



# Links Players

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## A Different Lens

*And behold, a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" Luke 10:25-26 NASB*

I asked my caddy if the putt was downhill. He said, "Yes, a little downhill." It was a lot downhill, and I hit it past the hole and missed my comeback putt. The Epson Tour player asked me whether she should allow her caddy to read her putts.

Reading greens requires clear analysis through what you see, past experience, and practice. Ultimately, a caddy can assist, but the player must process the information and execute it. Understanding the Bible often feels like reading a fast, undulating sixty-foot putt. Bible teacher and author Brad Gray says, "The Bible was written for real people in real places in real situations at real times. Yet most of us don't take into consideration the Bible's context."

The Bible is not a modern text. Its clarity and meaning are not straightforward. Gray adds, "We need to read and then interpret the Bible through the lens of its original context."

This is what Jesus did when he pointed the lawyer back to the Torah and asked him, "How does it read to you?" He sent the Lawyer back to the origin of his question – back to the laws written to the Israelites, laws for them to follow that set them apart from other nations.

In a previous devotion, I referred to the Ten Commandments as the "Ten Sayings." In the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), the words on the tablets are called Aseret ha-D'varim in Hebrew. D'varim comes from the Hebrew root Dalet-Beit-Reish, meaning word, speak, or thing.

Now that we know a little Hebrew, we can accurately translate Aseret ha-D'varim as Ten Sayings, Ten Statements, and Ten Declarations, but it does not accurately translate to Ten Commandments. Whatever you decide to call them, understanding context reveals the Ten Sayings are more than individual laws; they are ten categories.

There are six hundred and thirteen laws written throughout the Torah. The Israelites knew each one of these laws and failed to follow them. We also fall short at upholding God's moral code and living in his wisdom.

Thankfully, we aren't bound by the law (it still provides moral code and wisdom); we are bound to the one who fulfilled the law - Jesus (Matthew 5:17).

Brad Gray challenges his readers, "Are we doing the best we can to read responsibly?" Context matters, and learning to read greens requires expanding our tools, asking different questions, and a lot of practice.

Let us not be like the Lawyer (an expert in Mosaic law) who, by testing Jesus, missed the depth of God's Story. In a future devotional, I will share a framework for reading the Bible in context. Stay tuned.

Prayer: Lord, help me today to be willing to dig into your Word with curiosity and wonder.

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