

The Ten Commandments - Part 25: The Simplicity of Keeping the Sabbath II (8/22/2022)

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/qgps2hs/the-ten-commandments-part-25>

***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.**

Well, I'm going to get right to it. Last week we ended off in the book of Nehemiah, and the whole backdrop to that, if you remember, was the LORD had shown Mercy to His people. He remembered His people and brought His people back to the land. He was planting them in the land, and they're getting going and doing their thing. In the process of that, the LORD sent Shepherds to continue to instruct, guide honestly, and protect to make sure the heart of the LORD is received. They were to make sure the heart of the LORD was involved with His people as they are being replanted in the land.

Well, we're going to circle back because there's more to cover in Nehemiah. There are a couple things which are very fascinating regarding our topic. To start, we will re-read **Nehemiah 13:17- Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day?"**

I love Nehemiah's approach. He doesn't fall into the trap of being politically correct. He's not concerned about carefully crafting and constructing a beautiful collage of words to not offend his own brethren. Instead, Nehemiah does something profound. He comes out and calls sin, sin. What are you thinking? Why are you doing what is pure evil? I can't even imagine the kind of looks he got from the elders as they began to look at one another.

When you start looking at true shepherds like Nehemiah versus false shepherds and false prophets, there's a huge common denominator regarding true prophets. The common denominator of a true prophet is they uncover sin, and they bring the people back to repentance through the word of the LORD. The common denominator for the false prophets is this: they don't uncover the iniquity. Instead, they bury it. In fact, they'll tell you it's okay that you're doing this. They will tell you the LORD loves you, therefore, it is okay, and you'll have peace. No harm is going to come to you. No evil will come upon you even though you're doing these things. It's okay. Don't worry about it. This is literally how these false prophets talk. These false prophets who are recorded in scripture came to teach the people to trust in a lie.

Nehemiah, a true shepherd, does not do that when it comes to the issue of the Sabbath. And that is especially important in the generation we live in today. True prophets, and true shepherds will come deal with this issue.

Now moving on to **Nehemiah 13:18- Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning this Sabbath.**"

(Emphasis added). It's amazing because Nehemiah reminds them of their history: Do you not know what your fathers did? Your fathers did exactly what you're doing.

I again reiterate Romans 15; the things which were written before were written for our learning. And as Paul is going through this list in First Corinthians chapter 10, he's reminding the Corinthians, Gentile Christians, of everything that has been recorded in the Tanakh and specifically the Torah. He says to them: Do you not remember some of the people were idolaters, some of the people were sexually immoral, and some of the people in the wilderness gave into complaining and tempted Yeshua Himself. He reminds them things were written for our admonition. In other words, Gentile, you better learn. Look at these things God did to His own people, and you should learn from them.

It's an amazing thing to consider when you consider what we're reading right now regarding the Sabbath. Nehemiah is trying to get his people to wake up and understand they cannot go on desecrating the Sabbath. Talk about a life lesson for us today. Think about this. Do you want the wrath of God unleashed upon you?

Nehemiah is warning his brethren about profaning the Sabbath. He tells them if they want to walk down that road, the wrath of God will meet you. Is that what you want?

Here's the interesting thing about it: this is what separates the sheep from the goats and whether you're going to believe this or not, (Referring to Nehemiah 13:18), whether you actually believe. Let's be honest, me included, the only way you're going to change your ways is to walk away from the dictates of your own heart, which are the things you want in the world. There is a boatload of love for the LORD including a respect and reverence for His word when you're thinking: If I don't do this, I'm worried about what God is going to unleash on me. I'm worried about my salvation; I'm worried about where I'm going to end up. This is a reality. It is by the fear of the LORD that one departs from evil. And so, you know we can talk about this, and we can look at Nehemiah for examples. As for the sheep, the sheep will heed what they're being told right now, and the goats well, this doesn't really apply to them. However, this absolutely applies to us.

What is interesting is the devil is going to try to convince you to not believe this just as he convinced Eve that it wasn't a big deal if she ate a little bit of fruit. According to the word of the LORD, it was a big deal. That mentality is where you need to be according to the word of the LORD; as found in Nehemiah 13:18. That is one place in scripture where we find Shabbat desecration is defined as evil. Let it sink in.

