

# The Ten Commandments - Part 20: The Sabbath and Constantine (8/20/2023)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/dzpcxsg/the-ten-commandments-part-20>

**\*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserving the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Shabbat Shalom,

Today, we will continue to peel back more and more layers of history. For those of you who are bored to death by history, I will do the best I can to keep you awake. But history needs to be a huge part of this discussion considering the controversy that swirls around the topic of the Sabbath and whether or not we should keep it.

With that said, we will jump into the 4th century to a man who needs no introduction, and that is Constantine who is typically called Constantine the Great. He would prove to be (this is without exaggeration) one of the most influential men in the history of Christianity. No question about it.

Up until Constantine, the Christian experience under the Roman Empire was incredibly unfortunate: all the way from Nero persecuting Christians back in the early 60s A.D. to Diocletian in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Now, we are getting into the 4<sup>th</sup> century, but from Nero to Diocletian, the Christian experience under the Roman Empire was horrific. Christians were beaten; tortured; thrown into prisons; targeted; discriminated against; hated; burned at the stake; crucified; and fed to the lions for sport. That was the Christian experience. The church was under unbelievable persecution. Satan was doing everything he could to take the church out by force, and yet it's fascinating that the church grew.

But when Constantine came on the scene in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century, the whole experience totally and radically changed. Constantine provided religious freedom and religious protection for the Christians. No longer would the government target them and discriminate against them. Christians had the ability to freely express their faith according to their conviction.

This was what Constantine set out to do. It began in 313 A.D. with *The Edict of Milan*. The two most powerful men in the world, Constantine, the Western Roman Emperor, and Licinius, the Eastern Roman Emperor, came together for a meeting at Milan. I want to show you what this was about. I want to show you the heart of this meeting. Let's delve into this.

*The Edict of Milan* 313 A.D. – [When we, Constantine and Licinius, emperors, had an interview at Milan and conferred together with respect to the good and security of the commonweal....](#)

You need to understand that the Roman Empire under Diocletian, who came just before Constantine, was very insecure about the power of Rome. They were insecure about its fall and destruction. So, because of the fear of its security, Diocletian split the Roman Empire into four different parts which eventually were absorbed into two; hence Licinius and Constantine. So, understand the historical context. Rome is freaking out. They want to preserve and protect its power.

*The Edict of Milan* 313 A.D. continued – it seemed to us that amongst those things that are profitable to mankind in general, the reverence paid to the Divinity merited our first and chief attention.

Understand the main concern of Licinius and Constantine coming together. What Constantine was concerned about above all things, was the reverence that was due to the divinity, so that they could receive prosperity and protection. That was the very basis of their meeting.

*The Edict of Milan* 313 A.D. continued – and that it was proper that the Christians and all others should have liberty to follow that mode of religion which to each of them appeared best; so that that God, who is seated in heaven, might be benign and propitious to us, and to every one under our government. And therefore we judged it a salutary measure, and one highly consonant to right reason, that no man should be denied leave of attaching himself to the rites of the Christians, – look at this – or to whatever other religion his mind directed him.

Many Christian scholars look at Constantine as this incredible advocate for Christianity, but when you really dig into history, Constantine's vision for the Roman Empire was a little broader than that. His vision was this utopic environment, where the professing Christian could come alongside with the pagan, side by side in society, and worship their God or the pagan's gods, in a way that they felt convicted, to be able to freely express that faith.

I think about what Constantine had envisioned to do within the Roman Empire, and I see how many people perceive that America is supposed to be that very society, one that protects freedom of religion. It doesn't matter if you're a Buddhist; Muslim; Jehovah's Witness; evangelical Christian; or Catholic; we are all supposed to be afforded freedom of religion. That idea of what we experience today in our society is Constantinian. You are experiencing the vision of Constantine.

I want to jump ahead a few years to 321 A.D. where you will see that Constantine built upon the vision he had for the Roman Empire:

*Constantine* March 7<sup>th</sup>, 321 AD – **On the venerable day of the Sun** (*Emphasis added*). This statement is explicitly in the context of religious observance. It's the venerable; it's the honorable; it's a day that is to be revered; specifically, the day of the sun, which what we call today, Sunday. It's the first day of the week.

*Constantine* March 7<sup>th</sup>, 321 AD – **On the venerable day of the Sun, let the magistrates and the people residing in cities** – What is the decree? They're to – **rest, and let all the workshops be closed.** (*Emphasis added*).

Fascinating! Constantine instituted the principle of Sabbath rest, only it's not on Saturday, the seventh day; it is on the day of the sun, Sunday.

