

The Ten Commandments

Exodus Chapter 20

The same account is found in Deuteronomy 5

Exd 20:1 **1) God's Moral Law - The 10 Commandments** vs 1 - 17

Then God spoke all these words, saying,

Exd 20:2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

- God speaks to all the people. (2.5 million people)
 - End of chapter 19 Moses comes down from the mountain.
 - There isn't any mention of him going back up before the Lord speaks.
 - Vs 18 +19 the people ask that God speak to Moses then Moses to them after they heard the voice and saw and heard lightening and thunder on the mountain.
 - Deut 5:4 Moses recounts this scene and says the Lord talked to the people face to face.
 - Deut 5:22 Again Moses tells that the people heard and then came to him to become an intermediary.

"These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me."
- God identifies who He is (therefore He has the right to give commands)
 - The Lord (*Yehova*) - "the existing One" - the proper name of God
 - Your God (*Elohiym*) - "God, divine one, ruler, judge"
 - The One who delivered you. - the deliver now has the right over those delivered.

Exd 20:3 1)"You shall have no other gods before Me.

LOVE
GOD

- No other gods (*elohiym* - god, ruler judge)
- Before me (Greek *paniym* - in my face) This does not mean that a person can have other gods and add Jehovah and put him first. This is stating there is to be no other gods at all.
- Idolatry is worshipping other Gods.
- 1 Corinthians 10:14 tells us to flee from idolatry.
- Scripture also teaches that idolaters will not be granted to heaven.
(1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Ephesians 5:5, Revelation 21:8, 22:15)

Exd 20:4 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.

Exd 20:5 "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 the fourth generations of those who hate Me,

Exd 20:6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

- This commandment goes beyond just carving images of false gods into rock or stone.
- It speaks of making things and setting them before us to aid us in worship.
- This is fascinating that the Roman Catholic Church has removed this commandment from their list of 10. to make up for it they divide the 10th into two. The Roman Catholic Church is relies heavily on icons (images/idols) to aid them in their worship, and often times aids them away from worshipping God alone.
- John 4:24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth"
- Romans 1:22-23 tells us the failure associated with using images in worship "Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man; and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things."
- God Declares He Is Jealous - "God's jealousy is love in action. He refuses to share the human heart with any rival, not because He is selfish and wants us all for Himself, but because He knows that upon that loyalty to Him depends our very moral life . . . God is not jealous of us: He is jealous for us." (Alan Redpath)
- Visiting iniquity on children to the 3rd and 4th generation catches our attention but this judgment is just. The focus should be on "of those who HATE ME." (also see Ezekiel 18:18-22)

Exd 20:7 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.

- Ray Comfort uses this one in his evangelism technique. He'll say "Have you ever used God's name in vain? The gracious God who made you, gave you life, had given you breath today and who sustains you and offers you an escape from eternal torment. Have you used this wonderfully gracious God's holy name as a word of disgust or profanity?" This breaks the 3rd commandment.
- Matthew 6:9 "Hallowed be Your name" Jesus give us our attitude towards His name.
- In Vain could also mean to use His name in an unauthorized way. Many cheapen the glory of His name by applying "The Lord Said" to things they want to do when the Lord never said.
- What is often missed is the 2nd part of this verse. The inescapable judgment due for transgression this commandment. **They will not go unpunished.**
- Why do we not hear the vain use of Buddha, Krishna, Mohammad, or any other false deity?

Exd 20:8 4)"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Exd 20:9 "Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

Exd 20:10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; {in it} you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

Exd 20:11 "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

- Keep it Holy (separate)
- Six Days You Shall Labor.
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:10 "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."
 - Dr. Del Tackett from the "Truth Project" teaches that it is the divine imprint of God's very nature for us to work. Man is wired to work. He tells that man is encouraged to put down work for one day because it is our nature to work. Yet we have allowed the world to deceive us in that we Christians too are living for the weekend. Trying to get out of work. But it is our privilege to partake in God's divine nature.
- Rest on the 7th day "The Sabbath" The Jews honored Sabbath from Sunset Friday to Sunset Saturday.
- This is the only commandment that you cannot find enforced in the New Testament.
- Colossians 2:16-17 "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath [days]: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [is] of Christ."
- Romans 14:5-6a "One person regards one day above another, another regards every day {alike.} Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord,"
- Mark 2:27-28 Jesus was scolded by the Pharisees for His disciples walked through a grain field and they plucked some grain for they were hungry. Jesus replied to them, "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
- Jesus fulfills this. We have entered His rest. He is our Sabbath.
- "for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Corinthians 3:6)The spirit of the Sabbath is that we should honor the Lord with a day where we see Jesus and enjoy His rest.