Let's continue. **Nehemiah 13:19a- So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath.** One important point we really haven't even covered yet is the calculation of when the actual Shabbat begins. It doesn't begin as we calculate our days today, which is midnight. So, at 12:00 a.m. tonight, we'll enter Sunday. That's when we begin our day. This is how we calculate the beginning of days in our times. That's not how you count them biblically, and that's not how you would count observance of Shabbat today. Sabbath starts at Friday night at the going down of the sun, and this is exactly the situation we read about in this verse regarding the gates of Jerusalem as it began to get dark before the Sabbath. Nehemiah knows it's Shabbat, and so he prepares.

Continuing in **Nehemiah 13:19b- ...that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be open till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day.**

Amazing! Nehemiah takes action. He is moving to guard and to defend the Sabbath even to the extent that he is now posting servants at the gates. He's going to post them because he doesn't want what to happen? He doesn't want the burdens, the *massa* in Hebrew, and the large number of people who want to do business on the Sabbath. He doesn't want this because he doesn't want them coming into Jerusalem on the Sabbath because that's profaning the Sabbath.

Now with that said, I want to take this passage to another level. I want to bring it to the prophetic level, and I want to focus on one statement here, and that is this: Nehemiah commanded the gates to be shut. Keep in mind he's giving this command to shut the gates explicitly in the context of Shabbat. And I'm going to tell you on a prophetic level, this is mind-blowing; it is intense. At the same time, I'm going to tell you it's terrifying. Why do I say that? Because what you see happening here is really a prophetic reflection of what Yeshua is talking about in Matthew 25. He tells the parable of the ten virgins. I think most of you have heard the parable at least once. As you get to verse six, there's a cry that goes out to behold the Bridegroom is coming; you need to go out to meet Him. You should be ready because He's coming. And you know that as you read the New Testament, there's a heavy emphasis that Yeshua is coming soon.

So, Yeshua Himself is telling this parable. And right after Matthew 24, all hell breaks loose in the world with tribulation and all the things that would come upon it. Then it goes immediately into His coming. So, the Bridegroom is coming; go out to meet Him.

We're going to pick it up here. **Matthew 25:7- Then all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.** The first thing I want you to keep in mind is there are five wise and five foolish virgins. And we're told they all rise and trim their lamps; this is specifically that they arose from their sleep. And as you go through the New Testament, we find multiple times where sleeping is literally equated to death. So, what we're talking about here is the resurrection of the dead. You can reference what I'm talking about in First Corinthians 15, Thessalonians 4, and John 11.

Yeshua and the apostles are using the term regarding death; they're equating it to sleeping. That is interesting because we're talking about the resurrection. Then we read this in **Matthew 25:8- "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out'.** A side note here: all ten of the virgins have lamps. It is not just five, not just the wise; they all have lamps. And what is the lamp? Well, Thy Word is a lamp unto thy feet.

Now you notice they're all called virgins. They are not five harlots and five virgins; they're all called virgins. These are all people who have the word of God, they identify with the Gospel, but five of them are foolish, and that depiction of foolishness rests in the oil or the lack thereof. Now the wise possess the oil, but the foolish do not possess it. And what is the oil? The oil is what makes the lamp work; it's what makes the lamp shine.

In other words, what does Paul say in **Romans 2:13- For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law are justified.** And James said the same thing: **But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** (James 1:22). In other words, there are going to be some of you who have the word, and guess what? You apply it to your life; you will be considered a wise virgin.

Maybe others of you, and I hope none of you, will have the word, you will know it forward and backward, but not enough to believe it for it to change your life. Not enough for you to let go of the things you love in the world. This is a terrifying parable because they all identify with Yeshua.

Moving on **Matthew 25:9- “But the wise answered, saying, “No, Lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell and buy for yourself.** Go get yourself some oil. But the problem is the cry is the bridegroom's coming right now, and now they're going to go try to find some oil.

Moving on to **Matthew 25:10-“And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding;** How many times you have to read that Yeshua tells you to be watching because He is coming as a thief. He says: let your waist be girded and your lamps burning. They should be on fire because you are consuming this Word not just here. (Pointing to his head), but you are walking it out. You are living it. That's those who are truly watching because they're terrified, they know they're going to act wisely though the Almighty, the Holy One, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords is coming, and I need to be ready.

So, those who were ready went into the wedding. That is interesting. It's called the wedding. Do you know what Shabbat is? Traditionally, Shabbat is identified as a wedding. It is a fact that at times it's called The Bride. Shabbat is a wedding, and we know Yeshua ushers that in, and this is where the righteous go. They go into the Sabbath, millennial rest.

