

EXODUS 20

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

Exodus 20:1–26

God Gives the Ten Commandments Directly to the People

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “**For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.**” (John 3:16–18). “**I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!**” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Links to the [word-by-word](#), [verse-by-verse](#) studies of **Exodus** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) (that is what this document is). This incorporates 2 previous studies done in the book of Exodus. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined.

There is a second, less complete set of weekly lessons of Exodus ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Every word of that study can be found in this word-by-word, verse-by-verse study.

This study makes reference to a wide-range of sources. There are quotations from doctrinal teachers, of course; but from Catholic commentaries and from other sources as well. Wherever I found relevant truth, I quoted from it or was inspired by it. Even though it is clear that some churches have a better concept of our reason for being here, that does not mean that there is no truth to be found anywhere else. So, from time to time, I will quote from John Calvin, even though I do not subscribe to 5-point Calvinism; I will quote from some Catholic sources, even

though I believe that they are very wrong regarding Mary, the pope, apostolic succession and other such doctrines. The intention is for this to be the most thorough and accurate study of Exodus available anywhere.

Also, **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables**. They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them (based upon the suggestion of a friend). However, if you ever doubt the translation of a word, phrase or a verse, these translation tables are then available.

Preface: In this chapter, God gives the Ten Commandments directly to His people. They will beg Moses to speak God's word to them instead of allowing God to do that. Then Moses will speak to God directly, and God will give him guidance on how worship is to be conducted.

The Bible Summary of Exodus 20 (in 140 characters or less): *I am the LORD your God. Honour the LORD above everything. Keep the Sabbath. Honour your parents. Don't do wrong to your neighbours.*¹

There are many **chapter commentaries** on the book of Exodus. This will be the most extensive examination of Exodus 20, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text. Every attempt has been made to make this both a complete and self-contained study. Therefore, all references, vocabulary, and related concepts should be found within this extensive study. Easy access links to more in-depth studies of some vocabulary words, concepts and doctrines are also provided.

Quotations:

Outline of Chapter 20:

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Introduction	How is 21st century man to understand the laws given to Israel?
Introduction	The Purpose of the Ten Commandments
Introduction	The Code of Hammurabi
Introduction	Titles and/or Brief Descriptions of Exodus 20 (by various commentators)
Introduction	Brief, but insightful observations of Exodus 20 (various commentators)
Introduction	Fundamental Questions About Exodus 20
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¹ From <http://www.biblesummary.info/exodus> accessed June 26, 2017.

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The Principals of Exodus 20
The Places of Exodus 20
By the Numbers
Timeline for Exodus 20
A Synopsis of Exodus 20
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v.	2	Portions of R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Doctrine of Freedom
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v.	11	The Doctrine of the Sabbath (by L. G. Merritt; some editing by Kukis)
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Summary	
Summary	Why Exodus 20 is in the Word of God
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www.kukis.org	Exodus folder	Exegetical Studies in Exodus

Doctrines Covered or Alluded To			
	Laws of Divine Establishment		
Additional doctrines and links are found in Definition of Terms below.			

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To and/or Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			
Genesis 10	Genesis 11	Genesis 12	

Introduction to Exodus		Leviticus 11	
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Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

The terms below are cross-linked with their first occurrence in this document. This allows you to click on the first occurrence of a technical term and that will take you back to its definition below. Then you can click on that term below and that link will take you back to where you last left off in this document.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Often, the terms below are linked to complete doctrines.

Definition of Terms

1 st Advent	The time period when Jesus was born and had His earthly ministry. This time period extends from His birth to His death, resurrection and ascension.
Adam's Sin; Adam's Original Sin; Adam's imputed sin	All people have Adam's original sin imputed to the sin nature from birth, as the sin nature is the natural home or target for the sin nature. This is also known as <i>original sin</i> (but never known as Eve's original sin). Adam's act of rebellion (or sin) against God becomes a part of our being at birth. It is imputed to us; to our sin nature. As a result, all children are born condemned by God, from the first breath. This is the sin which condemns the unbeliever.
Age of Israel	The Age of Israel is the period of time in history where God works through believers in nation Israel. God also worked through the Abraham and those descended from him until nation Israel was established. See the Three Dispensations: The Age of Israel, the Age of the Hypostatic Union and the Church Age (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Angel, Angels, Elect Angels, Demons and Fallen Angels	Angels were living creatures created before man. They also have free will. Those who chose against God (or sinned against God) are fallen angels (also known as <i>demons</i>). They will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Those who have never sinned against God and never rebelled against God are the <i>elect angels</i> . We do not know exactly what their future is, apart from them spending eternity with God. See the Angelic Conflict (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Anthropopathism	An anthropopathism takes an easily understood emotion, passion or thought that man has or an act which man does and attributes that emotion, thought or action to God. These would be thoughts and emotions which God does not have; or describes an act which God does not do. The idea is to better explain God's thinking and His actions in terms which we understand (this is also known as, language of accommodation). For more information, see Wenstrom , Theopedia , Got Questions? , Baker's Evangelical Dictionary .

Definition of Terms	
Ark of the Covenant, Ark of God	The Ark of God (also called the Ark of Testimony, Ark of the Covenant) was a box which was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold; and it was placed in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle and then in the Temple. This is perhaps the most important religious symbol in the Old Testament, representing the humanity and the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The tables of the Law, Aaron's rod that budded, and a pot of manna were placed. See the Ark of God (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Bible Doctrine	Bible doctrine is the information found in the Old and New Testaments which God wants all believers to know. We live in the Church Age, where there is no additional Scripture being written; and therefore, there is no direct teaching by God to man. All that we need to know is found within the pages of the Bible. See the Importance of Bible Doctrine (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Canaan, the Land of Promise	Canaan is the land promised by God to Israel on a number of occasions. It is named <i>Canaan</i> after the <i>Canaanites</i> who live there. In modern terms, this would be the land between Egypt and Lebanon (roughly).
The Christian Life; the Christian Way of Life	The <i>Christian life</i> is a synonym for the spiritual life. Key to the Christian life is faith in Christ; naming of one's sins to God (rebound), and growing by means of Bible doctrine. See the Doctrine of Walking (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); Christian Basics (HTML) (PDF) (WPD), the Spiritual Life in the Church Age (HTML) (PDF) (WPD) and The Basic Mechanics of the Christian Life (also known as, The Christian Life for Dummies) (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Christology	Christology is the study of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, <i>Christ</i> was explained and developed through a complex system of animal sacrifices, feast days and the design of the Tabernacle and its furniture. See Basic Christology from the Spokane Bible Church.
(The) Church ; Local Church	The church has several different meanings today: (1) Most often, today, we understand <i>church</i> to refer to a local church that we attend. (2) At the beginning of the Church Age, this word referred to a gathering or assembly of people; their racial and gender specifics were irrelevant to their position in Christ. (3) The <i>church universal</i> refers to all of the believers (this could be all of the believers alive on earth right now or all of the believers who have lived throughout the Church Age). Grace notes "Church, the Body of Christ" (HTML) (PDF); Doctrine.org (The Church—the Body of Christ); Word of Truth Ministries (Church); Grace Bible Church of Baytown (The Church);
Church Age	The Church Age is the period of time in history where God works through the body of believers, also known as the church. This age began on the Day of Pentecost, following our Lord's resurrection and ascension, and continues today. See the Three Dispensations: The Age of Israel, the Age of the Hypostatic Union and the Church Age (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). See the doctrine of Dispensations (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Client nation	The client nation is a nation where there are a lot of believers and a lot of mature and growing believers (who are called the <i>salt or the earth</i> ; or <i>pivot</i>). This nation is known for its evangelization, for its Bible teaching, its Bible scholarship, and missionary activity. The government and leaders may or may not be supportive of such activity. However, generally speaking, such activity is allowed within the national entity. It is this activity which preserves such a national entity. A client nation is also sympathetic to the Jewish people and often has a considerable Jewish population. Doctrine of the Client Nation (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).

Definition of Terms	
Communism; Socialism	These words are rarely understood. By original definition, Communism is the direction that every socialist government should go in, where the state sort of melts away and what is left is this big organic system where everyone owns everything. We might call that theoretical communism. Theoretical communism has never existed and will never exist—people who have power will not naturally relinquish it. What remains is more of a practical definition: socialism is the government controlling many levers of society; and communism controls all levers of society. These governments are to the benefit, primarily, of those who are in charge; and there is a natural movement in government to control more and more of society. See the doctrines of Socialism (HTML) (PDF) (WPD) and Socialism and Communism (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
The Cross; the Cross of Christ; the Roman Cross; the Crucifixion	The phrases <i>the cross</i> and <i>the cross of Christ</i> are common phrases used today to represent Jesus dying for our sin on the cross. In that way, these phrases mean essentially the same thing as <i>the blood of Christ</i> . This does not mean that there is some magic or importance in the symbol of the cross, which is ubiquitous today. Jesus did not die on a cross which looked like that. The cross that He died on was a Roman cross, which looked more like a <i>T</i> . The physical pain which Jesus endured, the small amount of blood which He bled, and His actual physical death are real events, but they are typical of what actually saves us from our sins. During three hours of the cross, God the Father poured out on God the Son our sins; and Jesus took upon Himself the penalty for our sins during those three hours. This is not something which was not actually observed by anyone (although the Lord is said to have screamed throughout that process).
Dead Sea Scrolls	The Dead Sea Scrolls are very ancient manuscripts of portions of the Old Testament which date back to approximately 200 B.C. These are the oldest manuscripts which we have. I have done some extensive study on them in Genesis 19 (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Dispensation, Dispensations	A Dispensation is a period of human history expressed from Divine viewpoint (God's point of view). Dispensations give us the Divine outline of human history (or, God's different game plans for various periods of time in history). See the doctrine of Dispensations (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Divine Viewpoint	Divine viewpoint is how God thinks. This is very different than how man thinks. The Lord says, "My thoughts are not like yours. Your ways are not like mine. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8–9; ERV) See Human Viewpoint Versus Divine Viewpoint Thinking (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Elect of God; the elect; Election	Jesus was elected in eternity past by God to die for our sins. Because we are in Christ, we share His election (we share in the benefits of Him having died for our sins; as a result, we have an eternal relationship with God). God is said to foreknow us because He knew that we would be born and He knew every decision that we would make through His omniscience. See Ballinger's Doctrine of Election and Calling ; Roy A. Cloudt's Doctrine of Election .
Eternity Past	<i>Time</i> is an invention of God, and we find ourselves within the concept and reality of time. However, prior to God inventing time, there is, what we call, eternity past, a <i>time and place</i> , if you will, before <i>time and place</i> existed. R. B. Thieme, Jr. also calls this <i>alpha time</i> . It is here, in alpha time, when God made the Divine Decree (above).

Definition of Terms	
The Exodus Generation	<p>The Exodus generation is actually two generations of Israelites. Those who walked out of Egypt as adults (aged 20 and older) make up the older generation, whom I refer to as <i>Gen X</i> (ultimately they will be failures and die the sin unto death in the desert-wilderness). The younger generation is the <i>generation of promise</i>. They are either born in the desert-wilderness or they walked out of Egypt as children (aged 20 or younger). These men will walk into the land under the command of Joshua and take it.</p> <p>Often, the <i>Exodus generation</i> refers only to that older generation, <i>Gen X</i>.</p>
Faith-rest	<p>Faith-Rest is taking the promises from the Bible and mixing them with faith. Faith-rest is placing your trust in God, in His Word, in His promises or in Bible doctrine, and you step back and allow God to keep His Word, or fulfill His promises, or vindicate the doctrine which is in your soul. This approach to life is characterized by a moment-by-moment tranquillity, happiness, and stability, even when you are in the midst of pressure, adversity, and disaster. See the Doctrine of Faith-Rest (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). Doctrine of the Faith-rest Drill (Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries); (Divine Viewpoint.com); (Robert McLaughlin).</p>
Fellowship (with God)	<p>Fellowship means that we enjoy a current, active relationship with God. This is a real state of being; but it does not mean that we feel it. We lose fellowship with God by sinning; and we regain that fellowship by naming our sins to God (also known as, <i>rebound</i>; as explained in 1John 1:9). R. B. Thieme, Jr. called the naming of your sins and the resultant restoration to fellowship as <i>rebound</i>. See <i>Rebound and Keep Moving!</i> (R. B. Thieme, Jr.) <i>Rebound</i> (Kukis).</p>
Filling of the Spirit ; Filling of the Holy Spirit	<p>For the believer in the Church Age, his restoration to fellowship by rebound also restores the filling of the Holy Spirit to him. This is not <i>an experience</i>. That is, you will not feel differently when filled with the Holy Spirit. See the Doctrine of the Filling of the Holy Spirit (Grace Bible Church of Baytown) (Maranatha Church) (Word of Truth Ministries) From Grace Notes (HTML) (PDF) R. B. Thieme, Jr. (Rebound and Keep Moving) (Rebound Revisited).</p>
Gen X	<p>This is a short and clever reference to the generation of the Exodus. I was going to try to represent this as Gen Ex, but that looked too much like I was just naming the first two books of the Bible. At least with Gen X, most understand that we are speaking of a specific generation. Gen X stands for generation exodus; the generation of adults (20 and older) who left Egypt with Moses. Their children with them and the children born in the wilderness will be called the generation of promise.</p>
Generation of Promise	<p>The generation of promise are the Israelites who will actually go into the Land of Promise and take it (which process is described in the first half of the book of Joshua). They were under the age of 20 when they left Egypt in the exodus and some of them were born in the desert-wilderness, either as sons of Gen X-ers or as sons of the generation of promise.</p>

Definition of Terms	
Gospel, Gospel Message, Gospels	There are at least 3 ways to understand the word <i>gospel</i> : (1) It is a synonym for the truth, or the real truth. (2) The gospel of Jesus Christ refers to the revelation of the means of salvation to unregenerate man: " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. " There are other things which may be included in the gospel, such as a reference to the cross, to Jesus dying for our sins, to Jesus being resurrected, etc. The new believer never hears the entire gospel message; he hears a portion of it and believes that and is saved. Then, as a believer, he may learn the rest of it (depending upon whether he has positive volition towards doctrine after salvation). (3) The gospels refer to the 4 biographies of Jesus the Messiah.
Grace Orientation	<i>Grace</i> is all that God is free to do for mankind on the basis of the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. <i>Grace</i> is undeserved mercy and unmerited favor from God to us. <i>Grace</i> is the title of God's plan and His policy for mankind. <i>Orientation</i> is defined as familiarization with a particular person, thing or field of knowledge. <i>To orient</i> means to set right by adjusting to facts or principles; to put oneself into correct position or relation or to acquaint oneself with the existing situation. <i>Grace orientation</i> , therefore, means to become familiar with God's grace plan and grace policies by adjusting to the facts and principles found in the Word of God, which puts you in correct relation to God and others. You will never be <i>grace-oriented</i> until you understand that your personal sins don't condemn you. Adam's original sin, which was imputed to you at birth, is what condemns you (spiritual death). This means that God's grace was operational when He imputed Adam's original sin to you, because condemnation must precede salvation. This is just another part of God's ingenious grace plan of salvation. ² The Doctrine of Grace Orientation (Ron Adema) (Robert Dean) (Rick Hughes—audio) (Robert McLaughlin) (Utilization of Grace Orientation) (R. B. Thieme, Jr. as one of the problem solving devices)
Grace Oriented Believer, The	This is the understanding of the believer that our lives depend upon the graciousness of God, and not upon our own efforts and works. Our spiritual growth is a result of grace, our production is a result of grace, and, quite obviously, our salvation is the result of grace. At no point can we, as individuals, take credit for what God has done for us and in our lives. See the Doctrine of Grace Orientation (Ron Adema) (Robert Dean) (Rick Hughes—audio) (Robert McLaughlin) (Utilization of Grace Orientation) (R. B. Thieme, Jr. as one of the problem solving devices)
Human Viewpoint	Human viewpoint is man's thinking apart from Bible doctrine and apart from divine establishment thinking. See Human Viewpoint versus Divine Viewpoint (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Biblical Inspiration, Divinely Inspired	Biblical inspiration may be defined as <i>human authors wrote as moved by the Holy Spirit, so that, without waving their human intelligence, their vocabulary, their personal feelings, their literary style, their personality, their environmental influences or their individuality, they recorded God's complete and connected message to man with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, the very words bearing the authority of divine authorship.</i> ³ The is known as the verbal, plenary view of inspiration. See the Basic Doctrine of Inspiration (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); the Doctrine of Inspiration (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); and the Study of Inspiration (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).

² From http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556 accessed August 3, 2012.

³ Quoted and paraphrased from R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Canonicity*; ©1973 by R. B. Thieme, Jr.; p. 5, who in turn took this from Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*; Abridged Edition; Victor Books, ©1984, Vol. Two, p. 71.

Definition of Terms	
Israel	Israel can refer to a number of different things: (1) <i>Israel</i> is the name given to Jacob; and sometimes, these two names contrast his character and spiritual growth. (2) <i>Israel</i> can refer to the people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (3) <i>Israel</i> can refer to the nation made up of the people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (4) <i>Israel</i> can refer specifically to the northern kingdom, after the nation under Solomon split into a northern and southern nation (the southern nation being called <i>Judah</i>). Context determines which thing is meant.
JEPD Theory (also known as Documentary Hypothesis)	Documentary Hypothesis simply asserts that the Pentateuch was not authored by Moses but written 1000 years after Moses by several authors who wrote portions here and there and then other men have performed extensive revisions, colating and editing after them. See Documentary Hypothesis (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Jew, Jews, Jewish	Genetically, Jews are those with the genes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Religiously, those who follow the faith of Abraham (and today, those who follow a distorted version of the faith of Moses). Hebrew is the term used in the Old Testament; Jew/Jewish is used in the New. See Jews, Gentiles and Christians ; Jewish Civilization ; The Jewish Religious Systems ; The Jews and Hellenism ; Jews and Judaism ; and Jews and Gentiles in Bible Times .
The Jewish Age	The period of time which includes the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob); the nation Israel; and the Tribulation (which takes place at the end of the Church Age). The Jewish Age is equivalent to the Age of Israel. See the Three Dispensations: The Age of Israel, the Age of the Hypostatic Union and the Church Age (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Laws of divine establishment	<p>The laws of divine establishment are regulations and laws that will protect and prosper a nation. Hypothetically speaking, even a nation without Christians could follow the laws of divine establishment (although this would not occur in practice). The five divine institutions (the volition and function of the individual human soul, work, marriage, family and nation) are recognized and protected and there is a system of just laws and equitable enforcement of same. The result is law and order, freedom and prosperity. There is no freedom apart from law and order.</p> <p>The laws of divine establishment should also protect Christian activity, e.g. churches, evangelism, missionary activity, and Christian scholarship). Protection within the nation is provided by law, a police force and the courts; protection from without is provided by a well-trained military force. See the Laws of Divine Establishment (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).</p>
Legalism, Legalist, Legalistic	Legalism is the idea or philosophy that you might earn or gain something from God by means of your works or sincere efforts. Legalism is the polar opposite of grace. (Grace Notes on Legalism) (Spokane Bible Church on Legalism) The Doctrine of Legalism (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).

Definition of Terms	
Logistical Grace	<p>Logistical grace is defined as what God has planned for us, the Divine support he gives us, His Divine provision, and his Divine blessing. The result is, we as believers in Jesus Christ are able to execute the plan of God just as logistical support on the battlefield allows an army to defeat the enemy. God does not give us logistical grace because we are nice people or really good Christians; God gives us logistical support because we are believers and He gives this to us for a purpose.</p> <p>Logistical grace is Life support is provided for every Church Age believer. This explains how and why we are alive at any given moment. The only reason we are alive is because of logistical grace. We do not earn it nor do we deserve it. There is no set of spiritual works which we can accomplish to keep ourselves alive. For all intents and purposes, this is food, shelter and clothing. The principle was explained by Jesus in Matt. 6:25-33.⁴</p> <p>Logistical Grace (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).</p>
Mental Attitude	<p>Thinking is the primary place where the Christian life takes place. If you get your thinking (your mental attitude) right, a reasonable Christian life will be the result. What you think is who you are. Grace Notes on Mental Attitude (HTML) (PDF); Word of Truth Definition; R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Mental Attitude Dynamics (order it for free) (online);</p>
Mental Attitude Sins	<p>These sins would include arrogance, pride, jealousy, implacability, bitterness, vindictiveness, inordinate ambition and inordinate competition, all motivational sins, and sinful thoughts such as fear, guilt, worry, anger, judging, hatred. See the Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).</p>
Mercy Seat	<p>On top of the Ark of the Covenant was a lid or a covering, which was made of gold and two angels were a part of this configuration—this is the Mercy Seat. On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would come into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle blood on the Mercy Seat to atone for the sins of the many. This is all representative. The gold represents the pure essence of God; the angels represent the elect and fallen angels who are watching all of these things play out. The blood represents the spiritual death of our Lord on the Roman cross. As on the cross, no one actually saw this take place; they simply knew what happened by the testimony of the Scriptures.</p>
The Messiah	<p>The Messiah is one of the terms found in the Old Testament (and New) which refers to Someone Who would come and deliver the Jews. There was the true foundation of the Hebrew faith, and that was the Messiah-to-come; there was the false foundation of the bastardized Hebrew faith, and that was legalism. The Messiah is known by several titles in the Old Testament, including David's Greater Son and the Suffering Servant. Jesus Christ fulfilled all of the prophecies related to the Jewish Messiah, even though He was, for the most part, rejected by His people. Jesus will return to a much more appreciative people in the future. The Messiah (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). The Jewish Messiah (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). The Promised Messiah (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). (Grace Notes: Messiah in the Old Testament) (Spokane Bible Church: Messiah; Messiah's Birth was Unique; Messianic Prophecies 1; Messianic Prophecies2)</p>
Morality	<p>Morality is the protocol for human behavior which applies to all mankind. Morality preserves nations, states and cities. Morality is not the Christian way of life, although the Christian is sinning when he is immoral. (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)</p>

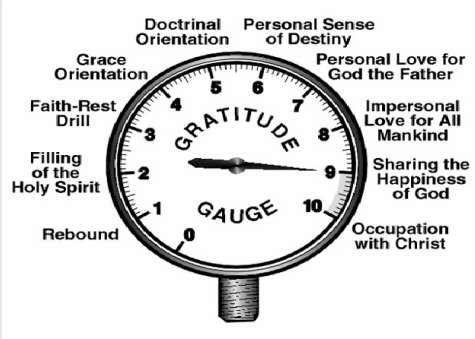
⁴ Both definitions from http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=268 accessed June 9, 2013.

Definition of Terms	
The Mosaic Law ; the Law of Moses	<p>The Mosaic Law is the Law which God gave orally to Moses, which Moses wrote down. It is found at the beginning of Exodus 20 and continues through the book of Numbers (with some narrative integrated into the text of the Law). The book of Deuteronomy summarizes and reviews much of the Mosaic Law and adds in some additional applications (Deuteronomy is actually a series of sermons given by Moses to the people of Israel—Moses himself wrote these sermons).</p> <p>Often the words <i>the Law</i> refer back to the books specifically written by Moses (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). See also (the Spokane Bible Church on the Mosaic Law.) (Maranatha Church on the Mosaic Law); Grace Notes.</p>
Occupation with the Person of Jesus Christ	<p>Occupation with Christ is a mental attitude by which a Christian believer views all things in life with the Lord Jesus Christ in mind. Occupation with Christ is love for the Son, the 2nd Person of the Trinity, therefore it is the expression of love for God. The Bible commands us to love God, with all our heart, soul and mind. Being occupied with Christ is a great part of our love for God. Therefore, this concept is one of the most important spiritual functions in the Christian life. See (Grace notes) (Grace Bible Church).</p>
Omniscience (of God); omniscient	<p>Omniscience means that God knows everything—whether past present or future, whether actual or possible. Jesus would have had access to this mark of Deity, but He may never have used it during His life on earth. See Grace Notes Essence of God (HTML) (PDF); Grace Bible Church (Omniscience); Got Questions (Omniscience).</p>
Pastor, Pastor-teacher	<p>The pastor (or pastor-teacher) is the highest spiritual gift with regards to authority. He has the authority over a single church. He is given one level of authority when he is called by the church into service; and then he develops a higher level of authority by teaching the Word of God. This is not, however, the authority to run the lives of individuals at the church. The pastor can teach the Word of God with near complete accuracy, yet members of his congregation might do the exact opposite. Grace Notes' Pastor-Teachers in the Church Age (HTML) (PDF); Jack Ballinger (Pastor-teacher); Roy Cloudt (pastor-teacher).</p>
Pentateuch	<p>The Pentateuch is comprised of the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), incorrectly called the first five books of Moses (as Moses did not write Genesis).</p>
Positive volition	<p>When speaking within the confines of a doctrinal message (be it written or verbal), positive volition is the state of mind for the unbeliever where he is ready to hear the gospel and believe in Jesus Christ. Positive volition is the state of mind of the believer who is interested in hearing the truth and will do whatever is necessary to expose himself (or herself) to the truth.</p>
Precanon Period; Precanon era; Post-Canon Period; Post-Canon Era	<p>The Church Age is divided into two period of time: the precanon era and the post-canon era. The precanon period takes place before the completion of the New Testament writings; and the post-canon period takes place after the completion of the New Testament (approximately A.D. 90). Healings, tongues, and various sign gifts are found in abundance prior to this time, close to A.D. 33. As the writings of the Apostles (and others) are recognized as authoritative, the sign gifts (which establish one's authority from God) are no longer necessary. Furthermore, once the Apostles die off, they are not replaced so their lasting authority is in their writings.</p>

Definition of Terms	
Priest, Priests, Priesthood	<p>During the Age of Israel, only those descended from Aaron were priests. Priests represent man before God (whereas, a prophet represents God to man). They offered up animal sacrifices to God on behalf of men. They had a number of specific duties assigned to them by the Law of Moses.</p> <p>Because priests are men, they can be a corrupt group.</p> <p>In the Church Age, every believer is a priest and there is no specialized priesthood. Every priest-believer can represent himself directly to God. See the Priesthoods of God and of Man: (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).</p>
Propitiation, propitiate, propitiatory	<p><i>Propitiation means satisfaction or appeasement, specifically towards God. Propitiation is the work of Jesus Christ on the cross by which He appeases the wrath of God who would otherwise be offended by our sin and demand that we pay the penalty for it. The concept of propitiation is often associated with the idea of a substitutionary atonement.</i>⁵</p>
Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)	<p>In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers). See the Doctrine of Rebound (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).</p>
Redeem; Redemption; Redeemer	<p>Redemption is the saving work of Christ whereby He purchased our freedom from the slave market of sin by means of His death on the cross. In Scripture, Jesus is often called our Redeemer. Doctrine of Redemption: (Jack Ballinger) (Ken Reed) (Wenstrom)</p>
The Revealed God (or, the Revealed Lord)	<p>Throughout human history, God has revealed Himself in a number of ways. Before the incarnation, when anyone believed in this revelation of God, he was saved (Genesis 15:6). When Jesus was born, God revealed Himself in Jesus (Hebrews 1:1–2); and we are now saved by believing in Jesus.</p> <p>We all come to a time of God-consciousness where we understand the concept and possibility of the existence of God. At that point, we face 2 great questions: (1) do we want to know this God and (2) are will willing to believe in God as He has revealed Himself or do we make a god in our own image and worship that? In both the Old and New Testaments, God will make Himself known (He reveals Himself) to those who will believe in Him and to others as well. We know Him firmly and concretely as Jesus Christ; and in the Old Testament, He is known as the God of the Jews, the Creator of the Universe, the God of Moses (or of Abraham), etc.</p>
The Sabbath	<p>The Sabbath Day is Saturday, and this was a day of rest for the Hebrew people, during which they would not work but contemplate the finished work of God. This became a repository of legalism over the years, where this day became more and more tightly regulated with new laws and regulations not found in Scripture. Believers in the Church Age are not under any Sabbath day restrictions. (Spokane Bible Church Sabbath Summary) (Grace Notes: Jewish Teaching on the Sabbath) Kukis—Doctrine of the Sabbath Day (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).</p>

⁵ From <http://www.theopedia.com/Propitiation> accessed May 24, 2009.

Definition of Terms	
Sin Nature, Adam's Sinful Trend	The sin nature is genetically passed on from father to his children. Every person on earth has a preponderance to sin because of having a sin nature. Grace Notes (from Austin Bible Church) (HTML) (PDF); Merritt (Old Sin Nature); Ballinger (Old Sin Nature/Sinful Trend of Adam)
Sin unto Death	The phrase "sin unto death" describes the final stage of divine discipline in which God removes from the earth the person who is totally alienated from God. The "sin unto death" is not a particular sin; but it is, rather, a mental attitude of total indifference to and rebellion against the will and purpose of God. This is the point at which harsh discipline is no longer working on the believer, so God takes the believer out of this world in a very painful way. Such a believer often stops using the rebound technique. For more information, see the Doctrine of the Sin unto Death (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Slave Market of Sin	<p>We illustrate the doctrine of redemption, is by picturing yourself being sold as a slave in a slave market. You are unable to purchase yourself, as you do not have the wherewithal to purchase yourself. A slave does not have the money to purchase himself (he lacks the coin of the realm, so to speak). Only someone who is not inside of this slave market (a non-slave) can purchase you. No fellow slave can look you over and say, "I'd like to purchase this one." This is because he is in the same boat that you are in. He cannot purchase himself and he certainly cannot purchase you. Jesus Christ does not have a sin nature and He has not committed any personal sins, so that He can purchase us from the slave market of sin.</p> <p>This concept is actually based upon the real historical example, where God purchased the Israelites from Egypt, and brought them out of bondage. See the Slave Market of Sin (R. B. Thieme, Jr.) (Buddy Dano) (Kukis) (Wenstrom)</p>
Soul, Human Soul, Souls	The soul is the immaterial part of man. It has volition, mentality, vocabulary, norms and standards, conscience, consciousness, self-consciousness, and the sin nature. The human soul has a technical meaning, where it is contrasted with the human spirit: the human soul stores up human experience and information about life on earth, while the human spirit specifically contains information related to God and the spiritual life. Grace Bible Church of Baytown (Characteristics , Diagram , Soul and Depravity of the Soul , Battle for Soul Control , Soul Tragedy , Prospering Soul , Soul's Need for Daily Doctrine , Soul's Need #2); Grace Notes (Doctrine of the Soul ; PDF).
Spiritual Advance	Spiritual advance is another way to describe <i>growing in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ</i> (2Peter 3:18). We grow by keeping short accounts with God insofar as our sinning goes (that is, we often name our sins to God as per 1John 1:9); and by exposing ourselves regularly (daily) to accurate teaching of the Word of God by a well-qualified pastor-teacher, hearing and believing the spiritual principles being taught. See Basic Themes of the Bible ; aka The Fundamental Themes of Scripture (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); Living the Christian Life (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); and Christian Mechanics (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
Spiritual Growth	Spiritual growth for the believer is an option. We do not automatically grow spiritually simply because we have believed in Jesus Christ. We grow because we spend time in the Spirit (using rebound) and because we learn Bible doctrine under the ministry of a well-qualified pastor-teacher. See Living the Christian Life (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); Christian Mechanics (HTML) (PDF) (WPD), the Stages of Spiritual Growth (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); and the Spiritual Life (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).

Definition of Terms	
Spiritual Life, Spiritual Lives	<p>The spiritual life is the life that God expects us to lead. Fundamental to the spiritual life is rebound (naming your sins to God and being filled with the Spirit) and spiritual growth (learning and believing Bible doctrine). Even though we are commanded to live the spiritual life, this is not an imposition to our lives, but enlightenment and peace of mind. The unbeliever cannot lead a spiritual life. (HTM) (PDF) (The Spiritual Life via the 10 problem solving devices—R. B. Thieme, Jr.) (Walking in the Spirit—Chafer) (Spiritual Metabolism—Robert R. McLaughlin)</p>
Spiritual skills	<p>The most basic spiritual skills are rebound (naming one's recent sins to God) and the intake of Bible doctrine (generally at a local church taught by a pastor-teacher). Based upon the doctrine in the soul of a believer, one moves on to use more advanced skills like the faith-rest technique. These are also known as the ten problem solving devices and can only be employed by the believer in Jesus Christ. See the Ten Problem Solving Devices (R. B. Thieme, Jr.) (chart) (McLaughlin).</p>  <p>Gratitude Gauge (a graphic); from the Lighthouse Bible Church; accessed June 23, 2023.</p>
The Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting, Tent of Assembly	<p>The Tabernacle was the original place of worship designed by God. It was constructed in the desert wilderness where the Jews lived before entering the Land of Promise; and it was the focal point of their worship up to the monarchy. The design of the Tabernacle, the furniture, and the way its furniture was arranged, all spoke of the first advent of Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. For instance, the Ark of God was made of wood overlain with gold, speaking of the Lord's Deity and humanity. The Tabernacle represented the 1st Advent of the Lord, as it was moveable. The Temple (a permanent structure) represented the Lord in the Millennium as the King of Israel. See the Ark of God (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); and the Model of the Tabernacle (which represents Jesus Christ and the cross) (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); the Tabernacle (Redeeming Grace); Jesus—the Golden Lampstand (Grace Bible Church).</p>
The Temple	<p>The Temple is a permanent structure as the place of worship of the Revealed God, originally built by Solomon. Both Solomon and the Temple represent the Lord Jesus Christ and His reign in the Millennium. Although the Levites had some limited and specific duties inside the Temple, others were not allowed in the Temple. When people are said to gather at the Temple, they are really gathering in the Temple Courtyard. See the Temple, Description and Measurements (Grace Notes); Solomon's Temple (Redeeming Grace); the Temple (Redeeming Grace).</p>
Torah, The	<p>The word <i>torah</i> is a Hebrew word that means <i>law</i>. This word is often applied to the first 5 books of the Bible. Occasionally, it may be used to refer to the entire Old Testament.</p>
The Trinity	<p>God exists in three Persons (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit), All with the same divine essence. Doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament (HTML) (PDF) (WPD); Grace Notes (HTML) (PDF); Jack Ballinger (Maranatha Church); Grace Bible Church (Trinity; Trinity Diagram; Trinity Expressed); Doctrine of the Trinity (Grace Bible Church).</p>

Definition of Terms	
Type, Typical, Antitype, Typology, Typological	A type is a person, a thing or an act which looks forward to Jesus or to Jesus on the cross. For instance, Isaac's birth was the <i>type</i> ; our Lord's birth was the <i>antitype</i> , which was the fulfillment of the type. <i>Typical</i> is the adjective; and <i>typology</i> is the study of type. <i>Typological</i> , an adjective, is, <i>of or relating to typology or types</i> . See Typology (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).
The Virgin Birth	The virgin birth is a doctrine which is essential Christianity. The importance of the virgin birth is based upon the concept that the sin nature is passed down through the man. Because Jesus is born of a virgin, He did not inherit the sin nature. It is not a part of his genetic makeup. Secondly, the virgin birth is prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 9:6, so this had to be fulfilled by the Messiah. See the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ (Grace Bible Church) (Doctrine.org).
Some of these definitions are taken from http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/terms-and-definitions/ http://www.theopedia.com/	
<div>Chapter Outline</div> <div>Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines</div>	

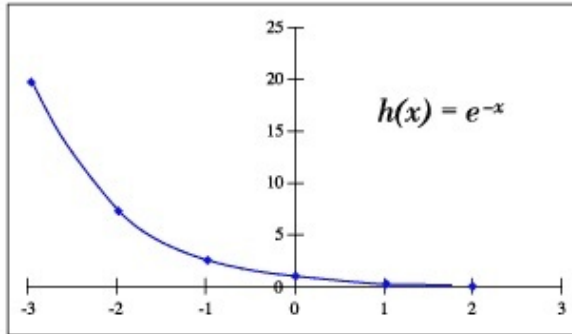
An Introduction to Exodus 20

Introduction: The Ten Commandments, because they are unique and remarkable, are going to require an extensive amount of introduction. After the Ten Commandments, there is going to be a great deal of time spent on the other laws and ordinances given by God in subsequent chapters and subsequent books.

It is at this point that we begin Exodus 20, which is the beginning of the dictated Law of God. Most of what we read from this point forward are God's words, God's laws and God's dictates (with some narrative included). There have been many false statements made about the **Mosaic Law** and its origins; therefore, there is considerable introductory material to understand.

Back in **Genesis 11** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), we follow out the line of Shem (one of Noah's sons) all the way down to Abram (Abraham's given name at birth). There are nine generations of elders, beginning with Shem and going to Terah (Abraham's father). You may recall that these men are said to live longer than we do. In our lives, one generation dies out and they are replaced with the next generation (the greatest generation has almost all died out and my generation, the baby boomers, is about to die out; and we will be replaced by the Millennials and the post-Millennials). That was not the case for these nine generations. For the most part, they were all alive when Terah was born; and they pretty much all died out before Terah died. Something like this has never happened before or since.

At the time of Terah (Abraham's father), the nine generations of elders were alive on this earth after the flood. However, during Terah's lifetime, these men were beginning to die out. It was actually a very strange thing. All of the men who had been alive during the flood and after were all dying out together in the same generation. There were eight generations between Shem and Abraham and all of them lived an unusually long lives. However, there was a gradual decline in their lifespans during those nine or ten generations (ten generations if you include Shem and Abraham).



Exponential Curve (a graphic); from [nku.edu](https://www.nku.edu); accessed June 19, 2024.

Interestingly enough, the decline in their lifespans is an exponential function with a negative exponent. Such a graph is preserved in this paragraph. The graph looks like this and many human, animal and plant functions show exponential increases (positive exponent) or decreases (negative exponent) which conform to such a curve. The decrease in the age of these

men conforms to such an exponential curve. All life has a close personal relationship with the exponential function. Somehow, the writers of Genesis seemed to intuitively know about this kind of curve thousands of years before logarithms and exponential equations found their way into the mathematical consciousness.

So all of these men (the nine generations of them) are born at different times, but they all die out in the same generation (because each succeeding generation has a decreased lifespan). Nine generations of men, all born at different times, nevertheless died out in the same generation.

While these men are dying out, God speaks to this person Abram, who lived in Ur of the Chaldees. God said to him, "Leave your country, and your relatives, and your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. You will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who treats you with contempt. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:1b–3; WEB)

This is quite a remarkable prophecy that continues to be true today. While Abram was alive, there were many well-known families and groupings: there were Canaanites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites, Arkites, and Sinites. However, these were not families or nations that God chose to bless. God chose to bless the Israelites, who come from the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now, you know some **Jews** or you know of Jews, but you don't know any Canaanites or Hittites or Jebusites, etc. The Jews are God's people. The others were not. God first promised to preserve the Jews and then He preserved the Jews. God's laws (known today as the Mosaic Law) helped facilitate their preservation.

So we have two concurrent sets of events. God calls Abram; but at the same time, all those with close ties to Noah, Shem, Ham or Japheth began to die out (that is, the nine generations of elders).

Let me suggest that, when it came to right and wrong, these nine generations spoke with much the same voice (that is, they were all pretty much in agreement with one another). However, suddenly, all of these

old voices of wisdom are gone. They all die out during the same time period. God knows that He must choose a man through whom His wisdom will be preserved and revealed to all the nations.

Codes of Law

After Terah and the rest of those generations died out, leaders would rise up and they would try to determine what laws would be best for their people. Men were well-respected if they could put together a set of laws which seemed fair and just. I have heard the term philosopher-king reasonably applied to such men. If any society was able to function in accordance with these laws, so much the better. These various sets of national laws are very similar to what we call the **laws of divine establishment** today. The laws of divine establishment are laws which are for humankind, not just for Christians and not just for Jews.

There are many critics of the Bible who make bizarre claims like, Moses essentially copied his commandments and writings from other sources. Now, interestingly enough, Moses would have been an expert in foreign cultures and laws. He received the greatest education that any person could have received in Egypt; and he thrived in this learning (Acts 7:22). As a matter of fact, there were actually many previous sources for ancient law, and Moses would have had access to many of them. However, this does not mean that he copied the laws of ancient Babylon (or, whatever).

Some of these legal codes which have been preserved. I know that the date of the **Torah** to be around 1450 B.C. I am not sure about the other laws. There is a great deal of documentation for the Mosaic Law being recorded when it was. One fundamental difference between the Mosaic Law and any of the other ancient law codes is, the level of preservation. The Mosaic Law was preserved by men who had the specific job of replacing worn out manuscripts, which has been written on very perishable materials, with new copies on new materials, which were in turn replaced with newer copies. This preservation process began soon after the giving of the Law and continues right now, even today. Today, these laws are preserved through modern printing in hundreds of languages. At the same time, the existing ancient manuscripts which are the basis for the Law and the Prophets are preserved as well.

The oldest actual manuscripts of the Old Testament go back to approximately 200 B.C. and are known as the **Dead Sea Scrolls**. It was commonplace to replace old manuscripts with new ones, at which time the old ones were then destroyed. These words were preserved by both Jews and Christians; and in many ancient languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Koine Greek and Latin) and in virtually all major modern languages (the Bible can be found translated into any major world language). Although various groups and denominations differ as to how to understand, interpret and apply the Mosaic Law, we do not have any important differences when it comes to the actual text. What we study as Christians could be based upon **Jewish**, Protestant or Catholic translations. There is little difference as to the actual text.

The only difference is the approach and interpretation. For instance, there are several different views of the fourth commandment (keeping the **Sabbath**), but the text and context of the fourth commandment are the same no matter what kind of Bible you pick up. In my verse-by-verse studies of Exodus, where multiple translations are recorded and consulted, there are far more differences between a modern paraphrase and the old King James Version, than there are between a specifically Jewish translation and a specifically Catholic translation. Check any verse in any chapter of Exodus—the chapters I have done are linked from this master document: **Exodus Links** (**HTML**) (**PDF**) (**WPD**) (**Folder**)—and you will see that I have typically reproduced the work of many translators (for each passage, I might use 50 of the 90 or so translations that I refer to) and what is most fascinating is, most of these translators do not appear to have any sort of theological bias seeping into their translation (the Jehovah's Witness

translation is a glaring exception to this, which is why I do not include their translation side-by-side with the others).

Regarding the various translations, you would be hard-pressed to find any passage where you could make the claim that one translation is very Catholic, another is very Jewish and another is very Protestant.

Below, where I have given some examples, you could not say, *this is clearly a Protestant translation* (or a Jewish or a Catholic translation). No matter who is preserving and translating the text, there is a scholarly attempt to be accurate and reasonably consistent.

Rather than simply make this claim, let me give you an example of this general lack of theological bias (I arbitrarily chose fourteen translations of Exodus 20:1–2 using seven of my own general classifications) (if there were any notes or section headings, I included these with the translation):

Thirteen Translations of Exodus 20:1–2:

Ancient texts: (These are English translations from the languages Hebrew, Latin and Aramaic)

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Elohim all the words the these, to say, "I [am] Y ^e howah your Elohim Who brought you out of a land of Egypt out from a house of slaves. (Kukis slavishly literal translation made directly from the Hebrew)
Revised Douay-Rheims ⁶	And the Lord spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (A translation made directly from the Latin)
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	God spoke all these words, saying, "I am Mar-Yah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (A translation based upon the Aramaic text)

Limited Vocabulary Translations:⁷

Bible in Basic English	And God said all these words: I am the Lord your God who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the prison-house.
Easy English	The 10 commandments Then God spoke all these words: 'I am the LORD your God. I brought you out of Egypt, out of the country where you were slaves.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	God said to the people of Israel: I am the LORD your God, the one who brought you out of Egypt where you were slaves.
The Living Bible	Then God issued this edict: "I am Jehovah your God who liberated you from your slavery in Egypt.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

⁶ Also known as the 'you' version; found here: <http://www.cormacburke.or.ke/node/1054>

⁷ Many of these Bibles fall into 2 or more categories. The CEV, for instance, is **approved** by the Catholic Church, it is a limited vocabulary Bible, and it is a paraphrase, for the most part.

The Heritage Bible See Exodus 34:28 and Deuteronomy 4:13 where the words, The Ten Commandments, appear, and 10:4 where they are called Ten Words, and Deuteronomy 5 where the Ten Commandments are listed again.
 And God spoke all these words, saying,
 I am Jehovah, your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out from the house of servitude.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New American B. (2002)⁸ Then God delivered all these commandments:
 "I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery.
 [1-17] The precise division of these precepts into "ten commandments" is somewhat uncertain. Traditionally among Catholics ⇒ Exodus 20:1-6 is considered as only one commandment, and ⇒ Exodus 20:17 as two. Cf ⇒ Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible Then God said all these words:
 ✕ "I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the abode of slavery. (Kukis note: it is the tradition of the Jewish Bibles to use *Adonai* or *Lord* rather than the proper noun *Yahweh* (or, *Y^ehowah*)⁹

Kaplan Translation *The First Two Commandments*
 God spoke all these words, saying:
 I am God your Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, from the place of slavery.
God spoke...
 The Ten Commandments are repeated in Deuteronomy 5:6-18.
I am God...
 This is a commandment to believe in God (Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive Commandment 1; see Josephus 3:5:5; Philo, Decalogue 1:385). Others, however, state that belief in God is too basic to be an actual commandment (Ramban on Sefer HaMitzvot, loc. cit.).

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible The Ten Commandments
 Then God spoke all these words:
 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt ·where you were slaves [^Lfrom the house of bondage].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...and "**Elohiym** ^{Powers}" spoke all these words saying, I am "**YHWH** ^{He Is}" your "**Elohiym** ^{Powers}", who made you go out from the land of "**Mits'rayim** ^{Two straits}", from the house of servants,...

Modern English Version The Ten Commandments
 Now God spoke all these words, saying:

⁸ Found here: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_INDEX.HTM

⁹ This is my own opinion as to the pronunciation of the Sacred Name.

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

First of all, I could not do this with any other law code anywhere from any era (we might find one or two English translations of it). And secondly, you should notice that, despite the various classifications and approaches, there are no remarkable differences between the translations, despite there being many differences. Even in Catholic Bibles, you are not going to be reading the text and come across a passage where they clearly inserted some of their specific doctrines into the text (at least with the books I have translated word-by-word, verse-by-verse, I have not come across this). The same is true of Jewish translations and of Protestant translations. The translations are simply translations and theological bias does not enter into it (there may be some exceptions to this, but I have never seen any).

When it comes to preservation and near universal acceptance, the Bible has no equals. In fact, it has no contenders. The Bible is studied in virtually every nation in the world today, except where it is outlawed (and even where the Bible is outlawed, people still study it). **Communism** has made concerted efforts to destroy Christianity, yet, in every communist dictatorship there are always Christian cells.

Interestingly enough, no one is offering up a religion based upon ancient Egyptian law or upon ancient Sumerian laws. (Islam, by the way, came along 2000 years after the **Law of Moses**, and yet, it seems to be more barbaric and ancient by comparison.)

There are several differences which occur to me regarding the Mosaic Law and other ancient law codes: (1) The Ten Commandments have no historic comparison. You can select any law system and similar laws may be found, but not all ten, not so organized, and often written for very specific situations (as opposed to the universality of the Ten Commandments). (2) The laws given to **Israel** are all-encompassing. Every aspect of their lives is dealt with, and often for different reasons (for instance, the dietary laws primarily preserved the people of Israel in an era prior to refrigeration). (3) The detail of historic scholarship regarding the Mosaic Law is not found with any other law code. In fact, one of the most referred to codes, the Law of Hammurabi, does not even exist in its entirety. About a third of it is missing.

Let me suggest that the many ancient of rulers were often wise elders, having lived hundreds of years. These men would often try to develop a law code which closely adhered to the time of Noah, to the concepts of right and wrong known during the time of Noah. Some peoples were very moral and had a desire to do that which was known to be right in the eyes of God. This would not be all peoples, but it would be true for some nations.

Cuneiform law

I do not want to go into great detail about these various forms of law, but they should be at least superficially discussed. Judaism and Christianity are inaccurately accused of simply copying these other laws and traditions (there are many internet memes about this). There is simply no truth to this trope.

From Encyclopedia Britannica: Cuneiform law [is] the body of laws revealed by documents written in cuneiform, a system of writing invented by the ancient Sumerians and used in the Middle East in the last three millennia BC. It includes the laws of the majority of the inhabitants of the ancient Middle East—especially the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Elamites, Hurrians, Kassites, and Hittites—who, despite many ethnic differences, were in contact with each other and developed similar civilizations.¹⁰

Notice the explanation of Encyclopedia Britannica: these civilizations developed very similar laws because they kept in contact with one another, developing similar civilizations as a result. Ancient history instead suggests that far more often, these civilizations were at war with one another. Two nations next door to one another often engaged in conflict concerning the regions and borders between them.

¹⁰ From <https://www.britannica.com/topic/cuneiform-law> accessed January 2, 2024.

Another and better explanation for the similarity of these law systems is, they all come from the thinking and **morality** of Noah and Noah's three sons. For hundreds of years, these people had almost an innate understanding of what law ought to be, as they had elders among them who actually knew people who went all the way back to the ark. Because of this very similar culture going back to the elders who go all the way back to Noah, their cultures are going to have great similarities when it comes to morality and law, even though these groups of men separated as per the Tower of Babel in **Genesis 10** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Nevertheless, all of the men had a connection to the ark (men who actually knew Shem, Ham or Japheth) died out during Terah's lifetime (Terah is Abraham's father). This nine generations of elders all died out within the same generation, one generation before Abram.

Encyclopedia Britannica understood that the similarities between these laws was uncanny, but how could they explain that? So they suggest that these various nations simply kept in touch with one another. But the actual explanation is, their elders learned a morality from the same source—Noah and his three sons.

