



## The Ten Commandments

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Scripture: Ex. 20:3-17 & Deut. 5:6-21

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### God's Law

God, as he was bringing the people out of the land of Egypt, gave Moses His Law for the nation of Israel.

God's Law consisted of Ten Commandments. (*Deut 5:6-21*)

1. *You shall have no other gods before me.*
2. *You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*
3. *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.*
4. *Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you.*
5. *Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you.*
6. *You shall not murder.*
7. *You shall not commit adultery.*
8. *You shall not steal.*
9. *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*
10. *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

There are two places in the Bible where the Ten Commandments are written; in Exodus 20:3-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

In Exodus the Law is given for the first time to Moses on Mt. Sinai. The nation of Israel had just come out of Egypt and was preparing to build the tabernacle of God among them.

The Deuteronomy account was recorded after the nation of Israel had wandered in the wilderness for 38 years and was again at the edge of the Promised Land in the plains of Moab.

Moses was getting old and knew that he would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land with the rest of the nation. (*cf. Deut 1:37*) Moses wanted to help the Israelites prepare to take the land so he reminded them all the things that God had done for them and of the Laws that God commanded them.

*Why was the Law recorded twice in the Bible?*

We can find the answer to the question in the book of Romans chapters 3 and 7.

In Romans 3:19-20 it says that the Law was given "that through the Law comes the knowledge of sin." This means that we would not even know what sin was without the Ten Commandments.

When we look at the Law we must admit our sin. (*cf. Rom 3:23*)

The second time that the Law was given was to show that man is completely unable to save himself through the Law. It pointed to the fact that Jesus fulfilled the Law and by his death saved us from punishment under the Law.

Man can not deal with a Holy God without some way to pay for the violation of His holiness. Jesus Christ is that payment.

Now to the actual Commandments or Laws themselves. Let's look at them one

at a time to see how we can apply them to our lives and to see what God promises.

1. *You shall have no other gods before me.*

God said I must be first, the only God in your life. There are no other gods. Notice that the Bible uses a capital "G" for God and a lower case "g" for gods. This is significant. This sentence not only prohibits all types of idolatry; in word, in thought, in deed; but also is a requirement to worship God.

2. *You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

After God says with the first commandment that He is the one true God, He places a serious penalty for worshipping any idols.

Would God really punish the children for the sins of their parents?

No way! What God is saying here is that if your parents sin a particular way, lying for example, then you are very very likely to lie as well. Why because you have been taught that from your parents. So if your parents committed the sins of idol worship and you saw it everyday in your house you would probably worship the idol.

Does this mean that you are doomed to commit all of the sins of your parents? No. You are going to be responsible for your own sins. (*Rom 2:5-7, Ps 62:12*)

God also has a blessing in this verse that he will show lovingkindness to thousands to those who love Him. So does this mean that if we love God then lots of people will benefit? Well if you tell

everyone that you know about God and pray for them and obey God in relation to them then YES! Your friends and family will see your life and know that it is because of God that you are the way you are and will glorify God because of it.

3. *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.*

We have all heard someone do this and at times may have done it ourselves. Have you ever wondered why people cuss God's name? I mean why not say Budda or Krishna or something else? It is because the name of God is Holy and His name has power when used properly, so Satan wants to make it ugly and cheap.

*Do you think that God really punishes people for cussing His name?*

I mean we have all heard someone say it and they didn't die or break out in leprosy or go blind did they?

No but a missed blessing is a sure a punishment as a swat on the bottom. Which would be worse missing out on some great treat or getting a swat? Sometimes that is quite a choice isn't it? You see God does not always have to give you a "spanking" to punish you. God will use whatever device He needs to get you to do the right thing.

4. *Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you.*

The Sabbath day, the day of rest belonging to the Lord, was first instituted here as a command.

This is God teaching us by example; He rested from His work of creation on the seventh day. (*Gen 2:3*)

God is telling us to set apart one day a week to rest and totally focus ourselves on Him.

*What does it mean to totally focus on God?*

We must set aside all of the cares and influences of this world and concentrate our minds on God. We could read about Him in His word or sing about Him or go to church and praise Him or one of millions of other things in which God is the focus of the day.

5. *Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you.*

In commandment 5 we have the first commandment with a promise, "that it may go well with you".

Fellow men or neighbors are to be loved (Lev 19:18): parents are to be honored and feared; reverence is to be shown them with heart, mouth, and hand – in thought, word, and deed.

Our parents are responsible before God for our lives. We owe them honor and respect.

If we obey our parents God blesses us first with a peaceful life at home. If we obey our parents we won't be struggling or fighting with them.

The next 5 commandments are summed up in Lev 19:18. "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

6. *You shall not murder.*

God calls killing wrong. God is the author and creator of life and as such is the only one who is allowed to take it.

7. *You shall not commit adultery.*

God says one man for one woman. Adultery is a violation of the trust of marriage. This is a sin of pride and of humiliation and should always be avoided.

8. *You shall not steal.*

Stealing is taking something that does not belong to you. If it is your mom's or your dad's then it is not yours.

Stealing in the bible also refers to destruction of someone else's property or keeping something loaned to you simply because the owner has not asked for it back.

We must be people of character. We must always live above the standard of this world.

9. *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

The ninth commandment really has to commands: you should not lie, and you should not support someone else's lie.

This command also requires that you tell the truth when no one else will. If you know the truth about something and you do not tell it you might as well be lying.

10. *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

The tenth commandment is a