Moving on to **Matthew 25:10- And the door was shut.** The door was shut! That's exactly in the context of Sabbath. Nehemiah goes forth and shuts the doors. Let that sink in for a moment. This, to me, is an incredibly powerful passage on a prophetic level; the depth is intense because now people are shut out. There are people who have entered in, and it's in the context of a wedding. It is in the context of Shabbat. This is mind-blowing.

Let's take this discussion back down for a moment to the practical level by looking at what Nehemiah has done and is doing here. What can you apply to your life right now? How do you practically apply what you're seeing happening right here? I'm going to tell you you're going to shut the gates of your home, you're going to shut the gates of your heart, and you're going to shut the gates of your mind so that you separate yourself and can totally enter Shabbat. You're separating from the world. That means when your employer calls and tells you they have an emergency and need you to come in, you shut the gate. There's going to be no way to get to you because I'm going to tell you right now the devil is going to try his best to get to you. If you're not careful, he will seduce you.

Moving on. **Nehemiah 13:20- Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice.** So, get this: when Nehemiah shuts the gates, the merchants don't go home. They sit right outside the gates of Yerushalayim so that they can be seen. The devil is very brilliant at what he's doing here. He wants to tempt the Jewish people; he wants to tempt God's people. Open those gates, let's do business, come out of those gates, and let's do business. This is what I'm telling you. As you look at the story, it's laying it out on a practical level.

We need to take heed to reality. Let's say you went from not keeping the Shabbat to keeping the Shabbat, I'm going to tell you you're going to have to post guards and servants at the gate doors; you're going to have to lock it down because in every way the enemy is trying to lure you out; he is trying to seduce you.

So, here you have those merchants outside the wall where everyone can see they're there. They have all those wonderful goods the people think they need to buy. How does Nehemiah respond to this? This is awesome. **Nehemiah 13:21- Then I warned them, and said to them, "Why do you spend the night all around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!"** From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath. (Emphasis added).

Nehemiah is a convincing guy. But what I want you to grab hold of here is so important. Nehemiah is willing to go to war to defend the Sabbath. He sent a warning across the bow: don't mess with me when it comes to keeping the Shabbat holy and not desecrating it because I will go to war against you.

We need to have this mentality. I don't mean physical violence; we're talking in the spiritual realm regarding you making decisions and saying no to the world, to your employer, and to those who just want you to come and do a little bit of shopping on the Shabbat. You say, no! You go to war and say, "I absolutely will not. I'm not going to engage in this with you."

This is an amazing thing. It's so important to Nehemiah, that he's willing to do this. Everywhere you look in Scripture, it's life and death. The Shabbat is life and death. But it is not life and death to you if you don't believe it. We read this in the Torah, and this is the Ten Commandments as found in Deuteronomy. That version reads a little bit differently. It says—**Deuteronomy 5:12- Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.** Remember in Exodus 20 it starts off with the word remember. It tells us to remember, *zakar*, the Sabbath. But when the Ten Commandments are reiterated at the end of the Torah in Deuteronomy chapter 5, it doesn't say *zakar*, remember. It says, observe. And when you look at this in the Hebrew, the word is *Shamar*, which means to guard, to keep watch, and to preserve. This is exactly what Nehemiah did. He went to protect and to guard the Sabbath. He implemented everything he needed to implement to ensure the Jewish people would not be brought back under a curse. They wanted to live in liberty. Nehemiah is acting as a wise shepherd.

You know what; husbands and fathers need to act wisely in their house to go and to guard the Sabbath. There are always particular things which can draw us away which are unholy and don't belong. Things we shouldn't be doing on the Sabbath. You need to post whatever you need to post. And when I say servants, you need to be thinking through things strategizing. How do we defend this sacred time. Because I'm not willing to sacrifice my liberty.

Let's go back to Exodus 20. We'll go back to The Ten Commandments. **Exodus 20:8-10- ⁸Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor, and do all your work,¹⁰but seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work...** The Hebrew word is *melakahh*. That means no Commerce, no going to work, no buying, and no selling, but it just doesn't stop there because remember it's *melakahh avodah* meaning no work. That means no labor. In other words, the spectrum is broader in that this is not the day for you to work putting an addition on your house. This is not the day for you to clean the garage, for you to clean the pool, or for you to mow the lawn. It is not the day for you to dig into the garden. For some people, that's very therapeutic; however, that's not Shabbat. When you read Exodus 34, it warns the people they need to keep the Sabbath, "you need to keep the day holy." And then it says even in seed time and in harvest. I want you to think about that. The two most important moments in time are when you plant and when you reap. These are the two most important moments because it is sustenance; that's survival. God says even in the most important moments, which is harvesting our food for survival, we are to step away from that work and cease from doing it. Nothing inhibits your observing the Shabbat. That's how serious God is about all of this.

