

God's Laws Are Eternal!

There are some people within Christendom who claim that the laws of God were somehow done away once Jesus was crucified, citing Colossians 2:14 as evidence.

“... having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

This verse is cited as evidence of the commandments being done away in spite of the fact that in verse 11 of the same chapter Paul speaks of “... putting off the body of the sins of the flesh ...”, and sin is, of course, defined as the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). Moreover, there are at least three reasons that this verse, and the surrounding context, does not imply the commandments are now void.

1) Jesus, with His crucifixion and shed blood, has cancelled the record of our debt that held us in bondage to death (Hebrews 2:15), in the same way that a legal pardon cancels the penalty for a crime: “... having wiped out the handwriting of requirements”

During Paul's day, a person could be arrested and enslaved to pay off debts or for committing a crime, so thus Paul's saying, “... taken it out of the way...,” indicates a debt being erased with no legal consequences. Some commentators have said that this verse may be an allusion to the custom in many ancient countries of driving a nail through an edict or decree so that the words were no longer legible.

2) The crucifixion and resurrection of

Jesus, the Perfect One, not only set aside our sins — “... taken it out of the way ...” — but any barrier of remembrance is removed between us and our Creator (Psalm 103:12) so we can have a joyful, living relationship with Him.

3) This brutal form of death, on the stake, is sufficient payment for all sins, thus the metaphor “... nailed it [the handwriting of requirements] to the cross [stauros, or stake].”

In reality, this terrible form of execution, which to the Romans portrayed shame, crucified sin itself, ignoring the sin and cutting it off from ever condemning us again.

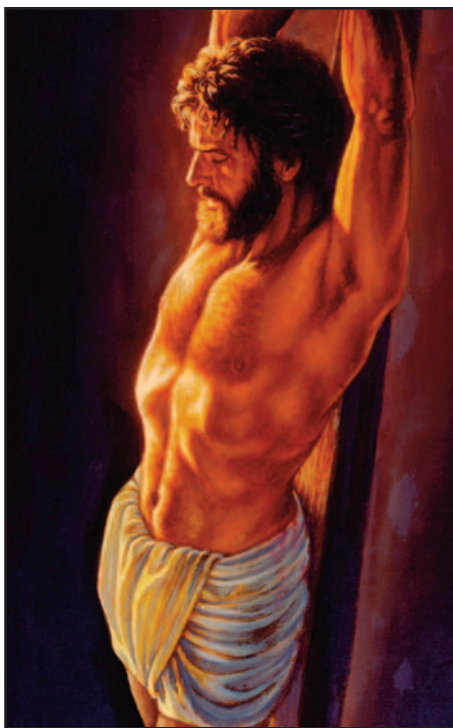
If the commandments of God were not wiped away at the crucifixion, then what can be said about how long those laws of our Creator have been in force? Did they originate with Moses when God wrote them on tablets of stone on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20)? What do the Scriptures tell us of this very important subject that has a direct bearing on how we view the laws of God? Are they forever in force, and do they indeed unveil the character of our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, so we might appreciate them even more as

the very essence of life that we must emulate in our own lives?

The Law and Sin

Before delving into this issue of the eternity of the commandments, we first must be clear on the relationship of the commandments to sin.

law (Old Testament) = **towrah**, “a precept or statute, especially the Decalogue [Ten Com-



The nailing of Jesus to the stake in no way obliterated the laws of God, which are eternal.

mandments] or Pentateuch”; from **yarah**, “to flow as water, to lay or throw (such as to shoot an arrow), or figuratively to point out or teach.”

law (New Testament) = **nomos**, “to parcel out (such as food or as pasture for cattle), law in general, regulation; the Mosaic law, or books that contain the law.”

sin (Old Testament) = **chata**, “sin, to miss the mark or road (as in Judges 20:16; 700 left-handed Benjamite soldiers “could sling stones at a hair breadth, and not miss [sin].”

sin (New Testament) = **hamartia**, “to miss the mark, sin, moral deviation, wrongdoing.”

