

# The Exodus Series – The Decalogue (First Five)

## The Ten Words

**Exodus 34:28 The Schocken Bible (Jewish)** Now he was there beside YHWH for forty days and forty nights; bread he did not eat and water he did not drink, but he wrote down on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Words.

- In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible and the version used by New Testament writers was translated as δεκάλογος, *dekalogos* or "ten words".

## Setting the Scene

**Exodus 19:17 - 19**

**17** Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.

**18** Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.

**19** And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder.

**Isaiah 42:20 – 21**

**20** He [Israel, my servant] sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear.

**21** The LORD was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

## The Layout of These Five Chapters

- **Chapters 19** and **24** serve as the bookends for the reception of the “Covenant scroll” which includes the Ten Words and the “ordinances” of **chapters 21 – 23**.
  - The first establishes the framework.
  - In the fifth chapter, Israel in essence, “signs on the bottom line of the covenant”

**Exodus 24:7** Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.”

## Why From the Base of a Mountain?

- There is an inherent human need for God to be before and above all things.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13** The end of the matter; all has been heard.

Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

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## The Structure of the Decalogue

- The first four commands – love God.
- The last six commands – love people.

### Love God

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. You shall not make idols.
3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

### Love people

5. Honor your father and your mother.
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.

### **Matthew 22:35b – 40**

**35b** a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.

**36** “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”

**37** And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

**38** This is the great and first commandment.

**39** And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

**40** On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

- The weight of the first four lays on the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment
- And in the same way, the weight of the last four rests on the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment

### **The whole law given to Israel is 613 commandments and it is broken into three parts:**

- The moral law, the ceremonial law, and the civil law

### **Matthew 5:17 – 18**

**17** “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

**18** For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

### **The First Commandment:** You shall have no other gods before me.

### **Romans 1:18 – 21, 25**

**18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

**19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.

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**20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

**21** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

- Underneath every sin is idolatry

**25** because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

**The Second Commandment:** You shall not make idols.

**Idols are not just on pagan altars but in hearts of people.**

**Ezekiel 14:2 - 6**

**2** And the word of the LORD came to me:

**3** “Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed let myself be consulted by them?

**4** Therefore speak to them and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Any one of the house of Israel who takes his idols into his heart and sets the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him as he comes with the multitude of his idols, **5** that I may lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who are all estranged from me through their idols.

**6** “Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: Repent and turn away from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations.

**An idol is worthless, and worshiping one makes you just like them.**

**Psalms 135:15 - 18**

**15** The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands.

**16** They have mouths, but do not speak; they have eyes, but do not see;

**17** they have ears, but do not hear, nor is there any breath in their mouths.

**18** Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them.

**Colossians 3:5** Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

**The Third Commandment:**

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain

**John 17:4 – 6**

**4** I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

**5** And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

**6** “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

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### Psalm 139:19 – 22

19 Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me!

20 They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain.

21 Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?

22 I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.

### The Fourth Commandment: Remember the Sabbath

#### Deuteronomy 5:12 - 15

12 “Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.

13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

14 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.

15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

#### Colossians 2:16 - 17

16 Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.

17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

### The Fifth Commandment: Honor your father and your mother

**Exodus 21:15** “Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

**Exodus 21:17** “Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.

**Leviticus 20:9** For anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother; his blood is upon him.

#### Deuteronomy 21:18 - 21

18 “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them,

19 then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives,

20 and they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.’

21 Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

#### Ephesians 6:1 – 3

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

2 “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise),

3 “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”