I want you to think about this concept because this is all about the Spirit of the Law. The Spirit of Torah is very simple. Shabbat is not a day to sow to your flesh, it is a day to sow to the spirit. Everything we do on this day is to create and cultivate an environment of closeness and relationship with Yeshua. That means prayer, praise, and fellowshiping with one another in order to encourage one another. That means studying the word to be able to hear from the Lord. This is how we are to fulfill this command.

Now continuing in **Exodus 20:10B- ...you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.** You want to talk about covering the entire gamut, right? This is not about you alone; this is not just your Sabbath. This is about our sons and our daughters too. I can't go out and say I am not going to work, but I'll make my daughters wash dishes. No! They're not supposed to work either.

I'm going to take it a step further. Notice how it specifically says, "your male servant, your female servant." Now, most of us don't have servants; let's be clear on that. However, business owners do. If you own your own business, you have servants. I want you to hear me on this: you cannot under any circumstance allow your employees at any level to be working on the Sabbath. You need to shut it down. This is the practical application, this is the reality, and it even extends to the cattle.

Historically, this was much more dramatic because the cattle did all the work. They did all the work in farming, agriculture, and in transportation. This is where you put all your belongings you're going to travel with. You put it on your animal, whether a camel or a donkey, they bore a burden as well. And even the beasts have been commanded to cease from work. It's upon us to not lay burdens upon them; they're supposed to take a Sabbath.

If you follow the command, you find no one is excluded. Even the stranger who is within your gates is to take a rest. I don't know about you, but occasionally you'll get someone who comes to stay at your house. Maybe it's family; maybe it's friends. Whoever it is, they're just not into the Sabbath. Then while at your house, they want to wash clothes on the Sabbath. My wife and I have had some interesting discussions with some people we've had stay with us. I have had to tell them they can't do that at our house on the Sabbath. I'm sorry, but you don't even use the dishwasher, and you're not going to be washing clothes because it's the Sabbath. Because it is the Sabbath, we're locking it down. We don't want the TV going. Not even to watch the news or whatever. Those are worldly things; you can do that the rest of the week but not on the Sabbath. We must guard the Sabbath. Sometimes that doesn't always go over so well, but that's a practical application for you.

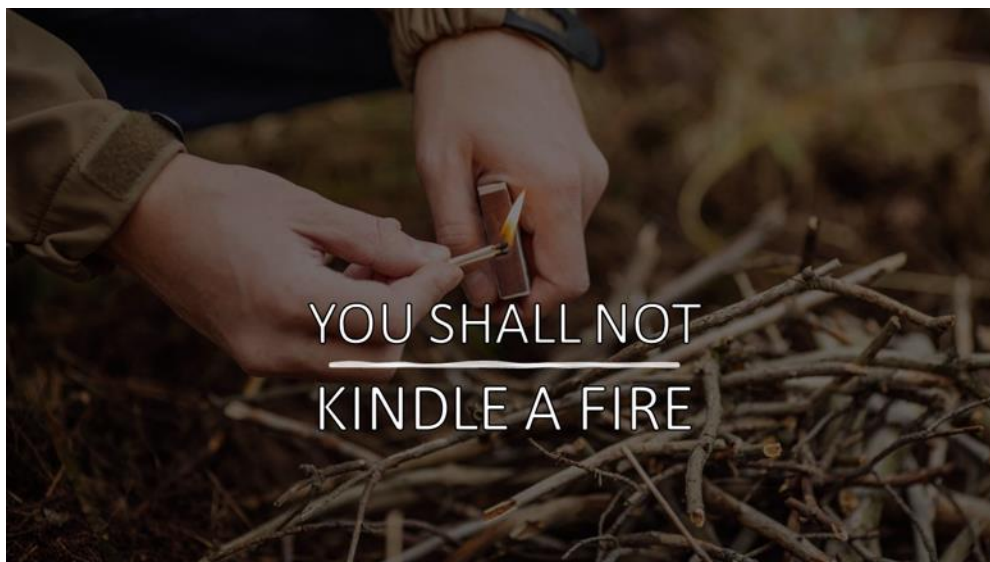
Continuing in **Exodus 20:11-For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.** In other words, you're to keep the Sabbath. You're not to make your servants work. You're not to make even your sons, daughters, or even the cattle work. You're to do this and you're to obey this. Why? Because in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. We are given the reason why, which is awesome. God doesn't have to do this because He's God. He can simply tell us, and we must nod our head and say, "Yes Father, this is what I'm going to do. I will heed You." But God gives you the reason why you are to observe the Sabbath. It's because of Him and what He did. He rested; therefore, we are to follow His example and rest.