Can you imagine being in the Roman Empire at this time? The effect that Constantine had on Rome and the radical changes that he made would be like going into communist China today and flipping it upside down by telling everyone they have freedom of religion and freedom to express their faith however they want. That would be absolutely radical. This was very much the radical nature of Constantine's ascent to power and the impact he had on Roman society.

I want you to see what some people would call the brilliance of Constantine in executing his vision. His vision was to bring Christianity and paganism together and create utopia and harmony. Let me explain what I mean by that statement and why this was so brilliant. This was so brilliant because in the first, second, and even into the third century, there was a real movement within Christianity to abandon the Sabbath and replace it with Sunday, the first day of the week. This was the focus. Many Christians adhered to this. So, Constantine implemented this edict and made the Christian community rejoice. But what's fascinating is that not only did the Christians rejoice, but with the very same edict, the pagans rejoiced. What do I mean by that? Check this out.

Constantine was known to worship Sol Invictus, the Sun god. Even today, we have bronze coins that Constantine minted and were in circulation when he made the statement about resting on the venerable day of the Sun. On one side of the coin is Constantine. What is on the flip side of the coin? Well, it is not the sign of the cross (something that Constantine implemented. Everybody had to put the cross on their shields. It was declared that because of the cross, he was victorious). There's not a menorah, shofar, or any biblical symbol. You would think that Constantine, being this big Christian ruler, would have something biblical on the coin. There isn't even a face of Saint Peter.

On the reverse side of the coin is a picture of Sol Invictus, circulating at the exact time of Constantine's statement about resting on the venerable day of the Sun. The inscription on the coin reads as follows: [In honor of the unconquered sun god, the companion of the emperor.](#)

This is how savvy the statement to rest on the venerable day of the Sun was. Constantine implemented it to appease both the Christians and pagans. An important historical fact is that the height of Sol Invictus, his fame in Rome, and being worshiped reached its pinnacle in the days of Constantine. That is noteworthy.

So, now you read this statement in a very different light. I read it as coming from someone who is a very good politician at bringing peace and harmony between Christianity and paganism. In fact, one of the key factors recognized by some historians, to Constantine's success in getting the Roman citizens to accept Christianity, was his ability to correlate certain aspects and practices of paganism with that of Christianity. Unbelievable! As you start to dig into history, this whole mentality of Constantine being a radical Christian begins to change.

Dr. Gilbert Murray at Oxford University says in *History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge – Mithraism* – According to inscriptions that we have, Mithras is literally called Sol Invictus. Now, when you read the stories, these two become independent victors, but Mithras is called Sol Invictus. – [Mithraism had so much acceptance that it was able to impose on the Christian world its own “Sun”- day in place of the Sabbath; its Sun's birthday, 25th of December, as the birthday of Jesus. \(Emphasis added\).](#)

Wow! Constantine's vision came into society and did exactly what he wanted it to do. If there's anything that the devil is good at, it's mixing the holy with the profane; it's taking beautiful truths and

adding a little bit of lies. This is what he is good at. This is what he did to Eve in the garden; he took the truth, then he told a lie and the lie was that you shall surely not die. The truth was that your eyes will be open. That was true and her eyes were open. Scary!

Moving ahead a few years to 325 A.D. to the Council of Nicaea. This is considered to be the first ecumenical council. It was a worldwide council of churches. There were hundreds of bishops that came from virtually every region of the Roman Empire and even from beyond. There is debate about the exact number, but some estimate about 318 bishops were represented at the meeting.

Who convened this meeting? It was Constantine that called them. He was involved in the discussions of the Nicaean Council. Some of the things that the Nicaea Council covered are things that I would go to bat for and fight for today. For example, I would stand with them on the Nicene Creed.

Arianism was out of control, which ironically Arius himself was present at the Nicaean Council. He didn't sign off on the Nicene Creed, and therefore they deemed him and all his followers that believed that Yeshua never eternally pre-existed heretics. So, there were things that were beautiful at this council where men chose to step up and come against heresy.

But unfortunately, the Nicaean Council would prove to be the epitome of mixing that which is holy with that which is profane. There were other things that were brought to the table that are absolutely Biblically vile. Things, which it's hard to believe, they unanimously believed and supported. I want to show you what I'm talking about. We read the following:

*The Blessed Emperor Constantine* by Eusebius of Caesarea – **At this meeting the question concerning the most holy day of Easter was discussed**, (*Emphasis added*).