These groups of ancient laws include:

The code of law found at Ebla (2400BC)

Code of Urukagina (2380–2360 BC)

Code of Ur-Nammu, king of Ur (c. 2050 BC). Copies with slight variations found in Nippur, Sippar and Ur

Laws of Eshnunna (c. 1930 BC)^[2]

Code of Lipit-Ishtar (c. 1870 BC)^[3]

Babylonian law

Code of Hammurabi (c. 1750 BC in middle chronology)

Hittite laws, also known as the 'Code of the Nesilim' (developed c. 1650–1500 BC, in effect until c. 1100 BC)

(I took this list directly from [Wikipedia](#)).

Regarding these ancient laws, more information can be found here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ancient_legal_codes

I was going to cover these all, but I don't really know how edifying that would be. I might say a few things about the Code of Hammurabi (which is perhaps the most quoted code when it comes to a modern slandering of the Mosaic Law).

None of these codes have a Ten Commandments (or five commandments or twelve commandments). What critics do is, take a list of 300 laws from the Code of Hammurabi and they pick and choose three or four of them which outlaw a specific kind of murder or a specific kind of stealing, and then say, "Moses took from these laws." He did not. The universality of the Ten Commandments is not found in those other ancient laws. Furthermore, the laws which we will study were all given directly from God, not from Moses.

One cannot find such a universal list of the most fundamental laws anywhere else in human history, even though we can find full or partial lists of ancient laws online. Some people will try to stylize some set of laws and try to update the Ten Commandments in some way, but the end result is always inferior to the original.

In Wikipedia, when listing the various ancient laws, they post this:

Law of Moses /Torah (10th–6th century BC)

Yet what we are studying in Exodus 20 takes place in approximately 1445 B.C. If Moses is the author, then he would be writing around 1445 B.C., not in the 10th century B.C. (or later). If someone wrote this after the 10th century, then this is certainly *not* Moses.

There are two predominant views of the Law of Moses: (1) It was written by Moses when the Bible says it was (circa 1445 B.C.). (2) Or, it was written by several people (or groups of people) and then assembled by other

groups of people, and introduced to the Jewish people somewhere between the 10th and 6th centuries B.C. (Wikipedia assigns these dates to the Mosaic Law). Interestingly enough, in Wikipedia's [entry Book of Exodus](#), they claim the writing of the Mosaic books did not even begin until the 6th century B.C. Just so you know, Moses lived in the 15th century B.C.

The second interpretation is known as [Documentary Hypothesis](#) or the [JEPD theory](#). JEPD stands for *Jehovah*, *Elohim*, [priests](#), *Deuteronomy*). Their hypothesis is, two men (or two groups of men) produced some side-by-side manuscripts. The Jevovist wrote chapters where the word *Jehovah* was used a lot; the Elohimist wrote chapters where the word *Elohim* was used a lot. Did these two men know one another? We don't know. Were these two groups (if these chapters were written by groups of men) knowledgeable of one another? We don't know. You see, there is actually no proof that such men (or groups of men) existed, apart from there being some chapters where Elohim is found more often than Y^ehowah (and vice versa). That is not proof of anything.

The priests (who somehow already existed, but apparently without written authority) possibly wove these two sets of documents together; and maybe the priests just did their own thing, writing the book of Leviticus (which has a lot of information about the priestly class). This theory, for some reason, also assigns a different author to the book of Deuteronomy. So, there are a minimum of four men involved in this process, and, who knows, maybe a dozen or more? Does anyone know how many men there were, or who they were, or when exactly they existed? Nope. None of that is known. There are no records of such a thing actually occurring. This is simply a theory built upon a theory, built upon theory, built upon some assumptions.

We have the collected opinions of various named rabbis going back thousands of years, but the production of the most fundamental text in the Old Testament—we don't know who did it or when they did it (that is, if we believe the JEPD theory).

This odd theory originally came about when historians determined that Moses had no access to writing materials back in his day (an assumption which has turned out to be false).

We have just studied nineteen chapters of the book of Exodus. Has it appeared at any time that you were reading two different authors? There is only one incident which is repeated (and there was a very good reason for that). When Moses had his first meeting with Pharaoh, we see this presented from [human viewpoint](#) (where the threats made by Egypt seem overwhelming to the Hebrew leaders) and then we see this same meeting from the divine point of view (where the threats made by Egypt have no long-term impact). This, by the way, is my interpretation of those two chapters (I have not really checked around to see if anyone else came up with the same idea).

In the JEPD hypothesis, there was also a priestly group who submitted their Leviticus chapters and maybe another group (or person) which wrote Deuteronomy (and maybe not). Somehow, all of this got mixed together into four or five books (depending on how you understand Genesis to be worked into this mix), and this final version, was completed somewhere between the 10th and 6th centuries B.C. In one place, Wikipedia gives that range; in another place, Wikipedia claims that this process did not even begin until the 6th century B.C. My reason for emphasizing this discrepancy is to emphasize that there is no true agreement on this theory.

At some point in time, long, long after the time of Moses, this well-edited conglomeration of writings was presented to the Jewish people as if these writings had been done by Moses many centuries previous. The theory is, the Jewish people simply accepted them and treated these writings as if Moses had written them many centuries previous. "Moses wrote these and here it is 800 years later, and we have never seen these writings before, but now you are telling me that Moses wrote this? Okay; sure. We completely accept that."

I first heard about this theory in Josh McDowell's book, *More Evidence that Demands a Verdict*. My initial reaction was, *this is absurd, why did Josh McDowell spend so much time discussing this goofy theory?* I had not heard of this theory until I read McDowell's book. Well, it turns out that many (possibly most) seminaries actually teach this theory as truth.

First of all, and most importantly, there is not a shred of evidence for this theory anywhere. Choose any single aspect of this theory, and you will find no evidence for it at all, except that there are some chapters of the Mosaic Law where the name *Elohim* is found more often than the name *Jehovah* and vice versa. There is also a verse of Scripture where someone discovers the Law, at a point in time when the Law had not been used for awhile (perhaps a generation)—these two things are the sum total of the evidence for this theory.

Documentary Hypothesis claimed to have *solved* two basic problems: (1) it explained how the Mosaic Law could be written even though Moses has nothing with which to write (again, this was a false assumption). (2) It explained why some chapters of the four books of Moses use one name of God more often than another. **However, what this theory does most effectively is completely undermine the authority and accuracy of the Scriptures by suggesting that Moses did not write them.** That is the actual unstated purpose of such theories (the same things are supposed about New Testament writings—particularly the *gospels*¹¹).

There are many problems which this theory introduces. Let's assume that JEPD is true and see where such an assumption leads us. Israel, at some point, either began its very complex set of rituals or changed over from its original religious structure to the religion of this manuscripts said to be written by Moses (and the JEPD theory claims were not really written by Moses). Here is the most fundamental problem. Most of us know what religious people are like. When a people are doing X for centuries and then someone comes along and says, "We need to do Y instead," are you aware of any group of people anywhere at any time who simply went along with it? A good example of this are the Mormons. There was the Protestant Christian religion, which most of America practiced, and then Joseph Smith came along and claimed to have these sacred golden tablets (no one ever saw these tablets, by the way) with a new set of doctrines for Christians. What happened was, Joseph Smith peeled off a number of people who followed him, and this group continues even to this day. They are not a majority of Christian-type believers; and they never have been and they never will be. This is typical. When a charismatic leader comes along, he can often ensnare a group of people—even a large group of people—and sometimes that cult continues and sometimes it dies out when the leader dies out. But the JEPD theory says all Israel used to do one set of acts of worship with one set of doctrines; but then, at some moment in time, there would be a whole new worship package and *everyone* adhered to this new worship package. If you know anything about religious people, that would never, ever happen, ever. At best, this new worship package might become a popular cult, and there would be two sets of worshipers—those who favored the old religion and those who favored the new religion (which is being falsely sold as the original Mosaic religion). It is quite illogical to think that any nation would simply accept a whole new worship package and simply go along with it.

The practice of the Jewish faith involved carefully manufactured artifacts. It involved a complex set of holy days. The rituals, as we will find out in Leviticus, were extremely specific and complex. It would have required a great deal of study to figure out what gets done when. How exactly does a people follow a few simple rituals and then suddenly, their religious acts become 100-times more complicated. How exactly is this sold to the people? Or, why would the priests willingly place this burden on themselves? Why would rituals never performed up to that point in time be described (like a ritual for the healed leper)?

Or, there is the possible option that nothing changed. That is, Israel had from the very beginning a super-complex worship package. Then, hundreds of years pass and then suddenly, the faked document of the fake Mosaic Law appears (between the 10th and 6th century B.C.). Let us assume that it did not change anything. As we are going to find out—sometimes painfully—that the Mosaic Law system was extremely complex. The sacrifices and rituals and feast days etc. etc. are not something you simply learn in a few hours and then you follow them. The documents which describes when do you do this and when you do that would have to already be in existence at the foundation of that whole worship package. These practices are far too complex not to be done without actual instructions. But If such a document already existed, then no new document package of rules are regulations

¹¹ Similar groups of people claim that the gospels were all written after the disciples had died. So, depending upon the person with the theory, the gospels were produced 40, 50 or maybe 80 years after they were actually written. There is no evidence for this. You cannot pick up an ancient manuscript and somehow decide, "You know, I bet this was written 50 years (or 100 years) later." Unless someone actually dates their manuscript in some way (which Luke actually does) or if there is a written record somewhere saying *when* a manuscript was originally written, can we move the date of writing a hundred years in either direction. But we do not have anything like that!

would be needed. If what you need is already in existence, and it says the same thing as a new set of documents, then why would anyone accept a new document? Of what necessity is this new document?

If such writings did not exist previously, then where did Israel's extremely complex set of laws come from? If these laws and practices are already in existence, did no one think to write them down except hundreds of years later? And not just one person wrote them down, but essentially a committee developed them over perhaps a few hundred years. But we do not know the names of anyone from this committee nor do we have any of the original manuscripts which were used to undergird the Mosaic documents. What we have is a frankly bizarre theoretical solution for a situation which does not require a solution.

This theory, besides not having any evidence, produces far, far more questions than it answers; and it produces far more problems than it alleges to solve. Essentially, in order for the JEPD theory to be true, one of two things had to have happened: (1) the entire nation would abandon one religious package and take up with another very complex religious package; or (2) unnecessary documents were produced to justify practices which had already been in existence for hundreds of years (it is unclear, under this theory, whether there existed some founding documents or not). It would have been impossible for a system as complex as the practices found in Y^ehowah worship to not have any founding documents from the beginning. It would also be impossible for a very religious nation to have one set of worship practices and then, essentially overnight, change those practices dramatically.

There is another big problem with the JEPD theory. As we will find out, about a third of the book of Exodus will be about **Tabernacle** worship (obviously, we are not there yet). But, do you know what did not exist in the 10th to the 6th centuries B.C.? Tabernacle worship. The people who supposedly developed the faked Mosaic documents never saw the Tabernacle and never participated in Tabernacle worship. They only knew the **Temple** (which David planned and Solomon built). So the people who put these documents together never actually went to the Tabernacle (it was stored, in pieces in the Temple, for a time, but we don't know if it was still in existence at that time that the JEPD documents were produced); and their parents did not go to said Tabernacle worship and their grandparents did not go). Yet, somehow the decision was made, to write long detailed chapters about something that they had never seen before, something which the writers actually knew nothing about. Remember, people did not simply walk into the Temple (or into the Tabernacle). Only a handful of priests had any sort of access to either one.

Let me simplify and condense these arguments.

JEPD Theory Options

Option One: Israel had a very simple religious package in the beginning but then, somewhere between the 10th and 6th centuries B.C., changed everything due to these new documents which were discovered. Centuries of one set of religious practices were completely abandoned and replaced by a completely new set of practices, which practices were extremely complex. These "newly discovered" documents changed everything. So their religious practices changed virtually overnight, but there is absolutely no record of this taking place; and this violates everything that we know about religious people. Something like this would have never happened.

Option Two: Israel's practices remained unchanged; so the fake Mosaic documents changed nothing. There are two problems associated with this: (1) Israel's system of worship could not have occurred without lengthy documentation (as we will find out); so (2) if this documentation is already in existence, then why are new documents developed and sold to the people as authentic when such documents already existed? Why are these new documents needed?

Option Three: The Mosaic documents, which we are studying, existed from the beginning. They provide a cohesive and complex religious system which the Jews followed from the very beginning. All of their complex religious practices started with Moses in 1445 B.C. and continued to A.D. 70. The people actually observed Moses going onto Mount Sinai to receive instructions. The people also observed Moses enter into his own pre-Tabernacle (also to be discussed later). This is essentially what the Bible teaches. Moses, at the time of the exodus, began to write (probably before that). The people were very aware of these writings and these writings

JEPD Theory Options

formed the basis for Israel's worship package.

There is one more thing. From the 10th century forward, Tabernacle worship ends and Temple worship begins (David planned this out and Solomon executed it). Over a third of the book of Exodus concerns itself with the Tabernacle. Why would someone fake documents and spend most of their time describing the Tabernacle and worship around the Tabernacle, which no one faking these documents had ever seen before?

If the JEPD theory were true, why is there no record of any of this taking place, despite the bulk of the Old Testament being the best kept records of any ancient nation ever? If there was a massive change in the religious package of the Jews, why don't we know about this?

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The JEPD theory provides solutions for problems that do not really exist; and then it introduces a whole new set of problems which have no explanation (such as, how do you get a large set of religious people to completely change all or most of their beliefs and practices?).

I know that some of those reading this have no idea that such a great controversy exists. I recall reading Josh McDowell's second *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, and he seemed to go on and on and on about this weird theory (which, at the time in my [Christian life](#), I had not heard anything about). The theory seemed so odd to begin with, I had no idea why McDowell was spending so much time on it. With more research, many years later, I come to find that this is a relatively well-accepted theory (not by me or by conservative theologians; but has nevertheless found its way into many seminaries).

Interestingly enough, very few pastors or commentators actually teach anything about the (so-called) original J documents or E documents. A [pastor-teacher](#) who does this will see perhaps a quarter (or more) of his flock suddenly disappear—overnight. I am telling you that if a pastor-teacher taught JEPD on one Sunday, the next Sunday, his congregation would be decimated. Some pastors have found this out the hard way. What I am telling you is, there are some pastor-teachers who actually believe this theory, but they would never teach it.

Often, when reading commentary that assumes the JEPD is a true theory, many readers will simply discard that commentary. If the author is wrong about this fundamental aspect of the Law, then how many other things is he wrong about? So, when a commentary begins to talk about the Jehovist origins of one chapter, and the Elohimist origins of another, that commentary is often shelved and never taken down again.

Illustration: Let me offer up a parallel situation. You are confused by love, and a friend of yours strongly recommends a book about love. Well, you get a copy of this book and find out that the author believes that there are perhaps 57 genders beyond male and female. How seriously are you going to take this author? When the author references gender #3, so you keep reading or do you chuckle to yourself and discard that book?

So, just in case I have not made my position clear, it is this: Moses is a real person and he wrote Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy during the time that these events take place. You may recall that Exodus 15 had to have been written right then and there, because it contains a song written by Moses which all Israel sings, that song being based upon God's defeat of the Egyptian army. My point being, there are many chapters of Exodus written right then and there, immediately after the incidents take place. We will find a number of internal proofs in the book of Exodus as we continue forth.

When introducing the book of Exodus, I explained that Moses is the original author of this material, and we have since supplemented that with additional proofs (such as, Exodus 15). This can be found in the [Introduction to Exodus \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) or in the first lesson or two of our weekly study ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). When we come to the chapters on the Tabernacle, I will speak about this theory again. A third of the book of Exodus makes no sense (the third that deal with Tabernacle worship) if the JEPD theory is valid.

New topic:

I am spending a lot of time introducing the Ten Commandments. How are they relevant to us today?

With Exodus 20 and through the book of Leviticus (and, later, the book of Deuteronomy), we have the laws and rituals which Israel was to follow for the next 1400 years. It is easy to become confused by these multiple laws. It is a very complex and intricate system.

From Wikipedia: *The Jewish tradition that there are 613 commandments (Hebrew: תּוֹצֵמַת גִּיּוּר , romanized: taryag mitzvot) or mitzvot in the Torah (also known as the Law of Moses) is first recorded in the 3rd century CE, when Rabbi Simlai mentioned it in a sermon that is recorded in Talmud Makkot 23b.*¹²

How is 21st century man to understand the laws given to Israel?

1. The entire Old Testament is instructive to the **Church Age** believer. The Old Testament is also God-breathed. It is a serious mistake for the contemporary believer to only study the New Testament.
2. What we will study can become quite confusing, and people can be beaten down with false arguments, if they do not understand what is taught in these chapters. For instance, pro-homosexual types will argue, "You eat shrimp right, and you like shrimp? Well, then, homosexuality is legitimate."
 - 1) You may not get the connection, but a number of animals are presented in the Old Testament as unclean and, therefore, are not supposed to be eaten.
 - 2) Homosexuality is clearly presented as a sin in the Old Testament.
 - 3) Therefore, people with an agenda say that these two things must rise or fall together.
 - 4) "Are shrimp unclean? Do you eat shrimp?" And when you have no idea how to answer this, they follow up with, "Just like that is old fashioned and does not apply to today's world, so it is with the Biblical restrictions on homosexuality. Those are simply prejudices from an era long ago."
3. So that there is no misunderstanding, there are laws in the laws of God which stand forever; or the principles behind them stand forever. Killing, stealing, desiring what others have, and homosexual acts—these things are always sins; they are wrong to do, no matter what period of time we live in. Exodus 20–22
4. In fact, such laws are properly practiced by all mankind. Jews and Christians and people of other faiths and backgrounds follow these laws and principles. The specific morality which we are about to study is fundamental to the laws of divine establishment (laws which have a wider application for all mankind).
5. There were a great many rituals found in these pages of the Law, and those rituals are specifically for Israel to be followed until what they represent—Jesus Christ and His offering for sin—comes to pass in time. Then the shadows of the future give way to the reality of that future. The Levitical offerings provided for the Jewish people a **complete Christology**. Leviticus 1–7
6. The animal sacrifices are known as **types** and Jesus offering Himself up for our sins is the antitype. The animal sacrifices are the shadow image of Jesus giving Himself for us—the reality of those animal sacrifices. Hebrews 8–9
7. The various celebrations look forward to Israel's future and to Jesus the **Messiah**. Exodus 23:10–19 Leviticus 16:1–34 23:1–44 25:1–22
8. The Tabernacle, its rituals and its furniture point, toward Jesus the Christ. Exodus 25:10–40

¹² From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosaic_covenant accessed December 2, 2020.

How is 21st century man to understand the laws given to Israel?

26:1–37 27:1–21 30:1–10, 17–38 Leviticus. 24:1–9

9. These things are all a part of the old contract, which has been replaced by a newer, updated contract. Hebrews 8:1–7 *The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who ministers in the sanctuary and true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man. And since every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, it was necessary for this One also to have something to offer. Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are already priests who offer gifts according to the law. They serve a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle, "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." Now, however, Jesus has received a much more excellent ministry, just as the covenant He mediates is better and is founded on better promises. For if that first covenant had been without fault, no place would have been sought for a second.* (BSB)
10. There are also laws which actually preserve the lives of the Hebrew people, which were appropriate for that time period, but not for today. They lived during a time of pre-refrigeration and a time when preservation of most food items was quite limited. There are foods which are more prone to carrying diseases when not properly preserved. So the *unclean* foods list was not a human history ban on these foods, but pertinent to Israel in its day and time. By avoiding such foods, Israel avoided the contaminants which came with them. **Leviticus 11** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#))
11. We are no longer under these regulations. Colossians 2:16–17 *Therefore let no one judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a festival, a New Moon, or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the body that casts it belongs to Christ.* (BSB)
12. The preservation of the Jews is a real thing. How many Elamites do you know or Philistines? How about Sumerians? There have been dozens of ancient nations and peoples contemporary with the Jews who no longer exist.
13. A very important point: neither Jews nor gentiles in the Old Testament were saved by obeying the Mosaic Law. They were saved by believing in the God revealed in the Mosaic Law. Just as my knowledge of Jesus Christ was not complete when I believed in Him; so the knowledge from the Old Testament about the **Revealed God** was also incomplete. Nevertheless, when a person believed in God as God revealed Himself, he was saved. Genesis 15:6
14. Jesus the Christ = the Revealed God. John 6:35 8:12 10:9, 11 11:25–26 14:6 15:5 Exodus 3:13–14
15. The Mosaic Law was given to the Jews at the beginning of the Jewish nation; the Mosaic Law was fundamental to their foundation and continuance as a nation. It described how their nation should be governed. Exodus 20–40 The book of Leviticus
16. The Mosaic Law was not given to the gentiles nor was it given to the **church**. Romans 3:19–20 Galatians 2:16, 19 3:10–14, 22–25
17. This does not mean that there is anything wrong with the moral principles of the Mosaic Law.
18. The Jews, under the economy of Israel, were under the Law. Galatians 3:22–25 *But the Scripture pronounces all things confined by sin, so that by faith in Jesus Christ the promise might be given to those who believe. Before this faith came, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law became our guardian to lead us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.*
19. Jews today are not under the Mosaic Law, nor do they place themselves under the entire Mosaic Law. Most notably, they no longer offer up animal sacrifices and they no longer have a Tabernacle or a Temple (although, we should not be surprised if a Temple is built in Jerusalem

How is 21st century man to understand the laws given to Israel?

in the near or far future). If ancient Jews observed the practices of current-day Jews, they would be flabbergasted (and vice versa). There are very few similarities between the rituals of the Old Testament and the rituals followed today in modern-day Judaism. The modern-day Passover would be completely unrecognizable to the ancient Jew.

20. Nation Israel does not follow the Mosaic Law today (although there are some similarities, such as the observance of the Sabbath).
21. We as gentiles learn today from the Mosaic Law the basic tenets and concepts of the laws of divine establishment. See the **Laws of Divine Establishment** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

If all of this material is brand new to you, then let me point out that the Ten Commandments is only a small portion of the Mosaic Law. However, they do provide for man a fundamental moral/law code. It is the final commandment that so many people in the United States need most to heed.

The primary purpose of my teaching Genesis through Deuteronomy is, it is important for the believer to understand the Law of Moses (which, strictly speaking, is Exodus through Deuteronomy).

Exodus 20 is the giving of the well-known Ten Commandments, which is also called the *decatalogue*, and known to some as the *freedom code*. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. pointed out, there are people who have never picked up a Bible before and have never read even a portion of the Bible who could name at least five of the Ten Commandments (that was in his day; today, maybe only two or three of them).

They are not called the Ten Commandments until Exodus 34:28 (see also Deuteronomy 10:4). Unlike most of the Law, all of the Israelites heard God give the Ten Commandments audibly. In fact, a great deal of the previous chapter was given over to them simply being prepared for such a direct encounter with their God.

The people will hear the ten commandments but that will be all that they can bear.

The commandments given by God cover three basic categories: (1) our relationship with God, (2) the Sabbath (which might be considered an aspect of our relationship with God), and (3) our relationship with our fellow man (which are the last 6 commandments).

The first category identifies to Whom our allegiance is due and why. Even though this is the Law, it is given specifically to Israel (Exodus 19:3 Leviticus 26:46 Romans 3:19 9:4) and not to the Gentiles (Deuteronomy 4:8 Romans 2:12–14) and not to the church (Acts 15:5, 24 Romans 6:14 Galatians 2:19). Nevertheless, the mandates herein stated, with the exception of one, remain in effect for all time. In fact, most of these commandments, particularly those dealing with people, are strengthened in the New Testament.

The commandment which no longer remains in effect is the mandate to keep the Sabbath. This was to teach the Hebrews that they could do nothing for salvation. God had provided for their every need in **eternity past** and they were to reflect upon that for their day of rest. The fact that we can do nothing and that God has done everything on our behalf is one of the central themes of the Bible in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Sabbath was analogous to salvation—the Jews could enter into God's rest by believing in the Revealed God (Jesus Christ).

At this point, we may want to examine...

The Purpose of the Ten Commandments

1. The commandments were designed by God to show that man was a sinner, that he did not measure up to God's standards, and that he needed a savior. **Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator [Moses], until the seed should come on the scene [concerning] whom the promise had been made...But the Scripture concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to the faithful ones** (Galatians 3:19, 22).
2. We have been kept under Law temporarily, which would lead us to Christ, until the doctrine of salvation came to us. **Before the coming of the doctrine, however, we were kept under law, having been embraced and under subjection to the doctrine which should afterwards be revealed. Therefore, the Law has become our tutor [our school bus] taking us to Christ** (Galatians 3:23–24).
3. The Ten Commandments provide for us a basic freedom code; a code of law for all man to live under. It provides a framework for behavior. **Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are delegated by God. Therefore, he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves...For because of this, you also pay taxes, for [these rulers] are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them; tax to whom tax [is due]; custom to whom custom [is due]; fear to whom fear [is due]; honor to whom honor [is due]. Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For this, You will not commit adultery, you will not murder, you will not steal, you will not covet—and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, You will love your neighbor as yourself** (Romans 13:1–2, 6–9)
4. The Ten Commandments cannot provide salvation **Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? No way! For if law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law** (Galatians 3:20). **[We keep] knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by the faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified** (Galatians 3:16).
5. Jesus actually expanded the Ten Commandments. When it comes to murder, we are not even to have hatred in our hearts, as that is mental murder. When it comes to adultery, we are not to even lust after another woman (other than our wives) in our hearts. Therefore, the Ten Commandments do not actually define sin (although by them our sinfulness is revealed). As we will see in the examination of each commandment, such as the prohibition of murder and adultery, that God's definition of right and wrong are much more extensive than what is contained in the decalogue (for instance, Matthew 5:21–28 Colossians 3:5–10).
6. If a country was going to institute a set of laws, the final 6 commandments would be essential to the protections of the freedoms of its citizens.
 - a. As an aside, you may think of these laws as not providing freedom but providing punishment for wrongdoers. That is the same thing, essentially, as providing freedom for most of society, which is law-abiding.
 - b. There is little freedom in a society where you must constantly protect yourself and your family and your property from others.

Obviously, this doctrine could be blown up considerably.

It is likely that you have heard, at some point, that Moses copied Hammurabi's Babylonia Code of Law. That is completely false and ridiculous. We will be studying the Law of Moses (more properly, the Law of God); and you are going to find it to be quite different in content and organization from Hammurabi's code (most of which you can find on the internet¹³). Hammurabi's code reads like case law. Or, like someone just started writing down a bunch of laws, very much tied to that day and age. The Mosaic Law will begin with the primary and most essential laws—which laws stand up to this very day. Then, throughout the next few chapters of Exodus, these laws will be further expanded. God will apply those laws to a variety of circumstances as related to that time period.

When it comes to the application of these laws, there will be a few similarities between the Mosaic Law and other ancient law codes. These similarities are based upon two things: (1) there would have been a similar concept of law and morality among mankind, almost as though these laws were written on man's heart; and (2) the circumstances and environment of ancient Babylonia and ancient Israel were very similar—therefore the application of these principles of laws would seem similar. They had farms, slaves and domesticated animals. Therefore, the basic Ten Commandments were specifically applied to the regulation of such things.

Was it possible that Moses was aware of the code of Hammurabi? I think the chances of this are very likely. Moses received the greatest education of his time, inasmuch as he was being prepared to become the King of Egypt. His education would have been diverse, wide-ranging, and it would have included anything from the outside world that would have seemed to be pertinent to his studies to become a future pharaoh. Acts 7:22–25 Exodus 2:11–25

In doing my research, I was surprised to come across this statement:

*The Encyclopedia Britannica: The best known ancient code is the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi. The Romans began keeping legal records, such as the Law of the Twelve Tables (451–450 BC), but there was no major codification of Roman law until the Code of Justinian (AD 529–565), which was compiled long after the dissolution of the Western Empire.*¹⁴

The best known ancient code of law is the Ten Commandments; followed by the rest of the commandments which came out of the basic ten. Hammurabi's code may have predated God's commandments to Moses (and to all Israel), but they are not better known or more revered.

Stop random people on the street and ask them if they have heard of the Ten Commandments and if they could name any of them, I am guessing that half of the people could. Ask these same random people about the code of Hammurabi or even quote from his code, and you will get blank stares from perhaps 99 out of a hundred.¹⁵

What seemed to be a real thing in ancient history was, developing a code of law for a nation. This was nearly a universal pursuit. Since the flood and the Tower of Babel, mankind moved all over the globe; and man soon organized into national units. This would have just seemed like a natural thing to do. Part of the greatness of a national entity would have been its system of laws and governance. The morality of their laws had to be generally accepted by all. Why would Charley Brown want to obey the law if he disagreed with half of them? Obviously, this aspect of a society would be ranked far behind the strength

¹³ Not all of it was preserved.

¹⁴ From <https://www.britannica.com/topic/law-code> accessed October 18, 2023.

¹⁵ I did not run an actual survey on this, so these numbers are pretty much made up. But the gist of my point is true. People know something about the Ten Commandments; they know nearly nothing about Hammurabi.

of their army and the size of their territory; but, there would come a point where there must be law and administration.

I must admit that, for many years, I did not understand prophets and the like speaking to the political leaders of their day and criticizing their morality. In the back of my mind, I have often wondered, what's the deal? Why do they do that?

However, let me suggest two reasons: (1) people do not want to obey the law of the land when it is written and enforced by hypocrites. If the law only applies when they want it to and to the people they want it to, then there is no real law. This is happening today in the United States. Martha Stewart was put in jail for insider trading; but Democrat politician Nancy Pelosi was not. How do you respect the law, when it is intentionally applied to only some of the people? So, leaders with immoral lives caused their leadership and their laws to be ignored. (2) For a long period of time, the primary celebrities of a national entity were their leaders. Therefore, when they exhibited immoral behavior, it was not abnormal for the population to imitate them and their rank behavior.

I will not list the entire Code here.

The Code of Hammurabi

(c. 1700 B.C.E.)

Note: The Code of Hammurabi was a compilation of almost three hundred laws on every aspect of life. Much can be learned both about Mesopotamian life and ideals through these laws. It should be kept in mind that we cannot be sure how well enforced these laws were, but it is safe to say that a powerful king in ancient Mesopotamia thought these were the laws that would guide a just society. This code was not an entirely new set of laws, but a compilation and revision of earlier law codes of the Sumerians and Akkadians

Prologue:

. . . When Marduk (God of Babylon) sent me to rule the people and to bring help to the country, I established law and justice in the language of the land and promoted the welfare of the people. At that time I decreed:

Justice

1. If a man brings an accusation against another man, charging him with murder, but cannot prove it, the accuser shall be put to death.
2. If a man has accused another of laying a spell upon him, but has not proved it, the accused shall go to the sacred river, he shall plunge into the sacred river, and if the sacred river shall conquer him, he that accused him shall take possession of his house. If the sacred river shall show his innocence and he is saved, his accuser shall be put to death.
3. If a man bears false witness in a case, or does not establish the testimony that he has given, if that case is case involving life, that man shall be put to death.
4. If a man bears false witness concerning grain or money, he shall himself bear the penalty imposed in the case.
5. If a judge pronounces judgment, renders a decision, delivers a verdict duly signed and sealed, and afterward alters his judgment, they shall call that judge to account for the alteration of the judgment which he has pronounced, and he shall pay twelve-fold the penalty in that judgment; and, in the assembly, they shall expel him from his judgment seat.

The Code of Hammurabi

Property

6. If a man has stolen goods from a temple, or house, he shall be put to death; and he that has received the stolen property from him shall be put to death.
7. If any one buy from the son or the slave of another man, without witnesses or a contract, silver or gold, a male or female slave, an ox or a sheep, an ass or anything, or if he take it in charge, he is considered a thief and shall be put to death.
8. If any one steal cattle or sheep, or an ass, or a pig or a goat, if it belong to a god or to the court, the thief shall pay thirtyfold therefor; if they belonged to a freed man of the king he shall pay tenfold; if the thief has nothing with which to pay he shall be put to death.
9. If any one lose an article, and find it in the possession of another: if the person in whose possession the thing is found say "A merchant sold it to me, I paid for it before witnesses," and if the owner of the thing say, "I will bring witnesses who know my property," then shall the purchaser bring the merchant who sold it to him, and the witnesses before whom he bought it, and the owner shall bring witnesses who can identify his property. The judge shall examine their testimony--both of the witnesses before whom the price was paid, and of the witnesses who identify the lost article on oath. The merchant is then proved to be a thief and shall be put to death. The owner of the lost article receives his property, and he who bought it receives the money he paid from the estate of the
10. If the purchaser does not bring the merchant and the witnesses before whom he bought the article, but its owner bring witnesses who identify it, then the buyer is the thief and shall be put to death, and the owner receives the lost article.
11. If the owner do not bring witnesses to identify the lost article, he is an evil-doer, he has traduced, and shall be put to death.
12. If the witnesses be not at hand, then shall the judge set a limit, at the expiration of six months. If his witnesses have not appeared within the six months, he is an evil-doer, and shall bear the fine of the pending case.
13. (I did not find this one)
14. If any one steal the minor son of another, he shall be put to death.
15. If any one take a male or female slave of the court, or a male or female slave of a freed man, outside the city gates, he shall be put to death.
16. If any one receive into his house a runaway male or female slave of the court, or of a freedman, and does not bring it out at the public proclamation of the major domus, the master of the house shall be put to death.
17. If any one find runaway male or female slaves in the open country and bring them to their masters, the master of the slaves shall pay him two shekels of silver.
18. If the slave will not give the name of the master, the finder shall bring him to the palace; a further investigation must follow, and the slave shall be returned to his master
19. If he hold the slaves in his house, and they are caught there, he shall be put to death.
20. If the slave that he caught run away from him, then shall he swear to the owners of the slave, and he is free of all blame.
21. If any one break a hole into a house (break in to steal), he shall be put to death before that hole and be buried.
22. If any one is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death.
23. If the robber is not caught, then shall he who was robbed claim under oath the amount of his loss; then shall the community, and . . . on whose ground and territory and in whose domain it was compensate him for the goods stolen.
24. If persons are stolen, then shall the community and . . . pay one mina of silver to their relatives.

The Code of Hammurabi

25. If fire break out in a house, and some one who comes to put it out cast his eye upon the property of the owner of the house, and take the property of the master of the house, he shall be thrown into that self-same fire.
26. If a chieftain or a man (common soldier), who has been ordered to go upon the king's highway for war does not go, but hires a mercenary, if he withholds the compensation, then shall this officer or man be put to death, and he who represented him shall take possession of his house.
27. If a chieftain or man be caught in the misfortune of the king (captured in battle), and if his fields and garden be given to another and he take possession, if he return and reaches his place, his field and garden shall be returned to him, he shall take it over again.
28. If a chieftain or a man be caught in the misfortune of a king, if his son is able to enter into possession, then the field and garden shall be given to him, he shall take over the fee of his father.
29. If his son is still young, and can not take possession, a third of the field and garden shall be given to his mother, and she shall bring him up.
30. If a chieftain or a man leave his house, garden, and field and hires it out, and some one else takes possession of his house, garden, and field and uses it for three years: if the first owner return and claims his house, garden, and field, it shall not be given to him, but he who has taken possession of it and used it shall continue to use it.
31. If he hire it out for one year and then return, the house, garden, and field shall be given back to him, and he shall take it over again.

These are not all of the laws. In fact, we do not have all of the laws. We are missing #66–99 (of 282 laws). This certainly gives an idea as to the very specific nature of these laws. After the Ten Commandments, there will be many applications of these laws, and those will be more similar to the Hammurabi code.

I do not denigrate these laws in any way. They are reasonably well-thought out for that period of time, as are most ancient law codes. They are simply not the source of the Mosaic Law.

I took these laws from two sources:

<https://f5webserv.wright.edu/~christopher.oldstone-moore/Hamm.htm>
<https://avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp> both accessed March 6, 2024.

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There is one more thing to cover here, and this is to set us up for God speaking the Ten Commandments. To whom was God speaking?

At this point, God is speaking directly to Israel. This is not actually made clear until we get to Exodus 20:22, which reads, *And Yahweh said to Moses, "Thus you will say to the sons of Israel, 'You + yourselves have seen that I have talked with you + from heaven.'*" (Updated Bible Version 2.17; I added in quotation marks). *You +* means *you all, you (plural)*. When did Israel see this? In Exodus 20:2–17 (the very words that we are about to study).

Exodus 20:22 helps us to frame this entire chapter. Moses is *not* telling the people what God said to him in Exodus 20 (which could be one understanding of Exodus 19:25). Moses did come down from Mount Sinai and he did speak to the people, and he told them what God told him in Exodus 19:21–24.

So Moses comes down from Mount Sinai and speaks to the people and tells them, "Do not rush the mountain; do not come close to this mountain." And then, while Moses is there with the people, God speaks aloud to them all (to Moses and the people).

Part of any confusion which may result from Exodus 19:25 ([So Moses went down to the people, and told them.](#)—UPDV 2.17) is Moses' natural economy of language. When he records this information, he does not repeat the things which God said to Moses from vv. 21–24. We saw this during the plagues where God told Moses what to say and then Moses came down and said these same words to Pharaoh. We only read the words once. We did not read them as God speaking to Moses; and then reread them when God spoke the same words to Pharaoh. Moses quoted these words only once, and we understood from the context that the same words were spoken twice).

When it comes to the Ten Commandments, we simply go right into it. What we do not have here is, *and right after Moses spoke to the people, telling them what God said, then God spoke the following words aloud, so that Moses and the people standing there with him could hear them.*

This was quite an amazing event, and Moses does not think to set us up for it. We figure out exactly what happened by going to v. 22 of this chapter.

Clearly, this is a very important chapter in the Word of God. Few things are more important than the giving of the Ten Commandments. I often used to wonder this—it is all the Word of God, how can one chapter be greater than another, but I guess that is just like all of life.

Titles and/or Brief Descriptions of Exodus 20 (by various commentators)

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Sometimes, a commentator will begin with a good observation of this chapter of the Bible.

Brief, but insightful observations of Exodus 20 (various commentators)

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As I study a chapter, questions will occur to me—some of them important and many of them minor. Not all of these questions will be satisfactorily answered.

Fundamental Questions About Exodus 20

1. One of the big questions of this chapter is, what about the Sabbath? What day is it? Should we still observe the Sabbath?

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It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of Exodus 20

Exodus 20 will begin with

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We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of Exodus 20

Characters	Commentary

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We need to know where this chapter takes place.

The Places of Exodus 20

Place	Description

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By the Numbers

Item	Duration; size

Brent MacDonald	Steve Rudd	Age of Moses	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
1546 B.C.	1532–1511 B.C.				Amuntotep reign
			1580 B.C. (1542 B.C.)	Exodus 1:8–14	Egyptian bondage and oppression increases.
	1526 B.C.				Amuntotep kills children
1522 B.C.	1526 B.C.	0		Exodus 2:2	Birth of Moses
1522 B.C.	1526 B.C.			Exodus 2:5	Hatshepsut, age 15, adopts baby Moses.
1526 B.C.	1511–1498 B.C.				Thutmose I reign (wife Ahmose)
1514 B.C.	1498–1485 B.C.				Thutmose II – Hatshepsut (his half-sister and co-ruler) Pharaohs of Oppression
1504 B.C.					Hatshepsut continues reign with Thutmose III
	1466 B.C.			Num. 11:29 Ex. 33:11	Birth of Joshua
1482 B.C.				Exodus 2:11-15 Acts 7:23	Moses flees to Midian to escape the wrath of Thutmose III. Pharaoh Thutmose III now rules Egypt alone, subsequently destroying most traces of Hatshepsut.
1450 B.C.					Egypt - Pharaoh Amenhotep II (alt. Amenophis II). He was not the oldest son of Thutmose III. Bloodthirsty; liked hand to hand combat, led troops into battle with howls of rage.
1446 B.C.				Ex. 4:18-5:1 1Kings 6:1	Egypt - Moses returns and confronts Amenhotep II.
1446 B.C.	1446 B.C.			Ex. 12:40-41	Moses leads people out of Egypt; the beginning of the exodus. note 3 . Scripture does not state that Pharaoh was killed at this time (read about it here).

Brent MacDonald	Steve Rudd	Age of Moses	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
					Sinai (Marah, Elim, Rephidim, Mount Sinai, etc.) - Israel in wilderness 40 years (Exodus 16:35). A timeline of stops on the Exodus is here .
1424 B.C.					Egypt - Pharaoh Thutmose IV (alt. Tuthmosis IV) reigns, son of Amenhotep II and lesser wife Tiaa. He was not the oldest son. Had dream at the sphinx that he would rule - recorded on stele there.
1414 B.C.					Egypt - Pharaoh Amenhotep III (alt. Amenophis III). The colossi of Memnon are all that remains of his temple near Thebes.
1402 B.C.				Deut. 1:1, 5	Israel - Moses writes and teaches the book of Deuteronomy in land of Moab.
1402 B.C.		120		Deut. 34:7	Moses dies at Mount Nebo at 120 years old
	1406 B.C.				Joshua crosses Jordan River.
1401 B.C.					Israel - Conquests of Joshua in Promised Land begin. Battle of Jericho.

Bibliography

MacDonald's timeline is from: <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63.htm> accessed January 29, 2016.

See <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63dating.htm> for his justification of his timeline.

Steve Rudd from <http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-date-1440bc.jpg> accessed January 29, 2016.

The Reese Chronological Bible; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 18–19, 54–74.

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Here is what to expect from Exodus 20:

A Synopsis of Exodus 20

Like all chapters of the Word of God, you need more than just the simple plot outline to understand what God wants us to know.

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Outlines of Exodus 20 (Various Commentators)

[Chapter Outline](#)

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A Synopsis of Exodus 20 from the Summarized Bible

Contents:	Ten commandments delivered to Moses at Sinai.
Characters:	God, Moses.
Conclusion:	A holy and righteous God has holy and righteous standards. Those who love God will constantly endeavor to live as He requires, enabled by the Holy Spirit.
Key Word:	Commands, Exodus 20:6.
Strong Verses:	Exodus 20:3-17.
Striking Facts:	Law proposes life and righteousness as the end to be attained by keeping it, but proves at the outset that man is in a state of death (Romans 5:20; Romans 7:7, Romans 7:13; Romans 3:20). Life and righteousness cannot come by that which only curses, but only through the grace of God in Christ.

Keith L. Brooks, *Summarized Bible; Complete Summary of the Bible*; ©1919; from e-Sword, Ex. 20.

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It is helpful to see what came before and what follows in a brief summary.

The Big Picture (Exodus 19–23)

Exodus	Text/Commentary
19	<p>The sons of Israel come to Mount Sinai and Moses calls for the people to cleanse themselves and to separate themselves from Mount Sinai. They were not to even touch it.</p> <p>God makes himself visibly and audibly known on Mount Sinai.</p>
20	<p>God speaks the Ten Commandments to all the people of Israel; and it really shakes them up. They ask Moses to speak to God directly and then to tell them what God says. They do not want to hear God speaking directly to them.</p> <p>The people pull back away from the mountain, and Moses goes towards the mountain to the thick darkness where God is. God speaks to Moses about idols and altars (which appears to continue into Exodus 21–23 for other topics).</p>
Apart from the Ten Commandments, most of the moral laws are given in Exodus 21–23.	
21	God gives laws about slavery, personal injury and homicide. These laws include actions by animals (the guilty party is the owner of the animal).
22	Laws on theft and a set of general property rights and laws. This chapter includes a wide variety of laws on illicit sexual activity, worship of another God, mistreatment of widows and orphans, loan conditions and restrictions, and consecration of the firstborn.
23	<p>Laws on giving truthful testimony, the keeping of the Sabbath and Sabbatical years; and the three major festivals are described.</p> <p>God promises to help the Israelites enter into the land of Canaan to take it.</p>

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Changes—additions and subtractions (for Exodus 20): Very often, when I begin a new chapter, I have either discovered a new translations, a new commentary; or have decided to leave out a particular translation or commentary. Sometimes, I make a minor formatting change. I have always placed such comments before the beginning of the first verse. So one formatting change is, *the addition of this more formal approach to changes, giving it a section of its own*. Many times, if I like a change a lot, I will occasionally go back and make that change in previous chapters.

Previously in the weekly study of Genesis, I used the Modern KJV translation (this is the second set of original notes placed in the chapter-by-chapter study of Genesis). For the book of Exodus, I will use the New King James Version (unless otherwise noted), which is a superior (but not perfect) translation. Therefore, an unnamed translation of Exodus will either be the NKJV or it will be one of the three original translations developed for each chapter.

I have gone back in the Exodus series and made certain that, after every verse, there is a mostly literal translation of that verse. At the end of every passage, there will be both a mostly literal translation and a paraphrase provided, both renderings clearly marked and original with me.

The Doctrinal Dictionary now allows you to go back and forth between the first occurrence of a specific term and the dictionary where its definition is found (they will be cross-linked).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

God Gives the Commandments Directly to the People

The Prologue

The Ten Commandments

This entire event of giving the Ten Commandments was set up in the previous chapter. The people of Israel are encamped at Mount Sinai, out in front of the mountain. Moses has gone up and down the mountain at least twice so far; having spoken to God. God gave Moses 2 days to purify the people, so that has been what has taken place in the two days previous to this. There are thick clouds, thunder and lightning all around the mountain. God gave Moses some last minute instructions, to tell the people not to come close to the mountain, and Moses did that. That takes us to the end of Exodus 19.

God now speaks, and all Israel can hear Him.

As always, 3 separate translations will be produced for each verse. The slavishly literal translation attempts to preserve word order and number, making it more literal than Young's translation (however, I do not preserve the consistency of the translation that Young does). The moderately literal translation may add or delete a definite article, change the number of a noun to correspond with the English sense of thinking, and the order is often changed in order to better represent our English sentence structure. The paraphrase is an attempt to give a thought-for-thought interpretation of what each verse tells us.

Kukis slavishly literal:

And so says Elohim all the words the these, to say, "I [am] Y^ehowah your Elohim Who brought you out of a land of Egypt out from a house of slaves.

Exodus
20:1–2

Kukis moderately literal:

Elohim spoke all of these words, saying, "I [am] Y^ehowah your Elohim; [it is] I Who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out from the house of slavery.

Kukis not-so-literal paraphrase:

God spoke all of these words directly to the people of Israel, saying, "I am Jehovah your God. I am the One Who brought you out from the land of Egypt, taking you out of bondage.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac (= Aramaic) and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation¹⁶; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

¹⁶ I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

The comparisons which I do are primarily between the English translations which are taken from the ancient tongues. For the most part, the variances are so minor that I rarely investigate them any further than that.

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

I will only list the translation from the Dead Sea Scrolls if it exists and if it is different from the Masoretic text.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. From http://www.becomingjewish.org/texts/targum/onkelos_Exodus.html and first published in 1862.

Occasionally, there is an obvious error in the English translation, and I correct those without additional mention or footnoting. For instance, the online version of the Targum of Onkelos which I use has *gorund* in Ex. 4:9; I simply corrected the text. This may occur once or twice in a chapter.

I attempt to include translations which are different in their vocabulary and phrasing. On many occasions, I may include a translation which is not substantially different than another listed translation.

Most of the translations can be found [here](#).

The very fact that we have ancient Greek, Latin, Syriac and Arabic translations of the Bible testifies to its accuracy. There may be a difference word or phrase here

or there; the Greek may have a singular where the Hebrew has a plural, but there is no set of doctrines in the Latin Bible which are any different from those found in the Greek Bible or the Syriac Bible. These different cultures when they chose to translate the Bible chose to translate it as accurately as possible. Where human viewpoint would expect to find doctrinal differences between the Bible of the Hebrews, of the Greeks or of the Romans, no such differences exist.

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Elohim all the words the these, to say, "I [am] Y ^h owah your Elohim Who brought you out of a land of Egypt out from a house of slaves. (Kukis slavishly literal translation)
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	And the Lord spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Mizraim, out of the house of servitude. Translation for Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. (1862).
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the Lord spake all these words, saying: [JERUSALEM. And the Word of the Lord spake all the excellency [praise] of these words saying:] The first word, as it came forth from the mouth of the Holy One, whose Name be blessed, was like storms, and lightnings, and flames of fire, with a burning light on His right hand and on His left. It winged its way through the air of the heavens, and was made manifest unto the camp of Israel, and returned, and was engraven on the tables of the covenant that were given by the hand of Mosheh, and were turned in them from side to side: and then called He, and said: Sons of Israel My people, I am the Lord your God, who brought you out free from the land of Mizraim, from the house of the bondage of slaves.
Revised Douay-Rheims ¹⁷	And the Lord spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	God spoke all these words, saying, "I am Mar-Yah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	AND God spoke all these words, saying, I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
Updated Brenton (Greek) ¹⁸	And the Lord spoke all these words, saying: I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:¹⁹

Bible in Basic English	And God said all these words: I am the Lord your God who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the prison-house.
Easy English	The 10 commandments Then God spoke all these words: 'I am the LORD your God. I brought you out of Egypt, out of the country where you were slaves.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	The Ten Commandments

¹⁷ Also known as the 'you' version; found here: <http://www.cormacburke.or.ke/node/1054>

¹⁸ I am using the Complete Apostles Bible, available through e-sword.

¹⁹ Many of these Bibles fall into 2 or more categories. The CEV, for instance, is **approved** by the Catholic Church, it is a limited vocabulary Bible, and it is a paraphrase, for the most part.