The meanings for *law* and *sin* are about the same in both Testaments, meaning the precepts of the Ten Commandments, and the statutes derived thereof, and failing to keep these commandments, implies “missing the mark.” We are told directly in I John 3:4 that “Sin is the transgression of the law,” a fact bolstered by Romans 4:15: “... for where there is no law there is no transgression.” Romans 5:13 states likewise that “... sin is not imputed when there is no law,” and “... all unrighteousness is sin” (I John 5:17). Moreover, “... love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10), and we know that love is the very basis of the spirit of God, that same spirit He places within us (I Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:22-23). Therefore, we can extend obedience to God’s laws as removing sin, while at the same time exercising the fruits of His spirit. We are beginning to see the intimate connection among God’s laws, the removal of sin, and His character. After all, “God is love” (I John 4:8)!

Proof of the Law Being Forever

Let us now explore the various instances in Scripture that prove the laws and commandments of our Creator have existed forever. We are not referring here to the temporary Levitical laws regarding sacrifices and offerings that were imposed upon Israel due to their rebellious nature, refusing to obey the Eternal’s laws. These additional laborious sacrifices were added after Israel left Egypt.

“For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices” (Jeremiah 7:22).

We are referring to the laws, commandments, statutes, and judgments that were observed by Abraham (Genesis 26:5), which form the basis of what we know as the Melchizedek Priesthood. That priesthood was passed down from Adam from the beginning of this age, on through the lives of Seth, Enosh, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, and Terah (Genesis 5:3-32; 10:21-25; 11:10-26). This directly implies that the laws of God were given to Adam or to someone in the lineage that leads to Abraham, for Abraham possessed them. The mode of transmission could have been writing, verbal communication, or revelation by God Himself to one or more of these generations.

One body of research contends that Mel-



Melchisadek in the Book of Jasher is said to be Shem, who transcended the Flood, and knew Abraham well.

chizedek was actually Shem, who, according to the Book of Jasher, taught and protected Abram after he fled from the face of Nimrod, who was trying to kill him. With this line of thinking, then the descriptions of having no father or mother, no genealogy, no beginning of days nor end of life, made like the Son of God, and a continual priest (Hebrew 7:1-3) can at least in part figuratively refer to someone who transcended the Flood, and was a progenitor of a totally new

world and civilization. He could not be Jesus Christ since he was made “like” the Son of God — Jesus Christ — but was not Christ Himself.

Note the following proofs of the law being eternal.

1. Our heavenly Father is eternal; He has lived forever and will live forever (Revelation 1:8, 11, 17; 22:13), and the law is inherent with Him. His character is summarized in the Decalogue, and is holy, righteous life that is epitomized in the fruits of His spirit.

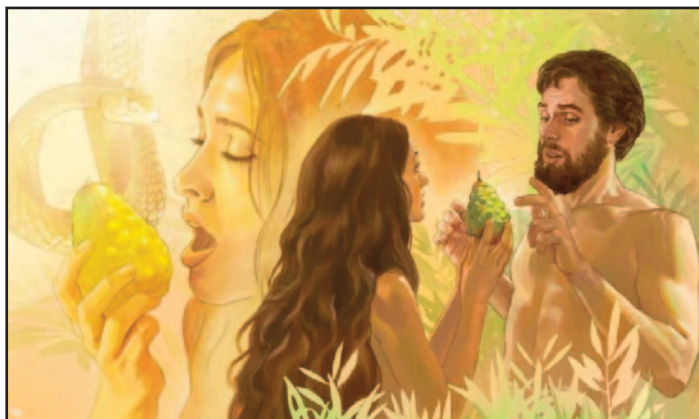
“But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

Our great Eternal God says, “For I am the Lord; I do not change” (Malachi 3:6), and we learn the following about Him.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

variation = parallage, “fickleness or variableness.”

turning = trope, “to turn or vary.”



Eve taking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil symbolizes mankind’s deciding for himself what is right and wrong, forsaking the laws of the Creator.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

“Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end” (Psalm 102:25-27).

“Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood” (Hebrews 7:23-24).