So again, I'll reiterate the point: every time you keep the Sabbath, and every time you run into someone at work or otherwise, and they know you keep the Sabbath, you bear witness to the God who created

heaven and earth. You are taking on His character, and His name is glorified when You observe the Sabbath. It is a testimony. This is an awesome testament and testimony which believers in Jesus are supposed to bear.

The devil is trying to convince us otherwise, and we must fight this with scripture. Because of that, I want to add to the list of prohibitions. So far, we know there is no *melakahh* (No work). There is no buying and selling. There is no common labor you would do around the house. This is not a day to exert yourself at the gym. This is a day to sow the spirit. **Exodus 35:2- Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.**

But we are given another prohibition in scripture. It's found in Exodus 35 not in Exodus 20. Scripture explicitly says on this day: You shall not kindle a fire.



It says this in **Exodus 35:2-Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.**

It is interesting that back in chapter 31 we find the exact same statement regarding being put to death. If you want to profane the Sabbath, you are going to be put to death. It reiterates the point just so you can feel the gravity of the situation here in Exodus 35. You want to do work on it, you're going to be put to death.

Then it says this in verse 3, and this is where we get to this prohibition. **Exodus 35:3- You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."**

What's interesting about this prohibition is that this is the only time anywhere in scripture this is commanded. This is called a *hapax legomenon*. There is no other place in scripture you'll find this explicitly laid out as a command; it doesn't exist. Why do I highlight that point? I highlight that point because when you have a situation like this, you typically will find that discussions get interesting. People have ideas and thoughts, and there are varying degrees of understanding regarding what this means and how we are supposed to fulfill this command. Therefore, a lot of questions arise from this.

I'm going to tell you that as I'm looking at just the simplicity of the commandment, it's baffling how complex it can get quickly when men get involved. So, what we want as believers in Yeshua is the Spirit of the Law. When I say, the Spirit of the Law, I'm not talking about what you feel, the emotion, or what you think. When I talk about the Spirit of the Law, I want God's heartbeat behind this commandment. What is His ultimate intent? How do we truly please Him and fulfill this?

So, to begin to help us appreciate this commandment, I want to take you back to the first century. I want to take you to two external sources outside of the Bible and even outside of Talmud and the *Mishnah*. We're going to go back to the first century and look at two very important Jewish sources. These men identify very well with the Torah.

The first one I want to bring to the table is Josephus the Roman, Jewish historian. I've said many times that the writings of Josephus, or what would typically be called today the complete works of Josephus, which would include the *Antiquities of the Jews*, and the *Wars of the Jews*, are probably some of the most critical and vital historical documents we have today. They are invaluable resources of Josephus recording all these important things.

About the time-period he wrote about was the first century. He was recording aspects of the Jewish Nation, of the different sects of Judaism, the different beliefs within Judaism, and the fall of the temple. He even talks about John the Baptist and Yeshua. He talks about the followers of Yeshua being called Christians. It is amazing.

So, Josephus, in his writing *Wars of the Jews*, goes through this discourse talking about a particular Jewish sect known as the Essenes. The Essenes are typically thought to be the ones responsible for housing the Dead Sea Scrolls. People think this was the community. Josephus gives an incredible, comprehensive explanation of what they believed and what they looked like. And in the midst of his writing, he addresses this very commandment. I want to show this to you. This is going to help begin to give us a perspective of what it was like in the days of the Apostles. This is what we read: *Moreover, they [the Essenes] are stricter than any other of the Jews in resting from their labors on the seventh day; for they not only get their food ready the day before, that they may not be obliged to kindle a fire on that day.* (The Works of Josephus. Wars of the Jews, 2,147).

Now, that absolutely fascinates me, and I'll tell you why: according to the mind of the Essenes, the way they understood this commandment is they weren't going to cook, bake, or do their stuff on Sabbath in order to fulfill the commandment found in Exodus 35:3 regarding not kindling a fire. So, in an Essene mind, the emphasis is very much placed upon the idea of not kindling a fire versus not baking on Shabbat. That is fascinating.