	These are the things God told his people: "I am the LORD your God. I am the one who freed you from the land of Egypt, where you were slaves. God spoke all these words: I am God, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a life of slavery.
The Message	
Names of God Bible	The Ten Commandments Then Elohim spoke all these words: "I am Yahweh your Elohim , who brought you out of slavery in Egypt.
NIRV	God Gives His People the Ten Commandments Here are all the words God spoke. He said, "I am the Lord your God. I brought you out of Egypt. That is the land where you were slaves.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	God said to the people of Israel: I am the LORD your God, the one who brought you out of Egypt where you were slaves.
The Living Bible	Then God issued this edict: "I am Jehovah your God who liberated you from your slavery in Egypt.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	God's Ten Great Laws Then God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house where you were servants.
New Living Translation	Ten Commandments for the Covenant Community Then God gave the people all these instructions [Hebrew <i>all these words</i> .]: "I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Then God spoke these words to the Israelite people. "I am Yahweh your Almighty, the one you worship. I am the one who brought you out of the land of Egypt. I am the one who freed you from being slaves there.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then the Lord said all of this: 'I am Jehovah... I'm your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of slavery.
Beck's American Translation	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And now God spoke all these words which follow. I, the Lord, am thy God (he said); I, who rescued thee from the land of Egypt, where thou didst dwell in slavery.
Translation for Translators	God gave the people the Ten Commandments Then God said this <i>to the Israeli people</i> : "I am Yahweh God, the one you <i>worship</i> . I am the one who brought you out of Egypt. I am the one who freed you from being slaves <i>there</i> .

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia	God spoke all these words, as follows: "I am the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	So Moses descended to the people and spoke to them. The Ten Commandments

Then the Ever-living dictated all these commands, and said;
Commandment I.

'I am your Ever-living God, Who brought you out from the Mitzemim, from the house of bondage.

International Standard V

The Ten Commandments

(Deuteronomy 5:1-21)

Then God spoke all these words:

x [20:2-17 The Heb. letters to the left denote numbers 1-10]

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

Wikipedia Bible Project

And Yahweh spoke all these things, saying:

I am Yahweh your God, who took you out of the land of Egypt, from the slave-house.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible

See Exo 34:28 and Deu 4:13 where the words, The Ten Commandments, appear, and 10:4 where they are called Ten Words, and Deu 5 where the Ten Commandments are listed again.

And God spoke all these words, saying,

I am Jehovah, your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out from the house of servitude..

New American Bible (2002)²⁰

Then God delivered all these commandments:

"I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery.

[1-17] The precise division of these precepts into "ten commandments" is somewhat uncertain. Traditionally among Catholics ⇒ Exodus 20:1-6 is considered as only one commandment, and ⇒ Exodus 20:17 as two. Cf ⇒ Deut 5:6-21.

New American Bible (2011)²¹

*The Ten Commandments.**

Then God spoke all these words:

[Dt 5:6–21] I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, [Lv 26:13; Ps 81:11; Hos 13:4] out of the house of slavery.

* [20:1–17] The precise numbering and division of these precepts into "ten commandments" is somewhat uncertain. Traditionally among Catholics and Lutherans vv. 1–6 are considered as only one commandment, and v. 17 as two. The Anglican, Greek Orthodox, and Reformed churches count vv. 1–6 as two, and v. 17 as one. Cf. Dt 5:6–21. The traditional designation as "ten" is not found here but in 34:28 (and also Dt 4:13 and 10:4), where these precepts are alluded to literally as "the ten words." That they were originally written on two tablets appears in Ex 32:15–16; 34:28–29; Dt 4:13; 10:2–4.

The present form of the commands is a product of a long development, as is clear from the fact that the individual precepts vary considerably in length and from the slightly different formulation of Dt 5:6–21 (see especially vv. 12–15 and 21). Indeed they represent a mature formulation of a traditional morality. Why this specific selection of commands should be set apart is not entirely clear. None of them is unique in the Old Testament and all of the laws which follow are also from God and equally binding on the Israelites. Even so, this collection represents a privileged expression of God's moral demands on Israel and is here set apart from the others as a direct, unmediated communication of God to the Israelites and the basis of the covenant being concluded on Sinai.

New English Bible—1970

The Decalogue.

²⁰ Found here: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_INDEX.HTM

²¹ Also called the revised edition. Found here: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/index.cfm>

God spoke, and these were his words:

New Jerusalem Bible

I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.
Then God spoke all these words. He said,
'I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of Egypt, where you lived as slaves.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

Then God said all these words:

א "I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the abode of slavery.

Judaica Press Complete T.

. The Kaplan Translation, particularly in Exodus through Deuteronomy, takes note of historic rabbinic opinions.

The Scriptures 1998

And Elohim spoke all these Words, saying,

"I am יהוה your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim, out of the house of slavery.

Weird English, 𐤀𐤋𐤅𐤍 English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible

(*The Ten Commandments*) **AND JESUS SPOKE ALL THESE WORDS, SAYING:**
†(*These are The Words of JESUS. This is not Moses talking. This is not Old Covenant Ordinances*)

"I AM JESUS YOUR THEOS (*Alpha & Omega*), WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE.

Awful Scroll Bible

He of mightyt ones was to speak this concern, to the intent:

I am Jehovah, he of mighty ones, who is to have led yous out from the solid grounds of Egypt, the house of slavery -...

exeGesés companion Bible

THE TEN WORDS OF ELOHIM

And Elohim words all these words, saying,

Exo 20:2 I - Yah Veh your Elohim,
who brought you from the land of Misrayim,
from the house of servants.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

Then Elohim spoke all these words, saying,

I am Hashem Eloheicha, Who brought thee out of Eretz Mitzrayim, out of the bais avadim (house of slaves).

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible

The Ten Commandments

Then God spoke all these words:

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt ·where you were slaves [^Lfrom the house of bondage].

Kretzmann's Commentary

Verses 1-11

The Decalogue

And God spake all these words, saying,

I am the Lord, thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. That was the Lord's solemn introduction to the legislation on Mount Sinai, a reminder of the wonderful deliverance which He had wrought when He led forth His people out of the land of Egypt, where they had virtually been slaves. Note that the Decalog, as here given, was intended for the children of Israel and applied its principles to the circumstances under which they lived, with a form of government every detail of which was fixed by the Lord.

The Voice

Then God began to speak directly to all the people.

Until now God has dealt only with Moses on behalf of His people; at Mount Sinai, He turns to address them directly in order to express the core of His covenant obligations. He begins by reminding them of all He has done for them. His miraculous deeds in liberating the Hebrew slaves and providing for them in the desert become the basis of this new relationship. He then proceeds to lay out the Ten Directives that will define and shape their lives together. The first four Directives concern their duties to know and worship the one True God. The last six pertain to how Israel is to live with one another in a covenant-based society. Properly understood, all the other teachings, prescriptions, and directives that come in later chapters derive from these Ten Directives.

Eternal One: I am the Eternal your God. I led you out of Egypt and liberated you from lives of slavery *and oppression*.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach²²

God spoke all these words, to respond:...

God spoke: Heb. מִיְהוָה אֵל. [The word] מִיְהוָה always means “a judge.” [This Divine Name is used here] because there are some sections in the Torah [that contain commandments] that if a person performs them, he receives a reward, but if not, he does not receive any punishment for them. I might think that so it is with the Ten Commandments. Therefore, Scripture says: “God (מִיְהוָה) spoke,” [signifying God’s role as] a Judge, [Whose function is] to mete out punishment [when the Ten Commandments are not obeyed]. [from Mechilta]

all these words: [This] teaches [us] that the Holy One, blessed be He, said the Ten Commandments in one utterance, something that is impossible for a human being to say [in a similar way]. If so, why does the Torah say again, “I am [the Lord, your God (verse 2)]” and “You shall have no...” (verse 3)? Because He later explained each statement [of the Ten Commandments] individually. — [from Mechilta]

to respond: Heb. רָמַאָל, lit., to say. [This] teaches [us] that they responded to the positive [commandments], “Yes,” and to the negative [commandments], “No.” -[from Mechilta]

"I am the Lord, your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

²² Also known as the Complete Tanach (and as *The Complete Jewish Bible*) with Rashi’s Commentary. I do not know who did the original translation, but it has been edited by translator and scholar, Rabbi A.J. Rosenberg. It is found [here](#).

Who took you out of the land of Egypt: The taking [you] out [of Egypt] is sufficient reason for you to be subservient to Me. Alternatively, [God mentions the Exodus] since He revealed Himself on the sea as a valiant warrior, and here He revealed Himself as an old man full of mercy, as it is said: “and beneath His feet was like the form of a brick of sapphire” (Exod. 24:10). That [brick] was before Him at the time of the enslavement [to remember the Israelites’ suffering when they made bricks as slaves], “and like the appearance of the heavens” (Exod. 24:10), [i.e., there was joy before Him] when they were redeemed. Since I change in [My] appearances, do not say that they are two [Divine] domains, [but] I am He Who took you out of Egypt and [I am He Who performed the miracles] by the sea (Mechilta). Alternatively, [God mentions the Exodus] since they [the Israelites] heard many voices [during the revelation], as it is said: “And all the people saw the voices” (verse 15), [meaning that] voices came from four directions and from the heavens and from the earth, [so] do not say that there are many domains (Exod. Rabbah 5:9). And why did He say [this] in the singular [possessive], *אֵלֹהִי*? In order to give Moses an opening to offer a defense in the incident of the calf. This is [the meaning of] “Why, O Lord, should Your anger be kindled against Your people?” (Exod. 32:11). You did not command them, “You shall not have the gods of others before Me,” but [You commanded] me alone (Exod. Rabbah 43:5).

out of the house of bondage: Literally, out of the house of slaves. [i.e.,] from Pharaoh’s house, where you were slaves to him. Or perhaps [Scripture] means only: from the house of slaves, that they were slaves to [other] slaves? Therefore, Scripture says: “and He redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt” (Deut. 7:8). Consequently, you must say that they were slaves to Pharaoh, but not slaves to [other] slaves. — [from Exod. Rabbah 43:5]

Kaplan Translation

The First Two Commandments

God spoke all these words, saying:

I am God your Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, from the place of slavery.

God spoke...

The Ten Commandments are repeated in Deuteronomy 5:6-18.

I am God...

This is a commandment to believe in God (Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive Commandment 1; see Josephus 3:5:5; Philo, Decalogue 1:385). Others, however, state that belief in God is too basic to be an actual commandment (Ramban on Sefer HaMitzvot, loc. cit.).

*The Decalogue*God spoke all these words:²

“I,³ the Lord, am your God,⁴ who brought you⁵ from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery.⁶

^{1sn} This chapter is the heart of the Law of Israel, and as such is well known throughout the world. There is so much literature on it that it is almost impossible to say anything briefly and do justice to the subject. But the exposition of the book must point out that this is the charter of the new nation of Israel. These ten commands (words) form the preamble; they will be followed by the decisions (judgments). And then in chap. 24 the covenant will be inaugurated. So when Israel entered into covenant with God, they entered into a theocracy by expressing their willingness to submit to his authority. The Law was the binding constitution for the nation of Israel under Yahweh their God. It was specifically given to them at a certain time and in a certain place. The Law legislated how Israel was to live in order to be blessed by God and used by him as a kingdom of priests. In the process of legislating their conduct and their ritual for worship, the Law revealed God. It revealed the holiness of Yahweh as the standard for all worship and service, and in revealing that it revealed or uncovered sin. But what the Law condemned, the Law (Leviticus) also made provision for in the laws of the sacrifice and the feasts intended for atonement. The NT teaches that the Law was good, and perfect, and holy. But it also teaches that Christ was the end (goal) of the Law, that it ultimately led to him. It was a pedagogue, Paul said, to bring people to Christ. And when the fulfillment of the

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promise came in him, believers were not to go back under the Law. What this means for Christians is that what the Law of Israel revealed about God and his will is timeless and still authoritative over faith and conduct, but what the Law regulated for Israel in their existence as the people of God has been done away with in Christ. The Ten Commandments reveal the essence of the Law; the ten for the most part are reiterated in the NT because they reflect the holy and righteous nature of God. The NT often raises them to a higher standard, to guard the spirit of the Law as well as the letter.

^{2sn} The Bible makes it clear that the Law was the revelation of God at Mount Sinai. And yet study has shown that the law code's form follows the literary pattern of covenant codes in the Late Bronze Age, notably the Hittite codes. The point of such codes is that all the covenant stipulations are appropriate because of the wonderful things that the sovereign has done for the people. God, in using a well-known literary form, was both drawing on the people's knowledge of such to impress their duties on them, as well as putting new wine into old wineskins. The whole nature of God's code was on a much higher level. For this general structure, see M. G. Kline, *Treaty of the Great King*. For the Ten Commandments specifically, see J. J. Stamm and M. E. Andrew, *The Ten Commandments in Recent Research* (SBT). See also some of the general articles: M. Barrett, "God's Moral Standard: An Examination of the Decalogue," *BV* 12 (1978): 34-40; C. J. H. Wright, "The Israelite Household and the Decalogue: The Social Background and Significance of Some Commandments," *TynBul* 30 (1979): 101-24; J. D. Levenson, "The Theologies of Commandment in Biblical Israel," *HTR* 73 (1980): 17-33; M. B. Cohen and D. B. Friedman, "The Dual Accentuation of the Ten Commandments," *Masoretic Studies* 1 (1974): 7-190; D. Skinner, "Some Major Themes of Exodus," *Mid-America Theological Journal* 1 (1977): 31-42; M. Tate, "The Legal Traditions of the Book of Exodus," *RevExp* 74 (1977): 483-509; E. C. Smith, "The Ten Commandments in Today's Permissive Society: A Principleist Approach," *SwJT* 20 (1977): 42-58; and D. W. Buck, "Exodus 20:1-17," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 16 (1982): 65-75.

^{3sn} The revelation of Yahweh here begins with the personal pronoun. "I" – a person, a living personality, not an object or a mere thought. This enabled him to address "you" – Israel, and all his people, making the binding stipulations for them to conform to his will (B. Jacob, *Exodus*, 544).

^{4tn} Most English translations have "I am Yahweh your God." But the preceding chapters have again and again demonstrated how he made himself known to them. Now, the emphasis is on "I am your God" – and what that would mean in their lives.

^{5tn} The suffix on the verb is second masculine singular. It is this person that will be used throughout the commandments for the whole nation. God addresses them all as his people, but he addresses them individually for their obedience. The masculine form is not, thereby, intended to exclude women.

^{6tn} Heb "the house of slaves" meaning "the land of slavery."

^{sn} By this announcement Yahweh declared what he had done for Israel by freeing them from slavery. Now they are free to serve him. He has a claim on them for gratitude and obedience. But this will not be a covenant of cruel slavery and oppression; it is a covenant of love, as God is saying "I am yours, and you are mine." This was the sovereign Lord of creation and of history speaking, declaring that he was their savior.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and " Elohiym ^{Powers} " spoke all these words saying, I am " YHWH ^{He Is} " your " Elohiym ^{Powers} ", who made you go out from the land of " Mits'rayim ^{Two straits} ", from the house of servants,...
Modern English Version	The Ten Commandments Now God spoke all these words, saying: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
New European Version	Ten Commandments Given God spoke all these words, saying, I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
Young's Updated LT	"And God speaks all these words, saying, I am Jehovah your God, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a house of servants. Note the location of the

quotation mark. This suggests that Young believes that Moses is speaking (there are no punctuation marks in the original Hebrew or Greek, so inserting them immediately suggests some degree of interpretation on the part of the translator..

The gist of this passage: 1-2 God begins to speak the Ten Commandments to the people of Israel.

Exodus 20:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
d ^b bârîym (דְּבָרִים) [pronounced <i>daw^b-vawr-EEM</i>]	<i>words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʾêlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>ALE-leh</i>]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective with the definite article	Strong's #428 BDB #41

Translation: Elohim spoke all of these words,...

To speak is in the Piel imperfect; the intensive stem because of the gravity of the situation.

God is speaking all of these words to the people of Israel directly.

The final words of the previous chapter are: [And Moses came down unto the people and so he said to them.](#) Because of these final words, it is very easy for a person to interpret this as Moses coming down and saying these things to the people. "God spoke all of these words..." Even though we lack the words *to say* (which act like quotation marks in the ancient Hebrew), they are not always found when a person speaks.

The Ten Commandments were *not* originally given orally by God to Moses *and* to the people of God. God tells Israel, through Moses, "You all better back up a bit." Moses tells this to the people and then God speaks.

Now, later, God will speak through Moses to the people. The Ten Commandments are first given by God to the people; and then this will be followed up with the judgements—that is, specific offenses of the law will be given along with judgements (or the punishments) of the same in Exodus 21:1–23:13. In many ways, the judgments later given by God directly to Moses will expand on the Ten Commandments. The judgments which follow the Ten Commandments will be spoken by God to Moses, and then by Moses to the people (as per the request of the people in Exodus 20:18–19).

The Ten Commandments are not written on the tablets of stone right at this time but rather given audibly to all the people of Israel. Later, God will write them in stone with His *finger*. It appears that only the ten commandments were written upon the stone, but not the myriad of other laws given by God to Moses directly. These first tablets are those which are broken into pieces when Moses returns to find the children of Israel practicing idolatry in his absence.

So far, in Exodus 20, we have only gotten this far:

Exodus 20:1a *And God spoke all these words...* (NKJV)

There are two basic ways to understand this chapter: (1) God speaks to all of the people of Israel and they hear the Ten Commandments directly. Everyone there hears the Ten Commandments audibly. Or (2) things are so crazy with noise and lightning, that the people ask that Moses go up the mountain to hear these words and then come down and tell them.

Option #2 requires that the people of Israel believe that they somehow have options in the way that they receive the Word of God, and then they express their preferences to Moses. They will, in fact, express their preferences to God, but only after they have directly heard the voice of God.

The first interpretation requires the people to hear the Ten Commandments and pretty much freak out as a result. Up to this point in time, Moses has been the faithful communicator, telling the people what God wants them to do. He has been doing this from his first meeting with the elders back in Exodus 4 until now (I bet the seems like a long, long time ago, but in real time (by that, I mean, Exodus time), that was only a few months ago).

The first interpretation is correct. Exodus 19:25 reads: *And Moses came down unto the people and so he said to them [all these things]*. That is, Moses relayed the information found in chapter 19 to the people (Moses spoke to the elders and they conveyed this information to the groups that they were responsible to).

But then, God speaks to the people of Israel all directly.

Exodus 20:1a *And God spoke all these words...* (NKJV)

From this point forward, God speaks the Ten Commandments to the people (which dissertation we have not yet studied). At the end of God speaking audibly to all of the people of Israel, this is what happens next:

Exodus 20:18–19 *Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us [anymore], lest we die."* (ESV; capitalized)
I added the word *anymore* to express what is happening.

What just happened to the people of Israel was one of the most frightening things that these people have ever experienced. God spoke directly to them. God spoke the Ten Commandments to all Israel. God speaking to them along with all of these other noises and sound effects really shook them up. They tell Moses, "*You speak*

to us; don't let God speak to us, or we will die." In other words, "We do not want to hear God say anything else to us directly."

Exodus 20:20 *Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of Him may be before you, that you may not sin."* (ESV; capitalized)

The idea is, God spoke to the people directly, causing them to fear Him, so that they not violate these Ten Commandments. The idea is, they would be too afraid to violate God's commands.

Moses takes up for God, at this point, and here in v. 20, he speaks extemporaneously. Throughout much of Exodus, from Exodus 4–19, God speaks to Moses and Moses speaks to the people. Moses did not go off-script, as it were. God spoke to Moses then Moses spoke these words to the elders of the people (as per Exodus 19:3–7). For the most part, Moses did not simply speak his own words, but this is what he does in v. 20:

Exodus 20:20 *Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of Him may be before you, that you may not sin."* (ESV; capitalized)

Moses understands what has taken place, he knows that the people are all shook up, and he attempts to calm them down. God did not tell him to say any of this; Moses just thought to say this on his own (not realizing that what he said was not true).

The times where we have Moses just speaking with authority are quite rare in the book of Exodus. On the other hand, this will be pretty much the entire book of Deuteronomy. Most of the time in Exodus, Moses is speaking the exact words of God, either to Pharaoh or to the people of Israel.

Moses tells the people not to be afraid and that God is testing them. Their fear/respect for God is to guide them away from sinning against Him. It won't.

Exodus 20:21 *The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.* (ESV; capitalized)

Remember how Mount Sinai was cordoned off, to keep the people from off of the mountain? At this point, the people step back. They don't want to be anywhere near this mountain. They don't want to take any chances with taking a step too close to it. They have just heard God's voice and they are deeply affected by it. "Don't let God speak to us! Go, listen to God's words and then you tell us, Moses!"

Therefore, Moses approaches the mountain, intending to go up. The people step back; Moses steps up. He went to where God was, which was the thick darkness which subsumed the mountain (my interpretation here).

Exodus 20:22 *And the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: 'You [pl.] have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you [pl.] from heaven.'* (ESV; capitalized)

From that point forward, God speaks to Moses, telling him what to say. Here is where we fully understand that God was speaking directly to the people. "This is what you will say to the people of Israel: 'You [all] saw for yourselves that I [God] spoke with you [all] [= the people of Israel] from heaven.'"

Now, normally, I don't like to jump ahead like this and reveal what is going to happen 20 verses down the line. However, it would be easy for someone reading this, to look only at Exodus 19:25–20:2 and get it in his head that I have misinterpreted this passage. Then, from this point, down to v. 22, be skeptical of whatever I write. If you mistakenly think that I am mistaken in my overall take, and we cannot proceed without clearing up this correct interpretation.

It is easy to follow a logical many-step process and get stuck back on step 2, even though the logical steps move forward 10 steps after that. So, it is important to get the person stuck on step 2 unstuck (in this case, we are reading enough so that you understand that God, for most of Exodus 20, is speaking directly to the people).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. ran into the problem constantly when he taught. Particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. When explaining a particularly difficult concept, he would go back and repeat the introductory material many times until he was certain that his congregation was getting it. A pastor-teacher who meets with his congregation 8x a week could do this. However, when committing such information to written form, repetition does not work.

God speaks directly to the people (Exodus 20:18–21)

God speaks these words (the Ten Commandments) directly to the people, after which we read:

Exodus 20:18 *All the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain in smoke. And when the people saw this, they trembled and stood at a distance* [from the mountain]. (Berean Study Bible) Bracket insertion is from me.

The people just heard God speak the Ten Commandments and they are all shook up.

Exodus 20:19 *“Speak to us yourself and we will listen,” they said to Moses. “But do not let God speak to us, or we will die.”* (BSB)

The people tell Moses, “Let’s go back to doing things this way: you speak to God, you tell us what God says. Please don’t let God speak directly to us anymore!”

Exodus 20:20 *“Do not be afraid,” Moses replied. “For God has come to test you, so that the fear of Him may be before you, to keep you from sinning.”* (BSB)

Moses attempts to calm the people down, and he speaks extemporaneously. What he says is actually wrong, because the people will sin against God later on in this book.

Exodus 20:21 *And the people stood at a distance as Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.* (BSB)

The people step back from the mountain, and Moses steps forward, onto the mountain.

Therefore, based upon what we have studied, we must interpret this chapter like this: God speaks to all Israel, so that every person in Israel actually hears God’s voice audibly. Every person hears the Ten Commandments spoken directly to them by God. This frightens the people considerably, and they ask Moses for God not speak to them directly. This interpretation requires no fancy footwork, no convoluted explanation, etc.

Now that we know God is speaking these words aloud to the people of Israel, we can officially begin the exegesis of this chapter (again):

Exodus 20:1a *And God spoke all these words,...* (NKJV)

All the words which God is speaking is vv. 1b–17. Vv. 18–21 will be narrative, which includes Moses and the people speaking with one another. At v. 22, God speaks again, but it will be specifically to Moses; and God will tell Moses to speak these same words to Israel (something that we do not read in vv. 1–2 of this chapter).

Exodus 20:1b–2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'ânôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 st person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...saying, "I [am] Y^ehowah your Elohim;...

Exodus 20:1b–2a ...saying: "I am the Lord your God,... (NKJV)

When giving the Ten Commandments (which is what the first half of this chapter is), the speaking of these words comes from the entire Godhead. Therefore, it begins with *Elohim said...* Elohim is often used for the Godhead (all 3 members of the **Trinity**). This plural noun, however, uses singular verbs, and God identifies Himself as *Jehovah your Elohim*.

Interestingly enough, *your* is the 2nd person masculine singular suffix, indicating that, even though God is speaking to all two million Israelites, He wants them to know and understand these words as individuals. *I am speaking to each and every one of you*, is the sense here.

Exodus 20:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where; in that, in which, in what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	<i>to cause to go out, to lead out, to bring out, to carry out, to draw out, to take out [of money]; to put forth, to lay out, to exact; to promulgate; to produce</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil perfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3318 BDB #422

Exodus 20:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from; some of; on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Mits ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced <i>mits-RAH-yim</i>]	<i>double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

Translation: ...[it is] I Who brought you out from the land of Egypt,...

A portion of this verse is very difficult to translate literally. *Brought out* is in the 1st person singular, Hiphil perfect, with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix. This portion of the verse reads *I caused you (singular) to be brought out*. You may be thinking that was easy to translate. However, prior to this verb we have the relative pronoun 'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *uh-SHER*]. Actually, calling it a relative pronoun is a bit simplistic. It is indeclinable and although we understand it in English to be in the 3rd person, in the Hebrew it can be in any person depending upon the context (here it is in the 1st person because the verb is in the 1st person). So we might translate this: "*I [am] Y^ehowah, your God; concerning Whom [or, I am the One Whom], I caused you to be brought out—out of the land of Egypt.*"

When we aim for a literal translation, then we end up introducing a number of extra words to smooth out the translation and to give the full impact of the individual Hebrew words. The so-called relative pronoun 'āsher alone takes up almost three pages of explanation in BDB and it is given eight basic definitions.

Another option, which is reasonable, is to leave this word out altogether. It is a *sign of relation* or a *connecting link* and that connection can be implied as well as stated. So we could reasonably translate this verse: "*I, Y^ehowah, your God—I caused you to be brought out—out of the land of Egypt.*"

Exodus 20:2b ...Who brought you out of the land of Egypt,... (NKJV)

God tells the people, "I brought each and every one of you out of Egypt to where you are standing right now."

Throughout these times in the desert-wilderness, God reminds the Israelites on a regular basis that it was He Who brought them out of the land of Egypt. You think that seeing all of those miracles up close would have had a permanent affect on these people, but that is not the case. As we will observe, this is the whiniest group of ninnies that we will every become acquainted with. There are maybe a half dozen men who will reach any level of **spiritual growth**; but there will be some 2,000,000 who keep on being mixed up beyond belief. This is despite all they have seen and heard.

Stop for a moment here and ask, *why did this information not stick? Why did these people experience these great miracles, these great acts of God—miracles that every one of them saw with his or her own eyes—and yet, they do not seem to advance spiritually? They have seen great miracles for the past few months, and yet, they are not advancing spiritually. Why?*

We advance spiritually by what is in our **souls**. We advance spiritually by the doctrinal information that we know and believe. If **Bible doctrine** is circulating in our souls, then we are growing. It is just like having blood circulate throughout our bodies. Our blood takes the nutrients necessary from the food that we eat and takes it to the right place for physical growth and improvement. The parallel is simple. Doctrine presented by a doctrinal teacher (in this case, God or Moses) is like the food that we eat. The nutrients of that food is like the Bible doctrine which then circulates throughout our souls.

We advance spiritually on the basis of truth which is believed, *not on the basis of empiricism*. These people saw some amazing things, but never put it all together. They did not connect the essence of God to the things which God did. They were unable to put the promises of God side-by-side the acts which they had all observed. The people of Israel were unable to connect God's guarantee of **logistical grace** to the manna which they received every single day while living out in the desert-wilderness (except for Saturdays, of course). They never developed an understanding of Who God is. They did not know what God would do, despite being told these things. As a result, these people were unable to understand God, to trust God, and to act in accordance with the character of God.

When a baby is a baby, and they are hungry, they cry and sometimes even scream, to let their needs be known. However, when a child grows to age 4 or 5, then they say, instead, "Mom, what's for dinner?" This child has learned, through empiricism, exactly who his mother is and what she does. He understands this and does not cry and scream when hungry. However, the adult Israelites (**Gen X**) did not put this all together. They did not take what they observed and apply that to the character of God.

Understanding Who God is and how He acts in relation to us is necessary for **spiritual advance**. Merely seeing logistical grace is not enough. You must believe in God's logistical grace.

I do not know what is going to happen in the future. I admit that, on some occasions, I am rather apprehensive about the future. But who controls human history? Jesus Christ. Who guides the protects **client nation USA**? Jesus Christ. Because I know the character of God, I better understand that the future is in His hands—despite the precariousness of pretty much everything related to the United States right now (I write this in 2024).

Let me draw an analogy. When we are children, we depend upon our parents. We know that we can go to our father or mother and they are going to make everything alright. Or, if one of them has no character, then we can generally depend upon the other one (and we learn who we can trust very early in life). As children, we did not know what was going to happen in the future; but we knew who we could turn to for help, protection and guidance. Now that we are adults, God is our Father. If we have learned any doctrine, we know that we can go to Him for help, protection and guidance. In fact, we know that we can do that, even if we make an awful mess of our lives.

If you have been a believer for any period of time, then you have observed and understood that God has been acting in your life in many ways. Now let's say that you run into a problem, one of life's speed bumps, as it were. Have you doubted God then? If the observations of your life were not imprinted on your **soul** as spiritual principles, then every problem that you face makes you question God. However, if you understand Who God is and what your relationship is to Him, then you adjust to life and life's curves as you face these things.

Let me suggest another analogy. I was a geometry teacher and I insisted on teaching proofs. This was very difficult for many students, and they often felt as if they were running head first into walls trying to figure out what I was teaching them. It was not sinking in. Then that day came, and the student got it, and he (or she) would say, "Holy crap, Mr. Kukis, I understand what you have been teaching us all this time!"

There are times when each of us has this moment, when doctrine and our lives intersect, and we say, "Holy crap, God, I understand what you have been teaching me all of this time!"

This helps to explain why the disciples of our Lord saw Him do miracles and healings every day and yet, they did not understand what was happening when He was crucified—even though He told them three times what was going to happen. The disciples scattered in fear (John being the exception). This is because they did not connect

what they saw Jesus do with Who Jesus is. The disciples did not begin to put things together until after the resurrection and after their faith-perception kicked in. That is, there were things about Jesus which they needed to understand and believe. Once that took place, their lives made much more sense.

This is what we have so far: Exodus 20:1–2b [Elohim spoke all of these words, saying, “I \[am\] Y^ehowah your Elohim; \[it is\] I Who brought you out from the land of Egypt,...](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The word *you* is a 2nd person masculine singular suffix in the Hebrew. God speaks to each person individually (even though He is speaking to all Israel). Every person has his own experience in being brought out of Egypt. God is trying to get them to connect what they understand about Him to their own personal experience to that point in time. “God brought me out of the land of Egypt, out from bondage, and He has provided me with food and water, even though we are traveling through an uncultivated land. Maybe I can depend upon God in the future.” This is what the people of Israel should be thinking, individually.

At church, there may be a half dozen people that you know. Each day that you interact with them, saying *hello* (or whatever), you know about your own life. You know what has brought you to this point in your life at church. Well, these people that you interact with have also had a series of life incidents which brought them to that point in church as well. They have also received a few kicks while they were down. Some of them are hanging there by the thinnest strand of doctrine, but they are there. God, by using the 2nd person singular suffix is recognizing all that has happened to each individual to bring him (or her) to that point in their lives where they are now free and He (God) is speaking to him (to each individual believer in Israel).

Exodus 20:1–2b [Elohim spoke all of these words, saying, “I \[am\] Y^ehowah your Elohim; \[it is\] I Who brought you out from the land of Egypt,...](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

One point brought out by R. B. Thieme, Jr., which I have not seen anyone else do prior to his time, it bring out the relationship between the decalogue (= the Ten Commandments) and freedom. Prior to even giving the Ten Commandments, God ties these commands directly to Himself and He also ties them directly to the freeing of the Israelites from the bondage to Egypt. This is the beginning of Jewish freedom and the first thing that they hear under freedom from bondage to Egypt is the Ten Commandments. A nation which operates under the framework of the Ten Commandments is a nation which is free. These commandments protect the volition, the property and the relationships between people so that each person can have a maximum amount of freedom without infringing on the freedom of others. “These are your limits, as a people. These are your boundaries. Stay within these boundaries, and you will enjoy great personal autonomy.”

Some people struggle with the concept of freedom being directly tied to restrictions. The freedom of the Hebrew people is tied directly to these restrictions, known as the Ten Commandments. Such people complain, “If I have restrictions, then I no longer have true freedom.” But it is the application of these restrictions which provides our freedom.

Between you and your next door neighbor is a property line. You have a certain amount of freedom concerning what takes place in your yard; but when you cross over into your neighbor’s yard you have no freedom, only limitations. Your lack of freedom in the yard of your next door neighbor preserves your neighbor’s freedom. This is why we do not steal, murder or commit adultery. Such restrictions provide those around us with greater freedom.

Exodus 20:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from; some of; on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

Exodus 20:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bayith (תֵּיב) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
ʿēbādîym (עֲבָדִיִּם) [pronounced ġe ^b -vaw-DEEM]	<i>slaves, servants; workers; underlings; subjects; slavery, bondage, servitude; this can mean military men, soldiers in the plural</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: ...out from the house of slavery.

The sentence structure is a little confusing. It would be very easy for a translator to translate this: *I am YHWH your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slaves.* That is, in fact, the ESV; capitalized. However, *to bring* is the 1st person singular, Hiphil perfect, with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix. So, even though *who* can be used for a 3rd person masculine singular verb, the relative pronoun is generally not used with the 1st person singular verb, as we have here. Therefore, I have inserted the words *it is*. At this point in my writing, I have not viewed 90+ translations (I did look at the CLV, ESV, Green's LT, Webster and WEB (the 5 translations I view by means of e-sword), and none of them insert those words. However, I believe that gives us a better sense of the translation.

The people of Israel were slaves; and God brought them out of that slavery.

When God speaks to anyone—especially in this era—He often identifies Himself with some specific set of acts. That is, God often takes the past experiences of the hearer and ties it to His Person. Ideally speaking, the experiences which God affirms helps to explain to the Israelite exactly Who He is.

At this point in the book of Exodus, God is speaking audibly to all Israel.

God brought this people out of Egypt. Every single person hearing Him has experienced being set free from bondage to Israel.

Exodus 20:1–2 Elohim spoke all of these words, saying, “I [am] Y^ehowah your Elohim; [it is] I Who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out from the house of slavery. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Throughout the Old Testament, there are parallels. The entire exodus event relates to us and to God saving us. We are all in the **slave market of sin**. We have no way out of this slavery. We cannot purchase ourselves from the slave market of sin. No one can purchase us unless that person is outside of the slave market of sin. We are born with a **sin nature**; and **Adam's original sin** has been imputed to that sin nature at birth. At some point in time, we begin to sin and we continue sinning for all of our lives. We cannot take ourselves out of this slave market of sin; we cannot take anyone around us out of the slave market of sin. This has to be accomplished by an outside force (just as God brought Israel out of Egypt, using Moses, as an outside force).

Moses represents Jesus Christ, our Savior. The theological term for this is **typical**. Moses is the type (the shadow form) and Jesus is the **antitype** (the fulfillment of the shadow). Moses is a real person, and what we are told about him is actual history. However, he is also a **type** (a shadow image).

Jesus is born outside the slave market of sin. He is born without a sin nature (this is the purpose of the **virgin birth**; as the sin nature is passed along by the father of the child, not by the mother). Because Jesus is born without a sin nature, Adam's original sin did not automatically attach itself to the infant Jesus. There was no place

for Adam's sin to be imputed to, as Jesus is born without a sin nature. Jesus lived His entire life without committing a single sin.

So, you see how the Exodus event is analogous to our personal salvation; to us being purchased by God the Son, taking us out of the slave market of sin. We do not have the coin of the realm to purchase our own freedom, but God the Son does. We are in the slave market of sin; Jesus comes from outside the slave market of sin.

Exodus 20:1–2 God spoke all of these words directly to the people of Israel, saying, "I am Jehovah your God. I am the One Who brought you out from the land of Egypt, taking you out of bondage." (Kukis paraphrase)

God has removed the people of Israel from Egypt; He has taken them out of slavery and He has given them freedom. However, this freedom does not mean, "Now, you get to do whatever you want. Go crazy!"

Freedom is not absolute and it does not exist in a vacuum. In today's society, freedom requires property ownership, authority, and some form of law (which the authority enforces).

The people of God now belong to God. He has purchased them off the slave market of sin; but now they are indebted to Him (just as we are indebted to the Lord Jesus Christ for saving us). This freedom given the people of Israel is not absolute, just as our freedom in Christ is not absolute.

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This doctrine is all about what freedom is and what it is not.

Doctrine of Freedom (by Ken Reed)

I. Introduction.

1. Freedom or liberty is a concept that is often used but little understood by the human race.
2. While volition (free will) is freedom to make choices, the possession of volition in and of itself does not make one free, either physically or spiritually.
3. Though volition is independent in its function, it still remains dependent upon and confined to the parameters within it is able to operate.
4. This is easily demonstrated by the institution of slavery.
5. Even the sovereign will of God is enslaved to His absolute righteousness and justice. That is, God cannot act outside of his absolute righteousness.
6. Most people believe that being free is doing what you want to, when you want to, etc., but that is a fallacy.
7. As Scripture will reveal, true freedom is tied directly to authority and one's willingness to acclimate to the standards of said authority.

II. Vocabulary.

1. Hebrew vocabulary:
 - 1) châphash (חָפַשׁ) [pronounced *khaw-FASH*] is a verb used 1x. It means, *to be free or loosed as opposed to being restrained or bound; free as opposed to a slave*. Strong's #2666 BDB #344.
 - 2) chûph^eshâh (חֻפְּשָׁה) [pronounced *choof-SHAW*], a feminine noun used 1x. It means, *liberty or freedom*. Strong's #2668 BDB #344.
 - 3) choph^eshîy (חֹפְּשִׁי) [pronounced *khof-SHEE*], an adjective used 17x. It means, *a free man as opposed to being a slave or a captive; being exempt from burdens or service*. Strong's #2670 BDB #344.
 - 4) d^erôwr (דֶּרֶוֹר) [pronounced *dehr-ORE*] is a noun used 8x; liberty or freedom; release from bondage; when followed by a ל (lamedh) it means to proclaim liberty or freedom to someone.
 - 5) Several other Hebrew words that are not strictly in this family are used to denote various concepts related to freedom.

Doctrine of Freedom (by Ken Reed)

2. Greek vocabulary:

- 1) ekluō (ἐκλύω) [pronounced *ek-LOO-oh*] is a verb used 6x in the New Testament. It means, *to loose, to unloose, to set free; to dissolve, metaphorically, to weaken, to relax*. Strong's #1590.
- 2) eleutherōō (ἐλευθερώω) [pronounced *el-yoo-thehr-OH-oh*] is a verb used 7x. It means, *to make free; to set at liberty; to exempt or liberate from liability or bondage*. Strong's #1659.
- 3) eleuthería (ἐλευθερία) [pronounced *el-yoo-ther-EE-ah*] is a noun used 11x. It means, *freedom or liberty*. Strong's #1657.
- 4) eleútheros (ἐλεύθερος) [pronounced *el-YOO-ther-oss*] is an adjective used 23x. It means, *free, freeborn, freed from slavery, exempt, unrestrained, not bound by an obligation*. Strong's #1658
- 5) Like the Hebrew, there are other Greek words employed to express concepts of freedom that are not strictly translated/defined as freedom or liberty.

III. Definition and description.

1. Freedom is the quality or state of being free; exemption or liberation from slavery, imprisonment, restraint, or the power and control of another.
2. It allows open access, admission or use of that available.
3. It is the independent ability to make decisions apart from any previous cause or antecedent/preliminary determination of another.
4. While freedom and liberty are nearly synonymous terms, freedom emphasizes the lack of restraint or repression, while liberty implies previous restraint.

IV. Freedom and God.

1. God is revealed to be the ultimate self-determining agent. Ephesians 1:11
2. Out of God's self-determination, He formed a creation that reflects and reveals Himself. Romans 1:19-20
3. The freedom of God is exercised and observed in the government of the moral creatures whom He created.
4. God's freedom, the exercise of which must be compatible with His essence, determined to create free moral agents whose eternal destiny would be decided by themselves and the use of the freedom He provided.
5. This view of God's freedom and the freedom of those whom He created must be maintained in the face of exaggerated and unscriptural views of sovereignty.
6. Any view that God's sovereignty, by an eternal divine decree, determined a fixed destiny of His moral creation without regard to individual choice reduces the concept of freedom to null and void. Deuteronomy 30:19, *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse (the two options of reality given to men). So choose* (bâchar (בָּחַר) [pronounced *baw-KHAHR*]; to choose, elect, select, decide for; denotes a careful, well thought-out choice; it is the same verb used of God choosing for Himself, Deuteronomy 7:6, et al) *life in order that you may live, you and your descendants"*; Compare Joshua 24:15 Proverbs 1:29
7. That God chooses/elects certain members of the human race into His plan and that man can choose/elect for His plan, denotes a self-determining action by both parties that is reciprocating and establishes the volitional bases of agreement between both parties necessary for a union to occur.
8. God provided moral creatures with the ability to make decisions on their own and these decisions, not God, determine their eternal destiny.
9. This is the purpose of Divine institution #1, volition; the freedom of choice.
10. God desires that His creation enjoy the freedom of will that He Himself possesses.
11. God placed the Laws of Divine establishment in order to protect freedom and insure the proper function of volition.
12. Again it is noted that while God has maximum freedom, even He is bound to act only in a manner compatible with all the attributes of His essence.

V. Physical freedom.

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1. Physical freedom is contrasted to the institution or status of slavery.
 - 1) Slaves possess volition, but are not free to do as they will in all circumstances.
 - 2) Another, the master, controls their life.
 - 3) Slavery as an institution is not condemned in the Bible. Genesis 24 (Abraham and his servant); Philemon (which teaches **grace orientation** between the master and slave)
 - 4) In fact, the **Divine viewpoint** states that if one becomes a Christian as a slave, they are to remain acclimated to that station of life unless God makes freedom available, at which point then they should accept it. 1Corinthians 7:21
 - 5) One could become a slave in the physical realm via:
 - i Capture during war. Deuteronomy 20:10–11 1Samuel 4:9 1Kings 9:20–22
 - ii Purchase. Exodus 21:1-11 Leviticus 25:44-46
 - iii Insolvency/bankruptcy. Exodus 21:1–6 Deuteronomy 15:12 Leviticus 25:47
 - iv Criminal activity. Exodus 22:1-3
 - v Birth. Exodus 21:4 Jeremiah 2:14
2. Authority as it relates to physical freedom:
 - 1) Freedom never means the unbridled ability to do anything and everything that a person wants.
 - 2) All normal members of any society must recognize that their freedom ends where the freedoms of others begin. Exodus We have freedom to worship in America as we see fit, as long as it does not infringe upon the freedom of others to worship.
 - 3) Laws and authority are necessary restraints upon personal freedom in order to ensure the maximum freedom and good for all.
 - 4) Failure to abide by establishment laws that various authorities put in place will result in a loss of freedom.
 - 5) Therefore, freedom demands the responsible use of one's freedom in order to maintain the status quo.
 - 6) Personal freedom demands that we respect:
 - i Other persons.
 - ii Other's privacy.
 - iii Other's possessions.
 - 7) Apart from authority and self-discipline, freedom ceases to exist.
 - 8) Authorities in the Divine institutions provide the framework within that one exercises their freedom.
 - i Volition – we are the self-determining authority in our choices. Philemon 14
 - ii Right man/Right woman – the husband is the authority over the wife. Ephesians 5:23
 - iii Family – parents are the authority over the children. Ephesians 6:1
 - iv Job – master/steward/boss is the authority over the servant/employee. Luke 12:42
 - v The establishment chain-of-command – civil authority is established to provide protection of the masses and the Establishment chain-of-command is ordained by God. Romans 13:1–7 1Timothy 2:1–3 1Peter 2:13–17
 - vi Nationalism – each nation is an authority over itself and citizens so that geographic/political freedom is available in history for men to freely pursue God. Acts 17:26-27
3. The military and physical freedom.
 - 1) The military under the Divine institution of Nationalism, is designed to prevent outside aggressors from robbing the populace of its freedom.
 - 2) When external forces threaten freedom, the demand for self-sacrifice to insure freedom may become necessary. Nehemiah 4:11-23 (Israel/Jerusalem under restoration after the Babylonian dispersion of 586 B.C.)
 - 3) The military is the agent that purchases and maintains freedom for the individual.
4. Physical freedom is necessary for the proper function of volition and the resolution of the Angelic Conflict.

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VI. Spiritual freedom (a.k.a. Freedom in Christ).

1. All men are born spiritual slaves via the Sinful trend of Adam. Romans 6:20 See Doctrine of the **old sin nature/sinful trend of Adam**.
 - 1) This is due to our position in Adam. Romans 5:12,19
 - 2) Adam was free prior to the fall. Genesis 2:16-17,25
 - 3) Spiritual slavery is a result of the fall and state of all prior to salvation. Romans 6:17; Galatians 4:9; Titus 3:3
2. Phase 1 salvation (Salvation adjustment to the justice of God) is freedom purchased by the work of Christ on **the cross**. Galatians 3:13 Titus 2:14 1Peter 1:18–19
 - 1) Slaves must be **redeemed** by someone who is free, and Christ was qualified to do so via His unique relationship with God and freedom from the Sinful trend of Adam and sin. Romans 8:2 2Corinthians 5:21
 - 2) Christ is “The Freeman” and hence, mankind’s kinsman redeemer (see Doctrine of **Kinsman Redeemer**).
 - 3) The price of **redemption** is called His blood. Ephesians 1:7 1Peter 1:18–19
 - 4) Faith in Christ provides phase 1 freedom. John 8:35–36 Acts 13:38–39
 - 5) The believer is exhorted to exploit that freedom and not enter into slavery again. Galatians 5:1
 - 6) Prior to salvation, the Sinful trend of Adam ruled the life in the realm of spiritual death and the body just acted out the corrupt desires of the sin nature. Romans 5:19
3. Christ’s work effecting our phase 1 freedom was designed to also provide maximum freedom for phase 2 to include any form of **legalism**. Galatians 5:1ff
 - 1) Phase 2 spiritual freedom is directly related to the truth of Bible doctrine. John 8:32
 - 2) The Word of God is called the Law of Liberty. James 1:25
 - 3) Spiritual freedom in time is contingent upon pursuit of Bible doctrine. Psalm 119:45 John 8:31–32
 - 4) It is contingent upon proper orientation to the Spirit of liberty/**filling of the Holy Spirit**. 2Corinthians 3:17
 - 5) The true blessing of freedom comes from the application of Bible doctrine that the believer pursues. James 1:22-25
 - 6) The mature believer who understands and functions within the guidelines of Bible doctrine, experience a freedom that others can only dream.
4. Spiritual laws and restrictions govern true freedom.
 - 1) Spiritual authorities are the protectors/guardians of our freedom (Acts 20:28), just as authorities in the physical realm (Romans 13:4), since all authority is from God. Romans 13:1 Hebrews 13:17
 - 2) Failure to abide by the laws results in loss of freedom. Romans 13:4
 - 3) As believers, we are not to infringe upon the freedoms in Christ bestowed upon other believers to include:
 - i Partaking of things associated with idols as illustrated by the dietary code. 1Corinthians 8:4-8 cp. Romans 14:1-4
 - ii The same goes for observance of holidays. Romans 8:5-6
 - iii The bottom-line application is that believers are to respect other believer’s level of spiritual growth and understanding as seen in the term “weak in faith”. Romans 14:1
 - iv “Weak in faith” does not refer to Sinful trend of Adam disobedience or rejection of Bible doctrine, since this demands separation (2Thessalonians 3:14), but refers to those ignorant of the freedoms of Bible doctrine as seen in the term “doubts/diakrinô (διακρίνω) [pronounced *dee-ak-REE-no*]/can’t discern/distinguish/ differentiate” in Romans 14:23 that denotes the intellectual evidence or proof necessary for faith to act upon is absent.
 - v This application is designed to maintain harmony between new members of the

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- particular local church and those already grounded in the principle of freedom. Romans 14:1a cp. vv. 17-20
- vi The higher application is for the stronger believer to abstain from any activity that would knowingly violate the conscience of a new member while in their presence. 1 Corinthians 8:9-13 Romans 14:14-15, 20-21 See Doctrine of **Stumbling**.
 - vii This is designed to give all members of the church maximum individual freedom to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, while working out their own phase 2 salvation. 2 Peter 3:18 cp. Philippians 2:12
- 4) It is the Word of God that is our military/defense for freedom. Hebrews 4:12 Ephesians 6:11-17
 - 5) Isolation of the Sinful trend of Adam (being in the filling of the Holy Spirit) is the law that all are to operate under in pursuit of freedom. 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 cp. the Royal Law of Divine Love James 2:8 cp. 1 Corinthians 13:8, 10 Galatians 5:13-14
5. Phase 3 freedom for believers is the ultimate in human freedom. Romans 8:21
- 1) It is eternal freedom from the Sinful trend of Adam via the new resurrection body. Romans 7:24 1 Corinthians 15:42
 - 2) We will have the entire realm of Bible doctrine in our new brain computers and within our souls. Hebrews 8:10-11
 - 3) Since absolute righteousness and justice is the standard used to generate perfect maximum freedom, those believers who do it right in time and finish their course, will be rewarded with the wreath of righteousness hailing them as the true champions in the cause for freedom. 2 Timothy 4:8
- VII. Abuses and enemies of freedom.
- 1. Liberty is not license. Galatians 5:13 Romans 6:15 1 Peter 2:16
 - 2. Legalism. Acts 15:10 Galatians 2:4 5:1-9
 - 3. The flesh/Sinful trend of Adam. Proverbs 5:22 Galatians 5:13
 - 4. False teachers. 2 Peter 2:18-19
- VIII. Conclusions.
- 1. The understanding of physical freedom provides the background by which one may understand spiritual freedom.
 - 2. The majority of men, including believers, do not exercise their right of freedom and therefore are not truly free. John 1:10 1 Corinthians 9:24
 - 3. They are slaves to some viewpoint, system, activity, etc. that proceeds from the sinful trend of Adam and not from being in the filling of the Holy Spirit and adhering to Bible doctrine.
 - 4. The result of failure to deal with the sinful trend of Adam via doctrine is enslavement and death. Romans 6:23 8:6
 - 5. Paradoxically, those who determine to enslave themselves to God and Divine viewpoint are set free. Romans 6:22
 - 6. To whatever extent the believer is oriented to God he is free.
 - 7. In areas of ignorance or intentional disregard of Bible doctrine, the believer remains a slave.
 - 8. Doing what you want in life such as the frantic search for happiness i.e., pursuing funsville, pursuit of the opposite sex, money, power, details, etc., does not make for a free or happy believer.
 - 9. The happiest and freest people on the planet are those with maximum doctrine in subjection of themselves to the Law of Liberty. **Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.** (1 Peter 2:16; ESV)

Doc. of Freedom
 Lake Erie Bible Church
 P-T Ken Reed
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Doctrine of Freedom (by Ken Reed)

We are studying this doctrine here because the Ten Commandments provide freedom for a national entity.

