

David Lynn's Message to John Spellman in response to comments on "Schooling an SDA" Video:

I read some of your comments. Thanks for respectfully sharing your thoughts.

Please understand, there is no Jew that considers the superiority of one law to another but see's the entire law as a whole.

Read this article from Judaism 101 about the 10 commandments. The 10 commandments were table of contents for the rest of the 613 laws of God. If you read through the Torah carefully, the Lord commanded all the laws, and it was not just good thoughts for the day.

Here is the link: <http://www.jewfaq.org/10.htm>

**Note that it says: The Aseret ha-Dibrot "The ten commandments" are not understood as individual mitzvot; rather, they are categories or classifications of mitzvot.

Each of the 613 mitzvot can be subsumed under one of these ten categories, some in more obvious ways than others.

For example, the mitzvah not to work on Shabbat rather obviously falls within the category of remembering the Sabbath day and keeping it holy. The mitzvah to fast on Yom Kippur fits into that category somewhat less obviously: all holidays are in some sense a Sabbath, and the category encompasses any mitzvah related to sacred time.

The mitzvah not to stand aside while a person's life is in danger fits somewhat obviously into the category against murder. It is not particularly obvious, however, that the mitzvah not to embarrass a person fits within the category against murder: it causes the blood to drain from your face thereby shedding blood.

**If this is true, then this explains it all and why Ex 34:28 says the Old Covenant IS the 10 Commandments and why 2 Corinthians 3 says clearly the law written ON STONE is DONE AWAY!
Blessings!

Response to David Lynn on Two Laws

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Dear Pastor David Lynn,

I read and considered your comments on my earlier post. I had hoped to write you sooner but was pulled in different directions and have finally cleared some time in which to both consider what you have said and respond.

Superiority of the law

In your reply to the information I put forth you stated:

“Please understand, there is no Jew that considers the superiority of one law to another but see's the entire law as a whole.”

This statement is true only to an extent. First, while it is possible for Jews not to recognize this distinction, we cannot base our understanding of Biblical truth on Jewish or Rabbinical interpretations. As you know, there are differences of opinion and many schools of thought within the Jewish community on any given topic. I took a look at your resource, however, and will respond with objections to the information presented in the website in a later section (5 Objections to JewFAQ.org). I found many of their claims to be inconsistent with scripture though they may be a “Jewish” scholarly interpretation.

Secondly, there are blatant subjects upon which orthodox and other Jews agree theologically that we adamantly disagree upon. For example, one could make the argument that Jews do not believe that the Messiah's birth is a virgin birth. Regardless of our respective denominational theology, all Christians generally concede that Isaiah 7:14 clearly indicates a virgin birth.

Another matter for consideration is that of the trinity. Every Jew interprets Deut 6:4 to mean that God is numerically one person and that to consider Jesus or the Holy Spirit a member of the godhead would be blasphemous (to them). Yet most of Christianity would disagree upon this point with strong theological basis. Even though there are Christians who do not believe in the trinity, as many commentators on your post, most do not deny the divinity of Christ. I'm sure you would agree with me that though no Jew would interpret the Hebrew word "echad" in Deut 6:4 to mean "one" as in "united" instead of "[numerically] one": this would not invalidate the doctrine held by the majority of Christians today. There is sound Biblical evidence for the Trinity and even for those Christians who don't believe in the Trinity, most of us would find common ground in the divinity of Christ—the Orthodox Jews would not.

I put this across to make the statement respectfully, that no doctrinal interpretation should be based entirely on Jewish interpretation. Jewish interpretation, as shown above, can be wrong, even when there is collective consensus among Jewish believers. For this reason, any doctrinal interpretation must be based on scripture alone. There is clear Biblical evidence for distinction between the two laws.

That being said, your statement about the law being seen as a whole is only partially true. I'm sure we would both agree that all the laws given to Israel have their origin with God. In that sense, if one defined the law as "rules that originate with God" your statement could be true. But the idea that the law was always seen as a whole, and not ever distinct and separate depending on the context, is not Biblical. The word Torah could describe anything from all law, to portions of the law, to the books of Moses, to the book of the law, to the psalms.

To illustrate this point, I would point out that the first 5 books of Moses are often called "the Torah". Yet according to John 10:34, Jesus states that Jewish law says "ye are gods". He was quoting Psalm 82:6. Since the Hebrew "Torah" was transliterated to the Greek "Nomos", we have an instance in which law or Torah could include the book of Psalms though there were other times when it only meant the first 5 books. This demonstrates that, depending on the context, there were times when Torah could mean the first 5 books or it could include the psalms. In another instance, Paul quotes the law in 1 Corinthians 14:21, yet he is quoting Isaiah 28:11. This again shows that the writings of a prophet could be included in the context of law. In another instance Galatians 3:10 uses the word law, speaking about the "book of the law" and is specifically referencing the book of Deuteronomy which was called "the book of the law" (Deut 29:21; 30:10; 31:26) and contained curses for disobedience. Thus, as I have clearly demonstrated, the use of the term law (torah or nomos) had different meanings depending on the context in which it was used.

With that said, I think the idea that there was no distinction between the laws is a mistaken one. There was one law in the sense that all the rules and regulations stemmed from God. I would even agree that the 10 Commandments summarized many of the laws written in the books of Moses. However, scripture is too clear that there were distinctions between these laws. When one observes these distinctions, it becomes clear that there was a difference between the 10 Commandments and the Law of Moses.

First, we know that the 10 Commandments were spoken by God audibly to the people, written by God on tables of stone, and were kept in the Ark of the Covenant. In addition to these laws, God also commanded statutes and judgments. These rules were not part of the 10 Commandments. In the context of the 10 Commandments, Deut 5:22 summarizes:

“These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: **and he added no more**. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.” (Deut 5:22)

This indicates that the 10 Commandments were a “stand-alone”. God commanded them audibly and later wrote them on stone to give to Moses. At the same time additional rules, called statutes and judgments, were given to Moses. However, the passage above is clear that these were not part of the 10 commandments.

Many people confuse the “book of the law” and the 10 Commandments suggesting that Moses wrote the 10 Commandments twice in the “book of law” and therefore suggest that the book of law contains the 10 commandments and thus they must be the same law. What most fail to realize regarding this matter is that when one has an understanding of the Hebrew chiasmic structure in which Moses (and others) write, one would see that the 10 Commandments are never commanded by Moses in Deuteronomy. Instead, the 10 Commandments are simply repeated in the retelling of the history about why they were receiving the additional commandments that Moses would give them that day. They were not commanded to keep the 10 Commandments that day. Instead, the story of how they received the 10 Commandments was retold as part of the context for why they were receiving the additional laws.

The chiasm makes this assertion very clear. Often phrases are repeated to give a context for a story, before the details of something new are given. Moses doesn’t begin to recite the new Commandments until Deuteronomy chapter 6. Chapters 1-5 are merely context, not Moses commanding anything.

People often get this confused because of the following text.

“And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.” (Deut 5:1)

Because of this verse, many readers assume that Moses is commanding Israel to keep the 10 Commandments again since they are listed in chapter 5. However, this is not the case. The phrase doesn’t indicate that Moses will begin listing the commandments to be commanded that day immediately, but rather that he will begin talking about it at some point in the future of his discourse; the phrase is used as an indicator that all the background information he is sharing is for understanding the context of the law that he will later give. He calls all Israel to listen, but does not indicate in these words that he is starting to list the commandments. Similar phrases exist in chapter 4, yet are not followed by any commandments.

“And what nation *is there so* great, that hath statutes and judgments *so* righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” (Deut 4:8)

“Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong *thy* days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, for ever.” (Deut 4:40)

After verse 8, Moses doesn't command anything: he continues with more history. He repeats the phrase again in verse 40 having commanded nothing. He merely announces in chapter 4 that there will be commands given, yet between the two phrases he doesn't command anything.

In chapter 5, he announced again that there would be additional laws. Yet in verse 2 he begins to recall more history which explained how they first received the 10 Commandments. Yet, in his discussion he doesn't command anything: he simply repeats a story. The contextual evidence does not use language that would suggest that Moses has begun listing the commands that he planned to command them that day. This is evident in that after repeating the 10 Commandments, Moses begins to retell the story of how they responded to God's voice. Clearly, his repetition of the commandments was not a re-commanding the children of Israel, but entirely for the purpose of regurgitating the history. Thus the commandments don't stand alone as a list of commands within the book of the law, they are merely repeated as part of a historical summary and are not part of the commands that Moses was instructed to give them that particular day.

“And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! Go say to them, Get you into your tents again. But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I give them to possess it. 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. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and *that it may be* well with you, and *that* ye may prolong *your* days in the land which ye shall possess.”
(Deut 5:28-33)

After the retelling of the story of the 10 Commandments and how the people responded, Moses is then told by God that he would receive additional commands which Moses would be instructed to teach the people. Thus, the story of the 10 Commandments contextualizes why Moses is giving the commandments that he must give them and teach them on this current occasion. It was not intended to be a re-commanding of the same rules.

“Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it:” (Deut 6:1)

Chapter 6 begins with, “now these are the commandments...”. This phrase was not used in chapter 5. When Moses begins listing the new commandments, he uses this phrase to distinguish the history he used as a context from the actual commands he plans to share with the people. Only after this phrase are the new commandments given which start as early as verse 4. Chapter 5 simply states that Moses will, eventually, give them a law that day; however, it is not until chapter 6 that these commands are actually given and contextualized. Thus, the 10 Commandments are physically separate from the “book of the law” which was kept on the side of the ark.

The reason many misunderstand this point comes from a lack of understanding of the Hebrew writing format. Deut 5:1 would make a person think that Moses was about to start commanding rules as early as

chapter 5. His writings do something similar in Leviticus 23. He states that he will begin talking about feasts, he mentions the Seventh Day Sabbath (which was not a feast). He then says that he is going to begin talking about feasts and lists the feasts. For this reason, many have interpreted Leviticus 23 to mean that the Sabbath was part of the annual festivals. Yet, Leviticus 23:37-38 indicates that the list, from verse 5 to 36, is a list of the feasts and the Sabbath is separate and distinct from the appointed times listed. It even indicates that the feasts are “beside” or “apart from” all the other requirements which they were commanded as part of the list of feasts.

Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 5-6 are both often mistaken because of the encapsulating phrases which tease the reader. In one breath, Moses states that he’s going to begin talking about something, but he doesn’t actually talk about it until much later. This is part of the Hebrew literary structure in which Moses wrote. It is done to provide context for a body of information that will later be provided. After this context is provided to draw a frame of reference, the details are expanded upon with new information after the repetition of a phrase that introduces or re-introduces the subject matter. To the American, this might not make sense because we don’t organize our writing in this manner: often, we write chronologically. Moses didn’t.

Lest, one be tempted to disagree with my two examples, suggesting that the Sabbath is a feast or that the 10 Commandments were part of the laws Moses gave that day, I will provide a separate example of Moses using this literary form to establish the fact that this was how he wrote. In the Genesis Creation account, Moses tells the story of Creation from Genesis 1:1 – 2:3. He begins his account with “In the beginning God...” and ends it in verse 4 with “these are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created...”. You’ll notice that the account is encapsulated between these two phrases.

In verse 4, 5, 6 of Genesis 2 we seem to go back in time. Moses begins to talk about what existed before man was created. He tells the story of Man being created in verse 7, but only the male. Yet, in the previous chapter, both Adam and Eve were created between verses 26 – 31. As Moses begins to talk about the Garden of Eden, he makes the statement:

“And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” (Gen 2:9)

This passage has led skeptics to suggest that the Bible contradicts itself because the trees were already created in Genesis 1:11-12. Yet, when one understands Moses’ literary form, it is clear that his writing has gone back in time chronologically and he is recounting information from the creation story in order to contextualize the details about the Garden of Eden and, eventually, the creation of Eve. Thus we can clearly see that details of a previous event are given in order to emphasize information needed to understand new details Moses wants to share—specifically, the story of Eve’s creation and the fall. No serious Bible scholar would suggest that Moses’ words should be interpreted chronologically and that God didn’t make the trees that yield fruit until after Creation week. However, many skeptics suggest that Eve was created after the first week of Creation because they do not understand the literary form that Moses writes in.

To summarize Moses’ writing style, I like to describe it to beginners as “introduce, seemingly go off topic (to contextualize), then repeat and expand in greater detail”. Moses, and other Bible writers, often repeat details of an event after seeming to go off topic in order to contextualize a new event or idea that they want to get across. This was the case in his account of Eden, it was the case in the list of feasts in Leviticus, and it was the case in the book of the law of Deuteronomy. (Please note that I increase the indent of particular verses in the paragraphs to make the literary structure visible.)