Exd 20:12 5)"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

LOVE
OTHERS

- A good question is WHEN? Or When should this begin and when does this end? When you are a small child until YOU die. Not when they die. Also in this culture families did not put parents away in senior homes. They remained part of the family and held a role as the one with the wisdom found in years of life.
- Also there is no prerequisite to honor them. This commandment does not insist on perfection or even honorable performance as a prerequisite.
- What about homes where children are abused? Are they exempt? Honor is not defined as calling evil good. But at the most base level a man can honor paternal fatherhood or motherhood in that God chose to give him life thru a certain mother or father.

- Honoring the authority of a father and mother for the child is the first and foundational lessons in roles and responses to authority. These lessons teach us how we interact with all other authority, Teachers, Police, Governments, Church, and even God Himself.
- This also is a commandment with a promise. Your days will be prolonged in the land God gives you.
- **Ephesians 6:1-6** "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH."
- **Colossians 3:20** "Children, obey [your] parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

Exd 20:13 6) "You shall not murder.

- Murder = Hebrew "*ratsach*" to take a person's life without moral justification.
- Kill = Hebrew "*nakah*" to take a person's life with moral justification.
- The commandment here uses the word "*ratsach*" murder. So the commandment is Do No Murder.
- God allowed killing in cases of sin (i.e.: murder Exodus 21:12-14, Leviticus 24:17,21) (i.e. adultery Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22-24)
- God also made provisions for accidental murder. (Numbers 35:9-34, Deuteronomy 19:1-13)
- God judges murder chiefly because man is made in His own image. And murder is the ultimate act of profaning God.
- **Matthew 5:21-23** "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire."
- **1 John 3:15** "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

Exd 20:14 7) "You shall not commit adultery.

- Adultery is husbands or wives having sexual intercourse with someone other than their spouse. God forbids this.
- **Leviticus 20:10** advocates the death penalty for adultery.
- A marriage and/or family is God's divine image of how Christ loves the church (**Ephesians 5:32**) This sin destroys the intended picture for every person's marriage.
- *Fornication refers to sexual intercourse by unmarried people. In the era when the Ten Commandments were given (1200 BC or so), people married at younger ages, so fornication was less of an obvious problem than adultery. I believe that fornication (pre-marital sex) should be included as an act contrary to the commandment against adultery, because sex before marriage runs contrary to God's blessing of sex for procreation and mutual affection within marriage. Fornication is adultery before the wedding (Carl Drews)*
- **Galatians 5:16, 19, 21** "[This] I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." And "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,..." And "...they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
- **Matthew 5:27-30** Jesus said "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast [it] from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not [that] thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast [it] from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not [that] thy whole body should be cast into hell."
- We aren't innocent just because we didn't have the opportunity to sin the way we really wanted to. (Guzik)

Exd 20:15 8) "You shall not steal.

- This commandment acknowledges a person's right to personal property. All things are God's, yet He entrusts people with goods or wealth as He sees proper. It is God who gives these to man. So to steal another man's property is to attack His judgment as to who should possess the goods or wealth.
- **Malachi 3:8-10** speaks of robbing God. Again all things are His and He entrusts goods and wealth to us. He had asked for a tithe and it was considered robbery against God to not obey.

- 1 Corinthians 6:19+20 "...do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."
- Ephesians 4:28 "He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have {something} to share with one who has need."

Exd 20:16 9)"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- DO NOT LIE! There are many ways to lie. Slander, Gossip, Silence
- Alan Redpath comments on these three:
 - i. "Slander . . . is a lie invented and spread with intent to do harm. That is the worst form of injury a person can do to another. Compared to one who does this, a gangster is a gentleman, and a murderer is kind, because he ends life in a moment with a stroke and with little pain. But the man guilty of slander ruins a reputation which may never be regained, and causes lifelong suffering."
 - ii. "Talebearing (Gossip) . . . is repeating a report about a person without careful investigation. Many, many times I have known what it is to suffer with that. To repeat a story which brings discredit and dishonor to another person without making sure of the facts, is breaking this commandment . . . How many people, especially Christian people, revel in this, and delight in working havoc by telling tales about others. To excuse the action by saying they believed the report to be true, or that there was no intention to malign, is no justification."
 - iii. *What about inappropriate silence?* "When someone utters a falsity about another and a third person is present who knows that statement to be untrue but, for reasons of fear or being disliked, remains quiet, that third person is as guilty of breaking this law as if he had told a lie."
- Colossians 3:9 "Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its {evil} practices,..."

Exd 20:17 10)"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

- All the other commandments are demonstrated actions that can be seen (*until Jesus redefines these and takes the commandment to the heart*). This one commandment looks straight to the heart. Covetousness is dissatisfaction in what God has provided for us and jealousy of what God has given to others.
- "The Problem of the Heart is the Heart of the Problem." --unknown
- Covet = Hebrew "*chamad*" to desire, to take pleasure in to lust after
- Coveting takes place before the item is taken. Joshua 7:21 Achan explains how he coveted and took things under a ban from Jericho. "I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and [I] took them"
- Jesus spoke concerning coveting Luke 12:15 "And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.""
- Hebrews 13:5 "[Let your] conduct [be] without covetousness; [be] content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you.""
- Here in Exodus 20:17, this passage shows us that covetousness can be towards man things. Property, People, Relationships, Status, Wealth, Jobs, and more.
- While the others I may score well, this one commandment does me in. I see other peoples' homes, cars, cell phones, motorcycles, accomplishments, and I covet. I see I am in need of a Savior.