Now, I want to read you something found in **Exodus 16:23- Then he said to them, This is what the LORD has said: "Tomorrow is the Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains to be kept until morning.** (Emphasis added). As we get into this verse, we find this to be totally unambiguous. This is the first time Israel is explicitly commanded to observe the Seventh Day Sabbath. The first time was not Exodus 20; in Exodus 16 we find this directive. It states here, specifically attached to Sabbath observance, that Israel is told not bake or boil. They were to do that on the preparation day. They were to do that on Friday.

This is fascinating because according to the Essenes, as they were looking at this command, and their understanding is not necessarily mine, but their understanding is this was only said because of what Exodus 35 says regarding kindling a fire. They believe the basis of this commandment is merely a byproduct of the command not to kindle a fire.

That is an interesting thought. I will point out that nowhere in Exodus 16 does it talk about the prohibition of kindling the fire. The Essenes would probably argue today, "Well, that is implied."

Let me build on this. I want to take you to our other first century Jewish commentator and prolific Exige philosopher known as Philo. His commentary on this is incredible. So, I want you to pay very close attention to how he takes up the issue. [It is forbidden also on this day \[the Sabbath\] to kindle a fire, as being the beginning and seed of all the business of life; since without fire it is not possible to make any of the things which are indispensably necessary for life, so that men in the absence of one single element, the highest and most ancient of all, are cut off from all works and employments of arts, especially from all handicraft trades, and also from all particular services.](#) (The Works of Philo. Special Laws 11, 2).

This is an incredible insight. As you look at Philo, Philo almost takes an opposite position to the Essenes in the sense that the Essenes believe the whole concept of this *melakah*, (No Work), which baking on Shabbat would fall under, is a byproduct of the kindling of fire. Philo recognizes that all *melakah*, which is banned, is performed through the vessel of fire. Keeping in mind the *melakah* portion is mentioned multiple times before you ever get to Exodus 35, Philo recognizes it would make sense for God to restrict the use of fire because of its direct association with *melakah*. (No work). Fire is being used as a tool to accomplish that. That is absolutely amazing.

When you look at Philo's discourse, this kind of gets into what I would call the Spirit of the Law because you truly are getting into its purpose and direction, if you will. Let me add this to the discussion. When you think about kindling a fire, especially in the historical context, they didn't have lighters and matches to kindle a fire. And think about the man in Numbers 15 who was going around on the Sabbath collecting sticks; he was stoned. The LORD told Moses and Aaron to put him to death. To kindle a fire on the Sabbath is a very laborious task from the collecting, to the cutting, to the chopping, and then to try to start it. There was an extreme amount of labor involved in kindling a fire. So, this is important and we need to put it into context.

Let me build on that by taking you to the Jewish Publication Society's commentary on this very thing. it says: [The manner in which the prohibition against kindling fire on the Sabbath is worded led the rabbis of the Talmud to understand that fire may not be kindled on the Sabbath itself; however, fire lit before the Sabbath and not refueled on the Sabbath is permitted.](#) (The JPS Torah Commentary. Nahum M Sarna, Exodus).

So, now we get into the Talmud the rabbinic mindset in the Mishnah (Which is the main text of the Talmud). The Tannaim is where the rabbinic sages views are recorded in the Mishnah. Their viewpoint is as they read the Commandment in Exodus 35, it says *Uv'Yom HaSabbat*. That is what the rabbis have read. And without a question, we're talking about lighting a fire on the Sabbath. The ancient sages believed it was totally permissible to light the fire before the Shabbat and let it burn into the Shabbat. They didn't find anything wrong with that. Now a debate can arise as to whether you have the ability to refuel the fire. And traditionally according to rabbinic authorities that would not be permissible on Shabbat. However, the altar of the LORD would be excluded from that.

Now I bring all these things to the table for you to ponder regarding this simple commandment. If you go back to Exodus 35:2, you get a vast understanding of Exodus 35:3 where it says you shall kindle no fire on the Sabbath from the preceding verse, 35:2, which specifically says you're not to do any *melakah* (No Work). And the reason I bring that up is from a biblical standpoint. The whole kindling of fire has everything to do with *melakah*. That's why I appreciate Philo's commentary where he directly connects these two things. I think it's absolutely appropriate.

So, what does it mean for us today regarding a spiritual level and carrying out the spirit of Torah? I'm going to start here. There are some rabbinic authorities who would say you can't turn on a light switch. They actually have Shabbat elevators, so you don't have to push the button. Some interpretations present that you can't drive cars on the Sabbath because there's a spark that starts when you turn the ignition, and that could be considered lighting a fire on Shabbat.