From <https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/download/doctrines/> accessed March 20, 2024. Some minor editing done.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

What follows is three main points from R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Doctrine of Freedom.

Portions of R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Doctrine of Freedom

A Principle of Human Freedom.

- 1 Freedom is the status of human volition as the uncaused cause of human function. Live and let live is the principle of freedom. Freedom is legitimate self-determination. It is exemption from necessity apart from human consent. Freedom is self-fulfillment. Freedom is exemption from arbitrary control and exploitation. Freedom is related to privacy, property, and authority. Therefore, it emphasizes the need for the laws of divine establishment which define legitimate authority, designed for the protection of freedom.
- 2 The second concept that comes from volition in the soul is privacy, which is the environment for the establishment of freedom. Freedom always demands that the individuals under it have their privacy. This includes for the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ the privacy of the **priesthood**. You have a double privacy.
- 3 Freedom includes the right to possess, enjoy, benefit, or to make profit from the acquired things of this life, that is, the true concept of property. Property is defined as the sum total of one's possessions, tangible and intangible. Under freedom, the individual has a right to make a profit and to possess personal and real property. Ownership means any valuable right or interest which can be considered as a source of wealth.
- 4 Freedom includes authority. Authority under the laws of divine establishment include personal volition, marriage, family, government. Authority without freedom is tyranny. Freedom without authority is anarchy. Under the laws of divine establishment, freedom and authority are mated. You cannot have one without the other. Freedom without the authority of doctrine is antinomianism. Authority without the freedom of the royal priesthood is legalism.
- 5 Both life and property are sacred under the laws of divine establishment. The laws of divine establishment recognize the sacredness of property, privacy, and life as the function of human freedom. Therefore, human cannot exist or be effective apart from human responsibility. The freedom of a nation is no more effective than the morality, virtue, integrity, and sense of responsibility of all of its citizens. Freedom and authority must coexist on the basis of integrity—the virtue and values attained by a nation in any given generation of its history.
- 6 There are two enemies of freedom to the national entity.
 - a Criminality is the internal enemy to freedom. Law enforcement is the part of establishment designed to apprehend and punish criminals. Once a person is convicted of a crime, they have no rights under the Scriptural view of law until they have served their sentence. Capital punishment is authorized by the word of God as the greatest control of criminality when properly practiced, Genesis 9:5–6 Matthew 26:52 Romans 13:3–4 Exodus 21:12 Numbers 35:30
 - b The external enemy to freedom are other nations. There are two general categories of nations: those that are power oriented and function under some system of tyranny, and those nations that are freedom oriented and function under the laws of divine establishment. Without Jesus Christ ruling the earth at the second Advent, there will always be wars. Freedom from power oriented nations comes from freedom through military victory.
- 7 The greatness of a nation can only be measured by the virtue of its freedom and the integrity of its authority.

Portions of R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Doctrine of Freedom

- a Psalm 119:45, "And I will seek freedom, for I seek Your doctrines, O God."
- b John 8:32, "and you shall know the doctrine, and the doctrine [truth] shall make you free."
- c Galatians 5:1, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free; therefore keep standing fast and do not become entangled again in the yoke of slavery." In context, this refers to slavery to the arrogance skills, slavery to legalism and activism, slavery to the dictates of the sin nature.
- 8 Freedom and equality cannot coexist.
 - a Freedom can neither guarantee nor manufacture equality in the human race. Some use freedom to advance under the principle of self-determination; others use freedom to retrogress. There is no equality in heaven. Eternal reward is determined by the use of volition in time.
 - b Freedom is a reality and equality is a myth. The function of freedom guarantees inequality. Equality is the device of the arrogant and the disoriented person. Forced equality is not only the policy of tyrants, but is the basis for Satan's eschatological cosmos diabolicus.
- 9 Freedom is the motivation of the grace-oriented person who follows the principle of live and let live.
- 10 Freedom is the policy of God in the creation of the human race to resolve the angelic conflict. The very fact that God created us with volition indicates that He intended us to exercise our free will as a part of the angelic conflict.
- 11 Freedom should be dogmatic and inflexible about the essentials of life, and flexible and pliable about the non-essentials. Therefore, freedom is common sense and orientation to reality.
- 12 Freedom must have content of thought. Spiritual thought content is revealed in the Word of God.
- B Summary of Establishment freedom as over against Spiritual freedom.
 - 1 Establishment freedom is the heritage of physical birth. Spiritual freedom is the heritage of regeneration.
 - 2 Spiritual freedom is can function with or without establishment freedom, depending upon the circumstances of life. Establishment freedom or lack of it is related to public modus operandi in the nation, while spiritual freedom is invisible. It is related to the privacy of your royal priesthood under the filling of the Holy Spirit and the metabolization of doctrine.
 - 3 Establishment freedom is based on human morality and virtue, both in thinking and action as illustrated by the function of law enforcement and the military establishment.
 - 4 Spiritual freedom is non-meritorious, because it is related to the divine initiative of antecedent grace in eternity past and the provision in time of the four spiritual mechanics.
 - 5 Establishment freedom recognizes the principle that freedom without authority is anarchy and authority without freedom is tyranny. Freedom is the virtue of its people and the integrity of its authority.
 - a Human freedom emphasizes self-determination in the function of human volition, and takes responsibility for one's own decisions.
 - b Therefore, human freedom demands a personal sense of responsibility in all citizens, believers and unbelievers, and subordination to all legitimate authority in life, e.g., parent, coach, teacher, professor, police officer, judge, senior officer, or boss.
 - c Human freedom is relative, based on the type of government and the policy of a nation or empire for its citizens.
 - d Human freedom is a merit system which depends on law enforcement, self-restraint, self-discipline, thoughtfulness of others, and freedom through military victory. Human freedom is no stronger than the thinking or **mental attitude** of leadership at the local, state, and national levels.
 - 6 Therefore, spiritual freedom is an absolute. The carnal Christian does not have spiritual freedom; only the believer who is said to be spiritual has spiritual freedom.
 - 7 The greatest decision of human freedom is to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. However spiritual freedom, by way of contrast, requires that you make constant decisions to live your very own **spiritual life**. Therefore, as the Romans put it: WINQIT QUI PATITUR, translated "He is a winner who perseveres."
- C The Relationship of Human Freedom to Christianity.

Portions of R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s Doctrine of Freedom

- 1 Knowledge of doctrine frees the believer from slavery to the old sin nature, permitting him to accurately live the **Christian way of life**, John 8:32. Doctrine frees us to have a relationship with God in time.
- 2 Jesus Christ provided us with spiritual freedom to serve God and advance to maturity, Galatians 3:13, 5:1.
- 3 Believers are said to have "a glorious freedom," Romans 8:21.
- 4 This freedom is related to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, 2Corinthians 3:17, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is [spiritual] freedom."
- 5 The "Word of God" is called the law of liberty because it defines the believer's freedom to glorify God through Bible doctrine, James 1:25, 2:12.
- 6 **Positive volition** to Bible doctrine is the basis for freedom in the client nation, Psalm 119:45. This is why freedom is part of our national heritage.
- 7 The Ten Commandments are the Magna Charta of human freedom, Exodus 20:2, Deuteronomy 5:6. The Year of Jubilee, wherein everyone started all over every fifty years, was designed to maintain and perpetuate the freedom of a nation, Leviticus 25:10.
- 8 As the Mosaic Law provided freedom in the **Age of Israel**, so today the Holy Spirit provides freedom in the Church Age, 2Corinthians 3:17; Romans 8:2-4.
- 9 Slavery was a national issue in Jeremiah's day, Jeremiah 34:8-17. Jeremiah constantly warned against soul slavery. The people's souls were shackled, and slavery of the soul always ends up in physical slavery or death.
- 10 Eternal liberty belongs to the children of God, Romans 8:21. Our eternal freedom is related to the doctrine of redemption, Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18-20.
- 11 Experiential sanctification provides daily freedom to serve God, Romans 6:16-20; while positional sanctification provides freedom from slavery to the old sin nature, Romans 6:7. If you're going to serve God, you must have freedom from the old sin nature, even though the old sin nature is still in you.
- 12 Bible doctrine learned and metabolized under operation Z provides freedom from soul slavery, John 8:30-36; James 1:25, 2:12.
- 13 Therefore, liberty is the modus vivendi of Christianity, Galatians 5:13; 1Peter 2:16. That means that every believer, even with a small amount of doctrine, ought to understand freedom, free enterprise, patriotism.
- 14 Legalism seeks to enslave the believer and destroy that liberty, Galatians 2:4. This is why false teachers, though in slavery themselves, promise freedom to their victims, 2Peter 2:19.
- 15 Freedom provides that stability of soul necessary for both **occupation with Christ** and worship, 2Chronicles 29:31.
- 16 Since salvation and the inculcation of doctrine provide freedom for the soul, human slavery does not hinder the believer from serving God, 1Corinthians 7:20-23. This is why Paul told believer slaves to not break out of slavery, for they are God's freemen and can continue to serve God. And to those who were free, he told them to consider themselves God's servants, free to serve Him. Galatians 3:28 teaches the same principle.
- 17 Citizenship in a national entity provides freedom, Act 22:28.

These notes came from the lectures of R. B. Thieme, Jr. in 1986, 1987 and 1995. His entire doctrine of Freedom is more extensive than this.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

I could find two other related doctrines to this.

Other Links to the Doctrine of Freedom

Freedom in the Christian Life ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) (from grace notes)

Freedom is not Free ([PDF](#)) (from Grace Bible Church)

We continue studying the first two verses of Exodus 20 along with the concept of the Mosaic Law.

Exodus 20:1–2 [And God spoke all these words, saying: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. \(NKJV\)](#)

Even though the first five books of the Bible are called *the five books of Moses, the Law, the Torah*; every one of these designations should have an asterisk next to it. Moses did not write Genesis. In fact, God spoke much of Exodus from chapter 20 forward and all of Leviticus (apart from Leviticus 9–10). If we focused on the Law of God, most of it would be found in the final third of Exodus and almost all of the book of Leviticus and, interestingly enough, almost all the book of Deuteronomy (which was written by Moses). It is Deuteronomy which informs us, early on, as to the extent of the [inspiration](#) of Scripture. Someone might allege that only the direct words of God, as found in the passages just cited, could be considered the inspired word of God. However, nearly all of Deuteronomy was written and then spoken by Moses, yet it carries with it all the force of the Law previously given. If the actual words of Moses can be considered the Law of God, then how can we understand his words as being anything other than inspired? (This sounds like a very good topic to expand upon in the introduction of Deuteronomy, whenever we get that far.)

Since we are beginning with an extended portion of text which are words directly from God, we are getting prepared for that. That is why we have an extensive introduction to this chapter.

Many of these doctrinal websites and doctrinal churches depend heavily upon the original work of R. B. Thieme, Jr. I don't say this by way of criticism, but to give credit where credit is due. That does not mean that there is no original work or study involved here.

The Law of Moses (from Grace Notes)

Law of Moses

I. Introduction

The Law of Moses is divided into three parts, or codes, as follows.

Code I, The Commandments, Exodus 20:1-17, contains the laws of divine institution and establishment, including the moral law. This is the Magna Carta or Bill of Rights of human freedom.

Code II, The Ordinances, or the spiritual code, included a complete Christology¹ also called the doctrine of Christ, and was designed to present Christ as the only savior. Included in the ordinances is a shadow Christology and a shadow soteriology also called the doctrine of salvation. These ideas are presented in the descriptions of the tabernacle, the holy days, the Levitical offerings and the daily activity of the priesthood.

Code III, The Judgments, was the social code. The divine laws of establishment applied to social living. Questions of diet, sanitation, quarantine, soil conservation, taxation, military service, how to spend a honeymoon, what to do about divorce, slavery, inheritances, etc., were all covered. It was a complete set of laws.

Kukis note: It is adherence to these laws which helped to preserve the people of Israel from the Exodus to this point in time (God preserved Israel naturally and supernaturally over the centuries).

The Law of Moses (from Grace Notes)

Kukis note: I have long wanted to subdivide this section, but have not yet crafted a way to do it.

The Law of Moses is called the book of the covenant: Exodus 24:7, 8; 34:27, 28; Deuteronomy 4:13; 9:9, 11, 15. There is a written addendum to the Law in Deuteronomy 29.

The prophecy regarding the breaking of the covenant is found in Deuteronomy 31:16, 20; Jeremiah 22:9. The book of the covenant is the subject of Jeremiah 11; but it is not to be confused with the new covenant with Israel discussed in Jeremiah 31 to 33.

In the teaching of world history in universities, Hammurabi's code is set forth as the shining example of law giving in human history. The Law of Moses is far more comprehensive and far reaching.

Kukis note: The Mosaic Law has been studied continuously from its being given to this point in time (you are studying it right now). You can find the Code of Hammurabi on the internet. I recall there as being about 300 laws and about a hundred of them are missing. They are not, in any way, a precursor to the Mosaic Law. Moses did not copy them; the Jews did not copy them. What they have in common is they were given a few hundred years apart. People farmed and people had slaves in that era, so there are laws in both systems dealing with farming and farm animals and slavery. That is what both sets of laws have in common.

II. Recipients of the Law of Moses

The Law was given to Israel: Exodus 19:3 Leviticus 26:46 Romans 3:19; 9:4.

The Law was specifically not given to Gentiles: Deuteronomy 4:8 Romans 2:12-14.

Born again believers of the church age are not under the Law. Therefore, the Mosaic Law was never given to the church: Acts 15:5, 24 Romans 6:14 Galatians 2:19.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law: Matthew 5:17, "...I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill..." He fulfilled the commandments by living perfectly under the Law. His perfect life fulfilled Code I. The Ordinances, Code II, were fulfilled by Christ's death, burial, resurrection, ascension and session. The Judgments, Code III, were fulfilled by Christ as He observed the law of the land by living under divine institutions and establishment.

Kukis note: When Jesus was accused of violating the Law, He was actually violating some tradition followed by the Jewish people (such as, some additional restriction given for the Sabbath). Jesus never violated the Mosaic Law; but He violated rabbinic traditions.

Jesus Christ is the end of the Law for believers: Romans 10:4.

Believers in the church age are under a higher law of spirituality: Romans 8:2-4; Galatians 5:18, 22, 23 1Corinthians 13. The believer who functions under the filling of the Holy Spirit takes up where Christ left off and fulfills the Law.

III. Limitations of the Mosaic Law

The Law cannot provide justification either for individuals or for groups: Galatians 2:16 Romans 3:20, 28 Acts 13:39 Philipians 3:9.

The Law cannot give life: Galatians 3:21.

The Law cannot give God the Holy Spirit nor the divine power and energy from the Holy Spirit: Galatians 3:2.

The Law of Moses (from Grace Notes)

The Law cannot solve the problem of the sin nature: Romans 8:3. While there were laws of punishment in varying degrees, and fear of punishment helps keep people in line, the Law does nothing to provide victory over sin.

IV. Present Purpose of Mosaic Law

The commandments provide laws of human freedom and provide a divine standard to which the sinner can compare himself and his actions and recognize that he is a sinner and needs a savior: Romans 3:20, 28 1Timothy 1:8, 9.

The ordinances are designed to communicate God's grace in salvation and restoration to **fellowship**.

The social code is designed to provide a true concept of a national function and freedom under the laws of divine establishment. (Kukis note: the laws of divine establishment describe how a nation ought to be organized and what moral code they should follow.)

V. Salvation in the Old Testament

Salvation is the adjustment a person makes to the justice of God when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as savior. The justice of God was satisfied when Christ bore our sins in His body on the cross. This makes it possible for God to reconcile the believer to Himself and to impute righteousness to the believer. Genesis 15:6

Kukis note: Since *Jesus the Christ* was the name given to the 2nd Person of the Trinity over the period of the life of Jesus, God must reveal Himself to man in some way prior to the incarnation. I have used the term, *the Revealed God*. In whatever way God has revealed Himself prior to the incarnation. The person who believes in that revelation of God is saved. So, Jonah could speak to the Assyrians about the God of Israel (Who is Jesus Christ), and when they believed Jonah, they were saved. Some random person could be watching an animal get sacrificed according to the Mosaic Law and he might trust in that God requiring that. That person is saved when he believes. Just as the Holy Spirit revealed to you or me Christ Jesus and we believed in Him, the Holy Spirit had to reveal God in some way prior to the incarnation.

The **gospel** is the information provided in the Bible to give us the facts about God's provision for us.

Kukis note: The gospel is enough information about God (and since the public ministry of Jesus Christ, about Jesus) which the hearer can then choose to believe and be saved.

The death of Christ on the cross was predetermined by the decisions of the divine decrees so that, from the standpoint of Old Testament times, Jesus Christ's substitutionary atonement was certain to take place, even though the actual efficacious sacrifice had not yet occurred. The justice of God was satisfied.

Old Testament believers received Jesus Christ as Savior as He was revealed in Old Testament times. Sometimes He was called Elohim, Jehovah-Elohim or Jehovah also called God our righteousness, etc.). Whenever there was positive volition at the point of God consciousness, God provided gospel information to the individual.

Kukis note: That gospel information could be actual words about the God of Israel or it could be a ceremony (like the slaughtering of the lamb for Passover). After a person heard the words or observed the ceremony, he could then choose to believe in the God behind those words, behind that ceremony; and that person was then eternally saved.

The first statement of the gospel is recorded in Genesis 3, at the time of original sin, man's fall. When Adam and Eve fell, they only had one count against them which is negative volition to the command regarding good

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and evil. Good and evil is the plan of Satan; so knowledge of good and evil is knowledge of Satan's plan. Adam and Eve, in their innocence in the garden of Eden did not need to be introduced to Satan's plan or to be inculcated with it. Therefore, this one tree was forbidden.

Kukis note: The knowledge of good and evil from this tree was the ability to then understand Satan and Satan's take on good and evil. Prior to eating from this tree, the thinking of Satan would not have been known to Adam or the woman.

Eve partook of the tree in innocence (she had been deceived), and Adam partook in cognizance (he understood that he was violating God's single command made directly to him). He had seen the first sinner, Eve, disobey God, but he took part anyway. Remember, there was no immorality involved here, because at the time they were neither moral or immoral. Their sin was merely rejection of what God had commanded. This brought instant spiritual death.

At this instant, man no longer ruled the world; Satan became the ruler of this kosmos. The coup d'état was complete; and man was now subject to Satan as far as this world is concerned. Mankind immediately became marked with the mark of Adam, the sin nature.

Kukis note: The sin nature is always passed down from the man to his son or daughter. This is because Adam knowingly violated God's direct command. Let me suggest that Adam was choosing Eve over God when he ate the forbidden fruit.

To the question, Which came first, personal sin or the sin nature? The answer is that personal sin came first and caused the existence of the sin nature. The human spirit was cancelled out in the sense of spiritual death.

For the rest of the human race, the sin nature is inherited at birth, so the sin nature is present before there is any opportunity for personal sin. Adam's sin is imputed to us, so that we are born with two strikes against us. "For as in Adam all die ..." (1Corinthians 15:22) Note: We are not called sinners because we sin; we are sinners because we are born, with a sin nature, by having Adam's sin imputed to us.

This is the reason that God, with His character of absolute justice and righteousness, is not free to enter into a relationship with us unless it can be done without compromising His integrity. That is only possible if all the sins of the world are judged and the penalty for them is paid for.

The Lord has found a way to save mankind.

Genesis 3:15 **"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you will bruise his heel."**

The seed of the woman is the title for the Lord Jesus Christ in virgin birth. The sin nature and Adam's imputed sin is passed down through the male; and Christ was not born of a male female relationship. He was able to avoid that result of the curse. The lamb of God had to be without spot or blemish.

At the second advent of Christ, the head of Satan will be crushed, and he will no longer rule the world. Christ will rule the world and Satan will be imprisoned for 1000 years.

The pattern of salvation in the Old Testament is exactly the same as the pattern of New Testament salvation. Genesis 15:6 **Abraham believed God, and God imputed it to him for righteousness.** Imputed righteousness means that God's justice has been satisfied. This verse is found in the context of Romans 4:1-4.

Comments:

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- There never was a time and there never will be a time when God is not saving mankind. Romans 10:13; 2Peter 3:9
- The gospel was clearly declared in Old Testament times. Romans 1:1-4; 1Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 3:18. The passage in Isaiah 53:5, 6 has exactly the same boundaries as are found in 1Corinthians 15:3. Daniel 12:2-3 has the boundary of the resurrection.
- Regardless of age or **dispensation**, man is always saved in the same manner which is positive volition to the gospel expressed in a non-meritorious way which is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12; Galatians 3:6-8
- Positive volition existed in Old Testament times, both at the point of God consciousness and the point of gospel hearing. Exodus 33:7; Genesis 15:6
- While revelation from God is progressive, reaching its peak with the New Testament scriptures, it has always been, nevertheless, sufficient for salvation of souls at all periods of time.
- The object of faith in salvation is the Lord Jesus Christ, Galatians 3:26. However, the revelation concerning Christ varies in different ages.
- Jesus Christ was first revealed as savior at the time of man's fall, Genesis 3:15. He is represented as the seed of the woman.
- Jesus Christ is usually revealed in the Old Testament by shadows. The tabernacle feasts, are the modus operandi of the Levitical priests.

Another means of revealing Christ was through inanimate revelation, that is, through things in nature like the burning bush, the rock, the Shekinah glory, or through the **typology** of the furniture in the tabernacle (Numbers 17:7). The **mercy seat**, the hilasterion, was the place of **propitiation** in the Holy of Holies.

Kukis note: The Jewish people (and some gentiles) would be aware of these things due to the reading of Scripture (which apparently began in the desert-wilderness). They saw the burning bush in their mind's eye. They knew about the Mercy Seat through the reading of Scripture, as only the high priest actually saw it.

The Levitical offerings were witnessing by ritual. The burnt offerings taught propitiation, with emphasis on the word of Christ, the lamb of God. The meal and fruit offerings revealed the person of Christ on the cross. The peace offering taught about the barrier between God and man being removed.

The gospel was presented in the Old Testament directly in theological teaching. Isaiah 53 was straight doctrinal teaching which showed that Christ carried our guilt as well as our sins.

- Once the reality is come, we have the New Testament, which is historical Christology.
- According to Isaiah 55:6, salvation in the person of Jesus Christ, is always available. Acts 4:12
- Many conversions are recorded in the Old Testament, including:

Noah was declared just in Genesis 6:8, 9, and was said to have righteousness in Hebrews 11:7. Hebrews 11 shows the spiritual life of Old Testament believers. The Old Testament imputation of righteousness is seen in Psalm 24:5 and Isaiah 61:10.

For Abraham, compare Genesis 15:6 with Romans 4:1-4

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Job gave perfect testimony to salvation in gospel form described as –Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. Job 19:23-27.

Many Gentiles were saved in the Old Testament. The citizens of Nineveh responded to the gospel when Jonah preached to them. Jonah 3:5-10, Matthew 12:41; Luke 11:32. See also Romans 9:24, 25; 30-33. See Daniel 4:34-37 regarding the salvation of Nebuchadnezzar.

Some minor editing was done by me, along with some textual additions and verses added.

¹ *Christ* comes from the Greek word *Christos*. Its Old Testament equivalent is *Messiah*.

From <https://www2.gracenotes.info/topics/law-of-moses.html>; © 2017 Grace Notes; accessed June 20, 2019.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

In general, the Ten Commandments are a mixture of spiritual, moral and legal laws. Relationship to God is covered in the first four commandments and relationship to man is covered in the rest. Our personal relationship with other men and property rights are covered in the last six commandments. These are not specific laws but general principles designed for the nation Israel. The Ten Commandments are a framework upon which is based many of the other 600+ laws given us throughout the **Pentateuch**. These more than 600 laws which are found in the Law of Moses may be condensed to these Ten Commandments and the Ten Commandments may be summarized as our Lord did: "**You will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. And a second is like it, You will love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.**" (Matthew 22:35–40; Deuteronomy 6:5 Leviticus 19:18).

A perfect man would have perfect love toward God and toward man. Knowing this, how could any man with some shred of personal honesty claim to keep the Law? I look at these two simple commands and I immediately recognize my personal inadequacies and my certain need for a Savior.

The Ten Commandments have real significant spiritual value today (such as **you will have no other gods before Me**; such as the implications and applications of **you will 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**); and some are absolutely necessary for a lawful society (**You will not murder; you will not steal**). Some portions of the law are strictly our moral duty toward our fellow man (**You will not commit adultery; you will not covet**); our moral duty toward God (**you will not use the Lord's name in emptiness**).

Application: The entire basis of one political party today—the one trying to sell the American people on socialism and fairness—is countered by the final commandment, *you will not covet*. If you obey that commandment, you are no longer interested in people who are much wealthier than you are.

Application: If you do not covet, then you understand that you ought not judge people on the basis of their wealth. An extremely rich person may or may not be greedy; he may or may not be immoral. If you judge someone to be greedy and immoral simply because he has wealth, then you are violating Jesus warning *do not judge others*. I have known many people who automatically think the worst of a businessman, lawyer, CEO, or millionaire—they simply assume what they have done is immoral and illegal. People in these realms do not necessarily have any unusual character defects (no more than you or I). It is arrogance and greed and jealousy which cause a person to judge any person who is financially better off than he is.

The Hebrews are given a rationale for the first three commandments. Y^ehowah delivered them from slavery and has promised them from the time of Abraham (but actually from eternity past) the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. We have the additional rationale that there is no other God; those worshipped as gods are

demons; not God. **We know...that there is no God but One** (1Corinthians 8:4b). Therefore, they ought to be devoted toward the God Who did that on their behalf.

In this first section of the decalogue, there will be 3 laws specifically about the relationship between man and God. Because these laws are given to Israel, we might suggest that these laws are specifically given to Israel and to no one else. However, every one of these laws finds a parallel in the New Testament (however, the 4th commandment—the command to observe the Sabbath—does not come into the Church Age as a legal obligation for gentiles or for Christians).

The ESV (capitalized) translates Exodus 20:3 as: **"You shall have no other gods before Me."**

The Kukis slavishly literal translation is: **[There] will not be to you elohim others against My faces.**

When translating, there is always the problem of deciding, *how accurate and how literal does one want the translation to be?* Many times when we have the verb *to be* followed by the lamed preposition affixed to a 2nd person singular suffix (or any suffix), that this can be legitimately rendered *you will have*; or, in this case, *you will not have*; even though the verb is a 3rd person masculine singular suffix verb (that is, *he, she or it is, will be*). So, the most accurate way to render this as, **[There] will not be to you other gods before Me**. It might be reasonable to interpret *other gods* as the subject of the verb, giving us, **other gods will not be to you before Me**. However, sometimes the sense of these words can be obscured by too much accuracy. So, most translations have some form of, **You will not have any other gods before Me**.

It is Y^ehowah Elohim Who purchased these people out of slavery. He redeemed them. Therefore, they belong to Him now. This may seem harsh at first that these people go from one form of slavery to another, but remember what the Lord Jesus reassures us with these words, **"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."** (Matthew 11:30; BSB)

It makes a big difference to the slave as to who owns the slave. Some masters are terrible and some are wonderful (I realize that many young people who read this believe that all slavery is despicable and they cannot relate to degrees regarding this particular topic). Nevertheless, the Hebrew people enslaved to God is far preferable to their being enslaved to the Egyptians. You may recall that pharaoh not only put more work on them than they could bear, but then he punished the Hebrew people for not being able to do the impossible (this punishment was short-lived, because God still had a plan, despite the negative volition of pharaoh).

If slavery is something that you cannot relate to, then, consider this: if you are over 25, you have probably had a good boss and a lousy boss. There are some terrible bosses out there and everyone has worked on a job for a lousy boss. The very fact that there are lousy bosses out there does not somehow invalidate the concept of having a job. The boss of the Hebrew people is God. They were not to have anyone before Him in this regard.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Commandments 1–3; Regarding God

Here is how far that we have gotten in Exodus 20:

Exodus 20:1–2 **And God spoke all these words, saying: "I am the Lord your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.** (NKJV; capitalized)

Vv. 1–2 give us the rationale for Israel to follow the commandments. God bought the Hebrew people out from the slave market; but now, they are beholden to Him rather than to the pharaoh.

This brief introduction leads us to the first commandment:

[There] will not be to you elohim others against My faces.	Exodus 20:3	[There] will not be to you other gods [= elohim] before [or, against, besides, in addition to] Me.
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You will have no other gods before Me.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	[There] will not be to you elohim others against My faces.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	Thou shalt have no other God beside Me.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	The second word which came forth from the mouth of the Holy One, whose name be blessed, was like storms, and lightnings, and flames of fire. A burning light was on His right hand and on His left and was borne through the air of the heavens, returned, and was made manifest unto the camp of Israel; it returned, and was engraven on the tables of the covenant, and was turned in them from side to side. Then called He, and said, House of Israel, My people, Thou shalt have no other God beside Me.
Revised Douay-Rheims	You shall not have strange gods before me.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"You shall have no other deities before me.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	You shall have no other gods except me.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Thou shalt have no other gods beside me.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	You are to have no other gods but me.
Easy English	You must not have any other gods except me.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	"You must not worship any other gods except me.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	"Never have any other god.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Worship no god but me.
<i>The Message</i>	No other gods, only me.
NIRV	"Do not put any other gods in place of me.
New Simplified Bible	»Do not have any other god.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Do not worship any god except me.
The Living Bible	"You may worship no other god than me.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	"Have no gods other than Me.
New Living Translation	"You must not have any other god but me.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	You must worship only me; you must not worship any other god.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, you must have no gods other than Me.
Beck's American Translation	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Thou shalt not defy me by making other gods thy own.
Translation for Translators	So you must worship <i>only</i> me; you must not worship any other god.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferrar-Fenton Bible	There shall be no other GOD to you, except MYSELF."
God's Truth (Tyndale)	You shall have none other gods in my sight.
Lexham English Bible	"There shall be for you no other gods before me.
NIV, ©2011	"You shall have no other gods before [Or <i>besides</i>] me.
Urim-Thummim Version	[1] YOU WILL HAVE NO OTHER ELOHIM BEFORE ME.
Wikipedia Bible Project	You will have no other Gods in my presence.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	There shall not be to you any other gods before my face.
New English Bible—1970	You shall have no other god Or gods to set against me.
New Jerusalem Bible	'You shall have no other gods to rival me.
Revised English Bible—1989	You must have no other god besides me.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	ב "You are to have no other gods before me.
Hebraic Roots Bible	You shall not have any other Elohim before My face.
Kaplan Translation	Do not have any other gods before Me.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	"You have no other mighty ones against My face.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Awful Scroll Bible	...are other they he of mighty ones to be turned before you? -
Concordant Literal Version	You shall not come to have other elohim in preference to Me.
exeGesés companion Bible	Have no other elohim above my face.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Thou shalt have no elohim acherim in My presence.
Third Millennium Bible	"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	"You must not have any other gods ·except [or before] me.
Kretzmann's Commentary	Thou shalt have no other gods before Me, no strange, false gods, no idols, over against Me, setting them up as rivals for the glory and power which belong to Me alone. Not that such figments of man's imagination, such works of their hands, were in truth gods in any sense of the word, but that the very thinking and fashioning of idols is forbidden by the Lord. He is supreme, He is the only God, and His will should govern all men in all situations of life; for the other nine commandments are but explanations and applications of the first.
The Voice	Eternal One: You are not to serve any other gods before Me.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	You shall not have the gods of others in My presence.
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You shall not have: Why was this said? Since it says, "You shall not make for yourself, etc." I know only that one may not make [graven idols, etc.] How do I know that one may not keep what was already made? Therefore, Scripture states: "You shall not have." -[Mechilta]

the gods of others: Heb. מִיִּרְחָא מִיִּהֲלָא, which are not gods, but that others have made them for gods over themselves. It is impossible to interpret this passage to mean: gods other than I, since it is a disgrace for Heaven to call them gods along with Him. Alternatively: strange gods, for they are strange to their worshippers. They cry out to them, but they do not answer them, and it appears as if it [the god] were a stranger, who never knew him [the worshipper]. — [from Mechilta]

in My presence: Heb. יִנְפַלֵּעַ [This means] as long as I exist [signifying forever. God states this so] that you should not say that only that generation was commanded [prohibited] concerning idolatry. — [from Mechilta]

NET Bible®

“You shall have no⁷ other gods before me.⁸

^{7tn} The possession is expressed here by the use of the lamed (ל) preposition and the verb “to be”: לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים (lo’ yihyeh lakkha, “there will not be to you”). The negative with the imperfect expresses the emphatic prohibition; it is best reflected with “you will not” and has the strongest expectation of obedience (see GKC 317 §107.o). As an additional way of looking at this line, U. Cassuto suggests that the verb is in the singular in order to say that they could not have even one other god, and the word “gods” is plural to include any gods (Exodus, 241).

^{8tn} The expression יִנְפַלֵּעַ (’al-panay) has several possible interpretations. S. R. Driver suggests “in front of me,” meaning obliging me to behold them, and also giving a prominence above me (Exodus, 193-94). W. F. Albright rendered it “You shall not prefer other gods to me” (From the Stone Age to Christianity, 297, n. 29). B. Jacob (Exodus, 546) illustrates it with marriage: the wife could belong to only one man while every other man was “another man.” They continued to exist but were not available to her. The point is clear from the Law, regardless of the specific way the prepositional phrase is rendered. God demands absolute allegiance, to the exclusion of all other deities. The preposition may imply some antagonism, for false gods would be opposed to Yahweh. U. Cassuto adds that God was in effect saying that anytime Israel turned to a false god they had to know that the Lord was there – it is always in his presence, or before him (Exodus, 241).

New American Bible (2011)

You shall not have other gods beside me.*

* [20:3] **Beside me:** this commandment is traditionally understood as an outright denial of the existence of other gods except the God of Israel; however, in the context of the more general prohibitions in vv. 4–5, v. 3 is, more precisely, God’s demand for Israel’s exclusive worship and allegiance.

The Hebrew phrase underlying the translation “beside me” is, nonetheless, problematic and has been variously translated, e.g., “except me,” “in addition to me,” “in preference to me,” “in defiance of me,” and “in front of me” or “before my face.” The latter translation, with its concrete, spatial nuances, has suggested to some that the prohibition once sought to exclude from the Lord’s sanctuary the cult images or idols of other gods, such as the asherah, or stylized sacred tree of life, associated with the Canaanite goddess Asherah (34:13). Over the course of time, as vv. 4–5 suggest, the original scope of v. 3 was expanded.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner’s Mechanical Trans.	...other "Elohiym ^{Powers} will not exist (for) you upon my face ,...
Green’s Literal Translation	You shall not have any other gods before Me.
New American Standard B.	“You shall have no other gods before Me [Or besides Me].
Young’s Updated LT	“You will have no other Gods before Me.

The gist of this passage: The people are to have no gods before the God of Israel.

Exodus 20:3

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (אֵל or אַל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'êlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated elohim, Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
'achêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i>]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	masculine plural adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

When not showing a physical relationship between two things, 'al can take on a whole host of new meanings: *on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, besides, in addition to, together with, beyond, above, over, by on to, towards, to, against, in the matter of, concerning, as regards to*. It is one of the most versatile prepositions in Scripture. This word often follows particular verbs. In the English, we have *helping verbs*; in the Hebrew, there are *helping prepositions*.

pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular) with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
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Together, 'âl and pânîym mean *upon my face, against my face; facing me, in front of me, before (as in preference to) me, in addition to me, overlooking me*.

Translation: [There] will not be to you other gods [= elohim] before [or, against, besides, in addition to] Me. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The Kukis mostly literal translation reads: Exodus 20:3 [There] will not be to you other gods [= elohim] before [or, against, besides, in addition to] Me.

I realize that this translation does not match the intensity of *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*. This verse begins with the negative lô' (אֵל or אַל) [pronounced *low*] and the 3rd person masculine singular of the Qal imperfect of hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] and it means *to be, to come to pass*. The subject is not the 2nd person singular or plural; it is the 3rd person singular; therefore, this should be translated, *there will be no, or there will not be*.

This is followed by the lamed preposition which means *to, for, in regards to*. This preposition has as its object the 2nd person singular masculine suffix; therefore it means *to you, for you, in regards to you*.

The word for *gods* is *elohim*; so this could be translated as a singular or plural (strictly speaking it is a plural noun with the *-im* ending). The general rule for all translations is that if this word speaks of the Godhead; then it is capitalized and rendered in the singular as *God*. If context indicates that this is some pagan god or gods, it is then translated, *gods*. In any case it is the exact same word (the ancient Hebrew written language does not have any capital letters). The Hebrew reader, despite this being the same word, understood from context whether this meant *God of gods*.

This verse terminates with the preposition 'al (על) [pronounced *gah*] (I have used *g* to represent a hard guttural sound—as if you are attempting to remove phlegm from the roof of your mouth—rather than a *g* sound). This preposition means *upon, above, beyond, over, in addition to*. There are no gods *above and beyond* our Lord, so we should have no God *in addition to* Y^ehowah. Translating this preposition *before* seems to leave the door open to having a secondary god to worship below Y^ehowah. Therefore, I prefer the translation *besides or in addition to*. There is no other God other than the triune God, Who is one in essence, yet three in person. This is appended with the 1st person, singular suffix, from whence we get *Me*.

The Kukis mostly literal translation is: *[There] will not be to you other gods [= elohim] before [or, against, besides, in addition to] Me*.

Simply speaking, there is no other god that should be worshiped—not Buddha, Krishna, Allah or Mohammed. These are all demons, either demon-possessed or demon-influenced gods. Behind them stand a whole pantheon of demons who, when these entities are worshipped, the disciple is worshipping these demons.

Even though this commandment is personalized and given only to the Hebrews, it applies to all mankind, regardless of their heritage, their geographical location, or their upbringing. No matter how sincere and how religious a person is, if they are worshipping Allah, they are worshipping a demon or a demon pantheon. This bothers unbelievers and it sometimes even bothers new converts. Such people *feel* that, if you are born in India and your parents and grand parents and ancestors back for twenty generations have only known and worshipped Krishna, and you are a moral, kind, loving individual who has known only Krishna and has no idea that there is another God, that maybe, somehow, this is okay and acceptable in God's eyes. It is not. Krishna is not God and those who worship him/it are worshipping a demon or a demon pantheon. This may not be the place for the doctrine of heathenism, but perhaps just a couple of points might help:

God's Omniscience and the Gospel Message

1. God has the ability to look into any soul and determine whether that person has any interest in the true God of the Universe. God knows the hearts of men. God is **omniscient**. 2Chronicles 16:9a; Job 34:21 Psalm 34:15 113:6 Proverbs 15:3 Acts 1:24
2. God does look into every single soul and determines whether that person has any interest in Him, because God is able to see the heart of every man. 1Samuel 16:7 Luke 16:15 Acts 1:24a
3. At some point early in a person's life, they become conscious of the concept of God. Romans 1:18–20
4. Some have an understanding of God, but then corrupt this understanding of God. Romans 1:21–23
5. God gives up on such a person and is not ethically required to provide the **gospel message** to them. Romans 1:22–25
6. If at any time in a person's lifetime that person desires to know God, then God will reveal Himself to that person as Jesus Christ and will see to it that person receives the gospel (Jeremiah 29:13 John 7:17a).
7. Furthermore, God the Holy Spirit will make this information real to the recipient of the gospel (John 16:7–11 1Corinthians 2:14 2Corinthians 2:14b).
8. If a person has no interest in knowing God, then, logically, God has no obligation to present that person with the gospel, even though He often does.
9. You must understand that an interest in God from a religious standpoint does not mean someone has a real interest in knowing the God of the Universe. Let me illustrate from the point of view of a male. I see

God's Omniscience and the Gospel Message

thousands of attractive females, many of which I would like to know. However, as soon as I see, for instance, that person put a cigarette in their mouth, I lose interest. To some heathen, as soon as they know one aspect of God's true character, they have no interest in Him. For instance, as soon as they find out that God is perfect righteousness, that He is holy, and can have no contact with sin—that all sin is totally repugnant to His character and must be judged, then they suddenly lose interest in such a *judgmental* God. They do not want to know this kind of a God. When a heathen finds out that all the good deeds of his life add up to jack squat in the sight of God, then he no longer has any interest in this kind of God.

10. Since God only needs to call the **elect**, He is under no obligation to bring the gospel to one who has no interest in the gospel.

It is clear that virtually every Hollywood actor, director and writer knows who Jesus is, as they repeat His name a considerable number of times in their shows. I have no doubt that if all of the last five years of HBO or Showtime's scripts were checked, the most commonly found proper nouns would be *Jesus*, *Christ* and *Jesus Christ*.

An excellent further study of this is R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s The **Doctrine of Heathenism**.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Exodus 20:3 **[There] will not be to you other gods** [= elohim] **before** [or, *against, besides, in addition to*] **Me**. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

For every one of the Ten Commandments, save one, there is a corresponding commandment in the New Testament. We have already looked at 1Corinthians 8:4. This passage goes on to say, **For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords** [the *many gods* refers to demons and demon royalty and the *many lords* refers to human celebrityship and royalty], **yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we through Him** (1Corinthians 8:5–6; NASB1995). If you would like something stronger, then 1Corinthians 10:21: **You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.** (NASB1995)

Exodus 20:3 **You will have no other gods before Me**. (Kukis paraphrase)

The second commandment:

You will not make for yourself a sculpted image and any representation [of] that [which is] is the [two] heavens from above; and that [which is] in the waters from under the earth. You will not bow down to them and you will not [be caused to] serve them; for I Y^ehowah your Elohim [am] an Êl a jealous [one], visiting iniquity of the fathers upon the sons; upon a third [generation] and upon a fourth [generation] to the ones hating Me. And manufacturing grace to thousands to the ones loving Me and to the ones keeping My commandments.

Exodus
20:4–6

You will not make for yourself [any] sculpted image or any representation [of] that [which is] in the heavens above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You will not bow down to these images [lit., *to them*] and you will not [be caused] to serve them; for I, Y^ehowah your Elohim, [am] a jealous Êl [= *God*], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their [lit., *the*] sons; and upon the third and fourth generations [if necessary] of those who hate Me. However [lit., *and*], [I will] manufacture grace to thousands, to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.

You will not make any sort of sculpted image which represents some deity figure in the heavens above, in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You will not make such images and you will not bow down to them nor will you serve them, for I am Jehovah-God and I am a jealous God. Furthermore, I will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon their sons and upon the next two generations after them of those who hate Me. But, I will provide grace for those who love Me and I will give grace to those who keep My commandments.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

You will not make for yourself a sculpted image and any representation [of] that [which is] is the [two] heavens from above; and that [which is] in the waters from under the earth. You will not bow down to them and you will not [be caused to] serve them; for I Y^ehowah your Elohim [am] an Êl a jealous [one], visiting iniquity of the fathers upon the sons; upon a third [generation] and upon a fourth [generation] to the ones hating Me. And manufacturing grace to thousands to the ones loving Me and to the ones keeping My commandments.

Dead Sea Scrolls
Targum (Onkelos)

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Thou shalt not make to thee image nor likeness of any thing that is in the heavens above, nor in the earth beneath, nor in the waters under the earth: thou shalt not worship them nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God; visiting the sins of the fathers upon the rebellious children, unto the third generation and to the fourth generation of those who hate Me; while the children continue (or complete) to sin after their fathers; but doing good to thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

You shall not make to yourselves image or figure, or any similitude of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them, or worship before them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God and an avenger, punishing with vengeance, recording the guilt of wicked fathers upon rebellious children unto the third and unto the fourth generation of them who hate Me; but keeping mercy and goodness for thousands of generations of the righteous who love Me, and who keep My commandments and My laws.

Revised Douay-Rheims

You shall not make to yourself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. You shall not adore them, nor serve them: I am the Lord your God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	<p>and fourth generation of them that hate me: And shewing mercy unto thousands to them that love me, and keep my commandments.</p> <p>"You shall not make for yourselves an idol, nor any image of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, Mar-Yah your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and on the fourth generation of those who hate me, and showing loving kindness to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.</p>
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	<p>You shall not make for yourself any graven image, or 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; You shall not worship them nor serve them; for I the LORD your God am a zealous God, visiting the offenses of the fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me; And showing mercy to thousands of generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.</p>
Updated Brenton (Greek)	<p>Thou shalt not make to thyself an idol, nor likeness of anything, whatever things are in the heaven above, and whatever are in the earth beneath, and whatever are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them; for I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God, recompensing the sins of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation to them that hate me, and bestowing mercy on them that love me to thousands of them, and on them that keep my commandments.</p>

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	<p>You are not to make an image or picture of anything in heaven or on the earth or in the waters under the earth: You may not go down on your faces before them or give them worship: for I, the Lord your God, am a God who will not give his honour to another; and I will send punishment on the children for the wrongdoing of their fathers, to the third and fourth generation of my haters; And I will have mercy through a thousand generations on those who have love for me and keep my laws.</p>
Easy English	<p>You must not make any false god for yourself. Do not make a false god in the shape of anything in the sky. Do not make one in the shape of anything on the earth or in the water. You must not bend down your head to a false god, nor worship it. I, the LORD your God, will be angry if you do not remember me. I will punish the children for the bad things that their fathers do. I will even punish the grandchildren and their children. I will do this to those who hate me. But I will love thousands of people who love me. These are the people who obey my commandments.</p>
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	<p>"You must not make any idols. Don't make any statues or pictures of anything up in the sky or of anything on the earth or of anything down in the water. Don't worship or serve idols of any kind, because I, the Lord, am your God. I hate my people worshiping other gods. [Or "I am El Kanah—the Jealous God."] People who sin against me become my enemies, and I will punish them. And I will punish their children, their grandchildren, and even their great-grandchildren. But I will be very kind to people who love me and obey my commands. I will be kind to their families for thousands of generations. [Or "But I will show mercy to thousands of people who love me and obey my commands."]</p>
Good News Bible (TEV)	<p>"Do not make for yourselves images of anything in heaven or on earth or in the water under the earth. Do not bow down to any idol or worship it, because I am the Lord your God and I tolerate no rivals. I bring punishment on those who hate me and on their descendants down to the third and fourth generation. But I show my love to thousands of generations [or thousands] of those who love me and obey my laws.</p>

The Message

No carved gods of any size, shape, or form of anything whatever, whether of things that fly or walk or swim. Don't bow down to them and don't serve them because I am GOD, your God, and I'm a most jealous God, punishing the children for any sins their parents pass on to them to the third, and yes, even to the fourth generation of those who hate me. But I'm unswervingly loyal to the thousands who love me and keep my commandments.

Names of God Bible

Never make your own carved idols or statues that represent any creature in the sky, on the earth, or in the water. Never worship them or serve them, because I, **Yahweh** your **Elohim**, am **El Kanna**. I punish children for their parents' sins to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. But I show mercy to thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments.

NIRV

"Do not make for yourself statues of gods that look like anything in the sky. They may not look like anything on the earth or in the waters either. Do not bow down to them or worship them. I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God. I cause the sins of the parents to affect their children. I will cause the sins of those who hate me to affect even their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. But for all time to come I show love to all those who love me and keep my commandments.

New Simplified Bible

»Do not make your own carved idols or statues that represent any creature in the sky, on the earth, or in the water. »Do not worship them or serve them. I, Jehovah your God, am a God demanding exclusive devotion. (I do not tolerate rivals.) I will not share your affection with any other god. I punish children for their parents' sins to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. »I show mercy (loving kindness) to thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible

Contemporary English V.

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Do not make idols that look like anything in the sky or on earth or in the ocean under the earth. Don't bow down and worship idols. I am the LORD your God, and I demand all your love. If you reject me, I will punish your families for three or four generations. But if you love me and obey my laws, I will be kind to your families for thousands of generations.

The Living Bible

"You shall not make yourselves any idols: no images of animals, birds, or fish. You must never bow or worship it in any way; for I, the Lord your God, am very possessive. I will not share your affection with any other god!

"And when I punish people for their sins, the punishment continues upon the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of those who hate me; but I lavish my love upon thousands of those who love me and obey my commandments.

New Berkeley Version

New Life Version

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"Do not make for yourselves a god to look like anything that is in heaven above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth.

"Do not worship them or work for them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. I punish the children, even the great-grandchildren, for the sins of their fathers who hate Me. But I show loving-kindness to thousands of those who love Me and keep My Laws.

New Living Translation

"You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those [Hebrew *for thousands of those*.] who love me and obey my commands.