An additional example includes Genesis 36.

Gen 36:1-5 “Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom. Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth. And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Bashemath bare Reuel; And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.”

Gen 36:6-8 “And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.”

Gen 36:9-16 “And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir: These are the names of Esau's sons; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau. And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife. And these are the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife. And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah. These were dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn son of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz, Duke Korah, duke Gatam, and duke Amalek: these are the dukes that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these were the sons of Adah.”

You'll notice that verse 1-5 emphasize the generations of Esau. It emphasizes who was born in Canaan. Verses 6-8 stop the telling of the genealogy and emphasize that Esau moved from Canaan to mount Seir because his livelihood had grown too large to dwell with Jacob. Verses 9 through the rest of the chapter, restart the genealogical record and share it in much greater detail, including what was already stated in verses 1-5. This demonstrates a clear break in the genealogical record to share a detail that was not part of the record, but necessary for contextualizing the record.

In the same way, Leviticus 23 starts off with an introductory phrase, talking about feasts, and mentions the Sabbath for the contextual purpose of “holy convocations”, and then introduces the topic of feasts again and finally lists the feasts in great detail. Were this not the case, Passover and Sabbath should have been mentioned together (since the Israelites were already familiar with it) and then the other feasts should have been mentioned. If Moses had intended to suggest that the Sabbath was like any ordinary feast, he could have introduced the feasts and then listed the Sabbath with all the other feasts rather than breaking the flow of thought to re-introduce what he had already introduced. In Deuteronomy 16, Passover, though commanded before, is never separated from the list of feasts. The Sabbath is never even mentioned in this text that gives a list of the appointed times. Furthermore, since Leviticus 23:37-38 states that the feasts (appointed times) are “apart from” or “beside” the Sabbath, it

stands to reason that Moses did not consider the Sabbath to be part of the list of appointed times, but brought it up to contextualize the additional holy convocations. New moons are also never included as an “appointed time”. Each mention of the “appointed times” seems to suggest that they were separate and distinct from that of the new moons and seventh day Sabbaths, rather than all inclusive. Leviticus likely repeats the Sabbath command since it was written for the priests and intended to draw a frame of reference for holy convocations. The fact that the Sabbath is not an “appointed time” or “feast” is observed by Baruch Levine, a Jewish author, who stated on page 154 of his book that the term “appointed times” is regularly used in a way that draws distinction from the Sabbath and is a term not used to reference the Sabbath.

Knowing that Moses writes in this manner, it is not plausible to suggest that simply because Moses wrote the 10 Commandments in Deuteronomy 5 that he was commanding them to Israel as part of the law he was commanding them that day. Chapters 1- 5 include a whole history of how they arrived at that point where these new commands would be given. The 10 Commandments are repeated in the contextualization of why they were receiving additional rules and regulations. Critics of the multi-law view fail to realize this point. When Moses commands something he usually contextualizes the command with a phrase like “these are the commandments...” or “these are my feasts...”. After the phrase a list will usually follow. This doesn’t happen in chapter 5. We are only told Moses will talk about the commands, but he never states “These are the commandments” until chapter 6.

Additional evidence that supports the described style in which Moses writes include his genealogical records in which he states “This is the book of the generations of Adam...” (Gen 5:1), “These are the generations of the sons of Noah” (Gen 10:1). You’ll notice with Noah’s genealogy there is not only a opening contextual introduction, but also a closing statement in verse 32 stating “these are the families of the sons of Noah”. It is therefore irrefutable that Moses frequently uses opening and closing contextual statements throughout his writing when he gives us information. The fact that an opening and closing statement exist in Leviticus 23 (opening in verse 4, closing in verse 37) proves that the Sabbath is not part of the feasts. This fact is compounded by the fact that verse 38 suggests that Sabbaths are separate from feasts using the word “beside”.

If one looks at Deuteronomy, reading from beginning to end, it is impossible not to recognize chapters 1-5 as repeated history. Moses uses an introductory phrase in chapter 6:1 and an closing phrase in chapter 31:9. After this, he seems not to assign more laws, but, instead, gives a series of warnings and closing thoughts. To suggest that the 10 Commandments were part of this law is to ignore the clear literary structure in which Moses wrote. To disprove this, one would need to find, in the book of Deuteronomy, where Moses commands the people to keep the 10 Commandments rather than simply retelling the history of God giving it to them.

To further explain what I mean, you’ll notice that before God spoke the 10 Commandments audibly he commanded the Israelites to observe the Passover. In Deuteronomy 16 the Passover is commanded with the other feasts (excluding the Sabbath) as if it were never commanded before. Thus, no one could argue that the Passover was not part of the book of the law. However, this simply never happens with the 10 Commandments. One should also consider that the story behind the Passover was not completely repeated and rehashed as it was commanded. The emphasis is on what must be done to keep the command. While the exodus from Egypt is given as a reason, all the details are not given behind the Passover as was the case with the 10 Commandments. Even the language of this chapter emphasizes

imperative statements rather than focusing on retelling the history of how they got to this point (as chapter 5 does). Thus, we can see that the emphasis of chapter 16 is on actually commanding the feasts, not repeating what the Israelites already knew and experienced. In fact, whereas chapter 16 is a direct command to keep the various festivals, there is no command in Deuteronomy chapter 5 to keep God's commandments. Instead, it reads more like Moses repeating a quote rather than commanding the Israelites to do something:

Moses says: "The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even* us, who *are* all of us here alive this day. The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, (I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;) saying,

'I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before me. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And 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 thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day. Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Neither shalt thou commit adultery. Neither shalt thou steal. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour. Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's.'

"These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me." (Deut 5:3-22)

When the format of the text is changed to reflect how the passage actually reads, you can clearly see that Moses is repeating something, not commanding something. Though the book of Exodus recalls the commanding of the Passover, the command is again given in Deuteronomy 16 with all other feasts to the

exclusion of the Sabbath. This solidifies my point that Leviticus 23's list of feasts did not include the Sabbath as part of the feasts.

Also, I read one comment online in which an individual stated that since the 10 Commandments were listed in Exodus and Deuteronomy that this demonstrates that they were written and commanded twice in the "book of the law". This logic, however, is severely flawed. It fails to realize what I demonstrated above. It also fails to realize that Exodus was not the "book of the law". The exodus and the giving of the Commandments is accounted in the book of Exodus, but it was not the "book of law". It is certainly part of what Jews would call the "torah" or the "Pentateuch"; but it is not the "book of the law". The term "book of the law" specifically referred to the book of Deuteronomy. In fact, this is solidified when one considers that the book of Deuteronomy has self-awareness that it is the "book of the law". No such awareness can be found in the book of Exodus. Only Deuteronomy refers to itself as the "book of the law". One would be hard pressed to find a passage in the book of Exodus that refers to the book itself as the "book of the law".

In fact, the phrase "this book of the law" appears 4 times in scripture. The reference in Joshua simply refers to the book—the book of Joshua does not call itself the "book of the law". In the 3 other instances in which the phrase appears, the occurrences are all in the book of Deuteronomy and are used in a context where the book is referring to itself. In other words, the book of Deuteronomy is crying out to us telling us: "I am the book of the law." The phrase "book of the law" doesn't even appear in the other 4 books of Moses. It is impossible to arrive at the interpretation, therefore, that Moses wrote the 10 Commandments twice in the book of the law. Exodus is not the aforesaid book. Deuteronomy repeats the story of God giving the Commandments, but does not expressly command the same Decalogue itself.

If someone were to ask me if the 10 Commandments were written in the book of the law or "the law of Moses" it would be a trick question. Technically, the words are in there, but they are by no stretch of the imagination commanded there. Instead, they repeated as part of the necessary history for understanding the context of the new laws that would be commanded that day.

These facts demonstrate that the 10 Commandments and the rules given in the "book of the law" were physically separate and distinct. The 10 Commandments were first spoken by God (Exo 20), written by God with God's finger on tables of stone (Exo 31:18), and placed inside of the ark. (Deut 10:2) The book of the law was given by God to Moses, taught by Moses to the people (Deut), written by the hand of Moses (Deut 31:9) into a book (Deut 31:24), and placed on the side of the ark. (Deut 31:26) It was also considerable that the book of the law was for a witness or testimony against the people. (Deut 4:26; 31:26)

It is also interesting to note that the word Deuteronomy (the name given for the book of the law), literally means "Second Law" (Duetero, second; nomos, law). This fact demonstrates that there was a "second law" called the "book of the law" that was distinct from the 10 Commandments.

To disprove these facts one would need to find an instance in scripture in "book of the law" can be proven to refer to any other book other than Deuteronomy. One would need to find evidence in the book of Deuteronomy where the 10 Commandments are specifically commanded again in the book of the law (just as Passover was). Finally, one would need to prove that the literary structure I described Moses to use does not exist and that the introductory / conclusive statements he frequently uses are meant to be understood chronologically (however, if you did that you would also prove that Eve was not created on Day 6, but sometime after Creation week. You would also need to explain the apparent contradiction stating that both male and female were created on Day 6).

With all this stated, to address your point about the law being viewed as the same or as a whole by all Jews, I have clearly demonstrated that the Bible makes clear distinction between the laws. However, I wouldn't go as far as to say your statement was entirely inaccurate. In fact, we're both correct depending on perspective. If you are thinking about the law (torah), as in "all rules that God gave", in that sense the law could be viewed as part of a whole because it emanates from the same source. However, technically speaking, there were distinctions in the law. I also demonstrated that "Torah" and "nomos" could mean different things depending on the context. It could mean just the 10 Commandments, the 5 books of Moses, additional books including the psalms and Isaiah, etc. If you then wanted to make a case that the "law was done away" you would be doing away with not only the 10 Commandments but also the psalms! Where would we be without psalms like 23, 51, and 91?

For these reasons, I challenge the logic that suggests the "whole law" was done away and that there was no distinction between the laws that God gave. In some cases the word "law" used in scripture is even plural. They don't contradict one another and they are united in the sense that God required them; but there was also a distinctiveness to them that should not be ignored.

I pleaded with God for a way in which to explain how a law could be part of a whole yet separate and distinct. Here's what was impressed on me to share. The United States has Federal and State laws. These laws are not intended to contradict one another but to enforce civility. To an outsider, looking in, if one was asked to describe the laws of the United States, they might recite federal or state laws. If one is lawbreaker, they are a lawbreaker regardless of whether or not they break federal or state law. Federal laws govern the entire country, whereas state laws govern only a particular region (state) within the country. If the Federal law states that I must pay taxes to the Federal government, then regardless of where I live in that country, I must pay these taxes. However, if one state's law suggests that I should pay taxes to the state and I move out of the state, I am no longer required or bound to the state law—yet I am still bound to the federal law. This point illustrates the difference between the "book of the law" and the 10 Commandments.

Summary of Laws

I agree that the 10 Commandments in many ways summarize all 613 laws. Your statement:

"Read this article from Judaism 101 about the 10 commandments. The 10 commandments were table of contents for the rest of the 613 laws of God. If you read through the Torah carefully, the Lord commanded all the laws, and it was not just good thoughts for the day... Note that it says: The Aseret ha-Dibrot "The ten commandments" are not understood as individual mitzvot; rather, they are categories or classifications of mitzvot...Each of the 613 mitzvot can be subsumed under one of these ten categories, some in more obvious ways than others."

... seems to suggest I am in disagreement that the 10 Commandments summarize the other laws. I have always held a similar view. However, the 10 Commandments are God's heavenly Federal law, whereas the other commands are state laws for Israel. Outside of the context of a temple, or a theocracy, the "state" laws would have little meaning. The 10 Commandments contain moral principles that encompass the teachings of the Israelite state law, but many of the state laws with moral principles would not be possible to keep. For example, most conservative Christians would agree that homosexuality is a sin.

However, the law states that they must be put to death. On the one hand, we would not disagree that homosexuality is still a sin; yet, it would not be permissible to kill them. In Israel's theocracy, however, these laws were enforceable and the death penalty could be carried out because they had their own state. The state law can no longer be carried out (nor should it be because of grace), yet we don't condone homosexuality in the churches of our respective denominations. If the law were done away, there would be no grounds to condemn homosexuality. However, since the 10 Commandments are the heavenly federal law, and summarize the moral principles of the entire law, though the Israelite state laws are done away with (requiring the death penalty for many different types of sins), the heavenly federal laws which condemn these practices are still in effect. Were this not the case, you'd have to explain how you only keep half of the same commandment! You wouldn't marry a homosexual couple, but yet you would not stone one.

