

The reinforcing of the covenant was made between the God of Israel and the next generation that emerged from the thirty-eight years of wandering in the wilderness after their fathers had broken the initial covenant through their wanton disobedience. As was seen in the previous chapter the Ten Commandments were the substance of the covenant, 4v13. God did not remove that first covenant when the other party defaulted as He could have done, but instead He renewed the same covenant with their children who had now reached maturity. Despite their disobedience God promised to *“not forsake thee neither destroy thee nor forget the covenant with thy fathers which He swore unto them”*. God does not enter into an oath lightly. He is not a man that He would repent! This was the covenant that God remade in Horeb.

The restating of the covenant with Israel is an important reminder that the tenancy of the children of Israel was conditional. The Law of Moses had been given to them to organise their lives which were to be lived in the land. There was a simple equation, keep the commandments and thereby prolong their days in the land which ye shall possess. The unstated implication was that if they did not keep these commandments that they would be expelled and this was precisely what happened. If they did not keep the divine law, then they would not deserve to live there. Right from the start before they had conquered the land, this was the basis of their right to the land. They were God's tenants by service. Leaseholders only, and not freeholders of the Holy Land which was first and foremost God's inheritance to grant to whomsoever He saw fit. He had chosen Israel and acknowledged that to the wider world. These things were not done in a corner far from curious eyes but were done openly before all. Israel was supposed to be a witness to everyone, Jehovah's witnesses in truth or in error.

This was another covenant which God had made with men, following on after the Covenant He had made with Abraham the father of the faithful, which came centuries before the Mosaic covenant. There was also the Noahic covenant which God made the man of faith who was saved by the water of the flood when the rest of mankind was destroyed. Other covenants which the scripture records are the covenant with David and with Levi, see Jeremiah 33v20-22 which also mentions God's covenant with the day and night. All the covenants which God made are perpetual. Exodus 31v16,17 *“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath to observe the sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever, for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth.”*

The Ten Commandments were not a Universal Law of all humanity, as is often believed, but the social covenant whereby God granted occupancy to Israel. They were always related to the covenant God made with His people the Jews. Reference has already been made to Deuteronomy 4v13 which has been cited above but the importance of this must be emphasised, and it is worthy while repeating the quotation in full *“And He declared unto you His covenant which He commanded you to perform even ten commandments”*.

This is seen again in the way the Sabbath commandment, the fourth, was framed in this chapter. *“Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out*

arm: therefore the LORD God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day” verse 15. The sabbath was established in Eden framed in creation itself but was not a law or commandment until God made it so. It is not binding on gentiles as they are outside the covenant of Israel. They might embrace the Hope of Israel and indeed will be cut into the future covenant which God will renew with Israel at the return of Jesus the Christ. Then the sabbath will be required to be honoured and respected by all people. Isaiah 66v23. “And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.”

The same is seen with the fifth commandment concerning honour thy father and thy mother. *“That thy days may be prolonged and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”* The Holy Spirit using the Apostle Paul remarks of this in Ephesians 6v2 *“Honour thy father and thy mother which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth”*. This repetition to all believers both jew and gentile, extended the original scope of the commandment from just Israel to any believers who are concerned with God’s high standards.

In the New Testament all the commandments are restated except for the Sabbath requirements.

1	v7	1 Corinthians 8v4-6
2	v8	1 Corinthians 10v14
3	v11	James 5v12
4	v12	Abolished see Colossians 2v16,17
5	v16	Matthew 15v4
6	v17	Luke 18v20
7	v18	James 2v11
8	v19	Luke 18v20
9	v20	Luke 18v20
10	v21	Romans 13v9

Other references also reinforce these points. Perhaps others can add to the Bible verses which establish this issue so that people can mark their Bible margins.

“Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you, ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left”. Verse 32, these words are not directed to us personally but were given to Israelites in the plains of Moab. However, we have other commandments which are given to gentile disciples, and we must be earnest in our efforts to render due service and respect to these in our turn.