Unlocked Dynamic Bible You must not carve a figure to worship that represents anything in the sky or that is on the ground or that is in the water under the ground. You must not bow down to any idol and worship it because I am Yahweh your Almighty, and I will not allow you to worship any other gods. I will punish those who sin and hate me. I will punish not only them, but also I will punish their descendants down to the third and fourth generation. However, I will never stop loving thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible 'You must not make images for yourselves of anything in the skies above, on the earth below, or of things that live in the water or under the ground. You must not bow before them or serve them; for I, Jehovah your God, am a zealous God, and I bring the sins of the ancestors upon the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of those who hate Me. Yet, I am merciful to the thousands who love Me and keep My Commandments.

Beck's American Translation .

Common English Bible Do not make an idol for yourself—no form whatsoever—of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. Do not bow down to them or worship them, because I, the Lord your God, am a passionate God. I punish children for their parents' sins even to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me. But I am loyal and gracious to the thousandth generation [Or *to thousands*] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

New Advent (Knox) Bible Thou shalt not carve images, or fashion the likeness of anything in heaven above, or on earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, to bow down and worship it. I, thy God, the Lord Almighty, am jealous in my love; be my enemy, and thy children, to the third and fourth generation, for thy guilt shall make amends; love me, keep my commandments, and mercy shall be thine a thousandfold.

Translation for Translators You must not carve/make for yourselves any idol that represents anything in the sky or that is on the ground or that is in the water under the ground/earth. You must not bow down to any idol and worship it, because I am Yahweh God, and I ◀am very jealous/want you to worship me only▶. I will punish those who sin and hate me. I will punish not only them, but I will punish ◀their descendants, down to the third and fourth generation/their children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren▶. But I will steadfastly love thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my commandments (OR, I will love for thousands of generations.)

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation You shall not make for yourself any carving, or any representation of anything in heaven above, or the earth beneath, or in the waters beneath the earth. You will not bow yourself down to them, nor be made to serve them. I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the depravity of the fathers on the sons to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and doing kindness to thousands of them that love Me, and to those who observe My instructions."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible **Commandment II.**
You shall not make for yourselves any image, or likeness of anything that is in the heavens above; or that is upon the earth beneath; or that is in the waters lower than the earth; you shall not worship them or serve them, for I, your EVER-LIVING GOD am a jealous GOD, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me; but I show mercy for thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

God's Truth (Tyndale) You shall make you no graven image, neither any similitude that is in heaven above, either in the earth beneath, or in the water that is beneath the earth. See that you

International Standard V	<p>neither bow yourself unto them neither serve them: for I the Lord your God, am a jealous God, and visit the sin of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: and yet show mercy unto thousands among them that love me and keep my commandments.</p>
	<p>"You are not to make for yourselves an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above, or on earth below, or in the water under the earth. You are not to bow down to them in worship or serve them, because I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children^b for the iniquity of the parents^c to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing gracious love to the thousandth^d generation^e of those who love me and keep my commandments.</p> <p>b 20:5 Or <i>sons</i> c 20:5 Or <i>fathers</i> d 20:6 Lit. <i>thousands</i> e 20:6 The Heb. lacks <i>generation</i></p>
Lexham English Bible	<p>"You shall not make for yourself a divine image [with] any form that [is] in the heavens above or that [is] in the earth below or that [is] in the water below the earth. You will not bow down to them, and you will not serve them, because I [am] Yahweh your God, a jealous God, punishing [the] guilt of [the] parents on the children on [the] third and on [the] fourth [generations] of those hating me, and showing loyal love to thousands [of generations] of those loving me and of those keeping my commandments.</p>
NIV, ©2011	<p>"You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.</p>
Urim-Thummim Version	<p>[2] YOU WILL NOT MAKE TO YOURSELVES ANY IDOL OR ANY IMAGE OF ANYTHING THAT IS IN COSMOS ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE LAND, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER. You will not bow down yourself to them nor serve them, for I (YHWH your Elohim) am a jealous Elohim, punishing the depravity of the fathers upon the children to the 3rd and 4th generation of those that hate Me. And showing goodness to thousands of them that love me, and observe my commandments.</p>
Wikipedia Bible Project	<p>You will make for yourself no statue and no image of that in the skies above and that in the land below, and that in the water underneath the land. You will not bow to them, and you will not worship them, because I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous god, commanding blight, from fathers to sons to the third generation and the fourth generation, to my detesters. And I will have kindness on the thousands, to those that love me, and that keep my commandments.</p>

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	<p>Do not make yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything in heaven, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God; for the sin of the fathers, when they rebel against me, I punish the sons, the grandsons and the great-grandsons; but I show steadfast love until the thousandth generation for those who love me and keep my commandments.</p>
The Heritage Bible	<p>You shall not make for yourselves carved idols, or any likeness⁴ that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; You shall not prostrate yourself to them, and you shall not serve them, because I, Jehovah, your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them who hate me; And doing mercy to thousands of them who love me, and hedge about my commandments.</p>

⁴**20:4 image, likeness.** See Gen. 5:3; 9:6. Hebrew: image, *tselem*, likeness, *demuwth*. The word image means a shadow of the original, or a statue of some human or animal. The word likeness has almost the identical meaning. Something that is like something else, but not the actual thing. Both image and likeness are used to describe idols, and pictures in dreams and visions. All of these are likenesses, but not the real thing. Each one of these uses describes something that is EMPTY, and needs to be filled.

In all the following Scriptures *tselem* is used: Num 33:52; 1 Sam 6:5,11; 2 Kgs 11:18; 2 Chr 23:17; Ps 39:6; 73:20; Ezk 7:20; 16:17; 23:14; Amo 5:26. It occurs 17 times in the book of Daniel referring to the images Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, the image that Nebuchadnezzar built for people to worship, and the appearance of the face of Nebuchadnezzar when he became angry.

Tselem is combined with the word death, and usually translated shadow of death, meaning the likeness or image of death was hanging over them, but they had not experienced the reality of death yet. *Tselm* means an empty shell.

Demuwth, likeness, is in 2 Kings 16:10. King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria. He saw an altar at Damascus, and king Ahaz sent to Urijah, the priest, the image or likeness of the altar. Ahaz asked for a pattern so he could use the pattern to build the real thing. The image is only a likeness, a pattern. All the other uses of *demuwth*, including 17 times in Ezekiel, the meaning is always a resemblance, not the real thing.

When we come to the New Covenant, the Greek, *eikon*, image, means both the shell, and the actual essence of the original. In the following verses image does not mean an empty shell, but an essential likeness that is equal to the original. 2 Cor 4:4 ...Christ, who is the image of God. Col 1:15, [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God.... The following verses show that the word image means that the Christian believer actually receives the real essence of Christ in the salvation experience. Rom 8:29 ...to be conformed to the image of his Son....1 Cor 15:49 And as we bore the image of the one made from dust [the image of Adam who had only an empty spiritual shell in God's likeness before he received God's forgiveness], we shall also bear the image of the one from heaven [the image of Christ who is the actual essence of God in flesh]. Christ has not only the appearance of God, He is the actual essential character of God in His entire being. See also 2 Cor 3:18, Col 3:10, and Eph 4:24 And you are clothed in the new man who from God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

After receiving revelation knowledge from all these places where the word image appears, we understand that:

(1) The original image of God that natural man received in creation is a spiritual shell capable of receiving God and becoming an eternal child of God. The animals did not have this.

(2) The new creation image of Christ that the believer receives in the new birth is the actual essence of the God-Man, Christ Jesus Who has become our life forevermore. This footnote was originally for Gen. 1:26–27.

New American Bible (2002) **You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; ²you shall not bow down before them or worship them. For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their fathers' wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation, on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments.**

New English Bible—1970 **² [5] Jealous: demanding exclusive allegiance, such as a wife must have for her husband. You shall not make a carved image for yourself nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship Or or be led to worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous god. I punish the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me. But I keep faith with thousands, with with ... with: or for a thousand generations with ... those who love me and keep my commandments.**

New Jerusalem Bible **'You shall not make yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything in heaven above or on earth beneath or in the waters under the earth. 'You shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God and I**

punish a parent's fault in the children, the grandchildren, and the great-grandchildren among those who hate me; but I act with faithful love towards thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	You are not to make for yourselves a carved image or any kind of representation of anything in heaven above, on the earth beneath or in the water below the shoreline. You are not to bow down to them or serve them; for I, <i>ADONAI</i> your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but displaying grace to the thousandth generation of those who love me and obey my <i>mitzvot</i> .
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	“You do not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of that which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth, you do not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, יהוה your Elohim am a jealous Ėl, visiting the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and guard My commands.
Tree of Life Version	“You shall have no other gods before Me. Do not make for yourself a graven image [Heb. <i>Pe-sel</i> , lit. “ <i>crafted idol</i> ”], or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or on the earth below or in the water under the earth. Do not bow down to them, do not let anyone make you serve them. For I, <i>ADONAI</i> your God, am a jealous God, bringing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to the thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My <i>mitzvot</i> .

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	<p>YOU SHALL NOT MAKE TO YOURSELF AN IDOL, NOR LIKENESS OF ANYTHING, WHATEVER THINGS ARE IN THE HEAVEN ABOVE, AND WHATEVER ARE IN THE EARTH BENEATH, AND WHATEVER ARE IN THE WATERS UNDER THE EARTH. †(The context is images being worshipped. Therefore it doesn't really matter whether the image is graven in stone, silver, gold, wood, metal, glass, on printed paper or digital technology. Idolatry of an image on paper/camera/screen is just as bad as idolatry of something carved in stone. If we truly examine ourselves deep enough, we must admit that most images of all kinds are idolatry. It's not idolatry to use images in educational material, to see an image in the newspaper, draw most pictures, watch the news or weather, etc. But it is idolatry when people are idolizing movie stars, musicians & sports stars. Images of idolatry include pictures of Jesus, pictures of angels, all statues, all stuffed animals, all dolls, figurines of animals or people, Christmas trees, Easter eggs & much more. Only truly saved, baptized people can truly discern the difference between an acceptable image & not acceptable. 1Cor. 2:14. See Deut. 4:15 to Deut. 4:19) YOU SHALL NOT BOW DOWN TO THEM, NOR SERVE THEM; FOR I AM JESUS YOUR THEOS, THE ALMIGHTY ALPHA, AM JEALOUS, REPAYING THE SINS OF THE DADS UPON THE CHILDREN, TO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION TO THEM THAT HATE ME, †(According to Deut. 24:16 & Ezek. 18:19 to Ezek. 18:32 children are not directly punished for what their parents do. However, What you do effects everyone around you & your descendants for generations. To this very day, the tribal descendants of Esau & Ismael are still suffering the consequences of their own free will sins) AND BESTOWING MERCY ON THEM THAT LOVE ME TO THOUSANDS OF THEM, AND ON THEM THAT KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS. †(We MUST keep the 10 Commandments. Matt. 5:17 to Matt. 5:48 & 1Jn. 2:3 to 1Jn. 2:6)</p>
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Awful Scroll Bible	...were yous to make hewn images, in the likeness of that in the expanse above, or on the solid grounds, or in the waters below the solid grounds? - were yous to bow down and serve them? - For Jehovah, he of mighty ones, is a jealous mighty one, noticing the iniquity of the fathers to their sons, to their third and fourth, they hating me; preparing honor to the thousands loving me, and observing my commandment.
Concordant Literal Version	You shall not make for yourself a carving nor any representation of that in the heavens above or that on the earth beneath, or that in the waters beneath the earth. You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor be made to serve them, for I, Yahweh your Elohim, am a jealous El, visiting the depravity of the fathers on the sons, on the third and on the fourth generation, to those hating Me, yet doing kindness to thousands, to those loving Me and observing My instructions.
exeGesés companion Bible	Work not to yourself any sculptile or any similitude of that in the heavens above or that in the earth beneath or that in the water under the earth: neither prostrate yourself to them, nor serve them: for I Yah Veh your Elohim am a jealous El, visiting the perversity of the fathers on the sons to the third and fourth of them who hate me; and working mercy to the thousands who love me and guard my misvoth.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Thou shalt not make unto thee any pesel, or any temunah of any thing that is in Shomayim above, or that is in ha'aretz beneath, or that is in the mayim under ha'aretz. Thou shalt not tishtacheveh to them, nor serve them; for I Hashem Eloheicha am an El kanna, visiting the avon Avot upon the Banim unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; But showing chesed unto thousands of them that love Me, and are shomer over My mitzvot.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	Thou shalt not make to thee an image, or any form, that is in the heavens above,—or that is in the earth beneath,—or that is in the waters beneath the earth: thou shalt not bow thyself down to them nor be led to serve them—For, I, Yahweh, thy God, am a jealous GOD, visiting the iniquity of fathers upon sons, unto three generations and, unto four, of them that hate me; but shewing lovingkindness unto thousands of generations ,—of them who love me, and keep my commandments.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	“You shall not make for yourself any idol, or any likeness (form, manifestation) of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth [as an object to worship]. You shall not worship them nor serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous (impassioned) God [^[a] demanding what is rightfully and uniquely mine], visiting (avenging) the iniquity (sin, guilt) of the fathers on the children [that is, calling the children to account for the sins of their fathers], to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing graciousness and steadfast lovingkindness to thousands [of generations] of those who love Me and keep My commandments. ^[a] God does not tolerate the transfer of the honor and worship that is due Him to any other being or object.
The Expanded Bible	“You must not make for yourselves an idol that looks like anything in the ·sky [heavens] above or on the earth below or in the water below the ·land [earth]. You must not worship or serve them, because I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. ·If you hate me, I will punish your children, and even your grandchildren and

	<p>great-grandchildren [^LI will visit/punish the guilt of the fathers on the sons/^Tchildren until the third and fourth generations of those who hate me]. But I show kindness to ·thousands [or thousands of generations of those] who love me and obey my commands.</p>
Kretzmann's Commentary	<p>Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, a carved or sculptured idol, or any likeness of anything, any representation that is intended for religious worship, that is in heaven above, birds or stars (heavenly bodies) of any kind, or that is in the earth beneath, men or beasts, or that is in the water under the earth, and marine animals; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, in the act of adoration, nor serve them, actually giving them the worship, the honor which pertains to God alone, for that is the point of the entire prohibition, that pictures and images should not be made for purposes of worship. For I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, not with the certainty of absolute fatality, but as a just punishment of those children that follow their parents and ancestors in their evil ways; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments. The Lord's holiness and righteousness demands that He visit the sinners with His punitive justice, but He takes far greater pleasure in giving proofs of His mercy and kindness: He would rather reward than punish.</p>
Syndein/Thieme	<p>"You shall not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."</p> <p>{4-Generation Curse}</p> <p>"You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them. For I, Jehovah/God your 'Elohim/Godhead am a jealous 'El/God {anthropopathism} . . . visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them who hate {negative volition} Me."</p> <p>"And showing mercy unto thousands of them who love Me, and keep My commandments."</p>
The Voice	<p>You are not to make any idol or image of other gods. In fact, you are not to make an image of anything in the heavens above, on the earth below, or in the waters beneath. You are not to bow down and serve any image, for I, the Eternal your God, am a jealous God. As for those who are not loyal to Me, their children will endure the consequences of their sins for three or four generations. But for those who love Me and keep My directives, their children will experience My loyal love for a thousand generations.</p>

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	<p>You shall not make for yourself a graven image or any likeness which is in the heavens above, which is on the earth below, or which is in the water beneath the earth.</p> <div style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>a graven image: Heb. פֶּסֶל [It is called by this name] because it is sculpted (פִּסְּלָה).</p> <p>or any likeness: The likeness of anything that is in the heavens.</p> </div> <p>You shall neither prostrate yourself before them nor worship them, for I, the Lord, your God, am a zealous God, Who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me,...</p> <div style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>a zealous God: Heb. אֵל זָעֵל, zealous to mete out punishment. He does not forgo retaliating by forgiving the sin of idolatry. Every [expression of] אֵל זָעֵל means enprement in Old French, zealous anger. He directs His attention to mete out punishment.</p> </div>
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of those who hate Me: As the Targum [Onkelos paraphrases: when the sons continue to sin following their fathers, i.e.], when they cling to their fathers' deeds. — [from Sanh. 27b]

...and [I] perform loving kindness to thousands [of generations], to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.

perform loving-kindness: that a person does, to pay the reward until the two-thousandth generation. It is thus found that the measure of reward [from God] exceeds the measure of [His] retribution by [the ratio of] one to five hundred, for this one is for four generations, and that one is for two thousand [generations]. -[from Tosefta Sotah 4:1]

Kaplan Translation

Do not represent [such] gods by any carved statue or picture of anything in the heaven above, on the earth below, or in the water below the land. **Do not bow down to [such gods] or worship them.** I am God your Lord, a God who demands exclusive worship. Where My enemies are concerned, I keep in mind the sin of the fathers for [their] descendants, to the third and fourth [generation]. But for those who love Me and keep My commandments, I show love for thousands [of generations].

Do not represent....

(Sefer HaMitzvoth, Negative Commandment 2; Yad, Avodath Kokhavim 3:9). Literally, 'do not make.' See Exodus 20:20.

who demands...

(Hirsch). Kana in Hebrew, used exclusively with relation to God; Exodus 34:14, Deuteronomy 4:24, 5:9, 6:15; cf. Joshua 24:19, Nahum 1:2. On the basis of the verbal form, 'jealous,' 'zealous,' or 'vengeful' (Mekhilta; Rashi), but more accurately, 'acting to punish' (Moreh Nevukhim 1:44; cf. Saadia Gaon).

for their descendants

But only if they follow their fathers' ways; cf. Deuteronomy 24:16 (Berakhoth 7a). **generations**

(Targum; Rashi).

NET Bible®

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image⁹ or any likeness¹⁰ of anything¹¹ that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath or that is in the water below.¹² You shall not bow down to them or serve them,¹³ for I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous¹⁴ God, responding to¹⁵ the transgression of fathers by dealing with children to the third and fourth generations¹⁶ of those who reject me,¹⁷ and showing covenant faithfulness¹⁸ to a thousand generations¹⁹ of those who love me and keep my commandments.

^{9tn} A פֶּסֶל (pesel) is an image that was carved out of wood or stone. The Law was concerned with a statue that would be made for the purpose of worship, an idol to be venerated, and not any ordinary statue.

^{10tn} The word תְּמוּנָה (tmunah) refers to the mental pattern from which the פֶּסֶל (pesel) is constructed; it is a real or imagined resemblance. If this is to stand as a second object to the verb, then the verb itself takes a slightly different nuance here. It would convey “you shall not make an image, neither shall you conceive a form” for worship (B. Jacob, Exodus, 547). Some simply make the second word qualify the first: “you shall not make an idol in the form of...” (NIV).

^{11tn} Here the phrase “of anything” has been supplied.

^{12tn} Heb “under the earth” (so KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

^{13tn} The combination of these two verbs customarily refers to the worship of pagan deities (e.g., Deut 17:3: 30:17; Jer 8:2; see J. J. Stamm and M. E. Andrew, The Ten Commandments in Recent Research [SBT], 86). The first verb is תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה (lo' tishtakhavah), now to be classified as a hishtaphel imperfect from חָוָה (khavah; BDB 1005 s.v. חָוָה), “to cause oneself to be low to the ground.” It is used of the true worship of God as well. The second verb is מִדְּבַעַת אֲלֵהֶם (vd'ba'at 'al'hem). The two could be taken as a hendiadys: “you will not prostrate yourself to serve them.” In an interesting side comment U. Cassuto (Exodus, 242) offers an explanation of the spelling of the second verb: he suggests that it was spelled with the qamets khatuf vowel to show contempt for pagan worship, as if their conduct does not even warrant a correct spelling of the word “serve.” Gesenius says

that the forms like this are anomalous, but he wonders if they were pointed as if the verb was a Hophal with the meaning “you shall not allow yourself to be brought to worship them” (GKC 161 §60.b). But this is unlikely.

^{14sn} The word “jealous” is the same word often translated “zeal” or “zealous.” The word describes a passionate intensity to protect or defend something that is jeopardized. The word can also have the sense of “envy,” but in that case the object is out of bounds. God’s zeal or jealousy is to protect his people or his institutions or his honor. Yahweh’s honor is bound up with the life of his people.

^{15tn} Verses 5 and 6 are very concise, and the word פָּקַד (paqad) is difficult to translate. Often rendered “visiting,” it might here be rendered “dealing with” in a negative sense or “punishing,” but it describes positive attention in 13:19. When used of God, it essentially means that God intervenes in the lives of people for blessing or for cursing. Some would simply translate the participle here as “punishing” the children for the sins of the fathers (cf. Lev 18:25; Isa 26:21; Jer 29:32; 36:31; Hos 1:4; Amos 3:2). That is workable, but may not say enough. The verse may indicate that those who hate Yahweh and do not keep his commandments will repeat the sins their fathers committed and suffer for them. Deut 24:16 says that individuals will die for their own sins and not their father’s sins (see also Deut 7:10 and Ezek 18). It may have more to do with patterns of sin being repeated from generation to generation; if the sin and the guilt were not fully developed in the one generation, then left unchecked they would develop and continue in the next. But it may also indicate that the effects of the sins of the fathers will be experienced in the following generations, especially in the case of Israel as a national entity (U. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 243). God is showing here that his ethical character is displayed in how he deals with sin and righteousness, all of which he describes as giving strong motivation for loyalty to him and for avoiding idolatry. There is a justice at work in the dealings of God that is not present in the pagan world.

^{16tn} The Hebrew word for “generations” is not found in v. 5 or 6. The numbers are short for a longer expression, which is understood as part of the description of the children already mentioned (see Deut 7:9, where “generation” [דֹר, dor] is present and more necessary, since “children” have not been mentioned).

^{17tn} This is an important qualification to the principle. The word rendered “reject” is often translated “hate” and carries with it the idea of defiantly rejecting and opposing God and his word. Such people are doomed to carry on the sins of their ancestors and bear guilt with them.

^{18tn} Literally “doing loyal love” (עֲשֵׂה חֶסֶד, 'oseh khased). The noun refers to God’s covenant loyalty, his faithful love to those who belong to him. These are members of the covenant, recipients of grace, the people of God, whom God will preserve and protect from evil and its effects.

^{19tn} Heb “to thousands” or “to thousandth.” After “tenth,” Hebrew uses cardinal numbers for ordinals also. This statement is the antithesis of the preceding line. The “thousands” or “thousandth [generation]” are those who love Yahweh and keep his commands. These are descendants from the righteous, and even associates with them, who benefit from the mercy that God extends to his people. S. R. Driver (*Exodus*, 195) says that this passage teaches that God’s mercy transcends his wrath; in his providence the beneficial consequences of a life of goodness extend indefinitely further than the retribution that is the penalty for persisting in sin. To say that God’s loyal love extends to thousands of generations or the thousandth generation is parallel to saying that it endures forever (Ps. 118). See also Exod 34:7; Deut 5:10; 7:9; Ps 18:51; Jer 32:18.

New American Bible (2011)

You shall not make for yourself an idol [Ex 34:17; Lv 26:1; Dt 4:15–19; 27:15] **or a likeness of anything* in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; you shall not bow down before them or serve them.** [Ex 34:7, 14; Nm 14:18; Dt 4:24; 6:15] **For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their ancestors’ wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation*;** but showing love down to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

* [20:4] **Or a likeness of anything:** compare this formulation to that found in Dt 5:8, which understands this phrase and the following phrases as specifications of the prohibited idol (Hebrew pesel), which usually refers to an image that is carved or hewn rather than cast.

* [20:5] **Jealous:** demanding exclusive allegiance. **Inflicting punishment...the third and fourth generation:** the intended emphasis is on God's mercy by the contrast between punishment and mercy ("to the thousandth generation"—v. 6). Other Old Testament texts repudiate the idea of punishment devolving on later generations (cf. Dt 24:16; Jer 31:29–30; Ez 18:2–4). Yet it is known that later generations may suffer the punishing effects of sins of earlier generations, but not the guilt.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...you will not (make) (for) you a sculpture and (any) resemblance which is in the skies <above>, and which is in the land <below>, and which is in the waters <below> the land, you will not bend yourself down to them, and you will not be made to serve them, given that I am "YHWH ^{He is} " your "Elohiym ^{Powers} ", the mighty one of zealously, registering the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third generation, and upon the fourth generation, to the ones hating me, and doing kindness to the thousands, to the ones loving me, and to the ones safeguarding my directives...
Charles Thomson OT	Thou shalt not make for thyself an idol, nor the likeness of any thing, which is in the heaven above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth; thou shalt not worship them; nor serve them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a zealous God, retributing to them who hate me the sins of fathers upon children to the third and fourth generation; but shewing mercy for thousands [of generations] to them who love me and keep my commandments.
Context Group Version	You shall not make for yourself a carved image, nor any likeness [of any thing] that is in the skies above, or that is in the land beneath, or that is in the water under the land. You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I YHWH your God am a possessive God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the sons, on the third and on the fourth generation of those that spurn me, and showing family allegiance to thousands of those that give allegiance to me and keep my commandments.
New European Version	You shall not make for yourselves an idol, nor any image of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and on the fourth generation of those who hate Me, and showing loving kindness to thousands of those who love Me and keep my commandments.
New King James Version	"You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness <i>of anything</i> that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve [<i>worship</i>] them. For I, the LORD your God, <i>am</i> a jealous God, visiting [<i>punishing</i>] the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth <i>generations</i> of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
Young's Updated LT	"You will not make to yourself a graven image, or any likeness which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth. You will not bow yourself to them, nor serve them: for I, Jehovah your God, am a zealous God, charging iniquity of fathers on sons, on the third generation , and on the fourth, of those hating Me, and doing kindness to thousands, of those loving Me and keeping My commands.

The gist of this passage: The second commandment is for the people not to manufacture any idol and worship it.

Exodus 20:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
peçel (פֶּסֶל) [pronounced PEH-cell]	<i>sculpted image, carved image, graven image, engraved image</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6459 BDB #820

Translation: You will not make for yourself [any] sculpted image...

The second commandment is a warning against idolatry. It focuses upon the idolatry of specific religious objects, but can be applied to any form of idolatry.

Specifically, there is a warning against the making of an object and then worshiping it. Obviously, that is worshiping the product of your own hands, although that does not have to be the case.

If you somehow have reverence regarding a picture or painting of Jesus; or if you carry rosary beads, or have a statue of Mary hanging down from the mirror in your car, you are being idolatrous. People can even develop a confused relationship with the cross, with the sign of the cross, with the stations of the cross, etc. None of these things are called for in Scripture. They are not magic objects nor are they not good luck charms. If you are going through a very difficult time and you take the cross around your neck and hold it or rub it, thinking that it might give just that little extra oomph when it comes to communing with God or dealing with difficulties in life; that is idolatry. Now, don't get me wrong here. You can wear a cross; you can have crosses among your jewelry; or you can that little ichthus fish thing (as a car sticker or a piece of jewelry, whatever). As long as you do not see it as good luck or as something that might give you just a little more heft when speaking with God in prayer. When it comes to your relationship with God, much of what is the Christian life is taking place within the confines of your thinking. You think accurate Bible doctrine; you act according to accurate Bible doctrine; you use the faith rationales for difficult circumstances. But anything handmade cannot be a part of your worship or prayers. This includes kneeling in front of some religious artifact in church (like a large cross, a statue of Mary, or whatever). There is no place in your church which is just a little more holy and that, if you go to that spot, you've got a better chance to get what you pray for. That is idolatrous thinking. Your prayers from somewhere in your church are no better than prayers made from inside your own house, as long as you are in fellowship.

An idol can also be the product of your own mind or your own thinking or your own research. The problem is not the shape of the cross in your church or as a part of your jewelry. The actual **cross of Christ** did not look like this: †; it looked more like a T. However, even if you have a religious symbol which is more accurate in shape, that still does not give you some kind of a magical symbol to somehow make your spiritual life better. There are spiritual mechanics and **spiritual skills** for the believer to employ; and none of these include some sort of religious artifact of any sort.

God has given us a great deal of information about Him in Scripture. We stick with that exact information. We do not take it further into some other realm, based upon our own fantasy thinking.

Exodus 20:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
t ^e mûwnâh (תְּמוּנָה) [pronounced <i>tem-oo-NAW</i>]	<i>a form, image; likeness, representation, similitude, semblance; something portioned out, an undefinable shape, a manifestation; statue, idol</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8544 BDB #568
’ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where; in that, in which, in what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAH-yim</i>]	<i>heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)</i>	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ma‘al (מֵעַל) [pronounced <i>MAH-ġahl</i>]	<i>higher, higher part, above, upon, forward</i>	preposition	Strong's #4605 BDB #751
With the preposition, this means <i>from above, above, upon; near, by</i> .			

Translation: ...or any representation [of] that [which is] in the heavens above,...

We are not to produce any object that represents any of the unseen world. We do not make an object that we believe represents something in the heavens. This might be **angels** or God or the throne room of God.

I need to footnote this particular commandment, otherwise, you may become confused later in the book of Exodus. God would require that very specific religious artifacts to be constructed (like the Mercy Seat over the **Ark of God**). However, these artifacts would be utilized in very specific ways—and these artifacts were never to be worshiped. The last third of the book of Exodus, we will study the making of the furniture for the Tabernacle.

On top of the Mercy Seat (we have not studied this yet) are two angels carved out of gold. One represents the elect angels and the other represents the fallen angels. All of angelic creation will watch mankind and watch Jesus very specifically during His **1st advent**.

Now, you may have thought that I was overly harsh when talking about crosses. God will actually use the **Ark of the Covenant** when Israel walks around Jericho. This was under God's direct supervision. However, when the Jews later appropriated the Ark of God to use in another battle, they failed spectacularly. They grabbed up the Ark as a good luck charm, essentially, and it did not work. Many of them died as a result.

Exodus 20:4c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where; in that, in which, in what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of; from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced <i>TAH-khahth</i>]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition; pausal form	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065

Min + tachath together mean *below, beneath, from under, from beneath* and it is used of those that were *under* anything and came out from there.

Translation: ...or in the earth below,...

We do not make any images of that which we believe to be living below us. This likely refers to the several compartments of Hades.

The Bible speaks of a great unseen world; and God forbids us to try to make physical representations of it.

Exodus 20:4d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where; in that, in which, in what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mayim (מַיִם) [pronounced <i>mah-YIHM</i>]	<i>water (s)</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4325 BDB #565
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of; from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced <i>TAH-khath</i>]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition; pausal form	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065
Min + tachath together mean <i>below, beneath, from under, from beneath</i> and it is used of those that were <i>under</i> anything and came out from there.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by; on account of; about, concerning</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...or in the waters under the earth.

There is water under the earth (underground wells), but that is not under discussion here. We are not to make any images related to the unseen world and how it is related to underground water wells. This is somewhat perplexing to me. Here, I think we need to separate the reality (water tables beneath the ground) and the ethereal—the place of men who have died and angels who have been imprisoned—is described as water beneath the earth.

Exodus 20:4 You will not make for yourself [any] sculpted image or any representation [of] that [which is] in the heavens above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The second commandment reads:

Exodus 20:4 “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;... (NKJV)

V. 4 begins the commandment against idolatry. There is a great, vast reality far beyond what our five senses perceive. It is a realm occupied by our triune God, by angels and by demons. We are not to create anything with our hands which represents these things in the regions which are beyond sight and sound.

Gill sees these images as being common animals on the earth or in the seas who are worshiped. This does not mean that we cannot produce artistic renderings of various animals. We will find out in subsequent chapters that the Hebrew people will have Aaron make a golden calf and they will worship that. That violates the second commandment. However, Christians used to identify one another during times of heavy persecution by using the figure of a fish. They did not worship the fish nor did they worship their drawing of a fish. They used this symbol as a way to identify one another (the letters for Greek word for fish formed the acronym, which stood for: *Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior*). That fish might be on a door or etched onto a post. This symbol indicated, at times, that this was a meeting place for Christian believers. There was nothing illegitimate or sinful about the fish symbol.

The Fish Symbol (a graphic); from [Pinterest](#); accessed May 1, 2024.

Many people in hearing this verse just zip right by it without a thought. They have not built any idols lately, nor do they worship Satan. Therefore, they feel as though everything is fine here. However, the idols which we create today are of a subtler nature. For some it is wealth and fame; for others position and power; for others it is recognition and admiration; for others it is the accumulation of material things; for others, it is the accumulation of status symbols. Some people build their entire lives around striving for these various idols, attempting to attain them, and being envious of those who have the things that they want. This is a form of idolatry. An idol is in the soul. You do not have to have a Buddha or a Mary statue in your house in order to be an idolater. All you have to do is to put something else ahead of God—that is the essence of idolatry. When that thing placed ahead of God, and if it has some spiritual significance, then it is all the more damnable. Furthermore, there is but one way to know God and that is through His Word. Any person—no matter how religious or how nice and how soft spoken they are—does not want to know God's Word, then he does not want to know God and, by definition, is an idolater.



Ι	Ιησους	=	Jesus
χ	Χριστός	=	Christ
θ	θεός	=	God
ύ	υἱός	=	Son
ς	σωτήρ	=	Savior

If you believe the government is capable of taking care of you and giving you good healthcare and equaling out all of the disparities of life, then you are in idolatry. No government can do this. There never has been a government been capable of providing such things. We had a president during my lifetime who honestly believed that he could end poverty (well, it is difficult to determine if a politician is being honest about anything). This president was going to end poverty, despite the fact that Jesus said that this could not be done. This president and every president after him, has been redistributing trillions of dollars, and still there is poverty and even people starving in the United States. Over the decades, the number of people who lack a house has increased.

Many other countries have more poverty than we do, but the United States is a client nation to God, and these other countries are not. It is not that our poverty programs are working; it is simply the blessing from God that gives us reduced poverty numbers in the United States. But, no matter what, there will always be poverty.

If you somehow believe that socialism is the answer to all economic woes, then you are in idolatry (and, just so there is no confusion on this, Jesus was not the first socialist—that is socialist propaganda from an economic system that rejects Jesus).

For those who reject God, you are automatically by definition in soul idolatry. You either worship things, possessions, culture, yourself, your intelligence, science, the position of man on this earth—you have something

that you do obeisance to. Most often, it is self-worship and faith in your own abilities and your own mind. I recall an atheist who still studied religions to find the good that was in them; he did not see that as a contradiction (nor do I). He is arrogant enough to decide that he is able to pick and chose from what Satan has provided and determine which is good, moral and important and what is not.

Whereas I am loathed to make pop culture references, Bob Dylan wrote *you gotta serve somebody*. When you are in idolatry, you are in slavery. Recall, these commandments are the basis and the framework for true freedom (that is, these commandments make it possible for you to live side-by-side other people and still have personal freedom). If you are idolatrous, whether overtly or in your soul, you are under slavery to Satan or to one of his many programs (Satan has a lot of programs).

Now, on the other hand, we are all in this world. We live in a particular country, state and city; we have certain friends; we have a family; we interact with coworkers, people at school, people at church. Being doctrinally oriented does not mean that you have to be an insane fanatic. For the average person, some doctrinal teaching once a day, 30 minutes to an hour and thirty is reasonable. You will spend the rest of the day working, buying food, preparing food, and eating food; sleeping, etc. Also, there will be things taking place within your family which require your attention. There will be games which you might play as a family, projects which you do as a family; or even entertainment which you might enjoy together as a family. All of this is normal and God does not expect you to shirk your family responsibilities. Furthermore, God does not want you to do less than satisfactory job at work so that you might sneak away and study your Bible.

When it comes to the amount of time spent on Bible study, there are exceptions to this. A pastor-teacher, missionary or evangelist may spend more time directly involved in God-stuff; in studying and teaching. You might be a writer and put in a full day of writing (whether that be two hours or four or six). People have to determine, through the **filling of the Spirit** and Bible doctrine, what God expects us to do, and most of the time, it is all about establishing a balance. We cannot ignore the realities of this world that we live in when establishing that balance. You want to get away to that cabin out in the woods; I want to get away to that cabin out in the woods. However, this is not the practical solution for most people.

Exodus 20:4 “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;... (NKJV)

Several pastor-teachers have put together good doctrines with regards to Idolatry. There is no need for me to reinvent the wheel.

Doctrine of Idolatry (by Ken Reed)

1. Definition:
 - 1) Idolatry is the exchange of honoring God for honoring any created thing; that is, ascribing divine glory to natural or supernatural phenomena. Romans 1:21-25
 - 2) Idolatry is a satanic attempt to substitute false gods and concepts for God's Person and plan. His purpose is to blind mankind with respect to God's plan. He does this by setting up a series of counterfeits. 2Corinthians 4:3,4 cp. 11:14
 - 3) There is religious idolatry (the regimented and ritualistic worship of idols e.g., pagan worship) and practical idolatry (applied idolatry in principle). Compare Deuteronomy 8:19 “...and go after other gods and serve them and worship them...”
 - 4) One can apply idolatry in principle apart from assembly. Compare Colossians 3:5
2. Vocabulary:
 - 1) Hebrew:
 - (1) ʾĒymîym (עֵימִיִּם) [pronounced *ay-EEM*]; *terrors, idols*. So called because of the terror that they cause to worshipers (Jeremiah 50:38b). Strong's #368 BDB #34. I am not sure if this word actually has the meaning of *idols* or not.
 - (2) ʾĒlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced *el-o-HEEM*]; *gods, deities; as false gods* (Deuteronomy 29:18; 31:16; etc.) This exact same word is used to mean *God*. Strong's #430

Doctrine of Idolatry (by Ken Reed)

- BDB #43.
- (3) Bôsheth (בֹּשֶׁת) [pronounced *BOH-sheth*]; *an idol that deceives the hope of worshippers and puts them to shame, shameful thing* (Jeremiah 3:24; 11:13; Hosea 9:10) Strong's #1322 BDB #102.
 - (4) Mas^ekkîyth (מַסְכֵּי־יָתֶן) [pronounced *mah-s^ek-KEETH*]; *image, figure, the chamber of images, walls adorned with painted or carved figures of idols* (Ezekiel 8:12). Strong's #4906 BDB #967.
 - (5) Nese^ek (נִסֵּךְ) [pronounced *NEH-sehk*]; *a molten image* (Isa.48:5c; Jeremiah 51:17) Strong's #5262 BDB #651
 - (6) Çemel (סֶמֶל) [pronounced *SEH-mel*]; *a statue or carved idol* (Ezekiel 8:3,5). Strong's #5566 BDB #702.
 - (7) Peçel (פֶּסֶל) [pronounced *PEH-cell*]; *a graven image, a molten idol* (Isaiah 21:9 48:5c; Jeremiah 50:38c 51:17). Strong's #6459 BDB #820.
 - (8) T^erâphîym (תְּרַפִּיִּם) [pronounced *t^eraw-PHEEM*]; *domestic of household gods, small figurines, personal or family gods* (Genesis 31:19,34,35; Ezekiel 21:21; Zechariah 10:2). Strong's #8655 BDB #1076.
 - (9) Tsîyr (צֵיִר) [pronounced *tseer*]; *an idol* (Isaiah 45:16). Strong's #6736.
- 2) Greek:
- (1) Eidōlōthuton (εἰδωλόθυτον) [pronounced *i-do-LOTH-oo-ton*]; which are *things (meat) offered to idols*. By implication, *this is the actual act of idolatry (offering food to an idol)*. Acts 15:29 1Corinthians 8:1,4,7,10
 - (2) Eidōlōlātrēs (εἰδωλόλατρης) [pronounced *eye-doe-lol-AT-race*], which means, *an idolater*. We get our English word *idol* from the first part of this word (the first four Greek words have the same first part). 1Corinthians 5:10,11; 6:9; 10:7
 - (3) Eidōlōlatreía (εἰδωλολατρεία) [pronounced *i-doe-lol-at-Rĭ-ah*], which means, *idolatry*. 1Corinthians 10:14 Galatians 5:20 Colossians 3:5
 - (4) Eidōlon (εἰδωλον) [pronounced *ĭ-doe-lon*], which means, *idol, an image (of a heathen god) (for worship), a likeness (of something otherworldly)*; by implication, *a false god, a heathen god*. Strong's #1497. Acts 7:41 15:20, (29) Romans 2:22 1Thessalonians 1:9
 - (5) Eikōn (εἰκών) [pronounced *ĭ-KOHN*], which means, *image, figure, likeness, statue, profile, or (figuratively) representation, resemblance*. We get our word *icon* from this word. Strong's #1504. Luke 20:24 Romans 1:23 Colossians 1:15 3:10 Hebrews 10:1 Revelation 13:14,15; 14:9,11
3. Things that can comprise idolatry:
- 1) Inanimate objects such as wood, stone, metal, trees, rivers, mountains, etc. Psalm 115:4-8; 135:15-18; Isaiah 44:9-20 Jeremiah 10:3-11 Daniel 5:4
 - 2) Animals. Deuteronomy 4:17,18; Romans 1:23
 - 3) People such as ancestors, great leaders, heroes, etc. Genesis 4:17 (Cain, an unbeliever dedicating the city to Enoch); Deuteronomy 4:16
 - 4) Powers of the natural realm such as earth, air (wind), fire, water, etc. Deuteronomy 12:31
 - 5) Heavenly bodies. Deuteronomy 4:19 Job 31:26-28
 - 6) Abstract soul qualities such as righteousness, justice, love, hate, good, etc. Psalm 14:1c; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 1:24
 - 7) Things such as power, wealth, fame, beauty, age, health, etc. Job 31:24,25 Psalm 49:6 52:7 Proverbs 6:25 11:28 Mark 10:23,24 Hebrews 13:5
 - 8) Worshiping God through icons. Isaiah 40:18-20 46:5-7
 - 9) Worshiping the symbol or image itself. Romans 1:23
 - 10) Other gods. Exodus 20:3-5 Deuteronomy 5:7-9
 - 11) Satan or angels. Matthew 4:8-10 Luke 4:7-8 Revelation 19:10 22:8,9
4. Idolatry results in negative volition to the gospel. Romans 1:18-25
- 1) This produces false concepts introducing soul idolatry. Romans 1:18-21
 - 2) This leads to overt idolatry. Romans 1:22-23

Doctrine of Idolatry (by Ken Reed)

5. The development of idolatry in postdiluvian civilization:
 - 1) What forms of idolatry that pre-existed the Noahic flood was wiped out leaving only believers in Noah and his family.
 - 2) The first recorded postdiluvian example of idolatry is found in Genesis 11:1-9
 - 3) The time: immediately after the flood.
 - 4) The place: historical Babylon. Genesis 10:8-10; 11:9
 - 5) The human instigators: Cush, Nimrod and Samerimus and the Samaritans (Shinar). Genesis 10:8-12; Genesis 11:1-9
 - 6) The images of idolatry: the city and the tower. Genesis 11:4
 - 7) The city = political idolatry; the tower = religious idolatry.
 - 8) The concept: One world order and a one-world religion. Many people today believe that a world government would be the key to a better world.
 - 9) The one world political order is further depicted in Jeremiah 51:7 and Revelation 18 under the code name Babylon.
 - 10) The one world religion is further depicted in Revelation 17 esp. vv. 1, 4, 5 under the code name Babylon.
 - 11) The distinctive characteristics of the cult: mother son. She was known as the goddess of love (Ashtarti, Isis, Diana, Venus, Mary, the queen of heaven). Nimrod (Baal, Brahma, Osirus, Jupiter, Bacchus). Salvation by works, many holidays, prayers for the dead and purgatory, false priesthoods; this organization sponsored the phallic cult.
6. Both the political and religious systems of idolatry are carried over into the Church Age. Revelation 17-18 cp. 2 Thessalonians 2:7
 - 1) Christian titles and terminology were adopted.
 - 2) Responsible for the death of millions. Revelation 17:6; 18:24
 - 3) Its concept and philosophy under religiosity dominates the world. Revelation 17:1-2, 18

Doctrine of Idolatry Lake Erie Bible Church P-T Ken Reed May 2003; Revised Feb., 2015

From <http://lakeeriebiblechurch.org/doctrine/pdf/IDOLATRY.pdf> accessed June 20, 2019. Some very minor changes by me.

Also see Grace Notes on Idolatry: <https://www2.gracenotes.info/topics/idolatry.html>

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

No Other Gods (a graphic); from [YouTube](#); accessed May 7, 2024.

The first verse of the prohibition of idolatry is:

Exodus 20:4 “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;... (NKJV)

V. 5 will continue this commandment.



Exodus 20:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by; on account of; about, concerning</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: You will not bow down to these images [lit., to them]...

We begin v. 5 with the negative lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]. Strong's #3808 BDB #518. Next is the 2nd person singular, Hithpael imperfect of shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW] and it comes from a root word meaning *to sink, to depress*. It means *bow down, worship, prostrate oneself*. The Hithpael stem is the intensive reflexive, meaning *you will not bow yourself down or you will not prostrate yourself*. Strong's #7812 BDB #1005. This phrase is completed with the lâmed preposition, which means *to* and it is affixed to the 3rd person, masculine plural suffix (*them*). No Strong's # BDB #510.

The people were not to make any images based upon the unseen world, nor are they to worship these images in any way. This certainly applies to statues of Mary, statues of Jesus, or any saint that a person might pray to. We do not pray to saints. Some people pray to Saint Jude, as the patron saint of lost causes and of prayers. If you want to make your prayer a lost cause, then pray to Saint Jude. However, people who have died have not been made into conduits of prayer. We pray directly to God the Father. If you have direct access to God the Father through Jesus His Son, why on earth would you think that going through some human-anointed saint would be better than that?

When we divided up a passages into small phrases, we often lose the flow of the overall passage. However, this verse is going to require a lot of exegesis and explanation because many important issues are raised here. Therefore, even though the second commandment is comprised of vv. 4–6, I will have to break that up into many separate parts in order to cover it properly. Then we will gather up these individual pieces and look at them as a whole.

Exodus 20:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wê (or vê) (וְ or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518

Exodus 20:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘abad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to be led or enticed to serve [work, labor], to be made [persuaded, incited] to serve</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hophal perfect with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5647 BDB #712

Translation: ...and you will not [be caused] to serve them;...

We do not serve these images or these manufactured gods. They should not be made in the first place; and if there are some idols which exist, they should have exactly no impact on our lives at all.

This is followed by the waw conjunction (which we usually translate as *and*, but it can be translated in a number of different ways). Then, the negative and the Hophal (causative passive) imperfect of ‘abad (עָבַד) [pronounced *gaw^b-VAHD*] follow. The verb means *to work, to serve, to enslave, to labor*. Strong's #5647 BDB #712.

In the first verb (v. 5a), you are choosing to worship these things and the second verb (v. 5b) means that these idols have got their hooks into you and now you are trapped into serving them. This has a wide application to involvement in an apostate church to accumulation of material things. I have known several people who were involved with apostate churches; however, they got in early, received a lot of approbation, and were so high up in the organization that they ended up being enslaved to that organization (I hesitate to use the word *church* in many cases).

Idolatry can refer to material things. Even today, there are specific objects made by man which are highly venerated by man. The examples of a carving of Jesus on the cross; or a statue of Mary, or a statue of a saint have been given.

There are other sorts of idols in modern life. When your efforts are directed toward the acquisition of material things, toward making others think highly of you, toward making a lot of money, toward making others jealous, toward sleeping with as many women as you can; toward gaining as much power as possible in your little realm—you can pursue any of these things and rank them high in your value system. When you expend your efforts pursuing such things; then you become enslaved to them. If you are after any of these things, then you are being caused to work for them.

Some women when they ask a man what their goals and hopes and dreams are, although this sounds very noble and meaningful, but it often means *what salary range do you see yourself in ten years and what kind of material things do you intend to possess?* Allow me to append this remark with, some women consider their future as a family, and would prefer that to take place in a safe home in a safe neighborhood. So, two women could make the same inquiry, one with noble motives and one without.

Maybe you have known someone who has stretched their earnings to a point of social status which has turned around and enslaved that person to a job which they despise, but are enslaved to in order to maintain their level of apparent material wealth. Who hasn't known a male Lothario who began by find women attractive, but with each new conquest finds himself more and more enslaved to the pursuit of the female (and so often, such a man also develops a deep-seated hatred of women). I knew one male that, after a conquest, he confided to me that he could not wait for them to leave his bedroom and house altogether once the sex was over. He wanted to sleep; he did not want to listen to them jabber endlessly.

These examples mirror what we have studied so far in v. 5. The progression is, a person chooses to become an idolater and this momentum takes him to a point where he is then enslaved to that idol.

Exodus 20:5a-b ...you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. (NKJV)

The NKJV combines v. 4 into the first portion of v. 5:

Exodus 20:4–5b "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; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. (NKJV)

Many other translations start a new verse with v. 5 and carry that into v. 6. Once we complete v. 6, we will look back on some examples of different ways to divide up these verses.

Exodus 20:5c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
Mits ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced <i>mits-RAH-yim</i>]	<i>double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʾĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
ʾĒl (אֵל) [pronounced <i>ALE</i>]	<i>God, god, mighty one, strong, hero; transliterated El</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #410 BDB #42
qannâ' (קַנָּא) [pronounced <i>kahn-NAW</i>]	<i>jealous</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #7067 BDB #888

Translation: ...for I, Y^ehowah your Elohim, [am] a jealous Ēl [= God],...

Here, in v. 5c, God uses an **anthropopathism**. God is not actually jealous; God does not have emotions as we understand emotions. The term *jealousy* is used here to convey the concept that God does not allow for any competition when it comes to worship. We are not to worship other gods; and we are not to worship people.

Jealousy is a sin and God does not sin. This is an anthropopathism so that we have a clearer understanding of God's acts based upon our understanding of human motivation (this is motivation which God does not actually have, but motivation which we can relate to). Just as a husband expects his wife to place no man before him and to sleep with no other man, God expects the same of us on a spiritual level. Spiritual faithfulness involves worshipping the one and true God and living in the Word.

