14:6; Acts 3:22-23; Galatians 3:19-20; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:1-3; Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 3:1-6; Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24-25; cf. Exodus 24:2; Deuteronomy 18:15-18.

²³⁵ See e.g., John 12:49-50; John 14:23-24, 31.

²³⁶ See e.g., Exodus 20:19; Deuteronomy 5:5, 23-27; Hebrews 12:19.

²³⁷ Acts 3:22-26; Acts 7:37; see also Deuteronomy 18:15-18; Deuteronomy 34:10-12.

²³⁸ See e.g., Galatians 3:13.

²³⁹ See e.g., John 7:37-39; Acts 2:33; Romans 4:3, 9, 16, 21; Galatians 3:14, 26-29; see also Genesis 12:1-3.

²⁴⁰ See e.g., 2 Chronicles 6:36-39; 2 Chronicles 7:13-15; Isaiah 55:1, 6-7; Matthew 6:9-13; 1 John 1:9.

²⁴¹ See e.g., John 6:63; John 7:37-39; John 14:15-17, 21, 23-26; John 15:26; Acts 2:33; Galatians 5:22-23; 1 John 4:13-14.

Christ Jesus as One with His Holy Father - the living Sovereign LORD God - is the Covenant LORD (Yahweh, Great I AM) and Immanuel, and He came to earth to reveal His Holy Father to the world so that everyone who calls upon the Name of the LORD finds life and salvation both now and for all eternity.²⁴² Christ Jesus is the Lord and God, even more He is the Savior of the world for all people - Jews and Gentiles through faith in Him.²⁴³ Importantly, Christ Jesus is the Messenger of the covenant predicted by the prophet Malachi in the Old Testament and John the Baptist (messenger) in the New Testament, who came and brought the Holy Spirit's fiery cleansing, salvation (healing), rebirth, and new life within our hearts and souls through repentance and faithful obedience to Him as Lord and Savior.²⁴⁴

Christ Jesus is the culmination of the Law of God, so that EVERYONE can freely receive, by God's grace, righteousness, a new spiritual life, salvation (healing), and redemption through faith and obedience in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior.²⁴⁵ The Good News is that Christ Jesus, our Savior, is the Son of God and true Israel, having fulfilled the Law of God.²⁴⁶ The Old Testament Law and the Prophets predicted and testified that everyone can receive God's righteousness, forgiveness of sins, and adoption as Abraham's seed through faith and obedience to Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior.²⁴⁷ By God's grace, believers in Jesus are called to live out the goodness and righteousness we have now received through faith in Christ Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit living inside our hearts - live righteousness.²⁴⁸ Believers in Jesus do not nullify or cancel the Law of God by faith; rather, by faith in Christ Jesus, we uphold the Law of God, because no one can please the living Sovereign LORD God except by faith in Him.²⁴⁹

²⁴² See e.g., Matthew 1:21, 23; John 3:15-18, 36; John 6:35, 48; John 8:12; John 10:7, 9-11, , 14, 30, 36-38; John 14:6, 9-11; John 17:2-3; Acts 2:21; Acts 4:10-12; Acts 16:30-31; Romans 10:9-13; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; cf. Isaiah 7:14; Joel 2:32.

²⁴³ See e.g., Matthew 1:21, 23; Matthew 28:19; Luke 1:35; Luke 2:10-11; Luke 5:20-21; John 1:1-3, 10, 14, 18, 49; John 4:42; John 5:18-19; John 10:30, 36-38; John 13:13; John 14:9-11; John 17:11, 21-23; John 20:28; Romans 1:3-4; Romans 9:5; Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 4:4-5; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:6, 11; Colossians 1:15-19; Colossians 2:9-10; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:1-3, 6, 8; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 4:14; Revelation 1:13-18; Revelation 22:13.

²⁴⁴ Malachi 3:1-5; Matthew 3:2, 10-12; Mark 1:2-4, 8; Luke 3:3, 16-17; Luke 7:27; John 3:3-8, 15-18, 36; John 7:37-39; see also Isaiah 40:3-5; Habakkuk 2:6-7; Matthew 11:10; Acts 1:4-5; Acts 2:1-4, 33; Acts 11:16; 2 Corinthians 3:6, 16-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.

²⁴⁵ See e.g., John 3:3-8, 15-18, 36; Acts 5:31-32; Acts 16:30-31; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 5:1-2, 15, 17, 20-21; Romans 10:4, 9-13; Galatians 3:24; Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-10; cf. Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:2-4.

²⁴⁶ See Matthew 5:17-20.

²⁴⁷ See e.g., Luke 24:25-27, 44-47; Acts 4:10-12; Acts 10:36, 43; Acts 13:38-39; Acts 26:22-23; Romans 3:21-22; Romans 9:30; Galatians 3:26-29; 1 Timothy 2:5.