The term Easter isn't found. First of all, Eusebius didn't write in English, he wrote in Greek. And when you go to the Greek, the Greek is more akin to the feast of salvation. It's specifically talking about Passover. I want you to understand this. I understand that with the translations, today it is called Ishtar Sunday. This is what it became, but when Eusebius wrote this, it is Passover explicitly. What do we do about Passover? This was the big controversy.

*The Blessed Emperor Constantine* by Eusebius of Caesarea continued – **and it was resolved by united judgment of all present, – they were unanimous – that this feast ought to be kept by all and in every place on one and the same day**. (*Emphasis added*).

You need a little bit of historical context to know what was going on. The Christian community was divided on Passover. I will simplify this for you. One group said that we must keep it exactly how the law says: on the 14th day of the month of Nisan, at evening which is getting into the 15<sup>th</sup>, we need to celebrate the Passover, and we will do it for seven days. And of course, on the seventh day there is the Shabbat. Gentile Christians were clinging to the Sabbath and to the Passover.

Then there was another group of which you're well aware of. Men like Justin Martyr, Mathetes and Victorinus said, "No, we don't need to do that. We need to transfer the solemnity of Passover to the Lord's Day." This had to happen on only one day of the week because they were very uncomfortable with the fact that Passover occurs on a different day of the week every year. That irritated them. That didn't make sense to them, so they wanted to fix it. And unfortunately, they fixed it to the first Sunday, after the full moon, following the spring equinox, which is still observed today as Easter or Ishtar

Sunday. There's a lot of history behind that, and I don't want to get into that. What I want you to focus on is the fact that they're bringing this up shows there's a debate because there are Christians in the fourth century that are holding fast to it.

In fact, let's go back to the second century, around 153 A.D. There was a man by the name of Polycarp who went to Rome to talk to Pope Anicetus. Pope Anicetus was a pretty good guy in regard to the early popes. This guy fought against Marcionism and rebuked Gnosticism. He did all of these things. He was wonderful. But the reason Polycarp (a second-generation believer; a disciple of Apostle John) met with Pope Anicetus was to persuade him to keep Passover on the right day, according to the law, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, because men were abandoning it in the mid 2nd century.

Not even 40 years later, about 190 A.D., a man by the name of Polycrates, also went to Rome and met with Pope Victor and told him that we need to keep the Passover as is written. Polycrates told the Pope to look back at the unbroken chain of succession from John to Polycarp, and then he named all these righteous godly men to the present day. He told the Pope that the keeping of the Passover had never been broken; we haven't turned to the right or to the left; we have not added to or taken away from the word of God; this needs to happen; we need to observe this; Gentile Christians who have been grafted into Israel are clinging on to this. Pope Victor sent him off. That conversation didn't go well at all. The Pope completely rejected that whole notion.

So, understand, as you look through history, it's a fact that Christians kept the Passover and the Sabbats.

*The Blessed Emperor Constantine* by Eusebius of Caesarea continued – [For what can be more becoming or honorable to us than that this feast from which we date our hopes of immortality, should be observed unfailingly by all alike, according to one ascertained order and arrangement? And first of all, it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, \(Emphasis added\).](#)

Mind-blowing! The first reason they gave for saying that they were not going to keep Passover, didn't come from the New Testament, the word of God. Their lips were dripping in antisemitism; they hated the Jews. This was their reasoning? So, it is not an exaggeration to say that early on the church was completely consumed by antisemitism. In fact, much of Christianity was built on it. That gets scary because I can tell you this: people who fall into that realm of antisemitism ultimately go down to the basement, and you will find they are anti-God.

*The Blessed Emperor Constantine* by Eusebius of Caesarea continued – [who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are, therefore, deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul.](#)

Can you feel the love for God's people? Isn't that warm and fuzzy? It gets crazier.

*The Blessed Emperor Constantine* by Eusebius of Caesarea continued – [For we have it in our power, – Talk about delusions of grandeur! This is Constantine – if we abandon – That's exactly what they want to do; abandon the word. – their custom, – Make no mistake, this is not a tradition of men; this is a commandment of God. – to prolong the due observance of this ordinance to future ages, – Constantine wanted to impact the future, and I love this; look at what he said – by a truer order, – There is no truth apart from the lips of the Lord; it doesn't exist. – which we have preserved from the very day of the](#)

passion until the present time. **Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd; for we have received from our savior a different way. (Emphasis added).**

I would love to see the scripture on that. Show me the scripture that tells the Gentile to abandon the ways of God and to abandon His people. Everything I see in scripture tells us the Gentile Christian is clinging on to the Messianic Jew, the one who is righteous.