This is not the same as respecting other people in our past (or in our nation's past); but they are not to take the place of God in any way. You can certainly admire George Washington or John Adams without the fear of entering into idolatry.

This does not, in some way, forbid a wife from serving her husband.

What follows is quite interesting.

Exodus 20:5d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced paw-KAHD]	<i>going to a person, visiting, having personal contact with, sorting out, visiting a person, committing; charging to the care of; falling upon, attacking, numbering, taking a census</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
‘âvôwn (עוֹוֹן) [pronounced ġaw-VOHN]	<i>iniquity, crime, offense, transgression, depraved action, guilt, punishment from wrongdoing</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5771 BDB #730
‘âbôwth (אֲבוֹתָם) [pronounced aw ^b -VOOTH]	<i>fathers, ancestors, both as the heads of households, clans or tribes; founders, civil leaders, military leaders</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1 BDB #3
‘al (עַל) [pronounced ġahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Translation: ...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their [lit., the] sons;...

Then we have the Qal active participle of pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced paw-KAHD] and it means *to attend to, to visit, to muster, to appoint*. The British concept of this is, *to sort out*. In this passage and several others, punishment is implied. Strong's #6485 BDB #823.

Vv. 5c–6 give the rationale behind the second commandment. This passage also raises an issue which some theologians have trouble with but which is relatively simple in its concept.

If a generation of Israelites fall into idolatry, God will deal with this iniquity in them and in their sons.

Exodus 20:5e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘al (עַל) [pronounced ġahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
shillêsh (שְׁלֹשָׁה) [pronounced shill-LAYSH]	<i>pertaining to the third, a third [generation]</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #8029 BDB #1026

Exodus 20:5e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘al (לְעַ) [pronounced <i>gah</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside; because of, on account of</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
ribbê‘ym (רִבְעִים) [pronounced <i>rihb-bay-GEEM</i>]	<i>pertaining to the fourth (in a series), a fourth [generation]</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #7256 BDB #918
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by; on account of; about, concerning</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
sânê’ (אֹנְשֵׁי) [pronounced <i>saw-NAY</i>]	<i>hating ones, the ones hating, the haters, enemies</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 1 st person singular suffix; pausal form	Strong's #8130 BDB #971

Translation: ...and upon the third and fourth generations [if necessary] of those who hate Me.

God will continue to deal with the iniquity of those in the 3rd and 4th generations from an idolatrous generation—if they continue with the sins of their parents and grandparents.

Notice that God specifies, *those who hate Me*. God does not cause bad things to happen just because they are in the line of an idolater. The idolater hates God, because he refuses to obey God's commandments; and very often, his son and grandsons will feel the same way.

Exodus 20:5d-e ...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,... (NKJV)

Here is where we have the problem. Just because a father sins in his idolatry, should God discipline his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren? How can God be just and fair and do such a thing? Therefore, we should take this in points:

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1. God holds us all accountable for the choices that we make from our own volition.
2. Those who make good choices in their lives often receive blessing because (1) God enjoys blessing believers who have the capacity for it; and (2) God vindicates His Word wherever it is found; even in the soul of the believer.
3. In the commandment we are studying, good choices would be avoiding idolatry in all its forms.
4. Combine good choices with spiritual growth (which occurs as we take in the Word), and we reap what God sows.
5. Those who make poor choices in their lives reap what they sow.
6. So how do we reconcile these points with Exodus 20:5d-e? Let me offer an illustration. Children are impressionable and when we have children, we are very responsible for much of their behavior, their ideas, their goals, etc. A person who brings their child up in the respect and admonition of the Lord will

God's Judgment Upon Subsequent Generations

- have a child who, when he is old, will not depart from God's Word.
7. I have heard of parents say, in their human arrogance, that they will allow their child to attend church if they want to and allow their children to make whatever spiritual decisions that they feel are right for them. As I said: children are very impressionable and when they observe their parents not worshiping God; not having any thought toward God—these actions or non-actions affect the thinking and behavior of a child.
 8. This certainly can extend beyond one's relationship with God. When children observe their mother having sleep-over boyfriends, when they observe the cursing of God at the dinner table, when they notice that their parents do not thank God for the food He provided for them, when they realize that there is a place called church where people go to worship God but their parents do not—how do you think they will choose to live their own lives? The parental influence is very great and they will grow up to have little or no thought about Who and What God really is.
 9. Parental influence is not an absolute, but since parents have such a tremendous influence over their children, it makes sense that their children will emulate their parents when it comes to various behaviors and actions, which can include not having any faith in God. There are some exceptions and those who pursue God, even though in their young years they have no encouragement to do so; but, for the most part, most children follow their parent's lead. When they have children, they might even be more passive about presenting God's Word. And their children will follow in kind. What this verse indicates is that when a family begins to neglect service to the Lord Who bought them; when in particular, they neglect Bible doctrine, they pass on this attitude for as long as the third and forth generations. God attends to the judgement onto the third and forth generation because these people pick up where their negative volition parents lead off.
 10. The key to this verse is that very last portion where the verse adds, *of those who hate me*. The key to those that God will attend to with punishment are those who, even after three or four generations, still hate Him as did their grandparents and great grandparents.
 11. So, there is a judgment on later generations, but this is often the result of the teaching of the first generation.
 12. For more detail, see the **Doctrine of the Four-Generation Curse**.

The **Doctrine of the Four-Generation Curse** comes next.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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We are studying the commandment which disallows idolatry. V. 4 tells the people not to make any idols and v. 5 says:

Exodus 20:5 You will not bow down to these images [lit., *to them*] and you will not [be caused] to serve them; for I, Y^howah your Elohim, [am] a jealous Êl [= *God*], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their [lit., *the*] sons; and upon the third and fourth generations [if necessary] of those who hate Me. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The Israelites are told not to make such idols (v. 4) and not to bow down and worship them (v. 5).

But then God talks about visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children down to the 3rd and 4th generations. What is that all about?

Buddy Dano was an assistant pastor at Berachah Church under R. B. Thieme, Jr. Much of the credit for this doctrine should probably go to R. B. Thieme, Jr. Dano's approach shows him to be very influenced by R. B. Thieme, Jr

I have replaced the KJV quotations Dano's doctrine with the more up-to-date World English Bible (WEB). I capitalized the pronominal references to God.

The Four Generation Curse (by Buddy Dano)

1. This doctrine is directly stated in the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20:4-6 “You shall not make for yourselves an idol, nor any image of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and on the fourth generation of those who hate Me, and showing loving kindness to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.” (WEB) This is repeated in Deuteronomy 5, along with the other commandments. Deuteronomy 5:8-10 “You shall not make a carved image for yourself—any likeness of what is in heaven above, or what is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and on the third and on the fourth generation of those who hate Me and showing loving kindness to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.”
2. The four generation curse occurred as a part of the rejection of God’s grace. Exodus 34:6–7 Yahweh passed by before him [Moses], and proclaimed, “Yahweh! Yahweh, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger, and abundant in loving kindness and truth, keeping loving kindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and disobedience and sin; and who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the children’s children, on the third and on the fourth generation.”
3. Numbers 14:18 ‘Yahweh is slow to anger, and abundant in loving kindness, forgiving iniquity and disobedience; and He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and on the fourth generation.’ You will never have the four generation curse where people respond to the grace of God.
4. The mechanics of the four generation curse are given in Proverbs 30:11-17 There is a generation that curses their father, and doesn’t bless their mother. There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes, yet are not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, oh how lofty are their eyes! Their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation whose teeth are like swords, and their jaws like knives, to devour the poor from the earth, and the needy from among men. “The leech has two daughters: ‘Give, give.’ “There are three things that are never satisfied; four that don’t say, ‘Enough!’: Sheol, the barren womb, the earth that is not satisfied with water, and the fire that doesn’t say, ‘Enough!’ “The eye that mocks at his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, the young eagles shall eat it.” The problem is the absolute arrogance of the subsequent generations.
5. The four generation curse cannot be understood apart from the law of culpability. Deuteronomy 24:16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers. Every man shall be put to death for his own sin. Jeremiah 31:29–30 “In those days they will say no more, “‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.’ But everyone will die for his own iniquity. Every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge. This law simply states that children are not responsible for their parents’ sins without culpability of their own. Therefore the four generation curse must take into account this law of culpability.
6. The principle of God’s fairness to children is given in Deuteronomy 21:15-17 If a man has two wives, the one beloved and the other hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated, and if the firstborn son is hers who was hated, then it shall be, in the day that he

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causes his sons to inherit that which he has, that he may not give the son of the beloved the rights of the firstborn before the son of the hated, who is the firstborn; but he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the hated, by giving him a double portion of all that he has; for he is the beginning of his strength. The right of the firstborn is his. It is incompatible with God's character for Him to be unfair. God is sovereign, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, immutability and veracity. It is impossible for a righteous and just God to be anything other than His essence, immutability and veracity adds up to fairness.

7. A principle existed in the Old Testament times which is not in effect during the present Church Age. Namely, maximum discipline for a negative or a rebellious son. There were some teenagers in the Old Testament who would never accept authority and were permanently in a state of rebellion. They were put on trial, and if they were convicted, they were executed, capital punishment was used. The passage referenced here Deuteronomy 21:18–21.
 - 1) Such young people were a part of a revolution, and no revolution is condoned by God.
 - 2) The so-called revolutionary war we fought to establish America as a free, independent nation was a war for independence. It was not based on revolutionary principles. It was not the Revolutionary War. It was a war for independence; it was a war for freedom.
8. The Word of God breaks the four generation curse. Deuteronomy 6:4-13 **Hear, Israel: Yahweh is our God. Yahweh is one. You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. These words, which I command you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates. It shall be, when Yahweh your God brings you into the land which he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you, great and goodly cities which you didn't build, and houses full of all good things which you didn't fill, and cisterns dug out which you didn't dig, vineyards and olive trees which you didn't plant, and you shall eat and be full; then beware lest you forget Yahweh, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall fear Yahweh your God; and you shall serve him, and shall swear by his name.**
 - 1) Verse 4, **"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God (ELOHIM) is one Lord (JEHOVAH)."** ELOHIM is plural, indicating that the Jews believed in the Trinity.¹ The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all are co-equal and coeternal, possessing the same essence. When all Three are mentioned together the word "ELOHIM," or God, is used. When one Person specifically is mentioned, the word "JEHOVAH," Lord, is used."
 - 2) **"The Lord our God is one Lord"** refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, the God of Israel. There is only one God, One Lord in the sense of the King or the Ruler of Israel. Verse 5: **"You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might."** The heart refers to the mentality of the soul, which is the authority of the soul. Literally, **"with all your soul."** You cannot love God with your soul until the commander of the soul loves, because it is the mind that contains the Word of God and all that is necessary for the capacity to love.
 - 3) **"And with all your might."** Literally, **"with all your excess."** This is the Word of God producing to the maximum capacity in the life. **"And these words I command you this day, shall be"**... where? In your emotions? NO! The emotions do not contain the Word. **"These words shall be in your mind,"** Deuteronomy 6:6.
 - 4) Deuteronomy 6:7 **...and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of**

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them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. The intake of the Word of God should be part of your daily routine at home.

- 5) Deuteronomy 6:8 You shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. Carried around the head, they just pulled it out, unrolled it, and read it. It was the original Jewish training aid.
 - 6) Deuteronomy 6:9 You shall write them [commands, promises, passages] on the door posts of your house and on your gates. A place where everyone could meet, see, and talk about it. And think about it. This is one of several passages that shows how the Word of God breaks the four generation curse.
 - 7) Deuteronomy 7:9–10 Know therefore that Yahweh your God himself is God, the faithful God, who keeps covenant and loving kindness to a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments, and repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack to him who hates Him. He will repay him to his face.
 - 8) Psalm 100:5 For Yahweh is good. His loving kindness [or, *grace*] endures forever, His faithfulness to all generations.
 - 9) Jeremiah 31:15–16 Yahweh says: “A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.” Yahweh says: “Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,” says Yahweh. “They will come again from the land of the enemy.
9. In the Millennium maximum knowledge of the Word breaks the four generation curse, Jeremiah 31:29-34. “In those days they will say no more, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.’ But everyone will die for his own iniquity. Every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge. “Behold, the days come,” says Yahweh, “that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant of Mine they broke, although I was a husband to them,” says Yahweh. “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” says Yahweh: “I will put My law in their inward parts, and I will write it in their heart. I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will no longer each teach his neighbor, and every man teach his brother, saying, ‘Know Yahweh;’ for they will all know Me, from their least to their greatest,” says Yahweh, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” In this passage Jeremiah looks ahead to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, at which time the four generation curse will be broken under the New Covenant to Israel. THE PERSONAL REIGN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST ON EARTH WILL GIVE THE WORLD THE GREATEST FREEDOM IT HAS EVER KNOWN.
10. In the time of Jeremiah the four generation curse on idolatry reached its peak, and the fifth cycle of discipline was administered by God. Jeremiah 16:10-13 It will happen, when you tell this people all these words, and they ask you, ‘Why has Yahweh pronounced all this great evil against us?’ or ‘What is our iniquity?’ or ‘What is our sin that we have committed against Yahweh our God?’ then you shall tell them, ‘Because your fathers have forsaken Me,’ says Yahweh, ‘and have walked after other gods, have served them, have worshiped them, have forsaken Me, and have not kept My law. You have done evil more than your fathers, for behold, you each walk after the stubbornness of his evil heart, so that you don’t listen to Me. Therefore I will cast you out of this land into the land that you have not known, neither you nor your fathers. There you

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will serve other gods day and night, for I will show you no favor.'

11. Exodus 20:6 continues with the second commandment. ... and showing loving kindness to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.
 - 1) *Showing loving kindness* is the manufacture of grace. We see the grace of God toward those who break away. "...and showing loving kindness to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments." The word "showing" does not mean to show. But what it does say is manufacture something out of something else. In this passage it means to manufacture grace out of the character of God. The Hebrew word here is actually not "mercy," but grace. Literally, this reads: "Manufacturing grace unto thousands of them that love Me." The word "love" is the basic word for love, but here it refers to the constant presence and reception of the Word of God into the mind. The word "keep" is literally translated "to guard," to guard something that is important that belongs to you.
 - 2) Therefore this portion of Scripture should be read this way. "Manufacturing grace unto thousands of them that keep on loving Me, and keep on preserving and guarding My commandments." How do we guard God's commandments? By a system of morality? NO! You guard them through the continuous intake of the Word of God as you establish your mind as the authority of your soul for life.
12. How to head off the third and fourth generation curse before it starts: learn doctrine daily and teach it to your children daily.
 - 1) Proverbs 1:7 *The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge, but the foolish despise wisdom and instruction.*
 - 2) Proverbs 1:8 *Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching,*

¹ It is Buddy Dano's opinion that the Jews believed in the Trinity. Personally, I do not believe that the Jews understood or believed in the Trinity. The concept of progressive revelation allows for more doctrinal information to be released by God (in the form of divinely inspired Scripture) which allows us to understand more than we did before. When believers began to understand that God was a Trinity, three Persons with the same essence, it became clear, with research, that this did not, in any way, contradict anything in the Old Testament (including Deuteronomy 6:4). Let me add to this information that the canon of Scripture is now closed. Therefore, no new revelation is being added. ANYONE in the Church Age, claiming to have new information from God not found in the Bible, is a lying prophet.

From:

<https://wisdomknowledge.wordpress.com/2010/04/09/the-second-commandment-%E2%80%93-the-four-generation-curse/> accessed June 27, 2019. I edited Dano's doctrine, replacing the KJV with the World English Bible. I edited some additional text as well.

I noticed that Buddy uses much of Bob's teaching and writing style and vocabulary. I don't know what went on that was personal between them (Buddy was an assistant pastor at Berachah), but his doctrinal viewpoint seemed to be straight.

Links to the Four Generation Curse

See also:

The Four Generation Curse ([Bible News1](#)) This has a great many illustrations from the Bible.

Doctrine of the Fourth Generation Curse ([L. G. Merritt](#))

The Four Generation Curse ([Ron Adema](#))

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Despite the power, literary dynamic and longevity of the King James Version, it sounds like a foreign language to most young people. For that reason, I rarely use it.

A brief review of Exodus 20:4–5:

So far, this is what we have studied (God is speaking aloud directly to the sons of Israel):

Exodus 20:4–5b "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; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. (NKJV)

Vv. 4–5b is the actual second commandment. However, there is additional information specifically for the Jewish people (but it has wide application to gentile nations; particularly, gentile client nations during the Church Age).

Exodus 20:5c-e 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,... (NKJV)

We have just studied the 3rd and 4th generation curse and how to keep it from happening. The gist of it is this: even if the 1st and 2nd generations go off track, if the 3rd and 4th turn back to God (that is, begin growing in grace and knowledge), then they can turn their country around. This is what is key to the United States today in the year 2024. Any person can see that client nation USA is in a very dangerous position. Our national debt is insanely out of control; we have at least 20 million people living in the United States right now who have no allegiance to this country; we have a government out of control, drunk on power, using its power to go after the previous President; our military is fragmented and scattered throughout the world. Fundamentally, however, our problem is spiritual. If we as a nation turn back to God, all of our other problems will take care of themselves. If we don't, then these problems and many others could lead us into national chaos.

Exodus 20:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>doing, making, manufacturing, constructing, fashioning, forming, preparing; producing</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced <i>KHEH-sed</i>]	<i>grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness; steadfast love</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾălâpîhîym (אַלְפִיִּים) [pronounced <i>uh-law-FEEM</i>]	<i>thousands, families, [military] units</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #505 (and #504) BDB #48

Translation: However [lit., and], [I will] manufacture grace to thousands,...

Regardless of who these people are, if they show positive volition toward the God is Israel, then God will manufacture grace to them.

This is only the second time in the book of Exodus that grace is mentioned. That is because Exodus is a book about the Law; not a book about grace.

The first verb is 'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which generally means *to do, to make* in the widest sense. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. This word has a variety of applications, from being involved in creation (Genesis 1:7 3:1), in doing God's commandments and statutes (Deuteronomy 16:12 30:8), and in performing signs and miracles (Joshua 24:17). We could also translate this, *performing acts of graciousness* or *manufacturing grace* in this verse.

Cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced *KHEH-sed*] is a word which is alternately translated *mercy* and *lovingkindness* by the KJV. It means *grace, gracious*, although the Hebrews did not understand the full impact of this word (remember that divine revelation is also *progressive revelation*; and they had not progressed to the complete vision of God). In the Old Testament we might view grace by the definition *unmerited favor*, because the Hebrews did not fully comprehend the reason behind or justification for God's graciousness and mercy and kindness toward them.

In fact, many Israelites became exceedingly **legalistic**, not only in their attempt to follow the Law (which is a good thing). However, those with power tried to improve upon the Law and embellish it, in order to receive more blessing from God (but they were not looking for grace, really; they wanted to be rewarded for their zealotry). These legalists had no concept of God's grace. Those who did, like Moses, were grace-oriented men. They realized that their power and strength both lie with God; that God poured out lovingkindness to them far beyond what they could have ever earned or deserved.

Since the cross, we have a better understanding of grace and the reason behind it. R. B. Thieme jr.'s definition of grace is, *all that God is free to do for us on the basis of the cross*. God can only be gracious to us if it does not compromise His attributes of righteousness or justice. These acts of mercy and kindness are unmerited; all the merit is Christ's and what He did on our behalf on the cross. God is only able to be gracious to us because His Son paid for our sins.

Cheçed means grace. I do not know what translation that Ballinger used in this doctrine below. If I reference the text of a verse below, I will provide the source. The best way to grow spiritually while studying this doctrine, is to open your Bible and read the verses which are cited.

Doctrine of Grace (by Jack M. Ballinger)

- I. Introduction.
 - A. Grace is all that God has done to bring fallen and sinful man into a just, perfect, and eternal relationship with Himself, without compromising His divine attributes. God's policy of grace is totally separate from human merit and works.
 - B. Grace is the policy of God and the title of God's plan. 2Timothy 1:9b [God called us] **according to His own purpose and grace, having been given us in Christ Jesus before time eternal.** (BLB)
 - C. Grace completely excludes human merit and works as the basis of access to divine blessing, Romans 11:6 **But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace;... Romans 4:4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited according to grace but as what is due.**
 - D. Grace benefits are bestowed on the basis of faith, Romans 5:1–2 **Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.**
 1. Faith is a nonmeritorious system of perception.
 2. The merit (or lack thereof) is never in the faith but in the object of one's faith.
 - E. Faith must always be directed toward the teachings of Scripture to secure the grace benefit. Romans 10:17 **So faith comes from hearing, and hearing from the word of Christ.**
 - F. All three adjustments to God's justice are attained according to grace by faith apart from works.
 1. Salvation adjustment to the justice of God. Galatians 2:16 Ephesians 2:8,9.
 2. **Rebound** adjustment to the justice of God. Rebound restores us to temporal fellowship with

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- God. 1John 1:9.
3. Maturity adjustment to the justice of God. James 1:21,22 2Peter 3:18. See the doctrine of GAP (grace apparatus for perception).
- G. Bible Doctrine is called **the word of His grace** (Acts 20:32).
- H. Grace can be rejected, which brings divine judgment. Hebrews 10:29 gives the example where one **has insulted the Spirit of grace**.
- I. However, grace always precedes divine judgment. That is, God gives individuals, geographical regions and nations grace before He brings His divine judgment against that individual, geographical area or nation.
- J. Certain phrases show the primacy of grace.
1. **the grace of God** (Acts 11:23; 13:43; 2Corinthians1:12).
 2. **the word of His grace** (Acts 20:32).
 3. **the true grace of God** (1Peter 4:12).
 4. **riches of His grace** (Ephesians 1:7; 2:7).
 5. **grace to you and peace** (2Corinthians1:3).
- K. *Mercy* is a synonym for *grace* (2Corinthians1:3, where *mercy* is grace in action).
- L. Greek vocabulary.
1. Verb, *charizomai* (χαρίζομαι) [pronounced *khar-ID-zohm-ahee*], used 23X. It means, *grant, give, bestow on, deal generously or graciously with, forgive*. Strong's #5483.
 2. Noun, *charis* (χάρις) [pronounced *KHAHR-ic*], used 155X. It means, *grace, favor, gift, blessing*. Strong's #5485.
 3. Verb, *charitoô* (χαριτόω) [pronounced *khar-ee-OW-oh*], used 2X. It means, *to bestow on freely*. Strong's #5487. Luke 1:28 Ephesians 1:6
 4. Noun, *charisma* (χάρισμα) [pronounced *KHAHR-ees-mah*], which is used 17X. It means, *gift*; used of salvation and spiritual gifts. Strong's #5486. In the Church Age, believers are given a spiritual gift or gifts at the moment of salvation.
- M. The Hebrew equivalent is *chên* (חֵן) [pronounced *khayn*], a noun. It means, *grace, favor, charm*, etc. (Genesis 6:8; Exodus 33:12 in an expression "found grace").
- N. Grace exists in five general categories: saving, living, maturity, dying, and surpassing grace. Those categories will make up the next five major points.
- II. Saving grace is all the Godhead has done to provide eternal salvation (Ephesians 2:5,8,9).
- A. We were called by grace (Galatians 1:15).
 - B. We were justified by grace (Titus 3:7).
 - C. All mankind are candidates for this grace (Titus 2:11 Hebrews 2:9).
 - D. This grace is realized only by faith (Romans 4:16).
 - E. This grace is not received by works (Romans 3:20,24 5:15,16 2Timothy 1:9 Titus 3:7; cf. vs.5).
 - F. The salvation adjustment to the justice of God is our access into all other spheres of grace (Romans 5:2).
 - G. This grace is called positional grace to the Royal Family (Ephesians 1:6).
- III. Living grace (also called logistical grace) includes the believers physical and spiritual provision to make the maturity adjustment to the justice of God.
- A. The physical provision includes food, shelter, clothing, etc. (Matthew 6:25–33; cf. 6:11 Philippians 4:19).
 - B. Living grace includes deliverance and protection so that we can finish our course (2Timothy 3:11 4:7,8,17,18). We will be persecuted, but our enemies cannot keep us from the adjustments to the justice of God.
 1. The first adjustment to the justice of God after salvation is rebound. That is, we get out of fellowship through sinning; and we get back into fellowship by naming our sins to God. 1John 1:9. This is temporal adjustment to the justice of God.
 2. By taking in the Word of God (hearing the Word of God and then believing it), we move toward maturity adjustment to the justice of God.
 - C. Living grace will be tested as with the **Exodus generation**. They flunked the test (Exodus 17:2,7;

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- Numbers 14:22; Psalm 78:18,41,56; 95:9; Hebrews 3:9; Abraham in Canaan, Genesis 12:10).
- D. Living grace is provided for all men (sometimes called common grace; Matthew 5:45 Acts 14:17).
 - E. Living grace also covers all of the special spiritual assets associated with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to the Church (Acts 2:38 10:45 Ephesians 4:7).
 - F. The completed canon, the local assembly, and the pastor–teacher are the grace heritage of the royal priesthood (1Corinthians 2:6–16 Ephesians 4:11).
 - 1. God has provided the entire canon of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, as our life textbook.
 - 2. The local assembly is the local church. This is the preferred classroom for spiritual growth.
 - 3. The pastor-teacher, the head of the local church, should have the training and background to teach the Word of God.
 - 4. Just as the believer needs to eat physical food every day, he also needs spiritual food every day.
 - G. We are to be content with our allotment (1Timothy 6:8).
- IV. Surpassing grace blessings in Phase 2 are the blessings, privileges, tests, and Phase 3 blessings associated with seizing and holding spiritual maturity.
- A. Phase 1 is salvation; phase 2 is the spiritual life; and phase 3 is life after death.
 - B. Surpassing grace blessings in Phase 2 results from maximum application of Bible Doctrine over the years (Luke 8:15; cf. vs. 14).
 - C. Temporal (overt) prosperity will vary greatly from believer to believer (as illustrated from the extremes in Hebrews 11).
 - D. Surpassing grace blessings in Phase 2 has been distorted into a "riches equals godliness" formula (1Timothy 6:5; cf. 9,10). All mature believers will not have great wealth, perfect health, sexual prosperity, etc.
 - E. Passages like Mark 10:28-30 and 1Timothy 4:8 clearly indicate the promise of temporal blessing for faithfulness.
 - F. The temporal blessings (beyond the living grace needs) will be tested. Example: Abraham in Genesis 22.
- V. Dying grace includes all of the blessings associated with the believer's promotion into heaven (Phase 3). (Means of death is not an issue.)
- A. It includes the spiritual stimulation associated with having a clear conscience regarding most pressing responsibility (2Timothy 1:3).
 - B. It includes the fragrance of memories on the glory road (2Timothy 1:3-5).
 - C. It includes the proper doctrinal perspective concerning Phase 3 (Philemon 3)
 - D. It includes the grace apparatus for perception (GAP) and divine good to the end (Paul executing his apostolic duties).
 - E. The alternative is the **sin unto death** (Proverbs 8:36; cf. 1John 5:16), which can be cancelled with reversion recovery (incestuous Corinthian).
- VI. Surpassing grace blessings in Phase 3 (SG3) refers to the special blessings and rewards reserved for us in Ph3 (1Peter 1:4).
- A. The terminology is taken from Ephesians 1:19.
 - B. It is available to all believers, but not all believers will receive it (1Corinthians 3:14,15 9:24–27 Luke 8:14 John 15:5,6 2Timothy 2:5 Hebrews 6:7,8 Revelation 3:11).
 - C. That which is done apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit (1Corinthians 13 "love") is rejected as human good (1Corinthians 3:12-15).
 - D. Bible Doctrine prepares us for every good work (2Timothy 2:21).
 - E. There is a special category of surpassing grace blessings 3 for those who stick with most pressing responsibility to the end (Hebrews 10:32–39 cf. 3:6,14 6:11 Revelation 2:26).
 - F. As the conflict intensifies, follow 1Peter 1:13.
- VII. The Church Age is called the dispensation of the grace of God because of our positional truth (grace; Ephesians 3:1-9).
- A. Union with Christ guarantees every grace blessing for Phases 1, 2, and 3 under the three

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- adjustments (Salvation adjustment to the justice of God, Rebound adjustment to the justice of God, Maturity adjustment to the justice of God; 1Corinthians1:4).
- B. Each Church Age saint has access to this grace (Ephesians 4:7).
 - C. Paul (the worst sinner, and the twelfth apostle) received this grace in abundance (1Timothy 1:12–16 1Corinthians 3:10 Galatians 2:9).
- VIII. Old Testament saints were under Phase 1, 2, and 3 grace as illustrated by Abraham in Romans4 (cf. Hebrews 11).
- IX. Right woman is a grace provision (Proverbs 18:22). The Hebrew word *chên* (חֵן) [pronounced *khayn*], is translated "favor" in the New American Standard, but should be translated grace (cf. 31:30, where *chên* (חֵן) [pronounced *khayn*] is incorrectly translated "charm").
- X. Grace orientation:
- A. Is commanded (2Peter 3:18).
 - B. Is associated with correct prayer (Hebrews 4:16, "the throne of grace").
 - C. Should characterize the sacrifice of praise (Colossians 3:16).
 - D. Should characterize the sacrifice of giving (1Corinthians16:3 2Corinthians 8:1-9,19; 9:8).
 - E. Should characterize the sacrifice of thanksgiving (Hebrews 12:28; 13:15).
 - F. Should characterize all our speech (Colossians 4:6).
 - G. Paul demonstrates his grace orientation as the super apostle (1Corinthians 15:10).
- XI. "Greater grace" is provided for the believer who puts the application of Bible Doctrine over personal interests, James 4:6 **But He gives a greater grace** (μείζονα χάριν, which is meizona charin.)
- A. The believer who refuses to compromise his norms and standards with the cosmos comes under severe attack and pressure to conform (James 4:4).
 - B. As he/she sticks with the divine viewpoint, refusing to quench and grieve God the Holy Spirit, relying on God for vindication, he/she is up for "greater grace" (the only time the word grace occurs in James).
 - C. Such a believer, who refuses to conform to societies' sinful trend of Adam standards and who bears up under testing, is called "humble".
 - D. To that believer, God gives grace (Proverbs3:34).
 - E. The arrogant man rejects and rationalizes divine viewpoint, hoping to get along, but misses "greater grace".
 - F. When you opt for the indwelling sinful trend of Adam (flesh) over the indwelling Holy Spirit, you are arrogant and miss "greater grace".
 - G. If you have been playing the arrogant world-ling by refusing to apply, implement James 4:7-9.
 - H. And the promise of "greater grace" will be yours (vs.10; 1Peter 5:6).
- XII. Misapplications of grace.
- A. Sinning so that grace may abound. This is a distortion (Romans 6:1,2).
 - B. Legalism distorts salvation and spirituality (Galatians 1:6-9; 2:21; 3:1-3).
 - C. The substitution of ritual for reality (Hebrews 10:29).
 - D. Liberals who label homosexual perversion along with right man/right woman as grace (Jude 4).
- XIII. A description of believers who reject true grace (1Peter 5:12).
- A. Receiving the grace of God in vain (2Corinthians6:1; cf. Galatians 2:2; 3:4; 4:11).
 - B. Falling from grace (Galatians 5:4, legalism).
 - C. Coming short of the grace of God (Hebrews 12:15, mental attitude sin)
 - D. Insulting the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29).
- XIV. The Lord is the supreme example of grace because He was totally aware of, and committed to, all truth (John 1:14,17); the First Advent epitomizes grace orientation under the hypostasis and is the example for grace giving (2Corinthians8:9).
- XV. Israel's **election** is based on grace (Romans11; cf. vs.5, "election of grace").
- XVI. New Testament exhortations related to grace.
- A. We are to grow in grace and knowledge (2Peter 3:18). This is the highest Biblical imperative, it is our most pressing responsibility.
 - B. We are to be strong in the grace of God that is in Christ Jesus (2Timothy 2:1).

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- C. We are to continue in the grace of God (Acts 13:13, of the Galatian churches before reversionism).
 - D. Stand firm in grace (1Peter 5:12). Believers are under persecution from the cosmos.
- XVII. The salutations and benedictions in the epistles emphasize both the external provisions as well as the mental attitude.
- A. Salutations include: Romans 1:7 1Corinthians 1:3 2Corinthians 1:2 Galatians 1:13 Ephesians 1:2 Philippians 1:2 Colossians 1:2 1Thessalonians 1:1 2Thessalonians 1:2 1Timothy 1:2 2Timothy 1:2 Titus 1:1 Philemon 3 1Peter 1:2 3John 3 Revelation 1:4.
 - B. Benedictions include: Romans 16:20,24 1Corinthians 16:23 2Corinthians 13:14 Galatians 6:18 Ephesians 6:24 Philippians 4:23 Colossians 4:18 1Thessalonians 5:28 2Thessalonians 3:18 1Timothy 6:21 2Timothy 4:22 Titus 3:15 Philemon 25; Hebrews 13:25.
 - C. The last verse in the Bible deals with grace, Revelation 22:21 "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all. Amen."

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Ballinger's study of grace essentially outlines the entire Christian life for us.

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[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

We are still on Exodus 20:6a. These verses precede it:

Exodus 20:4–5b "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; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. (NKJV)

Vv. 4–5b is the actual commandment. Putting a period at the end of this was the right thing for the NKJV to do.

The second commandment is not to involve oneself in idolatry.

Exodus 20:5c-e 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,... (NKJV)

In the middle of v. 5, God begins to explain the consequences of disobeying this commandment. These consequences could extend to later generations. As we have studied, the consequences extend to later generations when they commit the same sins.

The contrast will be between those who hate God and those who love Him.

Exodus 20:6a ...but showing mercy to thousands,... (NKJV)

V. 6a is in contrast to what has come before. V. 5c-e is the 3rd and 4th generation curse; v. 6a is the mercy of God toward those who love Him.

It may be helpful to see how several other translators dealt with this portion of v. 6:

But Showing Grace

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	...but showing graciousness and steadfast lovingkindness
Berean Study Bible	...but showing loving devotion
The Complete Tanach	...and [I] perform loving kindness
Concordant Literal Version	...yet doing kindness
Context Group Version	...and showing family allegiance
KJV	...and showing mercy
NIV	...but showing love
NRSV and Owen's	...but showing steadfast love
Orthodox Jewish Bible	...But showing chesed
Voice in the Wilderness	...but showing goodness

The key word here is *cheçed* (חֶסֶד) [pronounced *KHEH-sed*], which means, *grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness; steadfast love*. Strong's #2617 BDB #338. The verb is the Qal active participle of *‘âsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *‘gaw-SAWH*], which means, *doing, making, manufacturing, constructing, fashioning, forming, preparing; producing*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. Later in this chapter, when God speaks of *making* the heaven and the earth and the seas, and all that is in them (v. 11), it is the same word that God uses here. So God is not *showing* grace, but *making, producing, manufacturing* grace.

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Exodus 20:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
‘âhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced <i>aw-HAYV</i> ʰ]	<i>lovers; friends; those who are desired or loved, the ones loving</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #157 BDB #12
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAR</i>]	<i>keepers, those who guard, watchers, spies; the ones watching [guarding]; preservers</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036
mits ^e ôwth (מִצְוָה) [pronounced <i>mits^e-OHTH</i>]	<i>prohibitions, precepts, those things which are forbidden, constraints, proscriptions, countermands; commandments</i>	feminine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #4687 BDB #846

Translation: ...to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.

Note that there are two things required to acquire God's grace: love toward Him and obedience. Christians do not automatically love God. A Christian who is someone who has believed in Jesus Christ. There are many bitter

Christians. We know this from personal experience and from Scripture where there are many passages exhorting us not to be bitter. If some Christians were not bitter, then there would be no reason for this exhortation.

In salvation, we are redeemed by what Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross. Once we enter into our spiritual life, a myriad of things may cause us to be bitter. Nevertheless, the primary reason for being bitter is a failure to grow spiritually. Other reasons, such as a failed loved relationship, a failure in business or disappointing friends and relatives—these are all secondary reasons. But, the key to dealing with a failed love, or a business failure, or disappointing associates is spiritual maturity. It is a simple fact that people and things all around us fail.

Exodus 20:6 **However [lit., and], [I will] manufacture grace to thousands, to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Love is toward God is not an automatic thing. Unsaved people do not love God. For the unsaved person reading or hearing this, you might take offense at this statement, but God's love is revealed by His sending His Son to die in our stead (John 3:16, 36). We respond to that love by believing in Him. If we reject the greatest gift that God has given us—the gift that God desires all man to take—then obviously we do not love the true God. If we reject God's love through His Son, then we obviously do not love God.

Now, an unbeliever might love the god that he has manufactured in his own soul, but that is idolatry. Worshiping the god which he has created in his own image reveals his love to be a thinly veiled self-love and self-worship. And if it is any consolation, most believers do not love God. Only a small percentage of believers love God and love His Word. The only way we get to know God is through His Word; this is how He reveals His character to us after salvation. The man-woman analogy: you cannot truly be in love with a woman (or a man) whom you do not know. You may be terribly attracted to that person, but that is simple physical attraction at best, lust at worst. That is not love. Often you may see a wonderfully packaged product only to open it up and discover a horrible person underneath all that. The only way you can ever love a person of the opposite sex is to know them and this is also the only way we can love God. Knowing God is key in the mature Christian life. Notice that this is a step up from the Old Testament notion of *fearing and respecting* God. The first indicates salvation or being on the brink of salvation; the second indicates some knowledge and understanding of God.

This does not mean that a person who does not love God and who is not obedient to Him (except with respect to the gospel) receives no grace. All believers are recipients of God's grace (logistical grace is in place for all believers). In life, we receive far, far more grace than we deserve. Furthermore, the very nature of grace means, this is not something which we earn.

Exodus 20:6 **...but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.** (NKJV)

Those who obey God's commandments will enjoy grace from Him.

This indicates spiritual growth after salvation. The second half of this is keeping, or guarding His commandments. When we grow spiritually, we begin to understand that what God requires of us is for our own good and for our own benefit. As we learn more about God and His Word we have a better understanding of what is right and wrong (the new Christian and the unbeliever barely even have a clue in this regard), we have a more earnest desire to fulfill His plan for our lives, and therefore have a tendency to be more obedient.

God's response is grace and more grace. As has been covered, we do not deserve this; however, God is under no obligation to pour out His blessings and grace to overflowing upon those who have no appreciation for it. King David and King Saul both occupied the same throne and ruled over the same people. David repeatedly revealed a happy mental attitude and Saul became miserable in his position to the point of mental illness. It is a matter of capacity. If we have no capacity for blessing, then it doesn't matter what God gives us, it will not make us happy for a sustained period of time. Illustration: for a child's first birthday, he may wake up crabby and crying so you decide to give this child the keys to your new car and the deed to your house. Will that stop him from crying? Certainly not. He has no capacity for these things. A child has not the slightest clue as to what these things are.

On the adult level, there are many people who meet their right man or right woman and even marry them and they are unhappy. Why? They have no true capacity for love. They lie to the other person, they treat them badly, they cheat on them, they belittle them in public and in private—and then they wonder why they are not happy with their mate. They do not have in themselves the capacity for love. Even the unbeliever can develop a limited capacity for right man-right woman love through following the laws of divine establishment (which is what we are embarking upon at this moment). The unbeliever who endeavors to follow God's Law, apart from salvation, if he avoids severe legalism, will have happiness far greater than the unbeliever who is a hedonist and chases after the very elusive god of pleasure. They will both spend eternity in the lake of fire in regret, severe misery and pain—but in the very, very short time that they spend upon this earth, the one who tries to follow God's Law, even ignoring God's greatest commandment,²³ will be happier during this life. This is because God knows human nature—even fallen human nature in the devil's world—and He has made provision for it.

Exodus 20:5c–6 *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, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.* (NKJV)

This actually has a somewhat different meaning in the Old Testament and the New. In the New Testament, we are in Christ. Christ loves God the Father (from His humanity and from His Deity); and Jesus was obedient to God in all things. Because we are in Christ (as Christians), we share His love for God and His obedience. Therefore, God shows us grace (both logistical grace and saving grace).

The Old Testament believer was not put into Christ (or even *into the Messiah*). When a person acted in accordance with the laws of divine establishment, that person had a better life than those who rebelled against the laws of divine establishment. We studied the laws of divine establishment in **Genesis 12** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). They are also found in Genesis #101–200 ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Much of the Mosaic Law that we will study, from this point forward, are essentially the same as the laws of divine establishment.

The believer in the Old Testament could learn to love God; but prior to that, his respect for God (often taught from his parents) and obedience fulfilled what is said here, that God shows His grace to thousands, to those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Exodus 20:6 *However [lit., and], [I will] manufacture grace to thousands, to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Israel was blessed by pursuing God and following the laws of divine establishment. When they turned against God, their country fell apart.

The entire 2nd commandment reads:

Exodus 20:4–6 *You will not make for yourself [any] sculpted image or any representation [of] that [which is] in the heavens above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You will not bow down to these images [lit., to them] and you will not [be caused] to serve them; for I, Y^ehowah your Elohim, [am] a jealous Êl [= God], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their [lit., the] sons; and upon the third and fourth generations [if necessary] of those who hate Me. However [lit., and], [I will] manufacture grace to thousands, to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:4–6 *You will not make for yourself [any] sculpted image or any representation [of] that [which is] in the heavens above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You will not bow down to these images [lit., to them] and you will not [be caused] to serve them; for I, Y^ehowah your Elohim, [am] a jealous Êl [= God], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their [lit., the] sons; and upon the third and fourth generations [if necessary] of those who hate Me. However [lit., and], [I will] manufacture grace to thousands, to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

²³ *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved*; that is a commandment to all unbelievers

Exodus 20:4–6 You will not make any sort of sculpted image which represents some deity figure in the heavens above, in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You will not make such images and you will not bow down to them nor will you serve them, for I am Jehovah-God and I am a jealous God. Furthermore, I will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon their sons and upon the next two generations after them of those who hate Me. But, I will provide grace for those who love Me and I will give grace to those who keep My commandments. (Kukis paraphrase)

This takes us to the third commandment:

You will not lift up a name of Y^ehowah your Elohim for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*], for will not acquit Y^ehowah whoever lifts up His name for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*].

Exodus
20:7

You will not lift up the name of Y^ehowah your Elohim for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*], for Y^ehowah will not leave unpunished whoever lifts up His name for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*].

You will not take the Lord your God's name in vain; Jehovah will not leave you unpunished if you do that.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	You will not lift up a name of Y ^e howah your Elohim for vanity [or, <i>iniquity, falsehood</i>], for will not acquit Y ^e howah whoever lifts up His name for vanity [or, <i>iniquity, falsehood</i>].
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	Thou shalt not swear in the name of the Lord thy God vainly; for the Lord will not acquit him who sweareth in His Name with falsity.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	My people of the house of Israel, Let no one of you swear by the name of the Word of the Lord your God in vain; for in the day of the great judgment the Lord will not hold guiltless any one who sweareth by His name in vain.
Revised Douay-Rheims	You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the name of the Lord his God in vain.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"You shall not take the name of Mar-Yah your God in vain, for Mar-Yah will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	You shall not take a false oath in the name of the LORD your God; for the LORD will not declare him innocent who takes an oath in his name falsely.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord thy God will not acquit him that takes his name in vain.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	You are not to make use of the name of the Lord your God for an evil purpose; whoever takes the Lord's name on his lips for an evil purpose will be judged a sinner by the Lord.
Easy English	You must not use the name of the LORD your God in a wrong way. The LORD will be angry with anyone who uses his name in a wrong way.
Easy-to-Read Version—2001	"You must not use the name of the Lord your God in a wrong way. If a person uses the Lord's name in a wrong way, then that person is guilty. And the Lord will not make him innocent.

Easy-to-Read Version–2006	"You must not use the name of the LORD your God to make empty promises. If you do, the LORD will not let you go unpunished.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Do not use my name for evil purposes, for I, the LORD your God, will punish anyone who misuses my name.
<i>The Message</i>	No using the name of GOD, your God, in curses or silly banter; GOD won't put up with the irreverent use of his name.
Names of God Bible	"Never use the name of Yahweh your Elohim carelessly. Yahweh will make sure that anyone who carelessly uses his name will be punished.
New Simplified Bible	»Never use the name of Jehovah your God in a false and evil way. Jehovah will make sure that anyone who is false, evil, careless and vain with his name will be punished.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Do not misuse my name. I am the LORD your God, and I will punish anyone who misuses my name.
The Living Bible	"You shall not use the name of Jehovah your God irreverently [or "You must not use the name of the Lord your God to swear falsely."], nor use it to swear to a falsehood. You will not escape punishment if you do.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	"Do not use the name of the Lord your God in a false way. For the Lord will punish the one who uses His name in a false way.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Do not use my name carelessly because I am Yahweh your Almighty, the one whom you should worship, and I will certainly punish those who use my name for wrong purposes.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'You must not misuse the Name of your God Jehovah; for Jehovah your God will not forgive those who misuse His Name.
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	Do not use the LORD your God's name as if it were of no significance; the LORD won't forgive anyone who uses his name that way.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God lightly on thy lips; if a man uses that name lightly, the Lord will not acquit him of sin.
Translation for Translators	Do not use my name carelessly (OR, for wrong/evil purposes), because I am Yahweh God, the one whom you <i>should worship</i> , and I will certainly punish those who use my name for wrong/evil purposes [LIT].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	You shall not take up the Name of the LORD your God carelessly. The LORD will not find a person innocent if he takes up His Name carelessly." Literally, "futilely."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Commandment III. You shall not take the Name of your EVER-LIVING GOD in vain, for the LORD will not hold guiltless the taking of His Name in vain.
HCSB	Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God, because the LORD will not leave anyone unpunished who misuses His name.
International Standard V	λ "You are not to misuse ^f the name of the LORD your God, because the LORD will not leave the one who misuses ^g his name unpunished. <i>f</i> 20:7 Or <i>take in vain</i> <i>g</i> 20:7 Or <i>takes in vain</i>

Unlocked Literal Bible	You must not take the name of me, Yahweh your God, in vain, for I will not hold guiltless anyone who takes my name in vain.
Urim-Thummim Version	[3] YOU WILL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF YHWH YOUR ELOHIM IN VAIN; for YHWH will not hold him guiltless that takes his Name in vain.
Wikipedia Bible Project	And you will not carry the name of Yahweh your God in vain, because Yahweh will not absolve he who carries his name in vain.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	You shall not lift the name of Jehovah, your God, for ruin, because Jehovah will not consider him clean who lifts his name for ruin.
New American Bible (2011)	You shall not invoke the name of the LORD, your God, in vain.* [Lv 19:12; 24:16] For the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who invokes his name in vain. * [20:7] In vain: i.e., to no good purpose, a general framing of the prohibition which includes swearing falsely, especially in the context of a legal proceeding, but also goes beyond it (cf. Lv 24:16; Prv 30:8–9).
New RSV	You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.
Revised English Bible—1989	You must not make wrong use of the name of the LORD your God; the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who misuses his name.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	א "You are not to use lightly the name of <i>ADONAI</i> your God, because <i>ADONAI</i> will not leave unpunished someone who uses his name lightly.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	"You do not bring ¹ the Name of יהוה your Elohim to naught, for יהוה does not leave the one unpunished who brings His Name to naught. ¹ Or <i>lift up</i> , or <i>take</i> .

Weird English, 𐤀𐤋𐤁𐤏 English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF JESUS YOUR THEOS (<i>Alpha & Omega</i>) IN VAIN; FOR JESUS YOUR THEOS (<i>Alpha & Omega</i>) WILL NOT ACQUIT HIM THAT TAKES HIS NAME IN VAIN. †(<i>This means to treat our calling lightly & say that we are His, yet live a sinful deathstyle which brings shame to His Name. Heb_6:6. It is not impossible to repent. 1Jn_1:9. But when we have to repent every day for the same sin over & over & over, & when we live like the world instead of in Holiness, we take His Name in Vain as if it doesn't mean anything to be His Ambassadors to this world. Mat_5:33</i>)
Awful Scroll Bible	Were yous to take the name of Jehovah, he of mighty ones, in molestation? - was Jehovah to hold clean, he who was to take his name in molestation?
Concordant Literal Version	You shall not take up the name of Yahweh your Elohim for futility, for Yahweh shall not hold innocent him who takes up His name for futility.
Darby Translation	Thou shalt not idly utter the name of Jehovah thy God; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that idly uttereth his name.
exeGesés companion Bible	Bear not the name of Yah Veh your Elohim in defamation; for Yah Veh exonerates him not who bears his name in defamation.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Thou shalt not take the Shem Hashem Eloheicha in vain; for Hashem will not hold him guiltless that taketh Shmo in vain.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain [that is, irreverently, in false affirmations or in ways that impugn the character of God]; for the Lord will not hold guiltless nor leave unpunished the one who ^[b]takes His name in vain [disregarding its reverence and its power].

^[b] Using the name of God in a casual, frivolous way establishes a mindset that diminishes and dishonors the omnipotent God. Using the name of God to abuse, manipulate, or deceive invites judgment.

The Expanded Bible

"You must not use the name of the Lord your God thoughtlessly [take/lift up the name of the Lord your God in vain]; the Lord will punish ^[c]not hold/treat as innocent; not acquit anyone who misuses [takes in vain] his name.

Kretzmann's Commentary

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain, without purpose and object, in a frivolous manner; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain, an emphatic warning that the punishment of God will surely strike everyone who lightly and blasphemously utters the Lord's name, whether this be in thoughtless foolishness or in deliberate perjury.