Then we could consider our furnaces. In Minnesota, when it gets to 30, 40, or 50 below with the wind chill, furnaces are a wonderful thing to have. However, there is the problem that a furnace will kick on and kick off. Each time it kicks on, there is a flame being ignited. There is a fire started.

Then there is another important example. What about those who have a wood stove, and they literally heat their entire house with that wood stove. My grandparents' house was totally heated by two wood stoves. Is it the Spirit of the Law to say that you load up as much wood into your little pot belly stove, and however far that goes that's what you get? If the pipes start freezing and your kids start freezing, you're just out of luck. Is that the concept of what the LORD is conveying here? I'm going to tell you that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. You must understand the whole concept of *melakah* to truly understand the concept that you should not kindle a fire. If you don't have the concept of *melakah*, you will never come to a proper understanding of kindling of fire.

I will say that if you are one of those who do have a wood stove, and this is how you heat your house, you absolutely can't be cutting or collecting wood on the Sabbath. That must be done the day before. You need to have the preparation day so that if it is 40 below outside with wind chill, and you have your little pot belly stove that will need more wood four or five times on Shabbat, you better make sure that everything is there before the Sabbath starts. The Spirit of the Law would tell you that you will have everything prepared so all you must do is open the door of the stove and drop the wood in.

Now that being said, you won't find me lighting up my grill on Shabbat. I'm not doing it. Remember that the whole concept of what Philo is communicating would include the baking. Even the Essenes saw the connection between the cooking and the fire. I'm not going to do that. We're to have our food prepared the day before; there's no question about that. And again, baking falls under *melakah* (No work).

So, as we dig into this, you need to start thinking through some of these things regarding how you function in your life on the Shabbat. Most of the work ends up being done on preparation day. I will probably get a lot of questions about this topic. And that is good because there will be questions that I have not even thought of. So, you are welcome to send those in so we can then start navigating through these questions. It is about acquiring the Spirit of the Law. It is not about getting into the minds of men and turning the Shabbat into something that it's not.

With that said, I want to take you back to Exodus 16 because there is another prohibition here that we need to cover. **Exodus 16:29- See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath: therefore He gives you on**

the sixth day bread for two days. On the preparation day, the LORD gives enough. There's no question about that. **Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.** A *hapax legomenon*. (This means a Greek term being said once). This is the only time this is found anywhere at all in scripture. That means there's going to be some really fascinating discussion and interpretation of that this actually means.

One of those would be one of the early Church Fathers named Origen. Through his exposure to Rabbinic Theology and even Samaritan theology, Origen talks about a teacher named Dotseth who has a flock, he's a prominent teacher, and he was instructing his followers that whatever position that you're in on the start of the Sabbath, whether you are sitting down or are standing up, you must stay in that exact position throughout the whole Sabbath. Could you imagine that? And Origen is rolling his eyes saying that this is totally absurd. That's how some people, in the extreme case, have understood and interpreted the command, "Let man remain in his place" (Referring to Exodus 16:19). That's how he understood it.

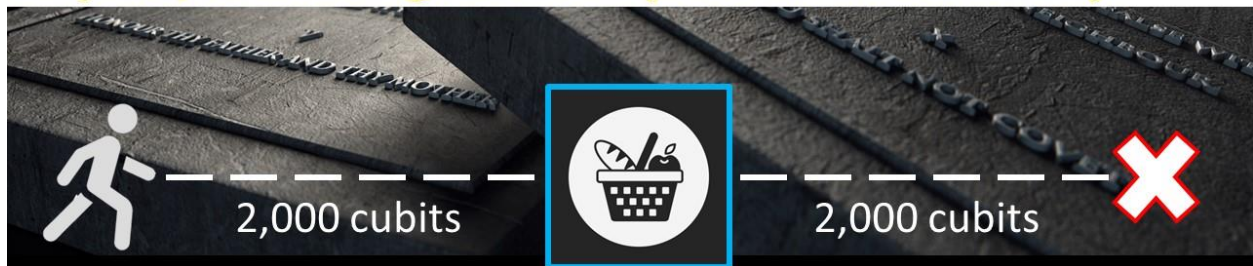
Then we can look at the ancient Sages. The Rabbis affixed an actual marker to the command. The marker was 2,000 cubits, so you're talking about 3,000 feet or well over a half mile, which is a long distance. However, the thing about it is nowhere anywhere in Scripture can you find a limitation on travel. It doesn't exist.