²⁴⁸ See e.g., John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7-13; Romans 6:1, 14-15, 17; Romans 12:1-2, 9-14, 20-21; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:17-5:20; Colossians 3:1-4:1.

²⁴⁹ See e.g., Matthew 5:17-20; John 3:31; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1, 6; cf. Genesis 15:6.

For the grace of God found in Christ Jesus has appeared, and He offers salvation, righteousness, and peace with God to all people through faithful obedience to Him as Lord and Savior.²⁵⁰ Christ Jesus's grace and goodness teach everyone to say "NO" to Satan's sinfulness, worldly pleasures, lawlessness, and ungodliness so that believers in Christ Jesus can live holy, self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this life by the Holy Spirit of God living within their hearts while we wait for Christ Jesus's return from heaven.²⁵¹ Everyone who confesses Christ Jesus as Savior must also live godly and holy lives because without holiness no one can see God.²⁵² Christ Jesus gave His life for us on Calvary's Cross to redeem and save us from all Satan's wickedness, evildoing, and dark living to purify us for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good and right.²⁵³ True salvation involves the double work of redeeming and saving us from Satan's sinful and ungodly living, which leads to God's wrath and punishment, and also producing holy and ethical living that loves God and serves others with goodness and mercy.²⁵⁴

O. Conclusion

Christ Jesus, our Savior, came to earth and died on the Cross to take away our sins and make us holy and righteous through faithful obedience to Him as our LORD, and also by obeying His commandments by loving His Holy Father and loving one another.²⁵⁵ The living Sovereign LORD God is merciful and welcomes all people into His Kingdom and offers everyone forgiveness of their sins through repentance and faith in Him and His Son Christ Jesus.²⁵⁶ Praise the LORD because He is the God of second chances! Everyone finds heaven's mercy, forgiveness of their sins, righteousness, salvation (healing), and a new spiritual life (rebirth) when one repents (turns from Satan's dark and lawless living) and comes to the living Sovereign LORD God, found in His Son, Christ Jesus, with sorrow and faithful obedience.²⁵⁷ Christ Jesus stated that when confronted by Satan, humans worship the LORD God and live in faithful obedience to His Word to find true and real life while on earth.²⁵⁸ Significantly, Christ Jesus, our Savior, summarized the Ten Commandments and the Book of the Covenant with two

²⁵⁰ See e.g., Romans 3:24-26; Romans 5:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 2:11; cf. John 1:14, 16-17.

²⁵¹ See e.g., Romans 6:1-2, 15; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; Titus 2:12-13; Titus 3:3-8.

²⁵² See e.g., Matthew 5:8; 1 Timothy 6:11-14; Titus 2:1-2, 4-5, 10; Titus 3:8; Hebrews 12:14; cf. Psalm 34:14.

²⁵³ Matthew 1:21; Matthew 5:14-17; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; see also Romans 12:1-2, 9-21; Galatians 6:7-10; Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14; Titus 3:1, 8, 14; Hebrews 13:1-3; 1 Peter 2:1-5, 9-12, 15-17; 1 Peter 3:10-12; cf. Exodus 19:5-6.

²⁵⁴ See e.g., Matthew 23:23; Luke 10:25-37; Romans 6:6-7, 22-23; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Titus 2:14; 1 John 3:3-10; cf. Leviticus 11:44-45.

²⁵⁵ See e.g., Matthew 22:37-40; John 15:12, 17; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30-31; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 3:5-10, 23-24.

²⁵⁶ See e.g., Exodus 34:5-7; 2 Chronicles 7:13-15; Romans 3:23-26; 1 John 1:9.

²⁵⁷ Matthew 3:2, 8; Luke 3:3, 8-14; John 3:3-8, 15-18; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 10:9-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.

²⁵⁸ Matthew 4, 10; Luke 4:4, 8; cf. Deuteronomy 6:13; Deuteronomy 8:3.

simple rules: love the LORD our God with all our heart, our soul, our mind, and our strength, and love one another with goodness, mercy, and kindness.²⁵⁹

Love Fulfills the Law of God

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. Romans 13:8-10 NIV

²⁵⁹ Matthew 7:12; Matthew 12:7; Matthew 22:34-40; Matthew 23:23; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:34-35; John 15:12, 17; see also Leviticus 19:18; Romans 12:1-2, 9-14, 20-21; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 1 Corinthians 14:1; Galatians 5:13-14; Galatians 6:7-10; Ephesians 5:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; Titus 3:8, 14; Hebrews 13:1-3; 1 John 2:3-5; 1 John 4:7-12.

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