Syndein/Thieme

"You shall not take the name of the Jehovah/God your 'Elohiym/Godhead in vain. For the Jehovah/God will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

{Note: When mankind make oaths, they make them based on someone or something 'greater' than they are. So to take the name of God in vain means to make a solemn oath like 'I swear to God I will . . . ' and then do not. Or to swear on the Bible that what you say is the Truth - and then lie.}.

The Voice

You are not to use My name for your own idle purposes, for the Eternal will punish anyone who treats His name as anything less than sacred.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:*The Complete Tanach*

You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain, for the Lord will not hold blameless anyone who takes His name in vain.

You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain: You shall not swear in vain by the name of the Lord, your God. — [Onkelos] אַוְשַׁל -[This word appears twice in this verse.] (The second [mention of אַוְשַׁל is an expression of falsehood, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: אַרְקִיִּשָׁל, as it says [in Shavuot 21a]: "What constitutes a vain oath? If one swears contrary to what is known, [for example, saying] about a stone pillar that it is [made of] gold. (The first [mention of אַוְשַׁל is an expression of vanity, as the Targum [Onkelos] renders: אַנְגָּל.) This [refers to] one who swears for no reason and in vain, [for example making an oath] concerning [a pillar] of wood, [saying] that it is wood, and concerning [a pillar] of stone, [saying] that it is stone. — [from Shevuot 29a, Mechilta]

*Kaplan Translation**The Third Commandment*

Do not take the name of God your Lord in vain. God will not allow the one who takes His name in vain to go unpunished.

name of God

The sense is changed from the first to the third person. Some therefore say that only the first two commandments were given directly by God (Makkoth 24a; Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:13; Ramban). See note on Exodus 20:16.

in vain

Or, 'illegally' (cf. Exodus 23:1). This commandment primarily forbids false and trivial oaths (Mekhilta; Shevuot 21a; Targum Yonathan; Rashi). However, it also prohibits all unnecessary use of God's name (Ramban; Berakhoth 33a).

NET Bible®

"You shall not take²⁰ the name of the Lord your God in vain,²¹ for the Lord will not hold guiltless²² anyone who takes his name in vain.

²⁰tn Or "use" (NCV, TEV); NIV, CEV, NLT "misuse"; NRSV "make wrongful use of."

²¹tn שָׁוַי (shav', "vain") describes "unreality." The command prohibits use of the name for any idle, frivolous, or insincere purpose (S. R. Driver, Exodus, 196). This would include perjury,

pagan incantations, or idle talk. The name is to be treated with reverence and respect because it is the name of the holy God.

^{22tn} Or "leave unpunished."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...you will not lift up the title of "YHWH ^{He Is} " your "Elohiym ^{Powers} " (for) the falseness, given that "YHWH ^{He Is} " will not acquit one (who) will lift up his title (for) the falseness,...
Context Group Version	You shall not take the name of YHWH your God in emptiness; for YHWH will not hold him innocent that takes his name in emptiness.
Green's Literal Translation	You shall not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain; for Jehovah will not leave unpunished the <i>one</i> who takes His name in vain.
New King James Version	"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold <i>him</i> guiltless who takes His name in vain..
Updated Bible Version 2.17	You will not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain; for Yahweh will not hold him innocent who takes his name in vain.
Young's Updated LT	"You will not take up the name of Jehovah your God for a vain thing, for Jehovah does not acquit him who takes up His name for a vain thing.

The gist of this passage:

Exodus 20:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לו' or לא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced <i>naw-SAW</i>]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5375 BDB #669
Nâsâ' actually has a variety of Qal meanings: It means ❶ <i>to take up, to lift up, to bear up</i> ; ❷ <i>to lift up someone's head</i> (this is used in a favorable way; i.e., it is used to mean <i>to make one cheerful or merry</i> ; ❸ <i>to lift up one's own countenance</i> , i.e., <i>to be cheerful, full of confidence</i> , ❹ <i>to bear, to carry</i> , ❺ <i>to lift up in a balance</i> , i.e., <i>to weigh carefully</i> ; ❻ <i>to bear one's sin or punishment</i> , ❼ <i>to lift up the voice</i> (this can be used in the sense of bemoaning, crying, crying out, rejoicing, <i>to lift up any with the voice</i> (a song, an instrument); ❽ <i>to lift up the soul</i> (i.e., <i>to wish for, to desire</i>); ❾ <i>to have the heart lifted up</i> (i.e., they are ready and willing to do something; ❿ <i>to bear one's sin</i> (in such a way to expiate the sin, to make atonement for the sin, to pardon the sin). This list does not exhaust the various connotations for nâsâ'. BDB adds the following: <i>to support, to sustain, to endure; to take, to take away, to carry off, to forgive</i> .			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i>]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yohoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Exodus 20:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated <i>Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by; on account of; about, concerning	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâv ^o (שָׁוְ) [pronounced <i>shawv</i>]	wickedness, iniquity; destruction, calamity; falsehood, a lie, false report; vanity, emptiness, unsubstantial, worthlessness	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7723 BDB #996

It is that which furnishes no support, that which cannot uphold or sustain, and will give away when any trust is placed in it.

This is the first time this word is found in Scripture.

Translation: You will not lift up the name of Y^ehowah your Elohim for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*],...

There are quite a number of interpretations of this third commandment:

New King James Version	"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain,...
The Voice	You are not to use My name for <i>your own</i> idle purposes,...
The Expanded Bible	"You must not use the name of the Lord your God thoughtlessly...
Darby Translation	Thou shalt not idly utter the name of Jehovah thy God;...
Complete Jewish Bible	א "You are not to use lightly the name of ADONAI your God,...
New RSV	You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God,...
New American Bible (2011)	You shall not invoke the name of the LORD, your God, in vain [i.e., <i>to no good purpose</i>].
HCSB	Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God,...
Translation for Translators	Do not use my name carelessly (OR, for wrong/evil purposes),...
Common English Bible	Do not use the LORD your God's name as if it were of no significance;...

Although most of us think we have a grasp of what is being said here, let's exegete this verse somewhat. This verse begins with the negative and the 2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *nâsâ'* (נָסָה) [pronounced *naw-SAW*] and it is another word similar to *âsâh* insofar as it is a word with many varied applications. Its basic meaning is *to lift*; it also means *to carry, to take*. It can refer to lifting up something in order to carry it away (Genesis 21:18 2Samuel 2:32), but it is used in the sense of lifting up one's feet to walk away (Genesis 31:17 42:26); it is used to pick up something and lay it upon someone. In a figurative sense, this word is used when someone lays an oath upon someone else. In other words, they require an oath from someone else (1Kings 8:31). Here, when we say God's name, we are lifting it up before Him. That is, it is as if we are calling upon Him when we use His name. Most translations say *take His name in vain*; which is fine, but the English concept of the word *take* here does not exactly correspond with the meaning of the word *take* as it applies to *nâsâ'*. This more accurately means that we lift up the Lord's name in vain. Strong's #5375 BDB #669.

The word often translated, *vain*, is *shâv*^o (שָׁו) [pronounced *shawv*]. It means *wickedness, iniquity; destruction, calamity; falsehood, a lie, false report; vanity, emptiness, unsubstantial, worthlessness*. We are not to lift up God's name to worthlessness. We are not to lift up the Lord's name with regard to that which is *empty* and *meaningless*. We are not to lift up His name for a lie or a falsehood. Strong's #7723 BDB #996.

There is a lot more in this verse than just taking God's name in vain. There is no excuse for a Christian to use our Lord's name lightly in vain chatter, in profanity or to liven up a conversation, using God's name or His Son's name to spice up your conversation. We are not to punctuate our conversation with an exclamation using our Lord's name. This is a poor testimony to trivialize the name of the Lord Who bought you.

This verse, I believe, goes further than that. The verb is not a direct reference to speaking. It is lifting up or carrying or taking God's name for that which is empty and meaningless. Let's see if I can illustrate this? When you asked God to give you something sinful or something which was wrong, you blasphemed the name of your Lord. When you ask for something merely to satisfy your lust pattern whether it be materialism lust, sexual lust, approbation lust, power lust—you have lifted up God's name with regards to emptiness.

My point in all of this is, lifting up the Lord's name in vain can be extended in many directions.

Exodus 20:7a “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain,.... (NKJV)

Whatever you do to lift up or bring His name (which also means His character and reputation) into a place of meaningless and emptiness, you have blasphemed the Lord Who died for your sins. God is not your best buddy who hangs with you and when you claim some special goofy relationship with Him, you trivialize God and He will hold you as guilty of sin and you need to rebound. *You ask and you do not receive because you ask with wrong motivation so that you may squander [it] on your pleasure lusts* (James 4:3).

Furthermore, this includes taking some meaningless oath in God's name or swearing by God about something. This includes perjury where you have sworn that your testimony would be true. Thieme lists several areas where God's name is taken into vanity: *May God strike me dead, God is my witness* (when you are about to lie about something), and even, *this is God's will*, when you want to get your way in some endeavor.

God's name is not to be used to support a falsehood, to be used for a vain, worthless or empty reason; it is not to be used in pursuit of iniquity or wickedness.

Anytime we use God's name for a vain, meaningless way or for a sinful purpose, we are lifting up His Name in vain.

It is of some fascination to me that the name of Jesus is probably the most used name in the film and television industry today—particularly when the medium is designed for the older teen or adult. I hear this in American film and TV, as well as Australian film and television (and British, to a lesser extent).

I don't hear the name of Mohammed or Buddha or even Moses tossed around; but writers love to use the name of Jesus. I think it is fair to say, *they are without excuse*.

Exodus 20:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וי) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Exodus 20:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or אֵל) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâqâh (נָקָה) [pronounced naw-KAWH]	<i>to be cleansed, to be acquitted, to be declared innocent; to leave unpunished</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong #5352 BDB #667
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	Indicates next word is the object of the verb; sometimes translated <i>to</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, they mean <i>how, that which, what, whatever; whom, whomever</i> . Possibly <i>when, whenever</i> .			
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced naw-SAW]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5375 BDB #669
Nâsâ' actually has a variety of Qal meanings: It means ❶ <i>to take up, to lift up, to bear up</i> ; ❷ <i>to lift up someone's head</i> (this is used in a favorable way; i.e., it is mused to mean <i>to make one cheerful or merry</i> ; ❸ <i>to lift up one's own countenance</i> , i.e., <i>to be cheerful, full of confidence</i> , ❹ <i>to bear, to carry</i> , ❺ <i>to lift up in a balance</i> , i.e., <i>to weigh carefully</i> ; ❻ <i>to bear one's sin or punishment</i> , ❼ <i>to lift up the voice</i> (this can be used in the sense of bemoaning, crying, crying out, rejoicing, <i>to lift up any with the voice</i> (a song, an instrument); ❽ <i>to lift up the soul</i> (i.e., <i>to wish for, to desire</i>); ❾ <i>to have the heart lifted up</i> (i.e., they are ready and willing to do something; ❿ <i>to bear one's sin</i> (in such a way to expiate the sin, to make atonement for the sin, to pardon the sin). This list does not exhaust the various connotations for nâsâ'. BDB adds the following: <i>to support, to sustain, to endure; to take, to take away, to carry off, to forgive</i> .			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by; on account of; about, concerning</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâv ^e (שָׁוְ) [pronounced shawv]	<i>wickedness, iniquity; destruction, calamity; falsehood, a lie, false report; vanity, emptiness, unsubstantial, worthlessness</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7723 BDB #996

Translation: ...for Y^ehowah will not leave unpunished whoever lifts up His name for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*].

To clear up the final portion of this verse, the verb found is the negative plus the Piel imperfect of nâqâh (נָקָה) [pronounced *naw-KAWH*] and it means *cleanse, acquit, declare innocent, leave unpunished*. God will not allow us to use His name in vain under any circumstance and go unpunished for it. This is our verse which gives us this promise.

To understand the extent to which the Hebrews became legalistic, they would not even pronounce the name of Y^ehowah without an entire procedure to preface it. This went beyond respect to venture into legalism. As a result of this, we do not know the exact pronunciation of God's Old Testament name. We have covered this; but to review, there is no *J* in the Hebrew language, which means that His name was not pronounced Jehovah. There were no vowel points in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament until well after the birth of our Lord, so, although we can work with the consonants of His holy name, we do not know what the vowels were and the resulting pronunciation Y^ehowah is at best an educated guess. God does have a name which is revealed to us in the New Testament and that is Jesus Christ. This is not way it was originally pronounced; that is our English pronunciation. Anyone in any language can believe in Jesus Christ as pronounced in their language and they are eternally saved.

There are some religious groups who write *God* as *G-d*. First of all, no Hebrew word in the Bible had an vowels in it for perhaps 2000 years; and secondly, their word for *God* is never written without vowels (except in the original text where every word is written without vowels). The Hebrew word for *God* is *Elohim*; It is never, ever written, *-l-h-m*. No Jewish person, reading their text, ever skips over the word *Elohim*; they simply say it. The name which they would not pronounce was YHWH, which is the more personal name for God.

The key is not the pronunciation of His name but in the Work that He did on our behalf. When the Bible exhorts us to believe on the name of Jesus Christ, *name* means *character, reputation*. One cannot be saved apart from having some sort of basic understanding of what Jesus Christ did on his behalf on the cross. Furthermore, the two names, Jesus (savior) and Christ (messiah), were rarely if ever put together until the New Testament epistles. Anytime a man was closely associated with being God, such a thing was considered blasphemous. Our Lord was continually accused of blasphemy because he exhibited the attributes of deity and took upon Himself certain aspects of deity (e.g., Jesus allowed Himself to be worshipped, He forgave sins). Even though most liberals and unbelievers refuse to see Jesus Christ as God come in the flesh, the religious unbelievers of His day fully recognized how He presented Himself and many times take up stones to stone Him for what they perceived as blasphemy because they did not recognize the Lord Who bought them. Although some liberals might admit that Jesus acted very God-like, they do not seem to understand that, Jesus presented Himself as more than just being *God-like*.

God promises punishment for the person who treats the name of God casually.

Exodus 20:7 You will not lift up the name of Y^ehowah your Elohim for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*], for Y^ehowah will not leave unpunished whoever lifts up His name for vanity [or, *iniquity, falsehood*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

We are never to use God's name in a trivial fashion; and those who do will not remain unpunished.

Exodus 20:7 You will not take the Lord your God's name in vain; Jehovah will not leave you unpunished if you do that. (Kukis paraphrase)

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Commandment 4; Regarding the Sabbath

The fourth commandment is:

Remembering a day of [the] Sabbath to consecrate him. Six of days you will work [or, *keep on working*] and you have done all of your work; and a day of the seventh [will be] a sabbath to Y^ehowah your Elohim. You will not work any work—you and your sons and your daughter, your servants and your female servant and your cattle and your immigrant who [is] in your gates.

Exodus
20:8–10

Remember the sabbath day and consider it set apart [to God]. You will work for six days and you will do all of your work [in those six days]; but the seventh day [will be] a sabbath to [honor] Y^ehowah your Elohim. You will not do any work—[not] you or your sons or daughters; [not] your male or female servants; [not even] your cattle or the immigrant within your gates.

Remember the sabbath day and set it aside as a holy day to God. You will complete all of your work in six days, but you will rest on the sabbath day to honor Jehovah your God. You will not do any work on the seventh day, nor will your children, your servants, your cattle or even your immigrants.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Remembering a day of [the] Sabbath to consecrate him. Six of days you will work [or, <i>keep on working</i>] and you have done all of your work; and a day of the seventh [will be] a sabbath to Y ^e howah your Elohim. You will not work any work—you and your sons and your daughter, your servants and your female servant and your cattle and your immigrant who [is] in your gates. For in six of days made Y ^e howah the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that [is] in them. And so He rests in the day the seventh. Upon so, blessed Y ^e howah a day of the sabbath and so he consecrated him.
Dead Sea Scrolls Targum (Onkelos)	. Remember the day of Shabbatha to sanctify it. Six days shalt thou do service and do all thy work; but the seventh day is Shabbath before the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not do every work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy servant nor thy handmaid, nor thy cattle, nor thy sojourner who is in thy city [Sam. Vers., “thy cities.”].
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	My people of the house of Israel, Remember the day of Shabbatha, to sanctify it. Six days you shall labour, and do all your service: but the seventh day is (for) rest and quietude before the Lord your God: you shall not perform any work, you, and your sons, and your daughters, and your servants, and your handmaids, and your sojourners who are in your cities.
Revised Douay-Rheims	Remember that you keep holy the sabbath day. Six days shall you labour, and shall do all your works. But on the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord your God: you shall do no work on it, you nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your beast, nor the stranger that is within your gates.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. You shall labour six days, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Mar-Yah your God. You shall not do any work in it, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your livestock, nor your stranger who is within your gates;...
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor and do all your work; But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor the sojourner who dwells in your towns;...
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days thou shalt labour, and shalt perform all thy work. But on the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; on it thou shalt do no work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy servant nor thy maidservant, thine ox nor thine ass, nor any cattle of thine, nor the stranger that sojourns with thee.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Keep in memory the Sabbath and let it be a holy day. On six days do all your work: But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; on that day you are to do no work, you or your son or your daughter, your man-servant or your woman-servant, your cattle or the man from a strange country who is living among you:...
Easy English	Remember the Sabbath day and keep it as a special day. You must do all your work for six days. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. You must not do any work on that day. Your son and your daughter must not work on that day. Your male servant and your female servant must not work on that day. The stranger who lives among you and even your animals must not work on that day.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	“You must remember to keep the Sabbath a special day. You may work six days a week to do your job. But the seventh day is a day of rest in honor of the LORD your God. So on that day no one should work—not you, your sons and daughters, or your men and women slaves. Even your animals and the foreigners living in your cities must not work!
Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i>	. Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Work six days and do everything you need to do. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to GOD, your God. Don’t do any work—not you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your servant, nor your maid, nor your animals, not even the foreign guest visiting in your town.
Names of God Bible	“Remember the day of worship by observing it as a holy day. You have six days to do all your work. The seventh day is the day of worship dedicated to Yahweh your Elohim . You, your sons, your daughters, your male and female slaves, your cattle, and the foreigners living in your city must never do any work on that day.
NIRV	“Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy. Do all your work in six days. But the seventh day is a sabbath to honor the LORD your God. Do not do any work on that day. The same command applies to your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and your animals. It also applies to any outsiders who live in your towns.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible Contemporary English V.	. Remember that the Sabbath Day belongs to me. You have six days when you can do your work, but the seventh day of each week belongs to me, your God. No one is to work on that day--not you, your children, your slaves, your animals, or the foreigners who live in your towns.
The Living Bible	“Remember to observe the Sabbath as a holy day. Six days a week are for your daily duties and your regular work, but the seventh day is a day of Sabbath rest before the Lord your God. On that day you are to do no work of any kind, nor shall your son, daughter, or slaves—whether men or women—or your cattle or your house guests.
New Berkeley Version New Life Version	. “Remember the Day of Rest, to keep it holy. Six days you will do all your work. But the seventh day is a Day of Rest to the Lord your God. You, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle, or the traveler who stays with you, must not do any work on this day.
New Living Translation	“Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated

Unlocked Dynamic Bible to the LORD your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you.

Do not forget that the seventh day of every week belongs to me, so keep those days only for me. There are six days each week for you to do all your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest, a day dedicated to me, Yahweh your Almighty, the one whom you should worship. On that day you must not do any work. You and your sons and daughters and your male and female slaves must not work. You must not even force your livestock to work, and you must not allow foreigners to work, those strangers who are living in your country.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible 'Keep the Sabbath day and make it holy. You may work and get everything done in six days. However, the seventh day is the Sabbath of your God Jehovah, and you must do no work... not you, your sons, your daughters, your male servants, your female servants, your oxen, your burros, any of your cattle, or any strangers that are visiting among you.

Beck's American Translation .

Common English Bible Remember the Sabbath day and treat it as holy. Six days you may work and do all your tasks, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. Do not do any work on it—not you, your sons or daughters, your male or female servants, your animals, or the immigrant who is living with you.

New Advent (Knox) Bible Remember to keep the sabbath day holy. Six days for drudgery, for doing all the work thou hast to do; when the seventh day comes, it is a day of rest, consecrated to the Lord thy God. That day, all work shall be at an end, for thee and every son and daughter of thine, thy servants and serving-women, thy beasts, too, and the aliens that live within thy gates.

Translation for Translators Do not forget that the seventh day *of every week* is mine, so dedicate those days to me. There are six days each week for you to do all your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest, a day dedicated to me, Yahweh God, the one whom you *should worship*. On that day you must not do any work. You and your sons and daughters and your male and female slaves must not work. You must not even force your livestock to work, and you must not allow foreigners to work, those who are living in your country.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation "Remember the Sabbath day, and set it apart. For six days you will serve and do all your work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you will not do any work, neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, your maidservant, your livestock, or the sojourner within your gates. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week.

Ferrar-Fenton Bible **Commandment IV.**

"Remember the seventh day to keep it holy. Six days you may labour, and do all your business, but the seventh day is a Rest to your EVER-LIVING GOD. You shall not then do any business, you, or your son, or your daughter, your man- servant, or your maid-servant, or your cattle, or your stranger who is within your gates ;...

NIV, ©2011 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns.

Urim-Thummim Version [4] REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY AS CONSECRATED. Six days will you labor, and do all your work. But the 7th day is the Sabbath of YHWH your Elohim, in it you

will not do any work, you, your son, daughter, male and female slave, livestock, nor the foreigner that resides within your gates.

Wikipedia Bible Project Remember the shabbat (sabbath/rest) day, in its holiness. Six days you will work, and you will make all your craft. And the seventh day, rest for Yahweh your God. You will not do any craft, you and your sons and your daughters, and your slave, and your slave-woman, and your beasts, and the stranger who is within your gates.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New RSV Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns.

Revised English Bible—1989 Remember to keep the sabbath day holy. You have six days to labour and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; that day you must not do any work, neither you, nor your son or your daughter, your slave or your slave-girl, your cattle, or the alien residing among you;...

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible ד "Remember the day, *Shabbat*, to set it apart for God. You have six days to labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a *Shabbat* for *ADONAI* your God. On it, you are not to do any kind of work — not you, your son or your daughter, not your male or female slave, not your livestock, and not the foreigner staying with you inside the gates to your property.

The Scriptures 1998 "Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart.
"Six days you labour, and shall do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath¹ of יהוה your Elohim. You do not do any 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.

Tree of Life Version ¹There are other Sabbaths, but this is the weekly Sabbath.
"Remember *Yom Shabbat*, to keep it holy. You are to work six days, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a *Shabbat* to *ADONAI* your God. In it you shall not do any work—not you, nor your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle, nor the outsider that is within your gates.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible REMEMBER THE SEVENTH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY. SIX DAYS YOU SHALL LABOR, AND SHALL PERFORM ALL YOUR WORK. BUT ON THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE REST OF JESUS YOUR THEOS (*Alpha & Omega*); ON IT YOU SHALL DO NO WORK, YOU, NOR YOUR SON, NOR YOUR DAUGHTER, YOUR SERVANT NOR YOUR MAIDSERVANT, YOUR OX, NOR YOUR DONKEY, NOR ANY CATTLE OF YOURS, NOR THE STRANGER THAT SOJOURNS WITH YOU.

Awful Scroll Bible Yous are to remember the sabbath day to set it apart. Six days yous were to work and are to produce of you all's business, and the seventh day is a sabbath to Jehovah, he of mighty ones - were yous to produce of your business, even you all's sons, daughters, men servants and maidservants, dumb beasts, and the nonnatives within you all's gates? -

exeGeses companion Bible Remember the shabbath day, to hallow it:
six days you serve and work all your work:
but the seventh day
is the shabbath of Yah Veh your Elohim:
work no work therein;

Orthodox Jewish Bible	<p>neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your servant, nor your maid, nor your animals, nor your sojourner within your portals:...</p> <p>Remember Yom HaShabbos, to keep it kodesh. Sheshet yamim shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the Yom HaShevi'i is the Shabbos of Hashem Eloheicha; in it thou shalt not do any melachah, thou, nor thy ben, nor thy bat, thy eved, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy ger that is within thy gates;...</p>
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	<p>Remember the sabbath day, to hallow it: Six days, shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but, the seventh day, is a sabbath unto Yahweh thy God,—thou shalt do no work, thou nor thy son nor thy daughter nor thy servant, nor thy handmaid, nor thy beast, nor thy sojourner who is within thy gates, For, in six days, did Yahweh make the heavens and the earth, and the sea—and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day,—for this cause, Yahweh blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it. V. 11 is included for context.</p>

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	<p>"Remember the Sabbath (seventh) day to keep it holy (set apart, dedicated to God). Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath [a day of rest dedicated] to the Lord your God; on that day you shall not do any work, you or your son, or your daughter, or your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock or the temporary resident (foreigner) who stays within your [city] gates.</p>
The Expanded Bible	<p>"Remember to ·keep the Sabbath holy [consecrate/sanctify the Sabbath]. Work and get everything done during six days each week, but the seventh day is a ·day of rest to honor [Sabbath to] the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the ·foreigners [sojourners; wanderers; resident aliens] living in your ·cities [·gates].</p>
Kretzmann's Commentary	<p>Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. This commandment presupposes a knowledge of the Sabbath, but not of its formal celebration. All those that urge the keeping of the Sabbath according to the Jewish pattern with the argument that this day and this form were included in the will of God as written into the hearts of men at the beginning, overlook or ignore the facts of history as found in the Book of Exodus. The deliberate setting aside of this special day of the week and the form of observance of this day as outlined to the Jews was intended for them only. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, perform everything connected with trade, business, or profession; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, perform the labor of your ordinary occupations, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter; thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates, the enumeration purposely being made inclusive, in order to emphasize the commandment.</p>
Syndein/Thieme	<p>"Remember the Sabbath day . . . to keep it 'set apart to God'/holy. {Note: This was from Friday sundown until Saturday sundown. This was a Jewish Age commandment. In the Church Age, the commandment has been changed to 'keep every day as unto the Lord'. It is a HIGHER law that we are under. To whom much is given, much is expected.}</p>
The Voice	<p>"Six days shall you labor, and do all your work." "But the seventh day is the Sabbath of Jehovah/God your 'Elohim/Godhead. In it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates." You and your family are to remember the Sabbath Day; set it apart, and keep it holy. You have six days to do all your work, but the seventh day is to be different; it is the Sabbath of the Eternal your God. Keep it holy by not doing any work—not</p>

you, your sons, your daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, or any outsiders living among you.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach

Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it.

Remember: Heb. זָכוֹר [The words] “remember (זָכוֹר)” and “keep (שָׁמַר)” (Deut. 5:12) were pronounced with one utterance. Similarly [the statements], “Those who profane it shall be put to death” (Exod. 31:14) and “And on the Sabbath day, two lambs” (Num. 28:9) [were said in one utterance], and similarly, “You shall not wear shaatnez,” and “You shall make tzitzith for yourself” (Deut. 22:11, 12). Similarly, [the phrases] “The nakedness of your brother’s wife [you shall not uncover]” (Lev. 18:16), [and] “Her brother-in-law shall come in to her” (Deut. 25:5) [were said in one utterance]. This [occurrence of God saying two phrases simultaneously in one utterance] is the meaning of what is said: “God spoke one thing, I heard two” (Ps. 62:12) (Mechilta). [The word] זָכוֹר is in the לִוְעָפֹה form, an expression of ongoing action, like “[Let us engage in] eating and drinking לִוְעָפֹה וְנִשְׂכָּר וְנִשְׂכָּר” (Isa. 22:13), [and] “walking and weeping וְנִשְׂכָּר וְנִשְׂכָּר” (II Sam. 3:16), and this is its interpretation: Pay attention to always remember the Sabbath day, so that if you chance upon a beautiful thing, you shall prepare it for the Sabbath (Mechilta).

Six days may you work and perform all your labor,...

and perform all your labor: When the Sabbath arrives, it shall seem to you as if all your work is done, that you shall not think about work.

...but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord, your God; you shall perform no labor, neither you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your beast, nor your stranger who is in your cities.

neither you, your son, your daughter: These are young children. Or perhaps it refers to adult children? You must admit that they have already been warned [to observe the Sabbath]. Rather, [this word] comes only to warn adults concerning young children resting [from work] (Mechilta). This is the meaning of what we learned [in the Mishnah]: If a young child comes to extinguish [a fire on the Sabbath], you may not allow him [to do so] since you are responsible for his resting [from work] (Shab. 121a).

Kaplan Translation

The Fourth Commandment

Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. You can work during the six weekdays and do all your tasks. But **Saturday** is the Sabbath to God your Lord. Do not do anything that constitutes **work**. [This includes] you, your son, your daughter, your slave, your maid, your animal, and the **foreigner** in your gates.

Saturday

Literally, 'the seventh day,' but this is the Hebrew expression for Saturday.

work

By tradition, there are 39 categories of work (Shabbath 73a). These include carrying (Exodus 16:29), cooking and other food preparation (Exodus 16:23), lighting fires (Exodus 35:3), and all agricultural activities (Exodus 34:21). By tradition, all such activities as writing, making cloth, sewing, making leather, building, laundering, and assembling articles are also forbidden.

foreigner

(cf. Ramban). Especially a gentile employee (Ralbag) or, 'proselyte' (Mekhilta), even a minor (Ralbag). See Exodus 23:12.

“Remember²³ the Sabbath²⁴ day to set it apart as holy.²⁵ For six days²⁶ you may labor²⁷ and do all your work,²⁸ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; on it²⁹ you shall not do any work, you,³⁰ or your son, or your daughter, or your male servant, or your female servant, or your cattle, or the resident foreigner who is in your gates.³¹

^{23tn} The text uses the infinitive absolute *זָכַר* (zakhor) for the commandment for the Sabbath day, which is the sign of the Sinaitic Covenant. The infinitive absolute functions in place of the emphatic imperative here (see GKC 346 §113.bb); the absolute stresses the basic verbal idea of the root – remembering. The verb includes the mental activity of recalling and pondering as well as the consequent actions for such remembering.

^{24tn} The word “Sabbath” is clearly connected to the verb *שָׁבַט* (shavat, “to cease, desist, rest”). There are all kinds of theories as to the origin of the day, most notably in the Babylonian world, but the differences are striking in so far as the pagan world had these days filled with magic. Nevertheless, the pagan world does bear witness to a tradition of a regular day set aside for special sacrifices. See, for example, H. W. Wolff, “The Day of Rest in the Old Testament,” *LTQ* 7 (1972): 65-76; H. Routtenberg, “The Laws of Sabbath: Biblical Sources,” *Dor le Dor* 6 (1977): 41-43, 99-101, 153-55, 204-6; G. Robinson, “The Idea of Rest in the OT and the Search for the Basic Character of Sabbath,” *ZAW* 92 (1980): 32-42; and M. Tsevat, “The Basic Meaning of the Biblical Sabbath,” *ZAW* 84 (1972): 447-59.

^{25tn} The Piel infinitive construct provides the purpose of remembering the Sabbath day – to set it apart, to make it distinct from the other days. Verses 9 and 10 explain in part how this was to be done. To set this day apart as holy taught Israel the difference between the holy and the profane, that there was something higher than daily life. If an Israelite bent down to the ground laboring all week, the Sabbath called his attention to the heavens, to pattern life after the Creator (B. Jacob, *Exodus*, 569-70).

^{26tn} The text has simply “six days,” but this is an adverbial accusative of time, answering how long they were to work (GKC 374 §118.k).

^{27tn} The imperfect tense has traditionally been rendered as a commandment, “you will labor.” But the point of this commandment is the prohibition of work on the seventh day. The permission nuance of the imperfect works well here.

^{28tn} This is the occupation, or business of the work week.

^{29tn} The phrase “on it” has been supplied for clarity.

^{30sn} The wife is omitted in the list, not that she was considered unimportant, nor that she was excluded from the rest, but rather in reflecting her high status. She was not man’s servant, not lesser than the man, but included with the man as an equal before God. The “you” of the commandments is addressed to the Israelites individually, male and female, just as God in the Garden of Eden held both the man and the woman responsible for their individual sins (see B. Jacob, *Exodus*, 567-68).

^{31sn} The Sabbath day was the sign of the Sinaitic Covenant. It required Israel to cease from ordinary labors and devote the day to God. It required Israel to enter into the life of God, to share his Sabbath. It gave them a chance to recall the work of the Creator. But in the NT the apostolic teaching for the Church does not make one day holier than another, but calls for the entire life to be sanctified to God. This teaching is an application of the meaning of entering into the Sabbath of God. The book of Hebrews declares that those who believe in Christ cease from their works and enter into his Sabbath rest. For a Christian keeping Saturday holy is not a requirement from the NT; it may be a good and valuable thing to have a day of rest and refreshment, but it is not a binding law for the Church. The principle of setting aside time to worship and serve the Lord has been carried forward, but the strict regulations have not.

New American Bible (2011) **Remember the sabbath day—keep it holy.* Six days you may labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God. [[20:8–11] Ex 23:12; 31:13–16; 34:21; 35:2; Lv 23:3] You shall not do any work, either you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your work animal, or the resident alien within your gates.**

* [20:8] Keep it holy: i.e., to set it apart from the other days of the week, in part, as the following verse explains, by not doing work that is ordinarily done in the course of a week. The special importance of this command can be seen in the fact that, together with vv. 9–11, it represents the longest of the Decalogue’s precepts.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner’s Mechanical Trans. ...remember the day of ceasing, to set him apart, six days you will serve, and you will do all your business, and the seventh day is a ceasing to "YHWH ^{He Is} your "Elohiym ^{Powers}, you will not do (any) business, you and your son and your

Context Group Version	daughter, your servant and your bondwoman, and your beast, and your stranger which is in your gates,...
New King James Version	Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it special. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to YHWH your God: you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your male slave, nor your female slave, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is inside your gates:...
Young's Updated LT	"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 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. "Remember the Sabbath-day to sanctify it; six days you will labour, and have done all your work, and the seventh day is a Sabbath to Jehovah your God; you will not do any work, thou, and your son, and your daughter, your man-servant, and your handmaid, and your cattle, and your sojourner who is within your gates,...

The gist of this passage: The fourth commandment is the setting aside of the seventh day, the Sabbath, to God. In that day, no work would be done—not by anyone in Israel.

8-10

Exodus 20:8			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
zâkar (זָכַר) [pronounced zaw-KAHR]	to remember, to recall, to call to mind	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #2142 BDB #269
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally to, toward	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
shâbbath (שַׁבָּת) [pronounced shawb-BAHTH]	ceasing, resting; desisting; transliterated Sabbath	feminine/masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7676 BDB #992
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qâdash (קָדַשׁ) [pronounced kaw-DAHSH]	to regard as holy, to declare holy or sacred; to consecrate, to sanctify, to inaugurate with holy rites	Piel infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6942 BDB #872

Translation: Remember the sabbath day and consider it set apart [to God].

There has already been some preliminary discussion of the seventh day, so the people are aware that God sees it as a day of some significance.

God calls for it to be regarded as holy—that is, set apart specifically for Him.

The Ten Commandments, like the so-called Lord's prayer and the sermon on the mount, have been memorized or reread so many times in the King James Version that it is difficult to distance ourselves from it to attain a better

understanding of what is here. This verse is not a command but almost a title of sorts. *Remembering* is in the Qal infinitive absolute, meaning that it is a verbal noun (although it can act as a noun, verb or adverb). The unfortunate neglect of prepositions has caused many scholars to overlook the lâmed preposition near the end of the verse, which means *to, for, in regard to*. Qâdash (קִדַּשׁ) [pronounced *kaw-DAHSH*] is a Piel infinitive construct, which is also a verbal noun which can be a noun, verb; it can take on prefixed prepositions, the article, and suffixes. It can be a subject, predicate, object of a preposition (which is what it is here). It means *to set apart, to make holy, to consecrate, to dedicate*. The examination of the word *Sabbath* will be reserved for later. The Piel infinitive construct is affixed to the 3rd person masculine singular suffix (which refers back to the *Sabbath*).

We do not have a command in this verse or in the next. The actual injunction will follow in v. 10 (although, it will not be in the imperative).

Exodus 20:8 **Remembering a day of [the] Sabbath to consecrate him (it).** (Kukis slavishly literal translation)

There is no command here to be followed, although it would be reasonable to understand this to mean, *set aside the seventh day*. On the other hand, this could be understood to be the title of the fourth commandment.

Bill Mounce says that the Qal infinitive absolute can be used as a Qal imperative (**citing** this verse in particular); but there is no actual command where there could be. God could have used the Qal imperative here, but, for whatever reason, He did not. Interestingly enough, the imperative mood is not used anywhere in the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20:8 **To remember a day of [the] Sabbath, to regard it as holy.** (Also a very literal rendering of this verse)

Exodus 20:8 **Remember the sabbath day and consider it set apart [to God].** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:9			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shishshâh (שִׁשְׁשָׁה) [pronounced <i>shish-SHAW</i>]	<i>six</i>	feminine form of numeral; construct form	Strong's #8337 BDB #995
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced <i>yaw-MEEM</i>]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
‘âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>ġaw^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

Exodus 20:9			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כָּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
m ^e lâ'kâh (מְלָכָה) [pronounced <i>m^elaw-KAWH</i>]	<i>work, occupation, labor, workmanship, items produced by work; that which is related to work</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4399 BDB #521

Translation: *You will work for six days and you will do all of your work [in those six days];...*

Whatever work a person believes needs to be done, will have to be done on the six other days of the week. So, God expects every person to work for 6 days.

Here is a verse pretty well translated correctly in any Bible. The verb *labor* is in the Qal imperfect, which means continuous action. You work throughout the week. So the first verb could be rendered, *you keep on working, you continuously labor*.

The second verb is the Qal perfect of 'âsâh, which means *to do, to make*. Because this is in the perfect tense, we are looking at a completed action, so I chose a synonym with that inference. In both cases, the verbs are in the 2nd person singular; so, like the rest of the commandments, these are addressed to each individual in Israel. Every Israelite would have understood this to mean that God is speaking directly to them individually.

Exodus 20:9 *You will work for six days and you will do all of your work [in those six days];...* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

This is a figure of speech where the imperfect and perfect tense are used to examine our work from two different perspectives: the daily grind (the imperfect tense) and the work week having been completed (the perfect tense). However, the imperative mood is implied because of the 2nd person singular and the construction of the previous verses.

The concept of not spending six days working was not anticipated by this commandment. Nevertheless, there are some people who do this (that is, they do not work).

Exodus 20:9 *You will work for six days and you will do all of your work [in those six days];...* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

Exodus 20:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shēbīy'îy (שִׁבְיָי) [pronounced shē-bee-EE]	seventh	masculine singular adjective; numeral ordinate with the definite article	Strong's #7637 BDB #988
shābbath (שַׁבָּת) [pronounced shawb-BAHTH]	ceasing, resting; desisting; transliterated Sabbath	feminine/masculine singular noun	Strong's #7676 BDB #992
lāmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by; on account of; about, concerning	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...but the seventh day [will be] a sabbath to [honor] Y^ehowah your Elohim.

V. 9 reads *six of days* and v. 10 reads (literally) *day of seventh*. It is a matter of the numeral is in the construct in v. 9 and *day* is in the construct in v. 10. This grammatically sets the seventh day apart.

The word *Sabbath* is a transliteration. It comes from the verb which means *rest, cease*. It is Saturday and not Sunday. Furthermore, there was never any official command in the New Testament to change the Sabbath to Sunday. However, there is no command in the New Testament to keep the Sabbath, the book of Hebrews notwithstanding (I later will explain that verse in its proper context).

Although the believer often worships on a Sunday, the Christian Sunday is *not* the Jewish Sabbath. They are entirely different days and treated in different ways. It would make no sense for the Christian to proclaim Sunday the new day of rest. The day of rest will always be the seventh day. Furthermore, Sunday is not the Christians simply choosing a new day to worship on.

However, right now we are studying the Sabbath, and this was a day which was to be observed by the Hebrew people.

Exodus 20:10a ...but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. (NKJV)

From this point forward (from the giving of the Ten Commandments), the people would continue to work, but only for six days. The seventh day would be considered holy (set apart) to God. It would be treated differently from the other days.

Exodus 20:10b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לו' or לא') [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
kôl (כָּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
m ^e lâ'kâh (מְלָכָה) [pronounced m ^e law-KAWH]	<i>work, occupation, labor, workmanship, items produced by work; that which is related to work</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4399 BDB #521

Translation: You will not do any work—...

On the seventh day, no work was to be done. Here, as with the other commandments, the 2nd person masculine singular is used with Qal imperfect verbs, so that every commandment applies to each and every person.

Remember that God is saying these things directly to the people. Every individual can hear these words spoken aloud. God is speaking to every person in the Israeli encampment as individuals.

Exodus 20:10a-b ...but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work:... (NKJV)

Exodus 20:10c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בַּת) [pronounced bahth]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

Translation: ...[not] you or your sons or daughters;...

Again, God emphasizes that no one is to work on the seventh day. A parent is not allowed to pick up the slack by making his children work. The sons or daughters are not allowed to work.

Exodus 20:10d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	slave, servant; worker; underling; subject	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘āmâh (אֲמָהָ) [pronounced aw-MAW]	maid, maidservant, handmaid, female servant, female slave	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #519 BDB #51

Translation: ...[not] your male or female servants;...

A family is not allowed to work their servants on the Sabbath—not their male or female servants. The Sabbath was not a day of rest for the Jewish faithful family, while their servants ran around and did everything that needed to be done on that day. If they had servants, those servants could not work either.

Exodus 20:10e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e hêmâh (בְּהֵמָה) [pronounced b ^e hay-MAW]	beasts [a collective of all animals]; mammal (s), beast, animal, cattle, livestock [domesticated animals]; wild beasts	feminine singular noun often used in the collective sense; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #929 BDB #96
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gêr (גֵּר) [pronounced gare]	sojourner, stranger, immigrant [or, outsider], temporary resident [inhabitant]; newcomer without inherited [property] rights	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1616 BDB #158
‘ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	that, which, when, who, whom; where	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

Exodus 20:10e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sha'ar (שַׁעַר) [pronounced SHAH- gahr]	<i>gates [control of city can be implied]; entrance [through the gates]; gates can be a metonym for cities</i>	masculine plural noun with thye 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8179 BDB #1044

Translation: ...[not even] your cattle or the immigrant within your gates.

They are not to take their cattle out to do work; they are not to lay a work requirement on the temporary immigrant who lives with the family (perhaps hired for a short period of time, for planting or harvesting).

God is eliminating all different ways that people might try to get around the Sabbath. They cannot decide that they want some work done and then assign it to someone else. This would be a violation of the Sabbath commandment. God says specifically that making new Hebrew people work is not an option.

Exodus 20:10 ...but the seventh day [will be] a sabbath to [honor] Y^ehowah your Elohim. You will not do any work—[not] you or your sons or daughters; [not] your male or female servants; [not even] your cattle or the immigrant within your gates. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The NKJV finishes v. 9 in v. 10; and then another sentence begins in v. 10:

Exodus 20:8–10 Remember the sabbath day and consider it set apart [to God]. You will work for six days and you will do all of your work [in those six days]; but the seventh day [will be] a sabbath to [honor] Y^ehowah your Elohim. You will not do any work—[not] you or your sons or daughters; [not] your male or female servants; [not even] your cattle or the immigrant within your gates. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:8–10 Remember the sabbath day and set it aside as a holy day to God. You will complete all of your work in six days, but you will rest on the sabbath day to honor Jehovah your God. You will not do any work on the seventh day, nor will your children, your servants, your cattle or even your immigrants. (Kukis paraphrase)

vv. 8–10 is the entire command.

Going forward, God gives an explanation (or the rationale) for the Sabbath day observance:

For in six of days made Yehowah the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that [is] in them. And so He rests in the day the seventh. Upon so, blessed Yehowah a day of the sabbath and so he consecrated him.

Exodus
20:11

For, in six days, Yehowah made the heavens and the earth, and the sea and all that is in them. Therefore, He rested on the seventh day. For this reason, Yehowah blessed the sabbath day and set it apart [to Himself].

This is because, in six days, Jehovah made the heavens and the earth; and the seas and everything in them. Therefore, because He was finished, He rested on the seventh day. So, for these reasons, Jehovah blessed the seventh day and set it apart from all other days.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	For in six of days made Yehowah the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that [is] in them. And so He rests in the day the seventh. Upon so, blessed Yehowah a day of the sabbath and so he consecrated him.
Dead Sea Scrolls Targum (Onkelos)	. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the seas and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the day of Shabbatha, and sanctified it.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	For in six days the Lord created the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and whatever is therein, and rested on the seventh day: therefore the Lord hath blessed the day of Shabbatha and sanctified it.
Revised Douay-Rheims	For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day: therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	...for in six days Mar-Yah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore Mar-Yah blessed the Sabbath day, and made it holy.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the seas, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	For in six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, and the sea and all things in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and everything in them, and he took his rest on the seventh day: for this reason the Lord has given his blessing to the seventh day and made it holy.
Easy English	In six days, the LORD made the sky, the earth and the sea. He also made everything that is in them. But on the seventh day, the LORD rested. And he blessed the seventh day and he made it special.
Easy-to-Read Version—2001	Why? Because the Lord worked six days and made the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. And on the seventh day, God rested. In this way, the Lord blessed the Sabbath--the day of rest. The Lord made that a very special day.
Easy-to-Read Version—2006	That is because the LORD worked six days and made the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. And on the seventh day, he rested. In this way the LORD blessed the Sabbath—the day of rest. He made that a very special day.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
<i>The Message</i>	.
Names of God Bible	In six days Yahweh made heaven, earth, and the sea, along with everything in them. He didn't work on the seventh day. That's why Yahweh blessed the day he stopped his work and set this day apart as holy.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	In six days I made the sky, the earth, the oceans, and everything in them, but on the seventh day I rested. That's why I made the Sabbath a special day that belongs to me.
The Living Bible	For in six days the Lord made the heaven, earth, and sea, and everything in them, and rested the seventh day; so he blessed the Sabbath day and set it aside for rest [or "hallowed it."].

New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them. And He rested on the seventh day. So the Lord gave honor to the Day of Rest and made it holy.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	I, Yahweh, created the sky, the earth, the ocean, and everything that is in them in six days. Then I stopped my work of creating everything and rested on the seventh day. That is the reason that I, Yahweh, have blessed the rest day and set it apart to be a sacred day.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	For after Jehovah made the skies, the lands, the seas, and everything in them, He rested on the seventh day. Then Jehovah blest the seventh day and made it holy.
Beck's American Translation	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	It was six days the Lord spent in making heaven and earth and sea and all that is in them; on the seventh day he rested, and that is why the Lord has blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.
Translation for Translators	I, Yahweh, created the sky, the earth, the ocean, and everything that is in them, in six days. Then I stopped my work of creating everything, and rested on the seventh day. That is the reason that I, Yahweh, have blessed the rest day and set it apart to be a <i>sacred/special day</i> .

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	"In six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth, and the sea, and everything in them, and stopped work on the seventh day. And so the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it special."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	...for in six ages the EVER-LIVING made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but rested at the seventh age ; therefore the EVER-LIVING blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.
International Standard V	...because the LORD made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them, in six days, then he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy [i.e. set it apart].
Unlocked Literal Bible	For in six days I, Yahweh, made the heavens, earth, and sea, and everything that is in them, and then rested on the seventh day. Therefore I, Yahweh, blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart to myself.
Urim-Thummim Version	For in 6 days YHWH made the visible universe and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the 7th day, then YHWH blessed the Sabbath day, and consecrated it.
Wikipedia Bible Project	Because six days did Yahweh make the skies and the Earth, and the seas and all that is within them, and he rested on the seventh day. Because of this, Yahweh blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New Jerusalem Bible	For in six days Yahweh made the heavens, earth and sea and all that these contain, but on the seventh day he rested; that is why Yahweh has blessed the Sabbath day and made it sacred.
New RSV	For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.
Revised English Bible—1989	...for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and on the seventh day he rested. Therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and declared it holy.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	For in six days, <i>ADONAI</i> made heaven and earth, the sea and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. This is why <i>ADONAI</i> blessed the day, <i>Shabbat</i> , and separated it for himself.
exeGesés companion Bible	...for in six days Yah Veh worked the heavens and earth, the sea and all therein; and rested the seventh day: so Yah Veh blessed the shabbath day and hallowed it.
Kaplan Translation	It was during the six weekdays that God made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on Saturday. God therefore blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
Tree of Life Version	For in six days <i>ADONAI</i> made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Thus <i>ADONAI</i> blessed <i>Yom Shabbat</i> , and made it holy.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	FOR IN SIX DAYS JESUS FASHIONED (<i>remodeled</i>) THE UNIVERSE AND THE EARTH, AND THE SEA AND ALL THINGS IN THEM, AND RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY; THEREFORE JESUS BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY, AND SANCTIFIED IT. †(<i>Sanctified means to be made Holy & set apart from the other. This was NEVER done to the first day of the week, now done as "Sunday"</i>).
Awful Scroll Bible	For in six Days Jehovah is to have made the expanse, the solid grounds, and the sea, and was to rest on the seventh day; even Jehovah is to have found favorable the sabbath day, and was to set it apart.
Concordant Literal Version	For in six days Yahweh dealt with the heavens and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He stopped on the seventh day. Therefore, Yahweh blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	For in sheshet yamim Hashem made Shomayim and Ha'Aretz, the yam, and all that in them is, and rested Yom HaShevi'i; for this reason Hashem blessed Yom HaShabbos, and set it apart as kodesh.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and everything that is in them, and He rested (<i>ceased</i>) on the seventh day. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy [that is, set it apart for His purposes].
The Expanded Bible	The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the ·sky [heavens], the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and ·made it holy [consecrated/sanctified it].
Kretzmann's Commentary	For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it, set it apart to the Jews for His worship. The commandment was later fixed even more definitely by the mention of specific forms of labor which were not permitted among the children of Israel, Psalm 104:23; Num. 4:47; Neh. 3:15; Jer. 17:21; Amos 8:5; Num. 15:32 ff. Note that the simple understanding of the text demands the assumption that the Lord created the world in six ordinary days.
The Voice	For the Eternal made the heavens <i>above</i> , the earth <i>below</i> , the seas, and all the creatures in them in six days. Then, on the seventh day, He rested. That is why He blessed the Sabbath Day and made it sacred.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach

For [in] six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

and He rested on the seventh day: As if [it were] possible, He ascribed rest [even] to Himself to teach (as an example) from Him of *kal vachomer* [a fortiori] reasoning for man, whose work is with toil and fatigue, that he must rest on the Sabbath. [I.e., although God does not and did not actually rest, He had His cessation of creating recorded as rest, so that humans would learn that if God, Whose work is accomplished without any toil or fatigue, rested on the Sabbath, surely people, whose work is accomplished only with hard work and fatigue, must rest on the Sabbath.]—[from Mechilta]

blessed...and sanctified it: He blessed it with manna to double it on the sixth day—"double bread"—and He sanctified it with manna, that it did not fall then [on the Sabbath]. — [from Mechilta]

New American Bible (2011) For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them; but on the seventh day he rested. [Ex 31:17; Gn 2:2–3] That is why the LORD has blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.*

* [20:11] Here, in a formulation which reflects Priestly theology, the veneration of the sabbath is grounded in God's own hallowing of the sabbath in creation. Compare 31:13; Dt 5:15.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...given that six days "YHWH ^{He Is} " (made) the skies and the land, the sea and all which is in them, and he rested in the seventh day, <therefore>, "YHWH ^{He Is} " [respected] the day of the ceasing, and he set him apart,...
Context Group Version	...for in six days YHWH made the skies and land, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: therefore YHWH esteemed the Sabbath day, and sanctified it.
English Standard Version	For in six days the LORD made heaven and 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.
Green's Literal Translation	For <i>in</i> six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all which is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; on account of this Jehovah blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it.
Young's Updated LT	...— for six days has Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rests in the seventh day; therefore has Jehovah blessed the Sabbath-day, and does sanctify it.