So, if our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have existed from time infinite — and since Jesus Christ existed before the earth was remade, for He and the Father made all things (John 1:1-2; Colossians 1:16; I Corinthians 1:6; Ephesians 3:9; Hebrews 1:2), a member of the Elohim we read about in Genesis 1 — then it follows that the perfect, righteous character of both our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have always existed. That includes the laws of God as embodied in the Ten Commandments, and the laws and statutes that emanate from them.

It is also wise to recall that “... the law is **holy** [**hagios**, ‘sacred, blameless, an awful thing’], and the commandment holy, and **just** [**dikaios**, ‘equitable, innocent, holy’], and **good** [**agathos**, ‘good’]” (Romans 7:12). These qualities define the Living God, who is holy, just, and good beyond measure ... and He has lived forever. Therefore the laws and commandments have been forever.

2. Lucifer [Hebrew *heylel*, “bright morning star”] sinned and became Satan [Hebrew *satan*, “an opponent”]“ Greek *Satanas*, “the accuser, the devil”], directly implying that sin existed before Adam in the Garden of Eden. Though made perfect from the beginning, he sinned in his exalted position and was cast out of the government (mountain) of

God.

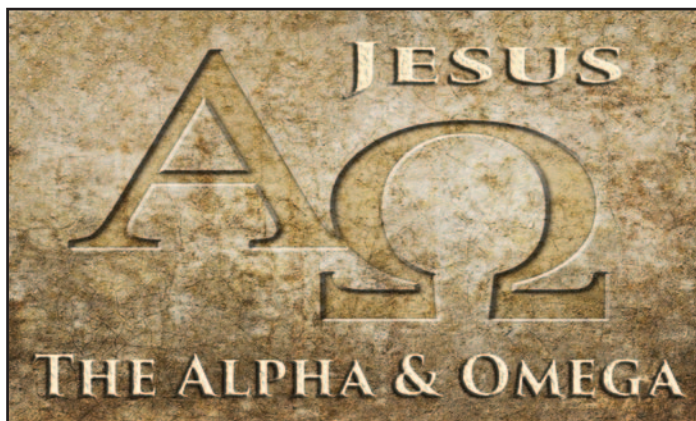
“You were in Eden, the garden of God You were the anointed cherub that covers; I established you, you were on the holy mountain of God You were perfect in your ways from the day you were **created [bara**, ‘created or selected’], till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you **sinned [chata]** You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trading ...” (Ezekiel 28:13-16, 18).

Next, note that in Genesis 3:1-14 we read of the serpent (Satan) confronting Eve with the temptation of partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eve stated that she and Adam could eat of every tree of the Garden except that particular tree if they were to avoid death. “God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die’” (Genesis 3:3). We know the story. Satan convinced Eve that she would not die if she ate of that forbidden tree, so she ate the fruit, and gave some also to Adam. Then their eyes were **opened [paqach**, “to open the senses and be observant”], and the next thing we read is that they knew they were naked (Genesis 3:7). I presume that the brilliant aura that they were emanating was now removed due to sin so their physical bodies were now clearly visible. Having *missed the mark (chata*, “sinned”) they sewed coverings from fig leaves and hid themselves from Yahweh Elohim (Exodus 3:7-8).

As this horrible episode of sin unfolded, we are made aware that Satan had already sinned. He had sometime before committed the sin of merchandising when at the mountain of God

(Ezekiel 28:13-16). Thus, it is obvious that the laws that define sin were present before Adam and Eve were created in the Garden of Eden. These laws also had to be present before Lucifer missed the mark, which we read about in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. We do not know how much time elapsed between Lucifer’s sin and his deceiving of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden; that time could have been a few years or thousands of years ... but sin he did. He tricked Adam and Eve into missing the mark as well, and all of mankind has suffered incredibly as a result of this sin being passed down (Psalm 51:5). The laws of character defining sin have always existed.

3. According to Psalm 111:7-9, Gods precepts are sure and stand forever.



“The works of His hands are verity and justice; all His precepts are sure. They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. He has sent

redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever. Holy and awesome is His name.”

