

Last week we left off with the Israelites fighting the Amalekites and how God granted them victory through Joshua, while Moses' hands were lifted. It was a powerful picture of dependence on God and the role of intercession.

As we move forward in the Book of Exodus, we see several key developments that I will briefly highlight.

Exodus 18 – Jethro's Counsel

In Chapter 18, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brings Moses' wife and children to him and gives Moses wise counsel about delegation. Moses learns that leadership is not meant to be carried alone.

Exodus 19 – Preparing for the Law

In Chapter 19, God brings Israel into a place of order and self-governance, preparing them for the formal giving of the Law.

Exodus 20 – Moses receives the Law

Moses will eventually be on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights, but before receiving the tablets, God begins giving laws to sustain the people.

We read in Exodus 24:1–3

“Now He said to Moses, ‘Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar... So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the

judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘All the words which the LORD has said we will do.’”

Moses then ascends the mountain with Joshua and is alone with God. This is where Moses will receive the Tablets of Testimony

Exodus 31:18

“And He gave to Moses... two tablets of testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.”

The stone tablets contained the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–17)

Exo 20:1-17

- (1) And God spoke all these words, saying:
- (2) "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- (3) "You shall have no other gods before Me.
- (4) "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;
- (5) you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

(6) but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

(7) "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

(8) "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

(9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

(10) but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

(11) For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

(12) "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

(13) "You shall not murder.

(14) "You shall not commit adultery.

(15) "You shall not steal.

(16) "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

(17) "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

The Commandments Breakdown

- **The first four commandments deal with our relationship with God.**
- **The last six commandments deal with our relationship with people.**

Jesus summarized the Law this way:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind... and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37–39)

Today, as the Holy Spirit permits, we will focus on **the first four commandments which points us to how our relationship with God should be.**

These are not suggestions, recommendations, or opinions; they are commandments.

1. “You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me” (Exodus 20:3)

The Call to Exclusive Loyalty

God begins with the most fundamental truth: **He alone is God.**

In the ancient world, people worshiped many gods.

In the modern world, we may not bow to statues, but we still worship many gods:

- Money Power Comfort
- Relationships Self Politics Success Family

Anything that takes God's place in your heart becomes your god.

Matthew 10:37

“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me...”

We belong to God and He should be the most important part of every aspect of our life.

1 Corinthians 6:20 “For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”

Romans 14:8 “If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.”

2. “You Shall Not Make for Yourself a Carved Image” (Exodus 20:4–6)

This commandment is not just about statues.

Today, people remake God in their own image.

They create a god who:

- Never judges
- Always affirms
- Fits their politics and personal preferences
- Approves their lifestyle and intentions

They have made a god that is convenient, but **not the God of Scripture.**

John 8:42, 44

“If God were your Father, you would love Me...”

“You are of your father the devil...”

Jesus made it clear: **You don’t get to redefine God.**

3. “You Shall Not Take the Name of the LORD Your God in Vain” (Exodus 20:7)

God’s name represents His character, authority, and presence.

We take His name in vain when we:

- Use God’s name casually or as a curse word
- Claim God’s authority falsely (“God told me...” when He didn’t)
- Live hypocritically while claiming His name

We bear His name as believers **Christians and our lives reflect on Him.**

Rom 2:21-24 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not

steal, do you steal? (22) You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? (23) You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? (24) For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," as it is written.

Our lives must honor the name we carry.

4. “Remember the Sabbath Day, to Keep It Holy” (Exodus 20:8–11)

The Sabbath is about **time set apart for God**.

God did not rest because He was tired, but to teach humanity that we must stop, recognize, and declare His Lordship.

Today, our ultimate rest is in Christ, and we honor this rest on the Lord’s Day. Sunday worship is a declaration that **Jesus is Lord**.

Hebrews 10:24–25

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together... but exhorting one another...”

Gathering is not optional, it is a testimony that Christ is our King.

In conclusion,

The first four commandments teach us this:

God must be first in our worship, our hearts, our words, and our time.