State laws are usually imposed on particular regions whereas federal laws are all encompassing across the country. The same thing is true of God's laws. There was a local law with rites, ceremonies, judgments, statutes, and ordinances. There was also an all-encompassing federal law which did not prescribe punishments or remedies for sin, but simply identified sin. Since, I have shown that the two laws were united but distinct at the same time, it follows, given the many uses of the term "law", that when the Bible says that "the law" was nailed to the cross, it is not necessarily referring to or inclusive of the 10 Commandments. If it were, you would basically be suggesting that it is now ok to steal, murder, commit adultery, burn incense to Baal, and take the name of the Lord in vain. In my opinion, grace doesn't look like a license to commit lawlessness. (Jer 7:9-10)

Most (almost all) of the commandments contained in Leviticus contain some aspect that we would no longer practice today. This includes death penalties for breaking certain rules. While we'd all agree that seeking the supernatural, homosexuality, and rape are morally wrong: the laws of Deuteronomy not only condemn the practices morally, but also call for the death sentence in the same passage. Thus, to say that the law is "done away" does away with the death sentence and the command itself. To say that the law is entirely binding keeps the law and the death penalty. However, when one considers that the 10 Commandments are separate and distinct, yet a summary of the moral code which identifies what sin is: if the book of the law were done away with, the 10 Commandments would still validate the moral codes within the "book of the law" though the death sentences and curses would be invalidated.

To cancel the book of the law would not cancel the moral precepts which summarize the morality of the book of the law. Thus, "thou shalt not commit adultery" would encompass the forbidding of homosexuality because it speaks against sexual relations with anyone that is not in a Biblically acceptable marriage—considering such relationships to be a form of adultery. All sexual immorality could be classified as adultery. All forms of seeking the supernatural make something else one's god, an idol, and an example of taking the Lord's name in vein. Thus, even if you invalidate the book of the law, the 10 Commandments would still be binding and would encompass all that was contained in that law. The main difference between the two would include that the 10 Commandments do not have prescribed punishments or atonements for sin apart from the 2nd death.

Another interesting point to be made is the fact that Deuteronomy considers itself a distinct covenant from the covenant made at Horeb when Moses received the 10 Commandments.

“The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even* us, who *are* all of us here alive this day. The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, (I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;) saying, I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before me.” (Deut 5:2-7) [Subsequently, Moses continues with the other 9 commandments.]

“Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it:” (Deut 6:1)

“These *are* the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, **beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.**” (Deut 29:1)

Clearly, the covenant made in Horeb references the 10 Commandments. Moses lists the 10 Commandments (given at Horeb) starting in verse 7. In chapter 6 he specifies the context that they were receiving a new set of laws. By chapter 29, Moses adds a concluding statement that these words, spoken between chapter 6 and 29, were the words of a covenant “beside” or “apart from” the covenant made in Horeb. We also learn that as this covenant is being made, they are making it in the land of Moab. Thus, the book of the law contains rules separate and distinct from the set of rules (the 10 Commandments) received at Mount Sinai (Horeb). Since the 10 Commandments are specified as part of the Horeb covenant, and the covenant of Moab is “apart from” that covenant, it is irrefutable that the 10 Commandments were not part of the “book of the law” except as a regurgitation of necessary contextual history.

Moses was taught these additional commands on his trips to meet and worship God; however, he seems not to have officially commanded these things until the end of his training with God. By the time Moses reaches the land of Moab, he seems to turnkey what he learned from God to the Israelites—compiling all the additional undocumented information into one “book of the law”. The covenant, or agreement, is that the Israelites agree to the terms and conditions of this law and thus additionally agree to the blessings and curses.

A third point that contributes to the strength behind viewing the laws as a whole yet distinct can be found in Galatians.

“And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by

promise. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.” (Gal 3:17-19)

Since the moral law was always in effect, it cannot be stated that the law was only 430 years after. Since there is no transgression where there is no law: murder, adultery, lying, stealing, dishonoring one’s parents, worshipping other gods, bowing down to idols, etc. could not be considered sin and punishable unless these commands were binding before being codified on stone.

“Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.” (Romans 4:15)

“(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 them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.” (Romans 5:13-14)

If the 10 Commandments were only binding on Israel, then prior to receiving the written code, it could not have been a sin to break the 10 Commandments. Yet, we see that Adam and Eve coveted, Cain killed his brother, Abimelech nearly died for taking Abraham’s wife, Abraham got in trouble for lying (the serpent lied in the Garden of Eden and was cursed), the wickedness of man was great in Noah’s time, etc. How could any of these things be morally wrong if without a law there is no transgression? Clearly, the moral standard of conduct pre-existed the codified commandments on stone. While the codifying on stone was the first time Israel had received these commands, that moment was not the origin of this law. It existed since the beginning of time. Were this not the case, it could not have been a sin for Cain to commit murder or for Abimelech to take Abraham’s wife.

It should also be pointed out that the 10 Commandments do not command the Israelites to make holy the Sabbath; instead, the commandments tell Israel to remember that it is already holy and they are to “remember” to keep it that way. If this is the case, the Sabbath, and the sanctity of it, does not originate on Mount Sinai. It must originate in Creation when the Sabbath was created on Day 7. Thus, the 7th day Sabbath was not for Israel only, but was for humanity. The Israelites were commanded to remember it because they were God’s representatives and the world had forgotten it as a result of sin. The commandment states that one must remember. One cannot remember something unless it pre-exists and is forgotten. In order to remember that which is forgotten, what was forgotten must have pre-existed in order to be forgotten: thus, the Sabbath’s sanctity does not originate at Mount Sinai, but was a moral requirement (just as the other 9 commandments) that was being forgotten and transgressed. If the law was codified due to the transgression of it, the Sabbath must have been binding upon humanity since the Israelites were required to remember something already established by God in Creation the day after marriage had been established and before sin entered the picture.

On the other hand, the festivals did not exist prior to their introduction to Israel. In fact, the festivals were unique to Israel. Many of the other additional commands not only emphasized certain aspects of the 10 Commandments, but also commanded capital punishments for breaking them in particular ways. Thus, these commands do not merely declare a particular practice as wrong: they demand justice as a part of the commandment to any who would offend. This could explain why the additional commands were given. The 10 Commandments generally addressed the ways in which one could transgress, but the additional commands addressed what to do when the law was transgressed in certain ways.

Since none of the 10 Commandments originate at Mount Sinai, it doesn't seem logical that Galatians was talking about the 10 Commandments when it says that the law was 430 years after. The Decalogue preexisted the Israelites. This is evident in that if there is no law, breaking these rules could not have been a sin before the law existed. Yet, we see several examples in which the law was broken and addressed by God. Thus, we have no choice but to concede that the law pre-existed the Sinai encounter, though not in its stone codified state. The law was meant to be an internal thing. It was codified on human hearts. However, transgression created the need to write the law down—externally from the person—as a reminder.

It stands to reason that the law added years later was not the moral law, but the book of the law. This law was added because of transgression to clarify and make the law clearer. Additionally, the existing law was codified on stone when it was supposed to be already codified on hearts. The added law was made for Israel as a school master and codified on paper by the handwriting of Moses. We also learn that it was ordained by angels: the 10 Commandments were directly codified and spoke by God—not angels. In fact, Deut 5:4 indicates that God spoke “face to face” with Moses and was personally involved with the people in commanding the Decalogue. Additionally, the book of the law prescribes punishments and remedies for handling transgression.

The more people break moral principles, the more laws are made and codified. Transgression of the 10 Commandments led to these additional laws which clarified and prescribed action against those who transgressed. Thus, it can be said that the book of the law was added because of transgression. One could say that the 10 Commandments were codified because of transgression, but it could not be said that they were added because they already pre-existed.

All this demonstrates that the book of the law was separate from that of the Decalogue and both the NT and OT attest to its distinction.

On Stone And Done Away?

You stated, “... **Ex 34:28 says the Old Covenant IS the 10 Commandments and why 2 Corinthians 3 says clearly the law written ON STONE is DONE AWAY!**”

This is actually not the case. If we read more carefully, we'll see a different understanding in comparison to the one you presented.

“And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.” (Exo 34:28)

Moses didn't say that the 10 Commandments were the Old Covenant. He said that the “words of the covenant” (the 10 Commandments) were written on the tablets. The Covenant was not the 10 Commandments. The Covenant was the agreement of the people to keep the 10 Commandments and all else that God asked of them.

“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.” (Exo 19:5-8)

Shortly after the people agreed to do “all that the Lord hath spoken”, God gives the 10 Commandments. A Covenant is an agreement between two parties. If the commandments were the covenant, there would be no agreement. Instead, the agreement lies in the promise of the people to keep God's commandments. This is why the Commandments are the “words of the covenant”.

“For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.” (Heb 8:7-9)

Here we see that the problem, or fault, with the Old Covenant was not with the law but was with the people. They had promised to keep the commandments, but broke them. For this reason there needed to be a new covenant established. But what would be different about the covenant?

“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” (Heb 8:6)

First, we find that rather than Moses mediating the covenant and offering the sacrifices to inaugurate it (Exo 24:7-8) Christ is the new and better mediator (Heb 8:6). Secondly, the new Covenant is established upon better promises! In other words, rather than the people promising to obey God (a faulty promise

because they could not follow through), God would establish a covenant on better promises: Promises which God Himself would make.

“For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:” (Heb 8:10)

Notice that the difference in the two covenants was not with the law but with the promises. The same law is still in effect but the location of it has changed. Rather than on tables of stone, it is in the heart of God’s people. The promise of this covenant is that God will write His law in this new location. Thus, the difference between the covenants is not the law, but the promises. Thus, Exodus 34:28 cannot be legitimately used as a passage to suggest that the 10 Commandments were the covenant and since the Old Covenant is done away the 10 Commandments must also be done away. Such an argument takes the passage out of context and does not consider the words of the New Covenant.

The second passage you quoted was also taken out of context.

You stated: **“2 Corinthians 3 says clearly the law written ON STONE is DONE AWAY!”**

You, quoted 2 Corinthians 3, but likely were specifically referencing this text:

“But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away:” (Cor 3:7)

But you did not consider this one:

“*Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” (2 Cor 3:3)

If you read the chapter carefully, it is not at all suggesting and does not say that the law is done away. It repeats the New Covenant promise that the law is changing location. The ministration of stone is done away because the words, concepts, and principles are being re-located to the heart. The only change is that what was external from the human being is now being made internal. This passage cannot be used to suggest that the law was done away because the Old Covenant was done away. They are not the same!

To summarize, Paul declares, in the first few verses, that the Corinthians are an epistle written on his heart. He has no need to be commended by men because they are the testament of his apostleship.

They were epistles of Christ written and delivered by those who ministered to them (including Paul). Paul indicates that the epistle that is this church of believers was not written by ink or engraved on stone; but in contrast, it was written on the fleshy tables of the heart. Thus the message of the Corinthian church is not external from the person, but internal within every believer after the ministry of Paul and other apostles. It is easy to discern here that in the language of the passage the New Covenant language is alluded to in the phrase “tables of the heart” as well as the 10 Commandments in the phrase “tables of stone”: It is only in the New Covenant that we see this concept of replacing the law on stone with the law on the heart. (cf. Heb 8:10; Romans 2:14-15)

“For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts**; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:” (Heb 8:10)

When we consider that the passage is referencing the New Covenant, based on the words of the New Covenant, we know that the law is not being “done away” but re-located. Even in the words of verse 3 we see a distinction between the two laws. The 10 Commandments were not written with ink. However, the book of the law was! It is replaced by the Spirit of God (cf. Eze 36:27) while the codified 10 Commandments on stone are re-engraved on the heart (just like in Creation). Apparently, the Corinthians were living examples of New Covenant Christians and thus were not breakers of the law, but doers of the law. (Romans 2:13)

Another point to consider on these texts is that the law discussed in Hebrews 8 is not a new law, but the same old law. In fact, the first place one finds the New Covenant is in the Old Testament:

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (Jer 31:31-33)

We know that Jeremiah considered the law to be the same law that God has always had. It cannot be said, therefore, that God has a new law that is expressed in the New Covenant. Even the two “love” commandments originate from the same old law. There was nothing new about the law.