“Forever and ever” means not just future time, but past time as well; God’s **precepts [piq-quwd]**, translated “commandments” in the KJV, are forever, as long as time exists! This scripture states outright that the commandments have been, are, and always will be, even as His name means “eternity.” The Tetragrammaton — YHWH — itself implies eternity, since the word in Hebrew is related to the verb “to be.” This verb has a sense of perpetual existence, as we read in Exodus 3:13-14:

“Then Moses said to God, ‘Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, “The God of your

fathers has sent me to you,” and they say to me, “What is His name,” what shall I say to them?’ And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ and He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, “I AM has sent me to you.”’

HYH = hayah, “to be, to take place, happen, become.”

“I am” is repeated three times in this verse, which logically reflects the three tenses of past, present, and future: (1) He was, (2) He is, and (3) He forever shall be. In essence, God told Moses, “Tell them that I am now what I always was and always will be,” just as we read in Hebrews 13:8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.”



Fire and brimstone rained down on Sodom and surrounding areas, proof that sexual perversions were sin well before the law was given to Moses at Mount Sinai.

So, just as God (Yahweh, the I AM) has existed forever, so have His laws that encapsulate His character.

Proof of the Law Being in Force From Adam to Moses

Let us examine Scripture and see how the laws of God were in force from the recreation of the earth to the time that Moses was given the Commandments and statutes at Mt. Sinai. Only one example will be given for each commandment, though several could be shown for each. Notice that Paul stated,

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men,

because all sinned (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come” (Romans 5:12-14).

In Genesis 13:13 we are told that “the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord,” and since sin is defined by law (I John 3:5), then the punishment of Sodom would not be plausible unless such evil activities of the Sodomites were indeed sinful, against the commandments. The same can be said about the people during the pre-Flood period, when ...

“... the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

evil = ra, “bad or evil”; from **raa**, “to spoil, to make (or be) good for nothing.”

It would be a stretch to suggest that the pre-Flood citizens of earth were not sinning, just as the Sodomites were sinning centuries later after the Flood.

Commandment 1. Adam and Eve placed the command (deception) of the serpent — Lucifer or Satan — above the one true God who commanded them not to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:6).

Commandment 2. In Joshua 24:2, we read of Terah serving false gods, in the context of Joshua telling the elders and other officials to avoid such evil.

Commandment 3. Leviticus 18:3, 21, and 27 speak of not profaning the name of the Eternal such as by burning their children to Molech, “... for all those abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled” (verse 27).

Commandment 4. Before the Israelites

reached Mt. Sinai, in the Wilderness of Sin, God provided meat in the evening and mana in the morning, but they were to gather twice as much manna on the sixth day as on other days; they were not to gather any on the seventh (Sabbath) day. When some went to gather on the Sabbath, Yahweh responded, “How long will you refuse to keep My Commandments and My laws? (Exodus 16:28), and the Holy Days as well on day four of the recreation week (Genesis 1:14).

Commandment 5. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden failed to honor their true Father by obeying the serpent (Satan), and reaped horrendous consequences by being cast out of the Garden, and having to face the prospect of death later on (Genesis 3).

Commandment 6. The first murderer, Cain, killed his brother Abel and was accused of sin (Genesis 4:1-7).

Commandment 7. When Joseph served as a valued servant of Potiphar in Egypt, Potiphar’s wife attempted to seduce him to commit adultery. When Joseph refused, she framed him by claiming he tried to rape her, but she fought him off. In the process of this altercation, Joseph said, “Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. There is no greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:8-9).

Commandment 8. When Jacob dealt with Laban regarding the sheep he would keep for his wages, Jacob stated, “So my righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be con-

sidered stolen, if it is with me” (Genesis 30:33). Stealing is mentioned here, a breaking of the commandment well before Moses’ day.