*The Blessed Emperor Constantine* by Eusebius of Caesarea continued – **To sum up in few words: By the unanimous judgment of all, – They're all *echad* (one); it's evil. – it has been decided that the most holy festival of Ishtar (Easter) should be everywhere celebrated on one in the same day, and it is not seemly that in so holy a thing there should be any division.**

This is history. Do you wonder why the church doesn't even know what a Passover is today or why Christians haven't celebrated a Passover? Don't wonder. The Council of Nicaea was a key instrument in the development of Christian belief and practice. Is it a coincidence that Christians will say, "Israel is over here, and the church is over there?" It's to the point they've created another God who literally governs by another word.

Constantine passed away in 337 A.D. Shortly thereafter, a council convened in Laodicea, which is typically called the Council of Laodicea. They created several canons: 60 canons, or some would say 59, but we won't get into that. They created several canons by which the church must be governed. I will share three of them with you:

*Council of Laodicea Canon 37* – **It is not lawful to receive portions sent from the feasts of the Jews or heretics,** – That is mind-blowing because they grouped the Jews literally with total pagan heretics. They're all one. This was how you were to see the Jew – **nor to feast together with them.**

Isn't that ironic? Did not Paul rebuke Peter because the Jew and Gentile were sitting together, but then the Jews separated? He rebuked them. They were supposed to feast together. Again, we're talking about Messianic Jews. Don't think in your mind and paint this as secular Jews, Orthodox Jews that deny Christ. No, no, no; we are talking about Messianic Jews. And you were not allowed to sit and eat with them! If this isn't the devil, I don't know what is.

*Council of Laodicea Canon 38* – **It is not lawful to receive unleavened bread from the Jews, nor to be partakers of their impiety.**

You weren't able to because they didn't want you to keep the Passover. You could not harmonize and be united with the Messianic Jew.

Then we read the canon which really comes full circle on our topic. *Council of Laodicea Canon 29* – **Christians must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day,**

This was an edict of the church! You could not rest; you had to work. Does that sound familiar? We read it last week: the influence of Ignatius on the church was going all the way into the mid 4th century. They picked up on that. It's significant.

*Council of Laodicea Canon 29 continued – rather honoring the Lord's Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ. (Emphasis added).*

Does this sound familiar today? Today, if someone professes Jesus as Lord, yet are dogmatic about religiously observing the Sabbath and declare that as Christians we are obligated keep His commandments, the rhetoric that comes back so often is, “You are a Pharisaic legalistic heretic, and you have denounced Christ.” This is what people who stand on observing the Sabbath receive today. *Canon 29* is exactly what is being hurled across the bow. It’s incredible that they actually commanded Christians to work on the day that we were commanded by God to rest.

Listen to this bit of history. *A Prayer to Our Father* (Nehemiah Gordon) REF. R.A. Pritz, Nazarene Jewish Christianity) – *When Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, the Nazarenes – Messianic Jews – were persecuted because they observed the seventh-day Sabbath. Their synagogues were closed, their books were burned, and they were forced underground. (Emphasis added).*

It wasn't just Messianic Jews; it went beyond this. It was also those Christians that joined themselves to the Messianic Jews. All of a sudden, persecution was totally removed from the Christian faith so they could celebrate their convictions of the faith that's provided for everyone except for the Messianic Jew and all the Gentile Christians that were grafted in that clung to the commandments of God and kept the Sabbath and celebrated Pesach. Unbelievable!

In the late 6th century and at the turn of the 7th century, there was a man by the name of Pope Gregory. He, like Constantine, bore that little descriptor, Pope Gregory the Great. Even today, Pope Gregory is not just accepted by Roman Catholics, but he's accepted by Protestants as well. John Calvin actually said that he was the last great pope. Pope Gregory had a concern in his kingdom, so he addressed his citizens:

*Pope Gregory the Great – To the Roman Citizens, Gregory, servant of the servants of God, to his most beloved sons the Roman citizens. It has come to my ears that certain men of perverse spirit have sown among you some things that are wrong and opposed to the holy faith, – listen to this – so as to forbid any work from being done on the Sabbath day. (Emphasis added).*

Mind-blowing. Here we are coming into the turn of the 7th century, and there were still Gentile Christians that would not let go of the Shabbat. And it's not just that they did not let go of the Shabbat, but they tried to compel others of what the word of the Lord says, “You need to keep the Sabbath.” This became such an issue; it even came to Pope Gregory’s own ears. This is massive.