With these facts established, it becomes easy to understand the rest of what Paul is saying in 2 Corinthians 3. We know he was referencing the New Covenant and that the New Covenant includes the same law. Furthermore, Jesus Himself never taught that He was invalidating the law. (Matt 5:17) Lest one be tempted to cite instances in which he “broke the Sabbath”, a number of scholars show clearly and definitively, that in each instance He was accused by not actually guilty. He even cited scripture that

demonstrated they could not possibly accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath when they would do the same thing or there were Old Testament examples of well-respected and righteous men doing the same thing. Furthermore, in regard to His healings, He pointed out that in order for Him to do the healings, God Himself had to be at work since the healings were not done of Himself. Thus, in order to accuse Jesus of breaking the Sabbath, one would also have to accuse God. In these cases Jesus actually refuted the idea that he was breaking the Sabbath by not respecting customs and traditions which were added by men and not required by God Himself.

“And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” (2 Cor 3:4-6)

Here Paul states that in the “new testament” (Or covenant), we are ministers not “of the letter” but “of the spirit”. It begs the question, what is the difference between the letter and the spirit? The content, as we saw earlier, is the same. The difference, however, is that the letter is external from the person and the spirit is internal. God has made our bodies temples for the Holy Ghost. If the Spirit of God dwells in us, the law becomes internal because we are caused to naturally obey God, as was designed in Creation. (cf. Eze 36:27; Romans 8:1-13; 1 John 3:7-10)

Paul seems to carry this theme in other scriptures.

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.” (Romans 7:6)

Paul discusses the death sentence resulting from law breaking in this passage. He points out in earlier verses that in Christ we are dead to the law and resurrected to be bound to Christ rather than bound by the law. Those who are bound by the law are marked for death since no one keeps the law. In verse 6 Paul states that we are delivered from the law so that we can serve in “newness of spirit” and not the “oldness of the letter”. Again we see the New Covenant alluded to in these words which mirror what Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 3.

Paul is not stating here that the law, specifically the 10 Commandments, should no longer be kept. In fact, in Romans 7:14, Paul states that the law is spiritual and he (along with all of humanity) are carnal. In Romans 7:22, Paul states that he delights in the Law of God after the inward man. These don’t sound like words suggesting that one should make a practice of breaking God’s law.

Instead, a stronger interpretation of Romans 7:6 would indicate that by “oldness of the letter” Paul is talking about 2 things. First, the external nature of the law from the human being which does not permit the human being to keep the law. If we serve God, by obeying his law, in the “oldness of the letter”: we are marked for death because, though we know to do better (James 4:17), we can’t find a way to do

better because the law is external. This is why in Romans 7:15-24 Paul expresses his famous internal complex that, though he knows right from wrong, he is at war with himself to do that which is right.

In contrast, through Christ, we serve in “newness of spirit”. This means that when the Holy Spirit enters a person’s life, the life becomes so transformed that it will naturally obey the Law of God. This was God’s New Covenant promise—placing the law within the individual, rather than having it remain external. When the law is placed internally, people are enabled (through a supernatural means) to naturally do that which is contained in the law. (cf. Romans 2:14-15; Eze 36:27; Hebrews 8:10; 1 John 3:9) Thus, they serve the same God, with the same law (as in moral standards), in a new way. They naturally keep God’s commandments from the heart.

Another, aspect of serving in the “oldness of the letter” is how one interprets and applies the law. When the law is external from the person, it gives knowledge: but it does not penetrate the heart. This can lead individuals to play word games and interpretational games with the words of the law to suit their own agendas by manipulating the language of the law. It is from this concept that we get the popular phrase “letter of the law” and “spirit of the law” (both of which are not found in the Bible, but are used in pop-culture). When one obeys the “letter of the law” they strive to be in harmony only with their interpretation of what is written externally. Since the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, people can often deceive themselves into thinking they are law keepers because they keep their perception of what the law says, rather than the “spirit of the law” which is the application of the law or the true mindset behind what the law actually means. We see this on many occasions as Jesus is accused of being a law breaker by the Pharisees and scribes.

When one serves in the “oldness of the letter” they do so because the law is not written on their hearts. When the law is external from the person they obey only that which they perceive they should obey. Personal biases can sometimes influence how one relates to the law. Some obedience may even be with the wrong intent and motive. However, when the law is internal, the obedience comes from the heart and is not restricted by personal biases. God has removed these biases in the engraving of the law upon the human heart. Thus, once the law is in the heart, the individual can serve the same God with the same law in “newness of spirit”. It was always God’s intent that the law (God’s moral requirements) be internal rather than external. (Deut. 6:5-6; 10:16)

With both aspects of “oldness of the letter” defined, it is clear that Romans 7:6 is referring to the external nature of the law by the term “oldness of the letter”. Even with the second aspect of what the phrase means, as I described above, one is still dealing with biases that occur because of the external nature of the law. In essence, both definitions incorporate the understanding of the law’s external nature. Paul juxtaposes this concept with serving in “newness of spirit”. Since the New Covenant promises that, through the Holy Spirit, the law will be written or sealed in one’s heart (cf. Heb 8:10; Isaiah 8:16; Eph 4:30); it becomes evident that serving in “newness of spirit” cannot be interpreted to mean disregarding or breaking the law—instead it means keeping the law in a new way. This new way is simply keeping the law successfully because the Holy Spirit’s power enables one to do that which they could not do in their own human strength. Thus, Christ has made us overcomers of sin (1 John 5:4; 1 Cor 15:57), he didn’t just entirely do away with the law so we no longer have a problem with sin.

This interpretation is consistent with the rest of what Paul writes from Romans 7:25 through Romans 8. After Paul describes his internal struggle with sin in verses 7-24, he goes on to say the following:

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” (Romans 7:25)

Notice Paul now juxtaposes serving the law of God with his mind, indicating that with the mind (the heart) he serves the law of God, while in the flesh he serves the law of sin. This text repeats the same concept of Romans 7:6 in different language. Serving the law of God with the mind is serving in newness of spirit while serving the law of sin with the flesh is serving in the oldness of the letter. This is further evidence by the fact that Paul stated he was dead to the letter but serves in newness of spirit. In chapter 8, continuing this theme, Paul states that he is dead to the flesh but alive in the spirit. Thus, it is clear that Paul is not disregarding the law of God but serving from the heart through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 7 leaves us with the conflict between what Paul does with his heart (the mind, Biblically, is the epicenter of human thought and emotion) and what he does in the flesh. This conflict is addressed in chapter 8 of Romans.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Romans 8:1-4)

Paul states here that the problem with the law [externally] was that the system was weak through the flesh. This is because, externally from the person, the law was transgressed and worked death in the individual. In other words, because the external law gives knowledge of what sin is, but doesn't enable one to keep the law, it does not accomplish the salvation of souls. No one can be saved by works. Though the law (externally) was weak in this regard, Jesus' ministry accomplished what the law could not. Because of His sacrifice, the righteousness of the law could be fulfilled in every individual. This was because of the New Covenant, ratified in Jesus' blood. Through the Holy Spirit's power, believers, following the promptings of the Holy Spirit, could not only receive pardon and forgiveness, but power to live a holy and godly life. Jesus' ministry doesn't do away with morality, it enables one to keep the law of God and to be relinquished from the death curse and guilt of past mistakes so that the individual stands before God accredited as if he never sinned in the first place (since Christ's record is applied to their account).

Most Christians make the mistake of thinking that Jesus' ministry only provides forgiveness and pardon. This is a mistake. Jesus did not die to provide a license for sin and a "get out of jail free card". Instead, in addition to forgiveness and pardon, he provides power to overcome and live a godly life – in harmony with the law of God. Thus, when we are in Christ and we walk after the Spirit, we have no condemnation!

"Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Romans 8:7-9)

Paul demonstrates this understanding when he states that the carnal mind is enmity against God specifically because it is not subject to the law of God. If the law of God were entirely done away, how could the carnal mind be at enmity with God simply because it is not subject to a law that has been done away with? Clearly, Paul sees the law as still binding. Those who are in the flesh and carnally minded are at enmity with God because they are not subject to the law of God. In contrast, the text seems to imply that the spiritual mind is subject to the law of God. Thus, believers belong to God because the Spirit of God dwells in them making them subject to the law of God as we demonstrated in the New Covenant passages cross referenced with passages about the work of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:9 states that when the Holy Spirit dwells in a person, they are not in the flesh (and thus not carnally minded and at enmity with God) but in the spirit. Thus, they don't become unsubjects to the law of God as those in the flesh—they become obedient from the heart.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:2)

Consequently, we can see that Romans 8's mention of 2 laws (the law of the Spirit of life and the law of sin and death) are actually talking about the same law in two different capacities. The law of the Spirit of life is talking about the law written on the heart internally while the law of sin and death references the external law codified on stone and on paper. The difference is that when the law is written on the heart, there is no need for curses and judgments. One with the law on the heart is obedient because of the Holy Spirit's transforming power. This ends the need for remedies, curses, and judgments for sin which appear in the ink-written paper code. Thus, the law of the Spirit of life makes one free from the law of sin and death because the written code does not enable one to keep the content of the code. It therefore works death to the individual who is guilty. The heart coded individual, however, has life because when the content of the law is codified on one's heart, they are enabled to keep the law through the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way, the law of the Spirit of life makes one free. By walking in the Spirit, there is no condemnation.

“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Romans 8:13-14)

Paul states clearly that those who live in the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh and they live. Those who live after the flesh, not being subject to the law of God, shall die. Those who live after the Spirit obey the law of God, mortifying the deeds of the flesh which cause them to break the law of God. The Holy Spirit leads them to naturally obey God’s law and have it written on their hearts. Thus, when one is led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.

As one can see, the scriptures in Romans and 2 Corinthians concur with the New Covenant that the law is not entirely done away but re-located. When the texts are carefully read, they indicate that Paul believes the law of God is still binding and important but places emphasis on the relocation of that same law in the heart rather than the external code. Thus, when Paul says that the ministration of death is “done away” he was not talking about the commandments in the law, but the death sentence of the external code. Were this not the case one would need to explain why Paul feels the need to serve the Law of God with his mind (heart) (Romans 7:25), if that law has been done away. When one reads the passages carefully it can easily be seen that the view that the moral law is no longer binding is inconsistent with what Paul actually said.

When we look at the passages of 2 Corinthians 3, we will see the continued theme of the external law juxtaposed with the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

“But if the **ministration of death, written and engraven in stones**, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away: How shall not the **ministration of the spirit** be rather glorious? For if the **ministration of condemnation** *be* glory, much more doth the **ministration of righteousness** exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.” (2 Cor 3:7-10)

This fact presents the surest evidence that the passage is referencing the New Covenant which states that the law is re-located, not done away in its entirety. Notice how he uses the terms “ministration of death” and “ministration of the spirit”. Since we know the Holy Spirit’s ministry is to write God’s law on the human heart (ie. re-proving the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment-- John 16:8), thus enabling them to naturally do what is contained in the law, 2 Corinthians 3 is a clear reference to the New Covenant. Paul is pointing out that the temporary system codified on paper and stone was glorious, but the new system administered by the Holy Spirit is better being that it exceeds in glory and that glory does not fade away.

When the Holy Spirit does the work of sanctification, one can retain the glory that comes as we commune with God. Sanctification also eventually results in glorification, at the return of Christ, when

the faithful will be given glory which never passes away. Under the old system however, any glory, like the kind Moses experienced, could only be temporary as humanity is sinful and separated from God because of sin.

Many have used the passage in 2 Corinthians 3 to suggest that the 10 Commandments were no longer binding; however, they usually do this not looking closely at the wording of the passage and not seeing the connection of this wording to the New Covenant language. Thus, they rightly point out that the ministry of stone has been ended, but fail to realize that the ministry of the Spirit includes the same law that was once codified on stone. It could not be a “new” law that is administered by the Spirit since the first place the New Covenant is found is in the Old Testament (Jer 31:30) which clearly states “my law” [God’s law] would be written on the heart. Nowhere in the passage of 2 Corinthians 3 is it ever stated that it is now ok to break the 10 Commandments because the Commandments themselves were now invalidated.