CONCERNING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

- Matthew 22:36-40 "Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."
 - Jesus speaks of the two tables of the 10 commandments. **Love God and Love Others.**
- Galatians 3:23-26 "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [to bring us] unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."
 - The law was never meant to save. It pointed us to our savior - Jesus.

Matthew 5:17-48

- Jesus didn't come to destroy the law but to fulfill it. - Matthew 5:17
- Heaven and earth will pass away before the law ceases. - Matthew 5:18
- The law is still the standard - Matthew 5:19
- Jesus said our righteousness should exceed that of the Scribes and the Pharisees - Matthew 5:20
- The law must be kept in the fullness of its spirit and intent. - Matthew 5:21-47
- We must keep the law perfectly. - Matthew 5:48

We cannot keep this law. What do we do? The most fantastic answer is in Romans 3

- Romans 3:21-22 "*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.*"

Exd 20:18 2) The People Fear vs 18 - 21

All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw {it,} they trembled and stood at a distance.

Exd 20:19 Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die."

- When God spoke to the 2.5 million people it was with a great display of power. This was a show of the severity of the commands given.
- If God gave them with intensity we should observe them with the same measure of attention.
- The people see the severity and they TREMBLED and STOOD BACK.
- Isaiah 6:1-5 "*In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory." And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."*"
- Revelation 1:10-17 "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like {the sound} of a trumpet, saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send {it} to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands {I saw} one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet {were} like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice {was} like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man."*
- It is very natural for man to see God, hear God and fear. Then to stand back. Or in our lives realize God interacting with us through church or the reading of His word or prayer and then not do those things. Let someone else hear from God and then speak to us. (A priest, a pastor or teacher) **BUT WE ARE NOT JUST NATURAL MEN. WE ARE SPIRITUAL.** So be spiritual commune with God.
- Hebrews 1:1 "*God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son"*
- God speaks to us through the life and word of Jesus
- Ephesians 3:3-5 "*that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.*"
- Galatians 1:11-12, "*For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*"
- God speaks to us through the teachings of the apostles

- 2 Peter 1:21 *"for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."*
 - God speaks to us through the scriptures
- **A WARNING** - Galatians 1:8-9, *"But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed."*
 - Anything spoken as from God must agree with Words of Jesus, Teachings of the Apostles and the scriptures.
 - Remember the Bereans were more noble minded for they studied the scriptures to see if what Paul taught was true. (Acts 17)

Exd 20:20 Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin."

Exd 20:21 So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God {was.}

- **Fear Not** but tested so the **fear of Him may remain**.
- The first fear is fear with torment. Or terror. God never wanted man to fear Him in this manner.
- The fear that should remain is a fear that is best described as reverential awe.
- Psalm 4:4 *"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah."*
- 1 John 4:18-19 *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us."*
- We will see that the fear with torment will keep these Israelites from sin for only a short while. But God's ultimate desire is obedience due to a reverential fear with love.

Exd 20:22 **2) God Gives Instruction for an Alter** vs 22 - 26

It is important to notice how close this instruction for the alter is to the commandments. God knows we cannot keep the commandments and have need of an alter.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven.

Exd 20:23 'You shall not make {other gods} besides Me; gods of silver or gods of gold, you shall not make for yourselves.

Exd 20:24 'You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you.

Exd 20:25 'If you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, for if you wield your tool on it, you will profane it.

- "Not to be carved or decorated by man so that the focus is on the sacrifice not on the alter" (Rodney Finch)
- No human effort used in building God's alter. This alter God has asked them to make is to always point to Jesus. The Rock or Stone is Jesus:
- Daniel 2:31-35 *"You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. "The head of that statue {was made} of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. "You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."*
- Ephesians 2:19+20 *"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner {stone,}"*

- 1 Peter 2:4-8 " *And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For {this} is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER {stone,} AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."* This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER {stone,}" and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this {doom} they were also appointed."

Exd 20:26 'And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, so that your nakedness will not be exposed on it.'

- Many recovery programs have steps. (12 steps) And you can look and see where you are on the 12 step program. In effect you can see how far each person is. Step one, Step two, Step eight. In effect you can see someone's nakedness.
 - This is man's program. It is effective. But it is not to be applied to God's plan of salvation.
- God's alter is one step. So you will not see someone's nakedness.
- No steps. We are on a one step program. We were lost sinners. We believe and are saved.

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