I look at the situation in the time of Pope Gregory, and there was a revival happening. They tried to turn the people back to the Lord, to hear His voice. That is happening today.

Let me show you what Pope Gregory said in response to people going with the conviction of the Holy Spirit and attempting to turn people back to the Lord.

*Pope Gregory the Great continued – What else can I call these but preachers of Antichrist, who, when he comes, will cause the Sabbath day as well as the Lord’s Day to be kept free from all work.*



Isn't that interesting. Pope Gregory looked at this and said, "Understand something: as a Christian, if you keep the Sabbath holy and give in to that conviction and listen to the word, you're not listening to God, you're actually listening to the spirit of the devil; you're listening to the antichrist."

I've heard this insanity before. For example, in the gospel of Matthew, Yeshua, the righteousness of the living God came forth, and in power, He set people free with a word. Demons came out of people and the religious Pharisees said that you don't do that except by the ruler of demons. They actually accused Yeshua, when he was performing righteousness, of adhering to the ruler of demons. In other words, the spirit of antichrist. We've seen this garbage peddled before.

What's interesting is if you continue to look at this passage in the gospel of Matthew, Yeshua gave the scariest lecture you've ever heard in your life. The Pharisees had seen the work of the Spirit of the living God. Yeshua said that whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit, their sins will never be forgiven. It's the unpardonable sin. That was Yeshua's response to this kind of garbage: Pope Gregory calling them preachers of Antichrist.

*Pope Gregory the Great* continued – **For because he pretends to die and rise again, – He's talking about the falsehood of the antichrist – he wishes the Lord's Day to be had in reverence; and, because he compels the people to judaize that he may bring back the outward rite of the law, and subject the perfidy of the Jews to himself, he wishes the Sabbath to be observed.** (*Emphasis added*).

Literally, Pope Gregory said that if you adhere to God's word, **"Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy."**, you are listening to the devil and doing his will. Is nobody here disturbed by this rhetoric? Notice the terms being used: you're judaizing; you're bringing yourself back under the law. This is what Pope Gregory warned: don't bring yourself back under the law.

How many conversations have you had when you engaged with someone about the Sabbath and they responded: "I'm not a legalist; I'm not a Pharisee; I'm not putting myself under the law." I kid you not; it's the spirit of antichrist. It's going directly against the word of God. I can go to my Bible and show you in scripture that God commanded us to **remember the Sabbath to keep it holy.**

What I don't find is the antichrist telling us to keep the Sabbath. I don't find that anywhere because when I read in Revelation where it says the dragon was enraged with the woman and goes to make war with the rest of her offspring who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Messiah Yeshua, I find that is who he hates. He hates the people that want to listen to the Lord over men and over him.

Let me build on this and show you what the Catholic church knows.

*Converts Catechism of Catholic Doctrine –*

**Q: Which is the Sabbath day?**

**A: Saturday is the Sabbath day.**

You could end here and say goodbye; close the lab; we're done; it's all you need to know.

**Q: Why then do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?**

**A: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church – notice not because of scripture – with the Council Laodicea (363-364) transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.**



*A Doctrinal Catechism* by Reverend Stephen Kennan, page 174

Q: Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

A: Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her. She could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, **a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.** (*Emphasis added*).

By their own direct admission: you can't support in scripture that God has commanded us to abandon His commandment and to take on a new day.

*Abridgement of Christian Doctrine* by Reverend Henry Tuberville, D.D. of Douay College, page 58

Q: How prove you that the (Catholic) church hath the power to command feasts and holy days?

A: By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, **which Protestants allow of** and therefore they fondly contradict themselves by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church. (*Emphasis added*).

The Catholic church is stepping back and looking at Protestantism dumbfounded. They're dumbfounded because Protestants don't acknowledge the authority of the Catholic church, yet do what the Catholic church has commanded of which there's no scriptural authority.

Q: How prove you that?

A: Because by keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the church's power to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin, and by not keeping the rest of the feast days by her command, they again deny, in fact, the same power.

*Plain Talk About Protestantism of Today* by Monsignor Segur

It was the Catholic Church which by the authority of Jesus Christ, – Messiah Yeshua – has transferred this rest to Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday **by the Protestants is a homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Catholic church.** (*Emphasis added*).

There's truth to that. There's no way to support the abandonment of Sabbath for the first day of the week, this Ishtar Sunday. You cannot do it scripturally, but it can be done if you acknowledge the authority of the Catholic church. Remember, and I think we often forget, Luther who is considered the father of Protestantism (not that Protestants didn't exist before him, but he is the father of it) came out of Catholicism, and he brought a lot with him.