“(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 them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.” (Romans 5:13-14)

To further emphasize the point: Paul didn’t believe that the Decalogue was invalidated. Most ministers, while they may disagree upon the binding nature of the Sabbath, generally agree that it’s not ok to lie, steal, kill, commit adultery, murder, covet, bow down to idols, worship other gods, or call yourself a follower of God when you really aren’t. If the ministry of stone is truly abolished, it would be ok to do these things. However, if the commandments on stone were relocated to the heart, the ministry of the Spirit empowers the believer to keep and practice these commands of which the Sabbath is one. One cannot say that the 10 Commandments are invalidated without also invalidating the other Commandments on the same list of laws. The New Covenant also did not state that God’s commands would be written on the heart-- minus one.

To the contrary, it states that God’s law (“my law”) would be written on the heart. The Bible is clear about which law or “aspect of law” was invalidated (which I will discuss at another time since my objective is not to focus on the Sabbath in this response, but the difference between laws). However, what I will say is that any moral principle existing since creation must be binding upon all of humanity. Murder, adultery, stealing, etc. would all have been wrong since the time of Creation. The Sabbath was the created on the 7th day and was a part of creation. If the Commandment to remember to keep it was never given, the Genesis Creation account still points out that the 7th day was blessed and sanctified by God.

In other words, according to this account, God blessed, hallowed, and sanctified the day itself. So, regardless of the commandment, one still has to acknowledge the fact that the day of the week itself was made special and holy regardless of whether or not humans choose to acknowledge it. The Commandment merely points out that people are to remember that which has already been blessed and made holy. It does not make the Sabbath holy by virtue of the command. The Sabbath is holy without the Commandment because it was created that way in Creation just like marriage was holy

since the 6th day. It is unreasonable to believe that God would make something holy in Creation and then not require it to be holy throughout eternity. To suggest that the Sabbath is no longer holy is like saying marriage is no longer holy and therefore same sex couples should not be restricted from marriage. I am aware of passages like Galatians 4:10 and Colossians 2:16; however, these passages cannot be interpreted to be references to the Seventh-day Sabbath when one does an exegesis of the passages (See, for example, "Judging The Sabbath: Discovering What Can't Be Found In Colossians 2:16" By Ron du Preez).

But, since the Sabbath is a topic for another time, I would like to conclude my response to your comments on 2 Corinthians 3 by stating that you were incorrect in suggesting that the passage says the law was done away. The passage talks about the "ministration of death engraved on stone" being done away; however, this is not suggesting that the Commandments are no longer binding. Instead, its emphasis is on the change in location. The term "ministration of death" is a reference to the ministry of the codified system and not the Commandments themselves. By the term "ministration of the Spirit" the same Commandments are included but relocated to the heart. Were this not the case, anyone could use the same argument to say that none of the Commandments are binding and ask you to perform homosexual marriages.

Going Back To The Summary

You also stated the following:

"Note that it says: The Aseret ha-Dibrot "The ten commandments" are not understood as individual mitzvot; rather, they are categories or classifications of mitzvot. Each of the 613 mitzvot can be subsumed under one of these ten categories, some in more obvious ways than others. For example, the mitzvah not to work on Shabbat rather obviously falls within the category of remembering the Sabbath day and keeping it holy. The mitzvah to fast on Yom Kippur fits into that category somewhat less obviously: all holidays are in some sense a Sabbath, and the category encompasses any mitzvah related to sacred time. The mitzvah not to stand aside while a person's life is in danger fits somewhat obviously into the category against murder. It is not particularly obvious, however, that the mitzvah not to embarrass a person fits within the category against murder: it causes the blood to drain from your face thereby shedding blood."

We agree on the fact that the Commandments provide a general summary of all the laws. I would add that the additional laws were added because of transgression of the Decalogue. The additional laws were added to clarify and make plain what the 10 Commandments already outlawed. Additionally, however, unlike the 10 Commandments – they contained curses, judgments, and punishments for sin. The 10 Commandments did not contain these. Earlier I showed how the "book of the law" differed from the Decalogue. Now, however, I would like to challenge a particular aspect of what you said.

The Sabbath is not and could not be a summary of the other sabbaths. First of all, it should be understood that in addition to the Sabbath there were feasts (appointed times). The Sabbath was not an

appointed time. This is evidenced by the chiasmic structure in Leviticus 23 (as I explained earlier). In fact, the Sabbath was considered “apart from” the feasts and was referenced by Leviticus 23 for contextual purposes. That being said, there were appointed times, separate and distinct from the Sabbath, which were specifically commanded to Israel and were not binding on any other nation—unlike the 10 Commandments which were binding universally. These appointed times including “hags/heorte” (pilgrimages), new moons, and sabbaths. The sabbaths of these appointed times were not seventh day Sabbaths but additional rest periods which included ceasing from work as one would do on the seventh day. These sabbaths were separate and distinct from the Sabbaths of the Lord occurring on the seventh day as indicated by Leviticus 23.

The fact that the Sabbath was not an appointed time puts the death nail in your argument that the Sabbath was a summary of the all the sabbaths. The term “sabbath” doesn’t include pilgrimages. In fact, Ron du Preez, in his exegetical study proves that the term “sabbath” is never used in the Bible to embody all the appointed times. Even in the famous passage Colossians 2:16, typically used to contradict the idea that the Sabbath is binding, Paul makes distinction between the types of appointed times and does not use one term to include all of them (ie. “festivals, new moons, sabbaths”). I demonstrated clearly, earlier, that the Sabbath was not an “appointed time”. However if it were, and the 10 Commandments intended to summarize all the appointed times: God could have done so easily by saying: “Remember to keep all my appointed times (moed) holy.” Leviticus could have included the Sabbath as part of the list of appointed times rather than stating that the Sabbath was separate and distinct.

Thus, your point about the Sabbath being a summary of the other appointed ceremonies and rests is invalid. The term “Sabbath” is never used in the Bible to encompass all the celebrations. The term “appointed times (moed)” is also never used to include seventh day Sabbaths though it does include all the ceremonials sabbaths commanded to Israel, but not the pilgrimages. If the 4th Commandment wanted to summarize the ceremonies it would have used the term “moed” (appointed times) to do so instead of commanding only one specific kind of appointed times. However, since the Sabbath was distinct from the “appointed times (moed)” according to Leviticus 23, commanding the seventh day Sabbath would not summarize or include the additional “moed” appointed times and “hag” pilgrimages.

In the examples you cited, you correctly point out that not standing aside while one is in danger would be a subcategory of the command against murder. You correctly point out that embarrassing someone is a form of bloodshed and therefore murder in a subtle way. However, the Sabbath cannot be a summary of the other sabbaths because the term is never used to encompass all of the ceremonies and Leviticus emphasized that it was distinct from the other holidays. In fact, some passages describing the appointed times, don’t even use the word “sabbath” though Leviticus does. If the 4th Commandment was a summary, it should have and would have used the term “moed” or at least added it. However, it does not do so. The 4th Commandment is very specific focusing on a particular kind of rest. While there are many forms which murder can take, each form is a type of murder. While there are many forms marital infidelity can take, each form is a type of adultery / fornication. However, the festivals and appointed times are not forms of Seventh Day Sabbaths. The 4th Commandment is therefore too specific to be a

generalization of holidays. This is why the term “moed” would be a better method of providing a summary. However, God doesn’t do that.

Furthermore, if all the “sabbaths” could be unilaterally yoked under the term “sabbaths”, the 4th Commandment could have stated, “Remember the sabbaths to keep them holy...”. However, the Commandment specifies only one Sabbath, the weekly Sabbath, and does not use any language that would be inclusive of other forms. Secondly, as I stated before, the term “sabbaths” is never all encompassing of Seventh Day Sabbaths and the sabbaths of the appointed times. An exegetical study of the use of the word “sabbath” will demonstrate that linguistic markers and syntactical markers tell us which sabbath is being referenced. The term “sabbath” both in Hebrew and in the Greek never encompasses Seventh Day Sabbaths and festival sabbaths at the same time. Thus, the linguistic and syntactical markers as well as context made distinctions specifying which sabbath was being addressed. Thus, the 4th Commandment use of the term Sabbath is singular in Hebrew in spite of the fact that if God was commanding all the appointed times under the (non-existent) umbrella term “sabbath”, it should have been plural and not so specific based on the context of the lines of the verse.

Instead, God clearly goes out of His way to specify that the Sabbath is distinct from that of the “moed” and commands it separately and distinctly rather than all at once. They were codified in two different places. While the Sabbath was created on the 7th day of Creation, the “moed” appointed times and other ceremonies were only commanded and binding on Israel. This fact is another thing that sets them apart from that of the Sabbath.

Therefore, in each case of Mitzvah you point out it is true that the command is a summary for other commands in the 613 laws. However, this cannot be said about the Seventh Day Sabbath because each form of celebration is not a type of Seventh Day Sabbath. Yom Kippur, for example, is not a type of Seventh Day Sabbath. It’s an appointed time (“Moed”). Seventh Day Sabbaths are separate and distinct. The term that could have been used to summarize all the holidays was not used—furthermore, the term was declared not to include the Seventh Day Sabbath in Leviticus 23. You, therefore, have a problem in that you’re trying to use a very specific command to include something general—yet the term sabbath is never used as a generalization of all holidays nor was the umbrella term for holidays (“moed”) used to include the Sabbath. As described earlier, if God had intended a summary, there were some simple terms that could have been used that were not used. Leviticus 23 could have included the Sabbath as a festivals or appointed times rather than identifying it as distinct and separate. Had this been done, the matter would have been clear. However, the fact that this was not done weakens the credibility of the idea that the Sabbath was an all-inclusive command.

Instead, it is more consistent with scripture that the other 9 commands are summaries that include moral principles for all of humanity, but the Sabbath is a very specific moral command for all of humanity. That begs the question, why would the other 9 commands be summaries and the 4th Commandment specific? The answer lies in the difference between the two sets of laws: the 10 Commandments and the “book of the law”: namely, the Decalogue contained moral principles binding upon all humanity while the book of the law contained some moral principles but had specifications specifically for Israel as a nation. The added 613 laws get more specific, but also contain commands

unique and specific to the Israelites. For example, it was a sin to commit incest, but if one did it in another country that an Israelite visited, they had no right to stone an individual on foreign soil. Thus, many of the commands in the “book of the law” were unique to and only binding upon Israel. Moral principles established in Creation, however, are timeless, location-less, and eternal.

While the 4th Commandment Sabbath is binding for humanity, since it merely points out that on the Seventh Day the Sabbath was made holy: the other sabbaths were unique to Israel and served a purpose that only applied to Israel. The Sabbath is a memorial of Creation—which all of humanity can celebrate since we are created beings. The other sabbaths were memorial services for events that took place in Jewish history. They also pointed forward to aspects of the Messiah’s ministry and were teaching tools that illustrated the plan of salvation. The Sabbath, on the other hand, held no such foreshadow. A correct understanding of Hebrews 4 would indicate that while God entered into a rest from His creative work (a rest which Adam and Eve at first enjoyed), the Sabbath day (the seventh day of the week) was still holy, blessed, and sanctified before sin entered the picture. Prior to sin, there can be no types, shadows, symbols, or foreshadows of redemption. All of these things take place after sin.

In short, because there is a clear scriptural difference between the Seventh Day Sabbaths and the appointed time sabbaths, it is impossible to arrive at the interpretation that the 4th Commandment summarizes all the holidays when different terms were used to reference these holidays, the terms are never inclusive of other categories (exp. Seventh Day Sabbaths are not “moed”), and if the terms were inclusive: the 4th Commandment could have used language that would reference all the celebrations rather than using language that clearly and directly specifies only one celebration that could not be inclusive of the others (exp. Yom Kippur and Passover are not types of Seventh Day Sabbaths). Thus, my argument makes more sense, concluding that the other 9 Commandments include many of the ideas and laws of the 613 laws, but were universal commands that apply to all of humanity. The 4th commandment also stands as a universal command binding upon all of humanity, but was specific because the Sabbath was a celebration for humanity (memorializing Creation), not just Israel. The laws contained in the “book of the law” contained moral principles but were generally framed in a context that applied only to Israel. For example, the command against homosexuality would be a morally binding principle, but the second half of the command dealing with stoning homosexuals would apply only to Israel during the theocracy. Many of the 613 laws were civil laws that could only be enforced within the context of a theocracy. They had animal sacrifices and specific judgments for dealing with sin that could not be upheld by Christians today, though the moral aspects of the principles are still valid. The ceremonial sabbaths (the appointed times / “moed” and “hags”) were only binding upon Israel as the Jewish economy pointed to Christ and foreshadowed His ministry. Since the Messiah would come through Israel, it makes sense that these celebrations were given to Israel and were binding until their fulfillment in Christ. The Sabbath day (the Seventh Day), however, was not given to Israel alone but was instituted as holy, blessed, and sanctified in Creation.