Where the Rabbis get these 2,000 cubits is from chapter three in the Book of Joshua. This is where the Israelites were commanded to maintain a distance from the Ark of two thousand cubits lest there be problems, and so Israel had to remain this distance. The Rabbis took that command, which has nothing whatsoever with the Sabbath, and applied it to what would commonly be referred to today as the Sabbath day's journey. This is how they came up with it.

However, the Rabbis got inventive with this. If you dropped a food basket, which was considered part of your dwelling, you can go 2,000 cubits to your own dwelling, you're going from your dwelling to a temporary dwelling, and now you get to go another 2,000 cubits. And so, it's interesting that even with their own laws they became very creative at extending those laws so they could go farther.

EXODUS 16:29

See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath: therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. **Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.**



So, when you look at this, what does it mean to not go out of your place? I'm going to show you this because this one is very cut and dry. When we go back to Exodus 16:27 we read the following—**Now it happened that some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather (manna) but they found none.** (Emphasis added). What was the actual command? You were not to go out and collect manna on the Sabbath. That was prohibited. This day is sanctified by the LORD. So, the LORD Himself observed the Sabbath in the sense that He didn't give the manna on the Sabbath.

Moving to **Exodus 16:28- And the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws?"** They went out looking for sustenance, the very thing that would keep them alive, but the LORD already told them don't do it. So, it comes to the decision of the people: either they are going to listen to the LORD or not. Apparently, some were not. And then the LORD says, "You're refusing to keep My commandments" (In the plural) "and My laws" (In the plural). This is true because if you break one you break them all.

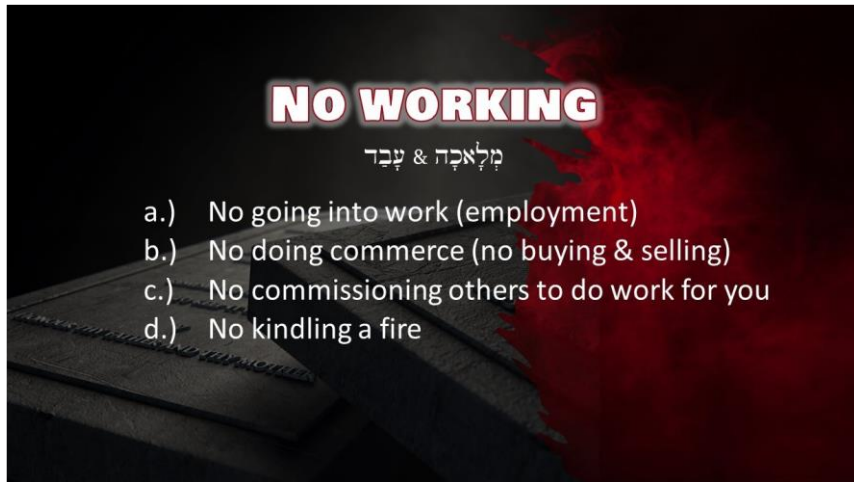
Then in verse 29, we get to the root of this. **Exodus 16:29- "See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath: therefore He gives you on the six day bread for two days.** He is supplying this is on the Friday preparation. And then he says—**Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.** The whole context of this statement was that they were not to go out to collect manna. And the LORD is telling them, no, this is not what you're supposed to do. I told you not to do this, and the way He expresses that command is to tell them—**Let every man stay in his own place.** There is nothing in scripture regarding a prohibition about how far you can walk on the Sabbath; it doesn't exist. That is a complete interpretation of man.

However, I will say this, if you're going to go out for a 10-mile run on the Sabbath, then you don't understand the Spirit of the Sabbath. That's not what the Sabbath is about. This is not typically the day you would want to travel. How are you going to travel? How are you going to get on a plane without

making other people work? How are you going to get on a plane without committing commerce? How do you do those things? It just doesn't make sense.

When my wife and I fly out to different places, we never would consider flying anywhere that would involve flying on the Sabbath or even close to Shabbat because flights can be delayed. There's some common sense involved to know where you need to have the Spirit of the Law regarding the observance of the Sabbath.

So, as we look at this, we can simplify it because there is a beautiful simplicity to observing the Sabbath.



We could add to this as part of *melakah*, no cooking, no baking, no boiling, no doing any of that. We're supposed to cease *melakah* on this day to be completely Holy unto the LORD.

Now we're going to stop here. Next week is going to be the last week on the Sabbath. So, I'm excited to close this part of the Ten Commandments. We get to move on to the rest of

the Ten Commandments.