I want to delve into Matthew 15. We looked at the same story in Mark 7, but I was focused on something else when we briefly looked at it. I want to show you something horrifying. We are given a great revelation in Matthew 15. In light of everything that we talked about today and in the previous weeks, it will kind of hit a crescendo.

Matthew 15:1-2 – <sup>1</sup> Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from *Yerushalayim*/Jerusalem came to Yeshua/Jesus, saying, <sup>2</sup> **“Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.”** (*Emphasis added*).

Just a quick reiteration. What was the charge? The Pharisees brought a charge against the apostles. When you bring a charge against someone, it's based upon law. But what's interesting, the charge was not based upon God's law; it was based upon the law of man, the tradition of the rabbis.

Matthew 15:3 – <sup>3</sup> He answered and said to them, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God **because of your tradition?** (Emphasis added).

Amazing! The Pharisees hurled a charge against the apostles: you are not keeping the tradition of the elders. Yeshua responded: you are not keeping the commandments of God. But Yeshua specifically framed it this way: **why do you transgress the commandments of God because of your tradition?** Yeshua showed that they exalted their tradition above the commandments of God. This is what they did. It was more important to them to keep the tradition than to listen to God.

Matthew 15:4 – Yeshua says – <sup>4</sup> For God commanded, – not man – saying, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses his father and mother, let him be put to death.’

This is unreal! Yeshua exposed the error of the way of these legalistic Pharisees. How did Yeshua do that? He cited from the *Aseret ha-D'varim*/ Ten Commandments, specifically the commandment that follows the Sabbath. This is how Yeshua showed them the error of their ways and said, “**God commanded**”. So now we know from Yeshua's own testimony, as He reiterated from the Torah when He spoke to the legalistic Pharisees, that He identified the Ten Commandments as the voice of God. There's no debate.

Matthew 15:5 – In verse four, He said, “**God commanded**”, but in verse five, He began with “**But you say**” – This is not God – <sup>5</sup> **But you say**, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you have might receive from me is a gift of God.” (Emphasis added).

The Pharisees were accustomed to saying, “Hey, mom and dad, I will give to you and help you out, but it's not really for you. I'm not really doing it. This is a gift to the Lord.”

Matthew 15:6 – Yeshua responded – <sup>6</sup> ‘then he need not honor his father or mother.’ **Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.** (Emphasis added).

I want you to think really hard about something. Regarding everything we talked about over the last weeks, does it not concern you (it is mind-blowing to me) that if you are dogmatic, and religious, and feel you need to keep the Sabbath as it's part of the Ten Commandments, the other side hurls an attack saying, “You're a pharisaic legalist. You're denouncing Christ. You're turning from Him.”? Here's the irony. According to Yeshua's definition, Pharisaical legalists are those who abandon the commandment of God for the sake of their own tradition. With this whole concept that Saturday no longer matters (a commandment of God) and has been replaced by Sunday, they are literally holding the traditions of men above the commandments of God. We have a problem. We are not the Pharisees. We are not the legalists.

Matthew 15:7-8 – How does Yeshua respond to this kind of rhetoric that these legalistic Pharisees are peddling? He says – <sup>7</sup> **Hypocrites!** Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: <sup>8</sup> ‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth, – They say “Jesus, Jesus, I follow you” – and honor me with their lips, **but their heart is far from Me.** (Emphasis added).

Look at Deuteronomy 5:29 – The Lord Himself is crying out – <sup>29</sup> ‘Oh that my people had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments.

The Lord determines where your heart is at by your willingness to submit and keep His commandments. That's why He says – <sup>15</sup> **If you love Me, keep My commandments.** (John 14:15). And He says – <sup>10</sup> **If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love.** (John 15:10)

Matthew 15:9 – Then He says – <sup>9</sup> **And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**

Vanity! We have seen it from the late 1<sup>st</sup> century all the way through the ages of the history of Christianity propelling vain worship by abandoning the commandment of God.

If you are a Christian and this is the first time you are hearing this, you need to listen to Yeshua's words very carefully. This is terrifying in the context of our subject, which is literally happening. Christianity has turned into a cult of Pharisaic legalists. They are the ones who are saying that the people who keep the commandments of God are legalists. Only the devil can propel a narrative like that, which is so absurd and ridiculous, to where Christians are not relying on the word of God.

With that said we're going to close.