For these reasons I disagree with your assertion that “all holidays are in some sense a Sabbath”. An exegetical study reveals that your assertion is wrong because the term “Sabbath” is never used in an all-inclusive manner. While I agree for the most part that the 10 Commandments summarize much of the additional laws, I disagree that the Sabbath was merely a summary of all the holidays. The 4th

Commandment, and the context surrounding it, are too specific to be a generalization. Better language was available, but not used, if God intended to summarize that Israel remember all the holidays. For example, one can argue that pirating movies, carjacking, cheating on taxes, rigging a balance, and selling a lemon (car) are all forms of stealing. But if the command mentioned only one of these things, and did not say “stealing”, it could not be said that stealing is a form of carjacking. It goes the other way around: carjacking is a form of stealing! Thus, the 4th Commandment does not summarize all the holidays. It was specified and distinctive from all the other holidays because it, like the other 9 Commandments, were binding upon all of humanity while the other laws were usually unique to Israel.

These points further add strength to my argument that the 10 Commandments and the other additional rules / laws were not the same, but were distinct though working harmoniously and united in the Old Testament system. It may be true that some Orthodox Jewish scholars see it as you described; however, this is not a strong enough argument to overturn the Biblical evidence presented since there are a number of subjects upon which we see things differently than Orthodox Jews on matters of doctrinal / scriptural interpretation. A stronger point of view in regard to the Decalogue and the 613 laws is that the 613 laws were civil laws for Israel to be enforced by their government and within their specific region. The 10 Commandments, on the other hand, were global moral principles which included the moral principles of the 613 laws. They summarized God’s requirements of humanity, not just Israel. Cain was not an Israelite, yet he was not to commit murder. Abimelech was not Jewish but yet he could not commit adultery with Sarah. Ananias and Sapphira lied and dropped dead after the resurrection of Jesus. If the 10 Commandments were done away and were no longer binding, why would it be such a great sin for them to lie? These points demonstrate that it is unlikely that a command of the Decalogue is no longer binding. These points add strength to my assertion that there was more than one aspect of law: one of those aspects were indeed done away—however, the aspect that was done away could not be one of the moral principles of the 10 Commandments. Instead, it is more consistent that there was another aspect of law—the added law, that was against the people and condemned them with curses for disobedience. This aspect of the law was done away, while what was on stone was re-located to the heart of every Christian believer.

The Law In Galatians

Another point to consider in the distinguished nature of the 2 laws is how Galatians 3 points out that the 2nd law was given. Since we know that God dealt directly with the children of Israel when He commanded the Decalogue, the law that was administered by angels through a mediator cannot be the same law. Galatians 3 clearly adds evidence that there was a distinction between the two laws.

“And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should

come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.” (Gal 3:17-19)

Since the moral law was always in effect, it cannot be stated that the law was only 430 years after. Since there is no law where there is no transgression, and murder, adultery, lying, stealing, dishonoring one’s parents, worshipping other gods, bowing down to idols, etc. was still considered sin and punishable: it stands to reason that the law added years later was not the moral law, but the book of the law. This law was added because of transgression to clarify and make the law clearer as well as to prescribe consequences for breaking the law. Additionally, the existing law was codified on stone when it was supposed to be already codified on hearts. The added law was made for Israel as a school master and codified on paper by the handwriting of Moses.

It is also interesting that the Galatians points out that this law was ordained by angels, implying that it originates with God but that God did not do it directly. With the 10 Commandments we know that God spoke, commanded, and wrote directly. (Exo 20:22; Deut 5:4) Thus, these commandments were not ordained by angels but by God directly. They were also not commanded by the hand of a mediator. God wrote them on stone directly after audibly commanding the children of Israel. It could be argued that Moses was given the stone tablets; however, he didn’t write on them and God had already ordained the commands audibly. The book of the law, on the other hand, was taught to Moses and then written down by Moses. It was also commanded to the people by Moses.

In contrast, when God directly commanded the Decalogue, the people requested that Moses speak to God and then relay the information to them. They feared that if God continued to talk directly with them, they would die. (Exo 20:19) This demonstrates that from that point on Moses acted as mediator whereas at first God dealt with them directly. Thus, Moses could not and should not be considered the mediator of the Decalogue unless one is counting the fact that he carried the stone tablets. This however, is a weak argument for Moses being a mediator because God had already commanded this law and wrote it Himself. The book of the law, on the other hand, was taught, spoken, written, and commanded by Moses at God’s direction.

This demonstrates that the law, contextualized in Galatians 3 is not likely the tablets of stone, but the book of the law. The book of the law is even mentioned by name in Galatians 3:10. The phrase, “ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” is a clear reference to Moses who wrote the book of the law by hand.

“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name *is* in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.” (Exo 23:20-22)

It is interesting that God points out that an angel would be sent to guide the children of Israel. They were expected to “obey his voice”. The things that the angel would command them were as if God Himself commanded them because God tells them to “obey his voice” and “do all that I speak”. Though the angel was doing the speaking, his authority to speak was of God. Thus, though the angel was commanding, it was rightly attributed to God.

Thus, we see that as the children of Israel traveled to the Promised Land they were led by God’s angel who would instruct them on behalf of God. Originally, God spoke with them directly “face to face”. From this point on it seems that God interacts with them through an angel and Moses mediates so that the people do not have to deal with God directly. This demonstrates that the law “ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” is clearly the book of the law.

In the New Covenant, there is a new and better mediator: Jesus Christ. (1 Tim 2:5; Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24) Texts that attribute the first mediator being Moses include Heb 9:17-21 and Exo 24:6-8. While there are different mediators and different promises that differentiate the old and new covenant: the Bible is clear that the law remains the same.

Clearly, God dealt directly with the children of Israel in regard to the 10 Commandments. Afterward, they requested that God no longer speak with them directly. Moses became the mediator between God and the people. God commanded statutes and judgments through Moses, who was now mediator. Shortly after, Moses sprinkled the book of the covenant. The people broke the covenant. God kept them in the wilderness for 40 years. After the 40 year period, Moses was instructed to write, command, and give them the “book of the law”. This book was considered a separate covenant in addition to that made at Horeb, when the Israelites received the 10 Commandments. God, thus, re-established His covenant with the surviving generation of Israelites after the 40 year period. Since, God commanded an angel to lead the children of Israel and instruct them, not long after He gave them the 10 Commandments, and this angel was considered to be speaking on God’s behalf: we have no choice but to consider that the 10 Commandments does not fit the criteria to be the law mentioned in Galatians 3.

Moses was the mediator of the external law, codified on paper. He was also a mediator of the Old Covenant through sprinkling blood on the book of the covenant. Additionally, he mediated the additional Moab Covenant which added on to the words of the statutes, judgments, and ordinances given in Horeb apart from the 10 Commandments. However, Moses did not mediate the 10 Commandments themselves: he mediated the covenant agreement. In this way, he enacted the ministration of death. Jesus, in contrast, mediates the New Covenant or the “ministration of the Spirit”. He sends the Holy Spirit, who will not come except He be sent (John 16:7), to write the same law on people’s hearts (as God promised in the words of the New Covenant). Through Jesus’ sacrifice there is pardon and forgiveness which allows the Holy Spirit to do the work of sanctification in the heart of every human believer. Since it is God that does the work in humanity, and not humanity trying to fulfill its promise to do what it can’t do for itself, this ministration is better than the first. It is a ministration of life, rather than death, because God can accomplish it. Human beings, under the old system could not and were condemned to death as breakers of the covenant being unable to uphold their end of the bargain.

With this in mind, 2 Corinthians 3 cannot be interpreted to mean that the 10 Commandments in and of themselves were the ministration of death. That is not what Paul was saying. He's talking about the Old Covenant system under which the people agreed to keep the 10 Commandments and all statutes, judgments, ordinances, etc. that God commanded. He was not talking about the individual commands themselves. This is evident in that it is still a sin to murder, steal, commit adultery, covet, dishonor one's parents, bow down to images, etc. If the 10 Commandments themselves were a ministration of death, and Paul claimed that they were done away with, he would be saying that it is now ok to sin in this manner. However, Paul did not believe this. Peter even points out that there are some who misinterpret or "wrench" Paul's writings to be viewed as if he promoted lawlessness. (2 Peter 3:16-17) Peter, thus, attests that Paul's writings should not be interpreted in this manner.

However, after looking carefully at the passages, it can be seen clearly that Paul was talking about the covenant system when he mentioned "ministration of death" under which sacrifices of blood were necessary to deal with the sin problem and everyone was always guilty. By ministration of life, Paul refers to the Holy Spirit's work of fulfilling God's New Covenant promise. Under this system, there is no death condemnation because God is able to do what humanity could not do. The carnal nature of man is not subject to the law of God. However, through the Holy Spirit's influence, the spiritual man can be subject to the law of God.

The text of Galatians 3 clearly follows this line of thinking. It did not suggest that the 10 Commandments were added after 430 years. Instead, then it speaks about additional laws that were added because of the transgression of the God's moral laws: the 10 Commandments. These laws were added to provide consequences, judgments, and ordinances that dealt with the sin problem. Unfortunately, these additional requirements condemned the sinner because they were always guilty. They demonstrated why humanity needed a savior. It would be a mistake to lump all the laws together in Paul's statement that the law was "added" after 430 years and given to Israel. The Decalogue was codified by then, but it pre-existed the Covenant. Only the laws contained in the "book of the law" were new to the Israelites and added later on specifically for them.

The Law of Moses

Earlier, I stated that there was a scriptural distinction between the 10 Commandments and the Law of Moses. I showed how the book of the law was distinct, but I will now demonstrate that the use of the term "law of Moses" refers specifically to the "book of the law". Before, demonstrating this, however, I would like to point out that all these commandments have their origins with God. Scripture does use the term "law of God" or "law of the Lord" interchangeably. However, it does not use the term "law of Moses" interchangeably. After doing a search of all the instances in which the phrase appears, I can conclusively say that the term "law of Moses" refers exclusively and explicitly to the book of the law or other additional commands given to Moses after the Decalogue (for Moses to command to the people). It never references the 10 Commandments.

The reason why is because, although God originates all the rules and regulations, this particular law was given through Moses. The 10 Commandments were given by God Himself. Even though the commands were given through Moses, this doesn't invalidate that the commands are still God's; however, since Moses was the mediator and because Moses wrote it, the law is attributed to Him. In the sense that all the commands originate with God, they can all be called "the law of God". However, the term "law of Moses" is used in scripture to apply only to the commands which God gave through Moses.

"As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the **book of the law of Moses**, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up *any* iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the **law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.**" (Joshua 8:31-32)

At this point Joshua has passed over the Jordan and he is seeking to follow all of the directions given to him by Moses. Notice that Joshua refers to the Law of Moses as "the book of the law of Moses". This is a clear reference to the title by which Deuteronomy frequently refers to itself, "the book of the law". Joshua, at this point, is following the commands written in this "book of the law of Moses". In doing so, the book of Joshua states that Joshua wrote upon stones a copy of "the law of Moses". This was not talking about engraving the commands on stones, like the 10 Commandments, but rather this would be done by plastering the stones. It is specified in verse 32 that Joshua is specifically making a copy of the law of Moses, which he [Moses] wrote in the presence of the Israelites. Which "book of law" did Moses write in the presence of the Israelites that was to be copied once they crossed over the Jordan and plastered on stone?

"And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaister them with plaister: And thou shalt **write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over**, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee." (Deut 27:2-3)

"And thou shalt **write upon the stones all the words of this law** very plainly." (Deut 27:8)

These passages show clearly that Joshua referred to the book of the covenant as "the book of the law of Moses" and "the law of Moses". It is thus, undeniable that the law of Moses can refer exclusively and specifically to the book we call Deuteronomy—a book which refers to itself as "the book of the law". After looking up Joshua 8:32 in the Septuagint, I found it fascinating that the Septuagint actually uses the word "Deuteronomion" making it without question what Joshua is referring to when he says "law of Moses". The text basically states, "And Joshua wrote upon the stones the second law [Deuteronomion], the law of Moses". (authors translation of Joshua 9:2c in the LXX)

Now that this fact has been established, let's take a look at other uses of the term "Law of Moses". Joshua 22:5 clearly references Deuteronomy where they were commanded to love the Lord their God and keep all of His commands. Joshua 23:6 refers to that which is written in the "book of the law of Moses" which we know Joshua uses to refer to Deuteronomy. 1 Kings 2:3 states that the Israelites should obey all of God's statutes, commands, and judgments as was written in the "law of Moses". There were no statutes and judgments in the 10 Commandments. This is a clear reference to either the "book of the law" or the "book of the Covenant". It is more likely that the reference is to the "book of the law". 2 Kings 14:6 clearly references Deuteronomy since it quotes Deuteronomy 24:16.

"Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to **all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.**" (2 Kings 21:8)

Notice the two criteria set by this verse. First, the people were to do all that "I have commanded them"—a clear reference to the 10 Commandments. Additionally, God adds that the people were to do "all the law that my servant Moses commanded them". The fact that this passage differentiates here is significant. The author could have ended the text at "all that I have commanded them". He chooses not to, feeling the need to specify that they should also do as Moses commanded. Doing "all that God commanded" would certainly include the Law of Moses, since they originate with God. However, for purposes of clarity, the author specifies that they were to do all that God commanded and all that Moses commanded. This was likely so it would be understood that the Decalogue and the Law of Moses were to be kept. Here again, the text likely is referencing Deuteronomy in the phrase "law that my servant Moses commanded them." Deuteronomy 28:1-14 seems to include the concept that the feet of the people would not be moved if they obey God.

2 Kings 23:25 is a reference to Josiah who led reforms based on the book of Deuteronomy. In the preceding verses it can be seen how the festivals and many other commands of God were starting to be practiced. The text, 2 Chronicles 23:18, talks about burnt offerings being offered in the house of the Lord according to the Law of Moses. This is a clear reference to Deuteronomy 12:11-12 which states that God would choose a place for His name to dwell (the tabernacle) and in this place burnt offerings (and other offerings) would be offered. It was also stated that the people were to rejoice, which clearly would imply singing. 2 Chronicles 25:4 references Deuteronomy 24:16. 2 Chronicles 30:16 likely refers to the book of Leviticus and by extension Deuteronomy 12:11-12. 2 Chronicles 33:8 seems to clearly refer to Deuteronomy—there were not statutes and ordinances in the 10 Commandments that were commanded by the hand of Moses. 2 Chronicles 34:14 is another clear reference to the "book of the law of the Lord given by Moses" being given to Josiah. This is clearly the book of Deuteronomy.

The remaining texts, from Ezra to Malachi, each Old Testament reference is a clear reference to the book of Deuteronomy and would not include the 10 Commandments since they were distinct and separate (as proved earlier). The Old Testament therefore clearly uses the term "book of the law" or "law of Moses" to refer to either the specific book of Deuteronomy or the additional commands in the of the covenant as commanded by Moses specifically. The term clearly is used to indicate a "book" of requirements that were spoken, administered and written by Moses. This fact is undeniable.

In the New Testament, we see a similar trend. Luke 2:22 specifically references a command in Leviticus 12:2-4. Luke 24:44, John 1:45, Acts 28:23 can reference Deuteronomy 18 or the other aspects of the law which foreshadowed the coming of Christ. It could not be a reference to the 10 Commandments. John 7:19 is likely a reference to the book of the law, though it could be argued that the Pharisees and the scribes didn't keep the 10 Commandments either. John 7:19 is likely a reference to the commands of Moses. Jesus was likely referring to their breach of these rules and regulations on many levels. However, he is specifically referencing the laws commanded by Moses. He then asks, "why go ye about to kill me?" However, this did not imply that by "none of them keeping the law" Jesus was referring specifically to their intent to kill him. A more likely interpretation is that in addition to breaking many of the commands given by Moses, they were adding to their sin by seeking to kill Jesus for calling them out on their hypocrisy. Thus they were breaking both the law of Moses and the 10 Commandments. However, Jesus was not likely including the 10 Commandments when he stated: "Did not Moses give you a law, and yet none of you keepeth the law". There is not enough evidence to support the fact that Jesus lumped the 2 types of laws together in the light of the fact that all the Old Testament references to the "Law of Moses" clearly distinguish the two.

John 7:22-23 suggests that Moses commanded circumcision continuing the covenant between God and Abraham (Genesis 7:11). It's interesting that none of the books of Moses contain a command from God which told Moses to teach this. Deuteronomy states that the people were to circumcise the foreskin of their hearts. The command was clearly of Moses, though likely encouraged by God.

Acts 13:39 is likely referencing the "book of the law" since they are talking about being justified by the law of Moses. In the book of the law were ceremonies and rituals like the festivals (specifically Yom Kippur) which could not make one truly justified or perfect. They pointed to Christ. Under the Old system, these laws symbolically justified people so that they could participate in the foreshadow of Jesus' ministry as depicted by the feasts and appointed times.

Acts 15:5 points out that there was a large dissention within early Christianity over whether or not new Gentile believers should be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. This was clearly not about keeping the 10 Commandments as there are references which show people in the early church (Jews and Gentiles) keeping the Sabbath. (Acts 13:14, 27, 44; 15:21) It was also clear that the apostles believed and taught that it was not ok to lie, steal, murder, covet, commit adultery, worship idols, etc. There could have been no question about whether or not it was appropriate to keep the 10 Commandments. To the contrary, the question seemed to be about circumcision and the "Law of Moses". Thus, it is likely that the dissention was about whether or not new Gentile converts should keep the additional commands contained in the Law of Moses which would include feasts, appointed times, and many other rituals which were unfamiliar to Gentile customs. James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, ruled on this matter stating that the Gentiles should not be troubled with this. (Acts 15:13-19)

When one considers that the issue was about whether or not to keep the Law of Moses, if that law included the 10 Commandments—James would have ruled that the 10 Commandments no longer need to be kept. It would therefore be ok to lie, steal, kill, commit adultery, covet, bow down to images, etc.

This is clearly not what James decreed. In fact, James expected that Gentiles would be in the synagogue every Sabbath when he stated:

“But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read **in the synagogues every sabbath day.**” (Acts 15:20-21)

Clearly, James understood that the Gentiles would be worshipping alongside Jews in the temple every Sabbath. For this reason, he writes to them about abstaining from idols, sexual immorality, and foods incorrectly prepared. This would alleviate any trouble they might encounter while worshipping with Jews. No serious Bible scholar doubts that James expected the Gentiles to keep the other 9 Commandments. Thus, when the “Law of Moses” is spoken of here, it clearly cannot be referring to the Decalogue. Paul’s writings which speak about a law being “done away” or abolished are a result of this counsel at Jerusalem. Paul did not teach that anything was done away until after the matter was settled at this counsel. Every passage in which Paul discusses the binding nature of the law must be read in the context of this controversy. It was Paul who brought the matter up—He was uncertain and needed there to be consensus in regard to whether or not the Law of Moses was binding. James decreed that it was not.

Thus, when we take into account that it was the “Law of Moses” that was in question between the Jews and Gentiles, one cannot interpret Paul’s writings to be suggesting that all law is done away with. To come to such a conclusion is to not take into account the Jerusalem counsel. Peter even states that some would misinterpret Paul to be suggesting that all law was done away. He affirms that this is not what Paul was saying. (2 Peter 3:15-17) Sadly, many Christians today are repeating the same accusations against Paul that Peter stated were not true. This is because most don’t consider the context of Paul’s discussions about law being done away. The issue was specifically about circumcision and the Law of Moses.

Given these facts, it is clear that by the term “Law of Moses” the book of Acts is referring to the additional commands given by Moses. It is likely specifically referencing the book of the law in Acts 15. This controversy also adds clear evidence that the Law of Moses was a set of civil laws that only applied to Israel (and later to the Jews) during the theocracy. Many of these commands were not applicable to Gentiles. This is why the controversy arose. There was a big question about whether or not Gentiles needed to be more “Jewish” in order to worship God. God did not require them to keep the Jewish traditions which were part of the Jewish economy pointing to Christ. However, clearly, the Seventh Day Sabbath was not included within this question as the Gentiles would be worshipping with the Jews each week. On the other hand, festivals like Passover and appointed times like Yom Kippur, were clearly not binding upon Gentiles. They would not need to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Thus, this evidence makes it clear that the Law of Moses in Acts 15 could not be a reference to the 10 Commandments but was specifically referencing the commands which Moses gave that included rights, ceremonies, and traditions only applicable to Israel. The use of the term seems to be specifically talking about the

content within the “book of the law”; but, regardless, it is focusing specifically on commands which were given by Moses.

Finally, 1 Corinthians 9:9 is a reference to Deuteronomy 25:4. Hebrews 9:19 is a reference to the book of the Covenant. We have now exhausted the use of the term “Law of Moses” in scripture both in the Old and New Testament. The majority of the time it specifically quotes or references the book of Deuteronomy. In a few instances it references the book of the covenant or other commands which Moses specifically gave (but these are rare). It is therefore conclusive that each reference to the phrase “Law of Moses” references a command which God commanded through Moses and not one of the 10 Commandments.

With that said we can conclude that the majority of the time, when the phrase “Law of Moses” is used it’s referring specifically and exclusively to the “book of the Covenant”. Since we earlier proved that the 10 Commandments were not part of this book, though the story of how the 10 Commandments were received is included in the book for historical and contextual purposes, it is conclusive that the Law of Moses and the 10 Commandments were separate and distinct laws though they worked in harmony with one another.

5 Objections to JewFAQ.org

As stated earlier, just because a resource may present a Jewish scholarly position does not make the position correct or Biblical. I will respectfully challenge the information presented on the website using both Old and New Testament references. While, I’m sure, Jewish scholars would not acknowledge the authority of the New Testament, since the New Testament was written largely by Jews and by people familiar with 1st Century Judaism: at the very least the New Testament can give us insight as to how some things were understood. Since my response is really dedicated to Pastor Lynn who accepts the authority of the New Testament, my challenges should be validated. They are as follows:

- 1. According to Jewish tradition, G-d gave the Jewish people 613 mitzvot (commandments). All 613 of those mitzvot are equally sacred, equally binding and equally the word of G-d. All of these mitzvot are treated as equally important, because human beings, with our limited understanding of the universe, have no way of knowing which mitzvot are more important in the eyes of the Creator. (<http://www.jewfaq.org/10.htm>)**

For the most part I would agree that all the commandments are important however, there were things that were more important than others.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” (Matt 23:23)

I don't know that Jesus would have been completely in agreement with Pirkei Avot. Jesus viewed all the commands as important but there were clearly principles which outweighed other principles. For example, Jesus kept the Sabbath yet also healed on the Sabbath. When challenged upon this point, He pointed out that in order for Him to heal, the Father had to be doing the work. He also pointed out that if the life of one's animal was in danger, one would perform the work of relieving the animal without considering it breaking the Sabbath. Thus, the Sabbath was important and necessary, but should not be used as an excuse to ignore human suffering. He concluded that it was "lawful" (and therefore not a breach of the law) to do good on the Sabbath. In another passage Jesus spoke of how people neglected their responsibilities to their parents in order to give gifts to the temple. While it was good, and lawful, to give gifts to the temple, it was not good to neglect one's parents in order to do so.

- 2. But what about the so-called "Ten Commandments," the words recorded in Exodus 20, the words that the Creator Himself wrote on the two stone tablets that Moses brought down from Mount Sinai (Ex. 31:18), which Moses smashed upon seeing the idolatry of the golden calf (Ex. 32:19)? In the Torah, these words are never referred to as the Ten Commandments. In the Torah, they are called Aseret ha-D'varim (Ex. 34:28, Deut. 4:13 and Deut. 10:4). In rabbinical texts, they are referred to as Aseret ha-Dibrot. The words d'varim and dibrot come from the Hebrew root Dalet-Beit-Reish, meaning word, speak or thing; thus, the phrase is accurately translated as the Ten Sayings, the Ten Statements, the Ten Declarations, the Ten Words or even the Ten Things, but not as the Ten Commandments, which would be Aseret ha-Mitzvot.**

It is true that the Exodus 20 account calls the Decalogue "Ten Words", "Ten Declarations", etc. This could be considered the official name of the Decalogue as far as that passage is concerned. However, the website is mistaken in suggesting that they were not commandments.

"And 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 thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." (Deut 5:15)

Notice the passage states that "the Lord thy God commanded". The Hebrew word used here is "tsavah" which is a root word within "mitzvah". The Decalogue was not just a series of 10 sayings: they were commanded ("tsavah"). The same word is used in verse 16. This demonstrates that all the "words of the Lord" were not just spoken but commanded. Thus, though not specifically called the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20, it was understood by the Bible writers that these were commands "mitzvah" of God.

