



# Links Players

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## Penalties and Passover

*For Christ, our Passover lamb has been sacrificed. (1 Corinthians 5:7, ESV)*

Golf penalties can be brutal. For example, Mark Roe and Jesper Parnevik were disqualified in the 2003 British Open for failing to exchange scorecards before teeing off. And who can forget when Dennis Johnson grounded his club on the 72nd hole in the 2010 PGA Championship costing him two strokes and a playoff with Kymer and Watson? The smallest of errors can lead to devastating consequences in golf. But without the rules, there can be no game.

Rule breaking in the Bible is significantly more serious. A quick overview of the Mosaic law reveals harsh penalties for moral disobedience, civil conflict, and ceremonial missteps. All of which were necessary for the young nation of Israel chosen to carry the seed of the promised Messiah.

Of all the Old Testament laws, idolatry was the most serious offense. It is no coincidence that it is the first of the ten commandments: You shall have no other gods before me (Exodus 20:3). Child sacrifice, divination, sorcery, witchcraft, consultation of a medium, as well as sexual sins were all associated with the idol worship of foreign nations.

Over time, the chaos and harm caused by these idolatrous practices would destroy any nation, including Israel. The Lord's legislation established through Moses was His wise and loving act of protection.

Individuals, as well as nations, are subject to penalties for abandoning the truths of God. Whether by ignorance, accident, or choice, we are all law-breakers, prone to bow down to the gods of our time. The consequences are unavoidable; we reap what we sow. And, as the Apostle Paul noted, "The wages of sin are death." (Romans 6:23). So who will save us from our disobedience and our failures?

Jesus entered Jerusalem two thousand years ago during the Passover festival. He humbly rides a donkey into the city as the people celebrate his arrival. When evening arrives, Jesus gathers his twelve disciples at the dinner table for the Passover meal, comprised of bread and wine only. There is no lamb served to harken back to the sacrificial lamb's blood and the protection it provided from God's judgment.

Then Jesus says to his friends, "Take this [bread and wine] and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

Behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the world's sin (John 1:29). No more sacrificial lambs are needed. Jesus is the fulfillment of all the Old Testament narratives, laws, and traditions—there is now a new covenant in his blood. He is forever our meal of salvation. Take and eat. Drink. Your sins have been passed over.

**Prayer: Jesus, thank you. You were pierced for my transgressions, crushed for my iniquities. The punishment that brought me peace was on you; by your wounds, I am healed.**

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Boo Arnold

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