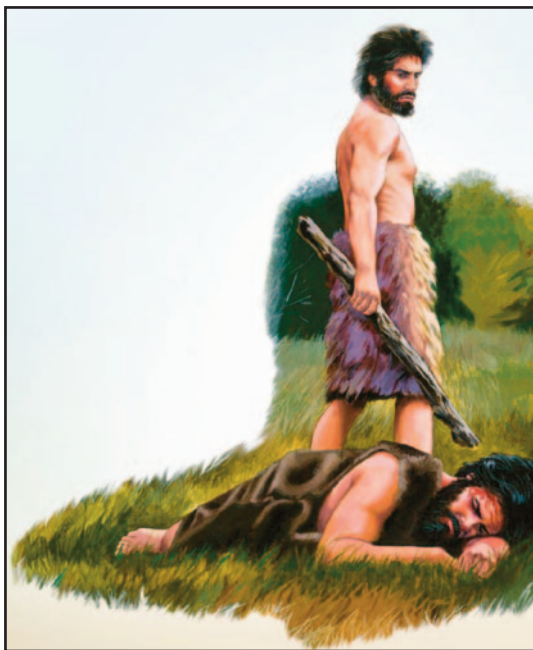
Commandment 9. Abraham and his wife Sarah traveled to the south country of Canaan, and met with Abimelech, the king of Gerar. The king took Sarah with the intent of marrying her, since Abraham had told him Sarah was his sister. As things turned out, God prevented Abimelech from approaching Sarah, but God told him in a dream to restore Abraham’s wife to him. Abimelech upbraided Abraham for his deception, and he responded with the lame excuse that Sarah was indeed his half-sister. Abraham clearly lied, and the consequences were anything but good (Genesis 20).

Commandment 10. Once again in the Garden of Eden, Eve was deceived into coveting the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which she saw as “... good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise ...” (Genesis 3:6). She had just been told

to not partake of that tree lest she die; it was totally off-limits. Yet, she partook of it and bore the hideous consequences of sin: death and unending trouble.

In Conclusion ...

Why is it important to understand that God’s laws and commandments are eternal? For one, this truth helps us to understand the history of civilization. From before the time of Adam, when Lucifer sinned, the laws of God were in force which defined sin and condemned Lucifer — now Satan — to figuratively crawl on his belly and eat dust all of his life ... meaning his position was to be utterly debased among the righteous spirits of the heavens, to which he could no



Cain’s murder of Abel reveals that sin — the breaking of God’s law — was implicated from the very beginning of man’s sojourn on the earth.

longer ascend after being cast out of the mountain of God (Ezekiel 28:16). He and his cadre of evil angels were cast to the earth (Revelation 12:9), a scene which Jesus was probably referring to in Luke 10:18 when He said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

What a remarkable fact it is that the wonderful laws of our Creator have dictated the standard for the behavior of all persons in heaven and on earth, and have guided the rise and fall of nations and individuals all through history, for we know that obedience to these laws brings rewards, and disobedience brings curses. As we read in the Torah,

"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you because you obey the voice of the Lord your God: ... But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:" (Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15).

Secondly, the knowledge of God's laws being eternal teaches us that the commandments are in force today for us to follow, and they bring blessings without end! This includes the keeping of the weekly Sabbath and the Holy Days, which is recorded at the recreation of the earth. We have already shown that Commandment Four is eternal (Genesis 2:2-3, but also we can note in Genesis 1:14 that the sun, moon, and stars are to define day and night, signs and seasons, days, and years. Notice three different translations of this verse.

"Then God commanded, 'Let lights appear in the sky to separate day from

night and to show the time when days, years, and religious festivals begin'" (*Good News Translation*).

"And God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years'" (*New International Version*).

"Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the sky to separate the day from the night. They will be signs and will mark religious festivals, days, and years'" (*God's Word Translation*).

While most translations do not translate "seasons" as "sacred times" a few do. This translation coincides with the fact that Leviticus 23 includes the weekly Sabbath along with the seven annual Holy Days as holy convocations and feasts; there is no distinction made between them. Thus, it can be safely concluded that the annual Holy Days are also a part of the eternal Sabbath commandment, and indeed are prophesied Zechariah 14:16 to be kept in the coming age.

"And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord or hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles."

What a wonderful truth it is that God's laws — His very character — are impressed upon the entire creation, both before the Garden of Eden as well as after it. Those laws and commands existed before Moses, as we have shown directly from Scripture. What a wonderful God we have who will never change, whose character must guide our own and lead us ultimately to the Savior of all — His Son — who paid the price for our sins!