This fact is further solidified when Jesus clearly referred to the 10 Commandments using the Greek word "entole". (Luke 18:20) This same word is used by the Septuagint in Exodus 15:26 to describe "commandments" which one must "give ear to". When the same passage is looked at in Hebrew the word used for "commandments" in the phrase "give ear to his commandments" is mitzvah. This demonstrates a clear instance in which "mitzvah" was translated "entole". This means that Jesus referred to the Decalogue as "Commandments" (or "mitzvah" in Hebrew) since the Greek word "entole" was used. Other instances of this translation include Exodus 16:28; 24:12; Leviticus 4:13, 22, 27; 5:17;

22:31; 26:3, 15; 27:34; and in several places throughout the Old Testament that turned out to be too many for me to write down. In most cases the Hebrew word “Mitzvah” transliterates to “entole” in the Greek. Thus, when Jesus references the “entole” and specifically lists the 10 “Words of the Lord” it is clear that these “ten Words of the Lord” are also referred to as “The Commandments”.

Furthermore, it is not uncommon that scripture calls things by multiple names or interchangeable names. It would be correct to refer to “The Commandments” as the “Ten sayings, words, declarations, etc. of God”. However, since scripture is clear that these 10 sayings were commanded (“tsavah”) and Jesus refers to them as “entole”, it is clear that the 10 Commandments were also Mitzvah (Commandments) required by God of the people. Exodus 20 may not use the term Mitzvah, but this simply means that the Decalogue may have had a different official name. Nevertheless, the official name used in Exodus does not invalidate that the Commandments were considered Mitzvah. It is noteworthy that Jesus used this term for them Himself.

- 3. The Aseret ha-Dibrot are not understood as individual mitzvot; rather, they are categories or classifications of mitzvot. Each of the 613 mitzvot can be subsumed under one of these ten categories, some in more obvious ways than others. For example, the mitzvah not to work on Shabbat rather obviously falls within the category of remembering the Sabbath day and keeping it holy. The mitzvah to fast on Yom Kippur fits into that category somewhat less obviously: all holidays are in some sense a Sabbath, and the category encompasses any mitzvah related to sacred time. The mitzvah not to stand aside while a person's life is in danger fits somewhat obviously into the category against murder. It is not particularly obvious, however, that the mitzvah not to embarrass a person fits within the category against murder: it causes the blood to drain from your face thereby shedding blood.**

For the most part, I’m not in disagreement with this. I do believe that the 10 Commandments or Ten Words could serve as classifications that were further expounded upon in the 613 mitzvot after transgression. I wouldn’t go as far as to say that the Commandments were not Mitzvah, as I explained earlier. I also challenged the idea that the Sabbath was a summary of all other feasts and appointed times (See my earlier comments in regard to this particular claim).

- 4. The website also states that only 7 commands, given to Noah were binding upon humanity. Another section of their website states: “According to traditional Judaism, G-d gave Noah and his family seven commandments to observe when he saved them from the flood. These commandments, referred to as the Noahic or Noahide commandments, are inferred from Genesis Ch. 9, and are as follows: 1) to establish courts of justice; 2) not to commit blasphemy; 3) not to commit idolatry; 4) not to commit incest and adultery; 5) not to commit bloodshed; 6) not to commit robbery; and 7) not to eat flesh cut from a living animal. These commandments are fairly simple and straightforward, and most of them are recognized by most of the world as sound moral principles. Any non-Jew who follows these laws has a place in the world to come.” (<http://www.jewfaq.org/gentiles.htm>)**

I am inclined to disagree with these statements. They suggest that because Noah and his offspring gave rise to the future generations of mankind, that the commands specifically applied to Noah apply to all of humanity specifically. However, by this logic, showing the binding nature of the commandments in the Decalogue becomes really easy. The Seventh Day of Creation was made holy and blessed. Adam and Eve would have respected the sanctity of the day God blessed in Creation. Since Adam and Eve gave rise to the future generations, what was considered holy by them should also be considered holy by their future generations. Thus the Sabbath would be binding upon all of humanity since it originates in Creation the day after Adam and Eve were created. Furthermore, the list for the Gentiles excludes the command against coveting, having other gods before the Creator, lying, and honoring one's parents. By the logic of Judaism presented by this website it would be ok to break these commandments as long as they didn't break the other ones. Such logic is refuted by scripture. (Rev 21:8; Prov 12:22; Gal 5:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:1-7)

I have clearly shown that it was not only these 7 commands that were binding upon Gentiles—the entire Decalogue was binding. The website has it wrong on this point. This may be the Orthodox Jewish interpretation, but the weight of evidence does not declare it to be correct and Biblical.

5. The website declares a different division of the 10 Commandments from that of the Catholics and Protestants.

It suggests that the first commandment is "I am the Lord your God which brought you out of the land of Egypt." (Exo 20:2) The problem is that this isn't a commandment. The phrase or a similar phrase is used throughout the Old Testament as a statement of authority, not as a Commandment. In Exodus 20, the statement is made to contextualize the Decalogue. It was saying, "I am the God who saved you... now here are my commands". The phrase, "I am the Lord..." can be found in Gen 15:7; Gen 28:13; Exodus 6:2; Exodus 6:6; Lev 11:44-45; Lev 18:2; and many other passages. It is never used as a distinct Commandment. Instead, it states the authority behind another Commandment, a promise of God, or something God will do. Thus, the first Commandment is "Thou shalt have no other gods before me". Verse 2 simply states the authority of God behind all the commands listed. In other words, God was saying, "Because I am the Lord and I saved you from Egypt... you will have no other gods, you will not make images, you will not take the name of the Lord in vain, you will remember the Sabbath, you will honor your parents, you will not murder, steal, kill, commit adultery, lie, or covet."

This fact illustrates the one thing that the Jewish scholars often don't recognize. While they tend to lean toward a "works salvation" approach in which if one obeys the Commandments one earns salvation—the Bible, even in the giving of the 10 Commandments, was blatantly stating that salvation was by grace and in response to grace, the Commandments must be kept. God said, "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt" – this was God's salvation by grace. The Israelites did not earn their deliverance from Egypt. It was given to them because God chose to give it to them by grace. They didn't earn the right to leave. Next, God begins to list the Decalogue. This is the response to the already obtained salvation. Thus, works are not a means to salvation, they are a response to it. (Eph 2:8-10)

It is important to emphasize here the right relationship between law and grace. Seventh-day Adventists do not believe that works (even keeping the Decalogue) earn an individual salvation. To suggest that they teach “works salvation”, as do some Jewish believers, is a mistake and a misinterpretation of the belief system. Instead, they teach that we are saved entirely by grace (as most Christian denominations do). However, as a result of the grace given salvation, the Bible teaches that works follow as a result of it. These works include obedience to the 10 Commandments. In regard to the Sabbath, it can be said that no amount of sabbath keeping will earn an individual a place in heaven. Nor will obedience to any other command. However, if we truly love and have been saved by God, obedience to the Commandments is a natural response to the salvation one has received. This is because upon receiving Salvation one is given the Holy Spirit. The mission of the Holy Spirit includes writing God’s law on the hearts of believers. In doing so, God causes people to naturally do the things contained in the law as New Covenant Christians. One cannot reject the work of the Holy Spirit writing the law upon their heart and be a New Covenant Christian. (Romans 8:9)

These facts coupled with the fact that the Commandments usually begin with the phrase “thou shalt not” indicates that the second verse could not be a commandment. Each of the commands is an imperative. The 2nd verse is not imperative but declarative: it declares the factual statement that God is Lord and it was He who delivered them from Egyptian Bondage.

To determine the appropriate division of the Commandments we must look at the phrase which starts each division, but also consider context. Verses 3, 4, and 5 all start with “thou shalt not”; however, verse 5 uses pronouns which connect it with verse 4 declaring verse 5 to be a continuation of verse 4 rather than a separate and distinct command. Verse 7 starts a new command beginning with the same introductory phrase. Verse 8 does not begin with the same introductory phrase because it is a commandment to do something rather than abstain from doing something. Nevertheless it is still an imperative. Verses 9-11 add detail to what was stated in verse 8. Verse 12 also contains a do command and is written as an imperative. Each verse from 13 to 17 all begin with the earlier introductory phrase “thou shalt not...”. Thus, we know that each phrase is a separate and distinct command. Though the phrase is used twice in verse 17, it is used in reference to the same subject which serves only to add detail to the same command rather than make a separate and distinct command. Were this not the case we would also have to divide verse 4 and 5. This would give us 11 commands when we know the Decalogue contains 10 exclusively. Thus, the Protestant interpretation is the most credible and consistent with the Biblical data. Ten different imperatives are presented within ten different subject areas.

In summary, the Jewish interpretations you shared with me through the website were informative about Jewish perspectives. However, the fact that they are Jewish doesn’t make them accurate. On several points I found flaws in many of the statements made on the webpage you asked me to read. As you can see, I took your reference seriously and spent time considering the validity of the arguments you presented and the research you presented to go with it. Consequently, I found the resource to lack credibility in terms of interpretational accuracy. I respect that many Jewish scholars may regard the details presented as fact, but based on my own research and study of the same data, I am forced to come to entirely different conclusions.

Overall, your purpose in sending me to this resource was to prove your general claim that Jews view the Decalogue as a summary or set of categories for the 613 laws. I see the point you're making and agree for the most part, but challenge that assertion in regard to the Sabbath, as I made clear earlier.

Conclusion

In Conclusion, the evidence provided in this response clearly demonstrates the fact that scripture places a clear distinction between the 10 Commandments and the additional commands that were added. The 10 Commandments contained moral laws that applied to all of humanity since Creation while the other laws contained civil laws that governed the people of Israel. Within those civil laws there were often moral principles that were applicable to everyone, but these laws often were attached to things that would only be applicable within the theocracy or with the temple. The 10 Commandments were written on stone and were commanded audibly by God Himself. The additional commands were given by Moses who received many of them through an angel sent by God. The 10 Commandments were placed inside of the Ark of the Covenant; the other laws were placed outside, on the side of the ark. The 10 Commandments were commanded by God at Mount Horeb; the other laws were compiled and commanded at Moab. The book of the law was said to be a testimony or witness against the people. Scripture clearly indicates that the 10 Commandments are good, holy, just, pure, etc.

From the stand point that all of these commands, laws, and rules originate with God they could be considered one law. However, scripture makes clear distinctions between them and treats them as distinct though working in harmony. For example, if the book of the law really included all of the commandments, including the Decalogue, why not put it in the ark instead of the tables of stone with only 10 commands? Why was Aaron's rod that budded and the manna placed in it, but not the book of the law? As was shown, the 10 Commandments certainly summarize the moral requirements, but the book of the law contained civil laws that were specific to Israel (though containing some specific moral commands also).

Furthermore, the moral requirements of 10 Commandments were binding since Creation. The additional commands were added after the Exodus. As was stated, Moses even goes as far as calling the "book of the law" an additional covenant that was distinct from the covenant made at Horeb.

All this evidence clearly demonstrates that there is more than one law; or, at the very least, that there were distinct and separate aspects of the law that were treated and referred to differently. For these reasons I disagree with your response to my earlier post. I hope that you will consider the presented evidence carefully and prayerfully. Feel free to share any Biblical evidence that you find after looking into the claims I presented. Please consider that if there are separate and distinct aspects of the law, then when one states "the law is done away" it must be made clear in the context which law or what aspect of the law was done away. The evidence is conclusive that the term "law" was used in a variety of ways and it is highly unlikely that it would be abolished in its entirety since the New Covenant states that the law will still exist—codified on human hearts. How can the New Covenant do away with the entire

law but state specifically that the law is still binding? For these reasons the context must be considered and a study of the terminology will lead to the conclusion that one law was entirely done away while the other was binding in a new way. Taking under consideration the Jerusalem counsel makes it evident which law came into question. It contextualizes everything Paul wrote in regard to what was done away. Thank you in advance for reading and considering my points. It may be long, but I am thorough in regard to Biblical research. My objective is not to argue but to come to deeper understandings of truth. I'm sure you can tell that I thoughtfully, prayerfully, and diligently considered what you presented. I carefully looked through the scriptures and the resources you gave. Please consider my work as it took much time and energy to both research and type the response. Although we may disagree, this response is submitted to you respectfully and with good intentions.

God Bless,

John Spellman