The gist of this passage:

The reason that God wanted the people to observe the Sabbath is, He made the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that was in them in 6 days, and then He rested on the 7th and declared that day set apart to Himself.

Exodus 20:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shishshâh (ששָׁה) [pronounced <i>shish-SHAW</i>]	<i>six</i>	feminine form of numeral; construct form	Strong's #8337 BDB #995

Exodus 20:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced shaw-MAH-yim]	<i>heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)</i>	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
’erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: For, in six days, Y^ehowah made the heavens and the earth,...

The Creation Special:

God made the heavens and the earth in six days. In fact, God created the heavens and the earth in an instant (Genesis 1:1). But what God is dealing with here is the restoration of the earth (Genesis 1:2b–31), which had fallen into disrepair (Genesis 1:2a).

The verbs used in Genesis 1:1 and Exodus 20:11 are different. In Genesis 1:1, we have the Qal perfect of bârâ’ (בָּרָא) [pronounced baw-RAWH], which means, *to create; to create something from energy [or from the immaterial]; to create that which is immaterial; to produce*. Strong's #1254 BDB #135. When we get to Exodus 20:11, we have the Qal perfect of the verb ‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH], which is clearly a different verb. It means, *to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; to accomplish*.

This second verb is taking materials which are already there (whatever God created in Genesis 1:1) and modifying, combining and fabricating them. Strong's #6213 BDB #793.

Genesis 1:1 takes place instantly. The greatest thing ever created is the entire universe, and yet, it was simply called into being and it instantly appeared. Why was there not a process given to us for the entire universe, as is described in Genesis 1:3 and following? This is why. The only Beings to observe Genesis 1:1 were the three Members of the Godhead. They did not need some long drawn out process, in order for Them to understand or appreciated what They had just done.

Now, there are three basic views with regards to the Genesis creation. (1) The heavens and the earth were created; the earth somehow turned to crap; and then God restored the earth in six days. This is often called the gap theory (the gap being Genesis 1:2). (2) God created the entire universe in an instant, but it was not exactly what He needed; and there were six days of fine-tuning which took place. (3) There is the day-age theory, where the days of Genesis 1 are actually ages, and that God's creation took place over very long periods of time, in order to make the creation account of Genesis 1 line up with the concept of evolution. (1) and (3) can both be true together (or not); and (2) and (3) can both be true together, or not.

I believe that the first view is correct, and the second and third are not.

In the first view, Genesis 1:1 is instantaneous. However, Genesis 1:3–31 appears to have been a six-day process. Why? There were observers for the six-day process; there were no observers (apart from the Godhead) for Genesis 1:1. Because there were observers for the restoration, they needed to see what God did step-by-step.

Why was this process necessary? God created the entire universe and angelic beings; and apparently, they could go anywhere in the universe that they wanted to go, but there was this one planet, the earth, which was a planet of incredible beauty. What happened between vv. 1 and 3? Genesis 1:2, where the earth appears to have been transformed into a waste dump which was then packed in ice.

Genesis 1:2a describes, albeit briefly, the process which took place:

Genesis 1:2a *And the earth [or, land] had become desolate and a waste and [there was] [extreme] darkness upon the surface of the depths [the deep waters]...* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

How do we know that God did not create the earth as desolate or as a waste? Isaiah 45:18 *For Yahweh who created the heavens, the God who formed the earth and made it, who established it and didn't create it a waste, who formed it to be inhabited says: "I am Yahweh. There is no other.* (WEB)

So, what did God do as a result?

Genesis 1:2b *...and the Spirit of Elohim was hovering [moving, brooding] over the surface of the waters.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The verb for *hovering* is what a mother hen does over her eggs. She warms them for hatching. The Spirit of God is doing something like that over the ice pack in which the earth was contained, hovering over all of that until much of the surface of the earth becomes water. This took a period of time, but we do not know how long it took. It was not something which could really be observed, because there was no light at the time.

Water is quite the amazing thing in the universe, because it is almost never found in this form. The universe has temperatures which are very close to absolute zero, which is -273°C and the **hottest place** in the universe is, according to a 2016 study of the quasar 3C273, 10 trillion°C at the plasma around the black hole. I chose to look

at this in Celsius, because the freezing and boiling points of H₂O essentially define the Celsius scale. 0°C is where water freezes and 100°C is where water boils and becomes steam (32° and 212° respectively on the °F scale). Considering that the temperatures of our universe range from -273° up to 10 trillion °C, that temperature range for water is really, really small. On earth, it does not appear to be a small range to us, because most of us live in places where the maximum Celsius temperature range is maybe 50°C (give or take). So, for planet earth, a 100° range seems pretty big. But, when considering the universe, such a temperature range is infinitesimal. Where in the universe do we have such a small range of temperatures? The earth, of course, but of the universe that we can observe, temperature range is much greater. The moon, which is pretty darned close to the earth, and therefore, subject to many of the same things that we are. The moon **ranges in temperature** from -246°C on up to 121°C—a pretty much unlivable range (if we are careful not to expose ourselves to the extremes). If we go to Mars, the temperature range is -153°C to around 20°C, an almost liveable range. The earth's range, by the way, is from -89°C on up to 57°C. Mercury is much colder and much warmer than the earth (pick a good spot to land). This sort of thing fascinates me, and all the temperatures for our solar system are found **here**. I did not actually know that Jupiter and Saturn actually have no surface, as we have on the other planets.

Anyway, in order for us to have water, our temperature range has to be quite narrow, and it has to be maintained in this narrow range. The existence of a massive amount of water on earth helps to maintain that narrow range. The massive amount of water needs the narrow range and it appears to help stabilize our temperatures at the same time.

Exodus 20:11a **For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth,...** (NKJV)

We do not have the word for *create* here in Exodus 20:11, as that is not what God is speaking of, but He uses the word for *to make, to accomplish, to do*. This is the word where something is made out of something else. The heavens and the earth had already been created in Genesis 1:1. During the six days, God restored the earth and its atmosphere to what we have today. This restoration process took six days; not because God was unable to do it sooner (it could have been instantaneous); but He worked for six days and rested on the seventh is done for two reasons. First, God had an audience, so He took time so that His audience could be able to observe and mentally process what He did. Secondly, the six days work (by God) followed by a seventh day of rest is done for a type. The Sabbath illustrates resting from our works for salvation. We do not work for our salvation; we enter into God's rest instead. We are able to do this because God has provided everything that we need (as He did in the six days of restoration).

Exodus 20:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yâm (יָם) [pronounced yawm]	<i>sea, lake, river, seaward, west, westward</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3220 BDB #410
wê (or vê) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

Exodus 20:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kôl ʾăsher mean <i>all which, all whom, all that [which]; whomever, whatever, whatever else, all whose, all where, wherever.</i>			
bē (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

Translation: ...and the sea and all that is in them.

God set boundaries for the seas and dry land. All of life which is on land, in the heavens or in the sea—God created all of that within the six time period of restoration.

God had an audience for the restoration of the earth, whereas, there was no audience for the instant during which that He created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1). It appears that planet Earth was the living quarters for all angels, although it is not clear whether elect and fallen angels lived there together or how exactly all of that worked. In any case, God packed the earth in ice; and in the first chapter of Genesis, God thawed the earth (Genesis 1:2b) and then restored it (Genesis 1:3–31), with all angelic creation watching.

Exodus 20:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nûwach (נָוַח) [pronounced NOO-ahkh]	<i>rest, cause to rest, to be at rest, set down, lay down, deposit, leave</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5117 (and #3240) BDB #628
bē (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
shēbîyʾîy (שִׁבְעִי) [pronounced sh ^e -bee-EE]	<i>seventh</i>	masculine singular adjective; numeral ordinate with the definite article	Strong's #7637 BDB #988

Translation: Therefore, He rested on the seventh day.

In restoring the earth, God did not rest on the seventh day due to physical exhaustion (God is not a physical being). He had completed all that He needed to do. He was done. So God stops working. There was nothing more to provide. The earth was ready to be inhabited by a perfect man and woman, along with a massive range of plants and animals (all of which was created or made during the six-day process).

Exodus 20:11d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, ‘al kên (עַל כֵּן) mean <i>so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, consequently, on this account, on account, for this reason</i> . Literally, these words would be translated <i>upon so, upon therefore, upon then</i> .			
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK^e</i>]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yohoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
’êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
shâbbath (שַׁבָּת) [pronounced <i>shawb-BAHTH</i>]	<i>ceasing, resting; desisting; transliterated Sabbath</i>	feminine/masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7676 BDB #992

Translation: For this reason, Y^ehowah blessed the sabbath day...

God blessed the Sabbath day. He set it aside and He made it a day of rest and refreshment and for spiritual recharging.

I more or less observe the first day of the week, which is Sunday (the Sabbath day was Saturday). I sometimes do a little work, but I do not schedule any and spend the day writing and studying. For me, that is a great blessing and great enjoyment. You may be surprised, but careful examination of the Bible and writing commentary is a blessing to me from God.

Exodus 20:11e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâdash (קִדַּשׁ) [pronounced kaw-DAHSH]	<i>to regard as holy, to declare holy or sacred; to consecrate, to sanctify, to inaugurate with holy rites</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect; Piel infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6942 BDB #872

Translation: ...and set it apart [to Himself].

God regards the seventh day as holy; as set apart for Him and to Him.

Exodus 20:11 For, in six days, Yehowah made the heavens and the earth, and the sea and all that is in them. Therefore, He rested on the seventh day. For this reason, Yehowah blessed the sabbath day and set it apart [to Himself]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

I find it fascinating that we have the Sabbath in the Old Testament, but that we do not have a direct crossover into the Church Age. The Sabbath is not being ignored by the church; nor was the Sabbath changed into Sunday for the church.

One possible advantage of having Christian churches in the Church Age following and obeying the Sabbath is, you immediately can cross those churches off of your list of possible grace churches to attend. A church which observes the Sabbath in any way is simply not a grace church (this does not mean that Berachah Church's policy of no Bible class on Saturday was an observation of the Sabbath). R. B. Thieme, Jr. really needed a day off, so Saturday was a logical choice. During conferences, they had classes on Saturday.

Exodus 20:11 This is because, in six days, Jehovah made the heavens and the earth; and the seas and everything in them. Therefore, because He was finished, He rested on the seventh day. So, for these reasons, Jehovah blessed the seventh day and set it apart from all other days. (Kukis paraphrase)

The ESV; capitalized is used below, replacing Merritt's references (which were probably from the KJV). I made a few additions to this doctrine and did some editing.

The Doctrine of the Sabbath (by L. G. Merritt/Kukis)

- The word Sabbath is derived from the Hebrew Shabbat, which means "to cease" or "to desist."
 - The Hebrew word is shâbbath (שַׁבָּת) [pronounced shawb-BAHTH], and it means, *to cease, to rest; to desist*; it is transliterated *Sabbath*. Strong's #7676 BDB #992.
 - The Greek word sabbaton (σάββατον) [pronounced SAHB-baht-on] is clearly transliterated from the Hebrew. Sabbaton is sometimes used to designate a single Sabbath. The word is also applied to several festivals in the Old Testament, but principally and usually it refers to the seventh day of the week, the Jewish day of rest and worship.
- The Sabbath was referenced at creation in Genesis 2:2, where the root occurs from which the word is derived. God ceased from His labor on the seventh day of creation and set a pattern for man to follow. Genesis 2:2–3 *And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.*

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3. Although the Bible, prior to Exodus 20, does not clearly delineate man following a Sabbath, maybe he did? Taking a position one way or the other would be speculative.
 - 1) Clearly, we have points of agreement and disagreement from dispensation to dispensation.
 - 2) The Age of Israel has quite a number of prophets; but there are no legitimate prophets in the post-canon Church Age.
 - 3) Circumcision was an absolute requirement of the Jewish believers in the Age of Israel; but it is not considered anything, good or bad, right or wrong, in the Church Age.
 - 4) Premeditated murder is clearly wrong in all **dispensations**.
 - 5) So we can put together a spiritual life for believers in the Age of the Gentiles (the age which precedes the **Jewish Age**); but there are things which would be missing. The Sabbath is mentioned, made holy prior to the Jewish Age, but was it followed and to what extent was it followed? We do not know the answer to that.
4. The incorporation of the Sabbath into the Decalogue was based on God's resting at the time of creation and on His deliverance of Israel from Egypt. (Exodus 20:11; Deuteronomy 5:15) Exodus 20:11 **For in six days the LORD made heaven and 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.** Deuteronomy 5:15 **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.**
5. Some have tried to trace the institution of the Sabbath back to Babylonia. Although the word appears in Babylonian inscriptions, it was not attached to the seventh day of the week (the Babylonians had a five-day week), nor was it a day of cessation from labor.
 - 1) J. R. Sampey remarks: "Hence the assertions of some Assyriologists with regard to the Babylonian origin of the Sabbath must be taken with several grains of salt." The Bible attributes the origin of the Sabbath to God's example at creation.
 - 2) After the creation account, the Sabbath is next mentioned in relation to the giving of the manna (Exodus 16:23-30); then at Sinai, when it became part of the Decalogue. (Exodus 20:8-11)
 - 3) Exodus 16:22-30 **On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, he said to them, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.'" So they laid it aside till the morning, as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, and there were no worms in it. Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none." On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See! The LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day." So the people rested on the seventh day.**
 Exodus 20:8-11 **"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 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, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and 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. "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.**
 - 4) So, for a very short time, the Israelites had become conditioned to some sort of Sabbath observance prior to receiving the Law.
6. God ordained keeping the Sabbath as the sign of His covenant with Israel. (Exodus 31:12-17)
 - 1) Exodus 31:12-17 **And the LORD said to Moses, "You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Above all you shall keep My Sabbaths, for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. You shall keep the Sabbath,**

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because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. It is a sign forever between Me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."

- 2) Thus the Sabbath acted as the seal of the Mosaic covenant (Isaiah 56:4–6), (Genesis 17:11) Isaiah 56:3–6 Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from His people"; and let not the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." For thus says the LORD: "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, who choose the things that please Me and hold fast My covenant, I will give in My house and within My walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off." You see, as eunuchs, they have no sons and daughters to follow them in life.
- 3) The Sabbath corresponds to circumcision as the seal of the Abrahamic covenant. Genesis 17:9–11 And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. So both the Sabbath and circumcision are signs of God's special relationship with the Hebrew people.
7. The other books of the Pentateuch contain legislation for Sabbath observance. The Day of Atonement was designated a Sabbath of complete rest, and the first, fifteenth, and twenty-third days of the seventh month (Feast of Trumpets, Feast of Tabernacles) were to be observed with a Sabbath rest.
8. The seventh year was to be a sabbatical year. Leviticus 25:2–7 "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you, the land shall keep a Sabbath to the LORD. For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the LORD. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. The Sabbath of the land shall provide food for you, for yourself and for your male and female slaves and for your hired worker and the sojourner who lives with you, and for your cattle and for the wild animals that are in your land: all its yield shall be for food.
 - 1) Not only were the fields to enjoy a rest from cultivation but the debts of fellow Israelites were to be cancelled. Deuteronomy 15:1–3 "At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed. Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release.
 - 2) As an aside, the Israelites did not observe the Sabbath year and this defect in their behavior gives the rationale to God for the time that they spent outside of the land.
9. After every series of seven sabbatical years the fiftieth year was to be observed as a year of jubilee when property reverted to its original owner and Israelites in servitude regained freedom.
 - 1) Leviticus 25:8–10 "You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years. Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.
 - 2) Leviticus 25:54–55 And if he is not redeemed by these means, then he and his children with him shall be released in the year of jubilee. For it is to me that the people of Israel are servants. They are my servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.
10. With the development of the synagogue during the inter-testament period, the Sabbath became a day of worship and study of the law as well as cessation from work. The beginnings of legalism and petty

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restrictions on Sabbath observance began during this period.

11. Jesus declared Himself to be Lord of the Sabbath, and that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Mark 2:27–28 *And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."*
12. Jesus pointed the Jews back to the original intent of the Sabbath ordinance, to provide rest for man, and taught that the higher principle of mercy should take precedence.
 - 1) Matthew 12:5–12 *Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."* He went on from there and entered their synagogue. And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked Him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—so that they might accuse Him. He said to them, "Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."
 - 2) There is nothing in the Law of Moses about *not doing any healings or miracles on the Sabbath*. The Jewish authorities in the time of Jesus decided to arbitrarily designate healings and miracles as works. However, there is absolutely no effort exerted by our Lord when healing someone (Jesus does not do these healings Himself; God the Father and/or God the Holy Spirit bring these healings to pass. Can you accuse God of working on the Sabbath?
13. Early Christians may have used the Sabbath for witnessing to Jews (Acts 13:14-15), but the first day of the week was their day of worship. (Acts 20:7)
 - 1) Acts 13:14–15 *And John left them and returned to Jerusalem, but they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent a message to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, say it." And they did.*
 - 2) Acts 20:7 *On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.*
14. It is interesting that the decrees of the council of Jerusalem made no mention of keeping the Sabbath in the requirements for Gentile Christians. Acts 15:28–31 *For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."* So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch, and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement.
 - 1) This letter from the council of Jerusalem represents a compromise. But even in the compromise, the Sabbath was not observed.
 - 2) However, the Sabbath will apparently be part of worship in the Millennium. Isaiah 66:22–24 *"For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before Me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain. From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, declares the LORD. "And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against Me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."*
15. Numerous biblical regulations governed the observance of the Sabbath.
 - 1) The chief biblical prohibition concerning the Sabbath was against work on that day. Exodus 20:8–10 *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 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, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates."*
 - 2) The Old Testament does not define work in detail except that it specifically forbids the kindling of a fire for cooking (Exodus 35:3–4) and the gathering of wood. (Numbers 15:32-36)
 - 1) Exodus 35:3–4 *You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day."*

The Doctrine of the Sabbath (by L. G. Merritt/Kukis)

- Moses said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "This is the thing that the LORD has commanded."
- (2) Numbers 15:32–36 While the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation. They put him in custody, because it had not been made clear what should be done to him. And the LORD said to Moses, "The man shall be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." And all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death with stones, as the LORD commanded Moses.
 - 3) However, in keeping with the purpose of the Sabbath, bearing burdens (Jeremiah 17:21-22.), traveling (Exodus 16:29), and trading (Neh 10:31) were also forbidden.
 - (1) Jeremiah 17:21–22 Thus says the LORD: Take care for the sake of your lives, and do not bear a burden on the Sabbath day or bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. And do not carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath or do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your fathers.
 - (2) Exodus 16:28–29 And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep My commandments and my laws? See! The LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day He gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day."
 - (3) Nehemiah 10:31 And if the peoples of the land bring in goods or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on a holy day. And we will forego the crops of the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.
 16. The Jewish Sabbath was also to be observed with a holy assembly, the doubling of the daily offerings, and the placing of new showbread in the holy place. (Numbers 28:9 ff.; Leviticus 24:5-8)
 - 1) Numbers 28:9–10 "On the Sabbath day, two male lambs a year old without blemish, and two tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, and its drink offering: this is the burnt offering of every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.
 - 2) Leviticus 24:5–8 "You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold before the LORD. And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD. Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the LORD regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever.
 17. The Sabbath was to be a day of gladness for it was to provide man an opportunity to put aside the duties of life and concentrate on spiritual activities for the refreshing of his soul. It was soon distorted and became an onerous legalistic burden--a heavy yoke as our Lord termed it.
 18. For the believer in Christ, the Sabbath rest of God at the original creation is made an illustration of the rest into which the believer enters in the new creation when "he also hath ceased from his own works" by trusting Christ not only for his salvation but for daily living. Hebrews 4:1–10 **Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, "As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,'" although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest." Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His.** Psalm 95:11 Genesis 2:2 Psalm 95:11, 7–8
 19. Two views are held today concerning the Sabbath:
 - 1) It has been done away with completely, and though man needs one day of rest in seven, it and all

The Doctrine of the Sabbath (by L. G. Merritt/Kukis)

of the Mosaic law--and the Decalogue in particular--are no longer binding. 2Corinthians 3:5–11 Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it. For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.

- 2) Since the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath He had the right to change the day of its keeping for His Church from the last day of the week to the first, and did so in order that it might become a commemoration of His rising from the dead.
- 3) Although I would disagree that Sunday is the *new Sabbath*, believers in the Church Age are not under the law of the Sabbath.
20. This appears to many to be the only explanation that fits all the facts. Since the Sabbath was made for man, Christ changed its celebration to bless man.
21. Man was never to be under the excessive legalization of the Sabbath day as practiced by the pharisees and others.

See also Tod Kennedy's [Sabbath Summary Doctrine](#).

From [West Bank Bible Church](#); accessed June 27, 2019. The translation used was changed to the NASB and sometimes more verses were given. I added a few words here and there.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Exodus 20:11 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. (NKJV)

Although there is no clear mandate to worship on Sunday, that seems to be a tradition from the New Testament.

The Doctrine of Sunday Worship

1. We should first differentiate between the 7th day of the week, the Sabbath (Saturday); and the 1st day of the week (Sunday). Sunday is the day that believers in the Church Age traditionally treat as a day of worship.
2. There is very little disagreement that the sons of Israel worshiped on the Sabbath day, which is the 7th day of the week, which is Saturday. Many Jewish people today continue to observe the Sabbath. This day has never changed.
3. There is no such thing as a *Christian Sabbath*.
4. The word *Sunday* is not found in the New Testament; but the words *first day of the week* are. This is the day after the 7th day of the week.
5. Jesus was resurrected on the first day of the week. Luke 24:1–7 John 20:1–2
6. The disciples are gathered together on the first day of the week in John 20:19.
7. The disciples are gathered together on the first day of the week in Acts 20:7.
8. Paul exhorts the Corinthians to put money aside for giving on the first day of the week. That would imply that the Corinthians met on Sunday when an offering would be taken up. 1Corinthians 16:2
9. John speaks of being in the Spirit on the Lord's day, which would logically be Sunday. This was, in fact, the day in which He was raised. Revelation 1:10
10. Whereas, worship of God on the Sabbath was a very big deal to the Hebrew people, there is far less emphasis upon the 1st day of the week for Christian worship in the New Testament. Pastors and

The Doctrine of Sunday Worship

missionaries and evangelists do not confine their work to just Sundays. Those who have a communication spiritual gift are not somehow confined to a gift which only functions once a week. Furthermore, it simply is not possible for anyone to grow spiritually based upon a single sermon once a week.

11. Spiritual growth cannot occur by attending church once a week. The people of that era often spent a much longer time together on Sunday, which often included a meal and sermons and teaching which lasted so long, some people fell dead asleep. The closest I have seen to this is, R. B. Thieme, Jr., at one time, met twice on Sunday morning and then on Sunday night. His 1.3 hour-long sermons, three times on Sunday, were probably a better parallel to the early church, than any other church that I am aware of. (As an aside, I know that there are churches who also meet three times on Sunday, but often the sermon is 30 minutes or less and this sermon is often repeated in the second service. Bob taught more during one service than most preachers do all day Sunday.

This great contrast between Sunday worship for the church (where there is very little by way of specificity in the New Testament) and the Sabbath for the Old Testament saints, ought to suggest that, there can be more for the New Testament believer than Sunday-only worship.

Church of the Great God seems to have a reasonable [article](#) on this.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Our current topic, however, is the Sabbath. First the commandment...

Exodus 20:8–10 *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: [not] 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. (NKJV)*

Now for the reason why:

Exodus 20:11 *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. (NKJV)*

In glancing through my NASB's topical concordance, I ran across two gross errors with respect to the Sabbath: (1) The Sabbath is called the Lord's day (Revelation 1:10); (2) The Sabbath is to be perpetuated forever (Exodus 31:16–17 Matthew 5:17–18). Mine is a very old NASB, but those points may still be there.

The brief counter-arguments are: (1) Revelation 1:10 has the designation *the Lord's day* and is not connected to the Sabbath at all—the word *Sabbath* occurs nowhere in this context. (2) As we have seen, the Law was given specifically to the Jew; not to the Gentile and not to the church. Exodus 31:13 reads: *"Speak to sons of Israel saying, 'You will definitely observe My Sabbaths...'"* Obviously, it is not perpetuated in the Church Age.

There is also a third common error, perpetuated by the legalistic branches of so-called *Christian* religions, where their claim is, we are still under the Sabbath Day Commandment. Often, they will quote Hebrews 4:9 **There still remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.** In fact, I recall watching *The World Tomorrow* (a show dedicated to the Armstrong cult), and the speaker confidently said, “Here it is in your English Bible, clear as day.” Then he quoted Hebrews 4:9. That was over 50 years ago, and I still remember it. Gardner Ted Armstrong was a powerful speaker—wrong often—but a very good public speaker.

Explaining There still remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God:

Under the Law, there were a number of different Sabbaths and kinds of Sabbaths, only one of which have we begun to study. Saturday was the Sabbath for the Jewish people. The people of God, the Jewish people, from this point forward, observed the Sabbath each and every week. In vv. 16 & 17, again, notice the words *"So the sons of Israel will observe the Sabbath...as a perpetual covenant; it is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever."* If you need some specificity as to who this is addressed to, there it is.

Our system of numbering verses has been a blessing and a curse. It is marvelous for a teacher to make a simple statement like *"Let's turn to Hebrews 10:9"*, and everyone can, given a few minutes, find this passage.

On the negative side, a speaker or writer can casually quote this verse: *There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God* (Hebrews 4:9) and many Christians are led astray by this, thinking that the Bible just told them to worship on the Sabbath. Every verse must be examined in context. Hebrews, first of all, is written to (hold onto your seats) Hebrews. Therefore, it will abound with Old Testament references. Hebrews 3 gives us the context: God had promised the sons of Israel the land of Canaan, but the Exodus generation could not enter into it because of unbelief. They had to continually wander through the desert, never entering into God's promise to them, the land of Canaan, thereby, in a sense, *never entering into His rest*. Hebrews 4:1 exhorts its readers not to make the same error. *Therefore, let us fear so that while a promise remains unclaimed of entering into His rest, that not any one of you should seem to come short of it* (Hebrews 4:1²⁴).

A general theme of the book of Hebrews is faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the promised One of God. This book was written to Hebrew who had two basic problems: unbelief and unbelief. That is, some who would hear this letter being read had not yet believed in Jesus for salvation. Throughout the book of Hebrews, the readers are exhorted to trust the Hebrew Scriptures which point to Jesus as their Messiah. Therefore, they should also trust in Jesus. The second problem of unbelief is, Hebrew Christians were not moving forward in the spiritual life because they kept clinging to previous modes of worship. They were not believing in the doctrines of this new age. They were not mixing true New Testament teachings with faith.

Rest is a synonym here for both salvation and the spiritual life. The Hebrew people continually worked for their salvation throughout their history, even though they were not supposed to. God has done all of the work; Jesus Christ died for our sins on our behalf—He has done all the work for us to be saved; we only need to claim this promise by faith and enter into God's rest, which is a rest from our labors for God's approval. The unclaimed promise is appropriating Jesus Christ—the promised Messiah. Not claiming this promise from God is the greatest error the Jewish person can make. *For indeed we have had the good news preached to us, just as they also, but the word they heard did not profit them because it was not united by faith in those who heard* (Hebrews 4:2). We can make a similar application to the spiritual life.

In a nutshell we have the problem of the Exodus generation; they did not unite (mix, combine) accurate teaching with faith; they did not mix together the promises of God with faith. A contrast and comparison is set up here between the Hebrews reading this epistle and the Hebrews of the Exodus generation. What are the Hebrews to whom this epistle is addressed to unite with faith? The good news! *For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "As I swore in my wrath, they will not enter My rest." although His works were finished from the foundation of the world* (Hebrews 4:3). The Exodus generation did not enter into God's rest. To accurately hone in on this point, they had all believed in the Revealed God, but they did not enter into the spiritual life, which is a life of rest and dependence upon God. Who should have understood this better than the Exodus generation; but there you go. Negative volition was predominant in the Exodus generation, despite the fact that all of them had believed in the Revealed God.

Just in case you did not connect *rest* with *salvation*, v. 3 clearly ties them together; that is, those who believed have entered into God's rest. *For He has thus said somewhere* [that is, somewhere in the Old Testament] *concerning the seventh day, "And on the seventh day, God rested from all His works."* And again in [the Word]:

²⁴ I have no clue what translation this is. I have googled it and have only come up with this document that you are reading.

"They will not enter into My rest." Since therefore it remains for some to enter it [enter into the rest] and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter [into this rest] because of obstinance (or, disobedience) (Hebrews 4:4–6). God's work was accomplished from the foundation of the world because His plan was true and His decrees immutable.

The Hebrews in the Exodus generation, although saved, never rested in the spiritual life because of their unbelief. The unbelieving Hebrews reading this will never enter into God's salvation rest because of their unbelief and obstinance. The believing Hebrews will not enter into the rest of the spiritual life, unless they let go of all the rites and practices of the Mosaic Law (the Mosaic Law being far more than simply the Ten Commandments).

The writer of Hebrews is very tactful here; all those who read this know about the hard-headed Exodus generation; so the writer can say these were obstinate or disobedient. But his inference is, those who do not claim the promise of the good news—they do not claim it out of obstinance and disobedience. He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." (Hebrews 4:7 Psalm 95:7–8). This certain day being spoken of is not the Sabbath but the day this epistle is read, which has amounted to over a half a million days thus far. This is today; this is right now. The book of Hebrews is God speaking to the reader; this is God's voice and you are hearing it right now. Do not do what the Exodus generation did. Lacking faith, they walked until they dropped like flies in the desert after 40 years (dying the sin unto death). They heard God's voice and yet they hardened their hearts. They never entered into God's rest because of unbelief. You listening to God's voice right now—do not harden your heart; do not spend the rest of your life wandering through the hot, arid desert of life; do not because of your unbelief fail to claim this promise of God and enter into His rest. All you have to do is to believe in Jesus Christ. For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that (Hebrews 4:8). Joshua entered the land with the sons of the Exodus generation.

Now, if entering into the land was the true rest, why would David say "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." (Psalm 95:7–8) When he wrote these words, Israel had been in the land of Canaan for 500 years. David is saying, "Today, right now, do not harden your hearts when hearing God's voice."

Chronology is brought into the picture. The Hebrews have hardened their hearts for centuries. David had an audience to speak to. The writer of Hebrews still has an audience to speak to. Those who are alive today hearing or reading this—God is still speaking to you. Just because Joshua entered the land, doesn't mean that the Hebrews suddenly became great believers. Entering the land was analogous to God's rest, which is analogous to salvation (or analogous to the spiritual life).

Notice how the context of this verse is entering into God's rest—this context has absolutely nothing to do with keeping the Sabbath. The Sabbath is being taught as a type of rest; a rest into which the Exodus generation did not enter because of unbelief. The sign of this was the fact that they wandered the desert for forty years and died their because of their unbelief and obstinance. There remains, therefore, a Sabbath rest for the people of God (Hebrews 4:9). Who are the people of God? This context is not the church of God, the universal church of believers. The people of God are the Hebrews—those who are reading this epistle (or having it read to them). There is still a Sabbath rest for the Hebrew people to enter, those who are reading this right now. The context is that the Exodus generation did not enter into the land—which meant that they did not enter into God's rest. Even after Joshua took the next generation into the land, David still told them, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." This Sabbath rest available to the Hebrews reading this epistle is not keeping the Sabbath under some legalistic system in the Christian era. The Sabbath rest is God's glorious salvation provided through the Messiah, Who is the subject of the book of Hebrews, Jesus Christ (read Hebrews 1).

For you see, the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, just as God did from His (Hebrews 4:10). Here the type or the analogy is further explained: when you enter into God's rest (which is obviously not keeping the Sabbath), then you are resting from your works just as God rested from His. Remember, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by His own mercy He saved us (Titus 3:5).

Let us therefore be diligent to enter **that rest**, so that no one fall through as the same example of disobedience [i.e., the Exodus generation] (Hebrews 4:11).

The rest the unbeliever is to enter into is the rest of believing in Jesus Christ. The rest the Hebrew believers was to enter into was the setting aside of the Hebrew traditions and to embrace the spiritual life post-Christ. In the first case, they would mix faith with the message of the gospel. In the second case, they would mix faith with the teaching of the spiritual life.

Exodus 20:11 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. (NKJV)

Conclusion: There was a literal rest day, the Sabbath, for the Jews during the Jewish Age. However, during this new age, which follows God speaking to all of us through His Son (Hebrews 1:1–2), there is still a *Sabbath* rest, a rest that the Exodus generation did not enter into. That is the rest of resting from one's works and believing in Jesus Christ; and, in addition, to enjoy the **faith-rest** life, which rest believers enter into after salvation.

When Hebrews 4 keeps speaking of the spiritual *rest* of the Old and New Testament believer, he is speaking of the faith-rest life. This technique is brought over into the Church Age dispensation from the Age of Israel. This is the key to understanding the point being made by the writer of Hebrews: faith-rest is brought into the New Testament from the Old; not the Sabbath Day observances.

Since the passage that we are studying is Hebrews 4 (as it relates back to Exodus 20), there is an important doctrine to come out of the first few verses of Hebrews 4, the Faith-rest life. Therefore, let's partially examine this doctrine.

The doctrine below is the streamlined version from what Bob eventually pulled together a more complete doctrine.

The Doctrine of Faith-Rest (by R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

1. Faith-rest is that function of the believer in which he utilizes Bible doctrine, Bible principles, Bible promises — everything he has ever learned about the Bible. Faith-rest is not only claiming God's promises, claiming doctrines and principles but it is, at the same time, thinking divine viewpoint. Faith-rest, therefore, is everything by which a believer utilizes Bible doctrine. All of this is to guide him in his life and his mental attitude.
2. The mechanics of faith-rest are found in Hebrews 4:1-3. That is the part where we claim certain promises, utilize certain doctrines, and mix them with our faith to launch them. Faith is the launcher and doctrine in the launching pad is actually fired by means of faith.
3. Faith-rest was the basic system for spirituality in the Old Testament among believers — Habakkuk 2:4 Romans 4:17–21 Hebrews 11. The indwelling ministry of God the Holy Spirit is the basis for spirituality in the royal family but this did not occur in Old Testament times and therefore there is a contrast in the modus operandi of believers in the Old and New Testament.
4. The inner dynamics of faith-rest. Faith-rest produces in the believer both a relaxed mental attitude and freedom from **mental attitude sins** — Isaiah 26:3–4 **You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.** [The believer who is advancing, who has doctrine resident in his soul sustains the purpose and the will of God, and he does so in perfect prosperity]. **Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock. Trust in Jehovah forever; for in Jehovah is a rock of ages.** (ESV; capitalized) The sustained purpose in this context is the daily function of the grace apparatus for perception producing the ammunition that is fired from the right lobe of the heart in the believer (that ammunition is Bible doctrine).
5. The production dynamics of faith-rest is described in numerous passages. For example, faith-rest is absolutely necessary for dynamics in prayer — Matthew 21:22 Mark 11:24. Everyone will face in their lifetime various forms of fear, such as, fear of adversity, fear of one's enemies, fear of danger, fear of

The Doctrine of Faith-Rest (by R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

death.

- a. There are many types of fear but faith-rest overcomes all of them — Psalm 56:3 (*When I am afraid, I put my trust in You.*—ESV; capitalized). This is the faith-rest technique overcoming a mental attitude sin called fear.
 - b. The overcoming of worry is the function of faith-rest — 1Peter 5:7 (*Casting all your anxieties on Him; for He cares for you.*). Whatever makes you anxious, upset or out of sorts can be given over to God. You can trust putting it into His very capable hands.
 - c. Benefit to others is related to the faith-rest technique — Matthew 8:13, the centurion who came to Jesus asking Him to heal his son. The centurion understood Christ's healing and was able to trust in Him.
6. Faith-rest is related to supergrace and occupation with the person of Christ — Psalm 37:4–5 (*Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will act.*—ESV; capitalized). The desires of the right lobe are based upon reaching supergrace. You will have not only the capacity for life, not only all of the blessings necessary in the spiritual realm, but you will also have desires compatible with your station.
 7. Faith-rest is the modus operandi of the royal priesthood.
 - a. 1Corinthians 2:3, 5 *I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling,...so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.* (ESV; capitalized)
 - b. 2Corinthians 5:7 *We walk by faith, not by sight.* (ESV; capitalized)
 8. Faith-rest is related to the function of GAP (grace apparatus for perception) — Colossians 2:6–7 *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.* (ESV; capitalized)
 9. Faith-rest is related to the victory of the angelic conflict — 1John 5:4 *... this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.* This is the faith-rest technique related to Bible doctrine under conditions of residency of doctrine in the soul.
 10. The beginning of the faith–rest drill is to believe God when He makes promises to us, such as Proverbs 3:5–6 Psalm 37:4–5 1Peter 5:7. In spiritual childhood, we reach out with our faith and claim these promises. But the faith–rest drill has far greater implications than just mixing the promises of God with our faith. However, these promises give us a starting point, even as young believers.
 - a. Psalm 4:8 *I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for You Lord only make me to dwell in safety.*
 - b. Psalm 34:19 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of all of them.*
 - c. Proverbs 3:5 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*
 - d. Psalm 55:22 *Cast all your burdens upon the Lord and He shall sustain you; He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*
 - e. Psalm 56:11 *In God I put my trust. I will not be afraid of what man can do to me.*
 - f. Deuteronomy 31:8 *And the Lord, He it is who goes before you; He will not fail you or forsake you. Fear not, neither be confused.*
 - g. 1Peter 5:7 *Casting all your anxieties on Him; for He cares for you.*
 11. Stage one of faith mechanics is mixing the promises of God with faith, Hebrews 4:1–3 (we are about to study this passage, but in a different context).
 - a. Hebrews 4:1 *Therefore, let us fear, lest a promise being unclaimed of entering into His rest any of you should seem to come short of it.*
 - i. "Fear" is used in the good sense of obligation to execute the mechanics of the faith-rest drill. We are never commanded to be afraid, but we should be afraid of failing in this matter.
 - ii. "His rest" is sharing the happiness of God--the tranquility and tremendous contentment which comes from understanding God's plan in the midst of the greatest confusion and stress in life. For the Christian, God's rest is entering into His happiness. Your happiness depends entirely upon what thoughts are circulating in your stream of consciousness. You are capable of facing any problem in life and handling it in your stream of consciousness and you are capable of making the right choices in resolving the problem. The true rest is what you have in your soul.

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- iii. This is the utilization of divine promises in the Bible. The blessing that comes from claiming God's promises and utilizing Bible doctrine circulating in the stream of consciousness is the basis of entering into this rest. This is a rest of great tranquility of soul in the midst of the greatest adversities in life. This is also a rest of being able to deal with stress from Bible doctrine resident in your own stream of consciousness. The better that you know these promises, the easier it is to depend upon them when you are under pressure.
- iv. The believer comes short of God's rest through scar tissue in the stream of consciousness, garbage in the subconsciousness, the arrogance and emotional complex of sins, the control of the soul by the lust pattern. Failure to claim the promises of God through your own faith results in building up stress in your soul. Stress in your soul cannot be cured by any system of counseling. Stress in the soul knocks out the filling of the Spirit (**Whatever is not of faith is sin**—Romans 14:23), doctrinal orientation, and the coordination of the faith-rest drill among the problem solving devices.
 - (1) Psychological principles of stress.
 - (a) There is a definite relationship between stress and cognition.
 - (b) Stress makes you forgetful and impairs your memory.
 - (c) Stress impairs your ability to learn.
 - (d) Stress affects your perception of reality.
 - (e) When stress is removed, cognitive ability can be restored.
 - (f) If a person remains in stress too long, all of his cognitive ability is destroyed and he enters into a psychotic state.
 - (2) Doctrinal principles of stress and adversity. These principles also apply to prosperity which creates great stress in the soul.
 - (a) Adversity is an outside pressure; stress is an inside pressure of life.
 - (b) Stress is what you do to yourself; adversity is what circumstances do to you.
 - (c) Adversity is inevitable; stress is optional.
 - (d) Stress in the soul contradicts the protocol plan of God for the Church and destroys the spiritual life of the believer.
 - (e) The conversion of gnosis doctrine to epignosis doctrine through faith perception prevents the conversion of the outside pressures of adversity into the inside pressures of stress in the soul, which is tantamount to sin nature control of the soul.
 - (f) Extrapolation from epignosis doctrine circulating in the soul's stream of consciousness produces ten problem solving devices by which you, in the privacy of your priesthood, can resolve your own problems and make good decisions from a position of strength. With ten problem solving devices on the defensive line of your soul, you defensively prevent adversity from being converted into stress in the soul. Offensively you remove stress from the soul.
- v. Claiming the promises of God by faith substitutes contentment and tranquility for stress in the soul. No believer can deal with stress and adversity when he comes short of the temporal rest of contentment and tranquility provided through the ten problem solving devices of the protocol plan of God. The alternative to dealing with pressure and catastrophe in life is the total carnal breakdown of the believer, also known as self-fragmentation. Self-fragmentation results in both Christian moral and immoral degeneracy and involvement in the cosmic system so that the believer cannot be distinguished from his unbeliever counterpart in mental attitude, sin nature function, and the *modus operandi* of life.
- vi. The faith-rest drill coordinates and correlates by claiming the promises of God and applying the doctrinal rationales with God's happiness. When pressure and adversity attacks, you have to have a base of contentment and tranquility from which you use the faith-rest drill

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- under the power of the filling of the Holy Spirit, grace orientation, and doctrinal orientation.
- b. Hebrews 4:2 **For we also have been evangelized, even as they; but the doctrine of hearing** [the word of teaching] **did not profit them, because it was not mixed together with faith by those who heard.**
 - i. The faith-rest drill was operational in all previous dispensations ("they") and is operational today ("we"). Entering into the rest of God is not a matter of evangelization. Comparison of the Church Age believer with the believers of the Exodus generation indicates that the issue is not salvation by faith but the function of the faith-rest drill.
 - ii. After salvation, the believers of the Exodus generation were not able to use the faith-rest drill because they were negative to Bible doctrine taught by Moses. The Exodus generation had no faith perception, no metabolization of doctrine. It is possible to sit in Bible class and not be profited, because the doctrine is not mixed together with faith. There is no moving forward in the Christian life without faith and doctrinal knowledge.
 - c. Hebrews 4:3 **For we** [Church Age believers] **who have believed** [Bible doctrine as it is taught] **enter into the place of rest [+H], just as He said** [Psalm 95:11], **'As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter into My place of rest,' although His works were finished from before the foundation of the world.**
 - i. The place of rest was the place of blessing--the place where you depend on the promises of God and doctrinal rationales to handle stress, problems, and adversity in life. They did not enter into Canaan, the place that God had provided for them, because they did not use the faith-rest drill during their time in the desert. Since they did not claim the promises of God as taught in Bible class, God gave them the promise that they would never enter into the place of blessing but would die the sin unto death in the desert.
 - ii. God provides for believers in eternity past. In eternity past, God provided in grace everything the believer needs in human history to handle every adversity. The faith-rest drill has been provided for every generation in human history. Doctrine is always available to meet any stressful situation in life.
 - d. Mixing the promises of God with faith is designed to stabilize the mentality of the believer under pressure, confusion, adversity, stress, and disaster. Claiming promises is the way new believers and young believers who have not yet grown up spiritually can function under the faith-rest drill. In time of stress, the believer begins by claiming promises of God and mixing those promises with a weak faith. As the believer grows spiritually, his faith increases, along with his doctrinal sophistication.
 - e. As a result of stage one of the faith-rest mechanics, the believer begins to prevent the outside pressures of life from penetrating into the soul. Faith claims the promises of God; faith applies the promises of God; faith takes control of the situation. The increase of the faith-rest drill in your life means the increase of control over your soul and your spiritual life.
 - f. Abraham used the first stage mechanics, Romans 4:20–21 **Yet, he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, being fully persuaded that what God had promised, God was able to execute.**
 - g. When stage one of the faith-rest mechanics is fully operational, the believer fulfills 2Corinthians 5:7 **We walk by faith** [the faith- rest drill] **and not by sight** [human viewpoint].
12. The second stage of the faith-rest mechanics requires a much stronger faith and a greater understanding of the word of God. A strong faith now applies doctrinal rationales to experience. In the second stage, we have the development of a stronger faith through the perception of doctrine. With this perception of doctrine, the faith becomes strong enough to do more than just claim a promise from God. In the second stage, we begin to claim doctrinal rationales. Two things are needed for stage two.
- a. You need a stronger faith from consistent perception of Bible doctrine (post-salvation epistemological rehabilitation) which means metabolized doctrine circulating in the stream of consciousness.
 - b. You have a stronger faith because you have had experiences in the Christian life combined with more Bible doctrine.

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- c. You need cognition of the whole range of doctrine, which gives the faith-rest drill an option to meet the stress and pressures of life. This fulfills the concept of professionalism and integrity in the modus operandi of the protocol plan of God. Cognition of doctrine has two results related to the faith-rest drill.
 - i. Cognition of doctrine results in the development of a stronger faith. Romans 10:17 **Faith comes by hearing** [positive volition] **and hearing by the word of Christ**. The word of God is the thinking of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1Corinthians 2:16. Your faith has to become strong and be developed.
 - ii. Cognition of doctrine results in the development of the doctrinal rationales. The stronger faith claims doctrinal rationales once they are circulating in the stream of consciousness. God does not permit these difficult situations in life to come along until you have at least had a chance to learn doctrine.
- d. The faith-rest mechanics of stage two are as follows.
 - i. Faith applies a doctrinal rationale.
 - ii. Faith reaches doctrinal conclusions.
 - iii. Faith takes control of the situation.
 - iv. You follow your faith rather than your fear.
- e. The second stage of the faith-rest mechanics demands an understanding of five areas of doctrine found in the Scripture: the essence of God rationale, the plan of God rationale, the policy of God rationale which is grace orientation, the a fortiori rationale, and the ten problem solving devices. Doctrinal rationales begin to circulate in the stream of consciousness as a result of reaching spiritual adulthood. Lifting the shield of faith with the doctrinal rationales provides both the tranquility and contentment of soul in great pressure.
 - i. The essence of God rationale. (See the Doctrine of Divine Essence.)
 - (1) By learning about who and what God is, you develop a stronger faith. To mix your faith with the doctrine of divine essence gives you an advance in the faith-rest drill which is absolutely necessary for your spiritual advance.
 - (2) Spiritual self-esteem is that status of the Christian life where the believer grows up spiritually so that he can advance into the second stage of the faith-rest mechanics. Spiritual self-esteem does not emphasize who and what we are as believers but Who and What God is. Hence, the importance of the essence of God rationale. Therefore, spiritual self-esteem understands and executes the protocol plan of God by use of the essence of God rationale. The advance from spiritual self-esteem to spiritual autonomy is rapid when the believer consistently functions under both the essence of God rationale and the plan of God rationale. The believer in spiritual self-esteem is not easily subverted into arrogance or emotional complexes of sins because he is motivated by who and what God is from the essence of God rationale.
 - (3) Part of the faith-rest drill is the application of the essence of God rationale to stress circumstances, especially those that involve injustice and unfairness to you personally. The mixing of the essence of God rationale with a strong faith is the basis of handling these circumstances. For example, you are the victim of the public lie, the victim of slander, maligning, gossip, or some unfairness from people. By using the application of the essence of God rationale as part of the faith-rest drill you become a plaintiff before the supreme court of heaven. As a part of the essence of God rationale, faith-rest mechanics leave all personal injustices, all vilification, all unfairness in the hands of Jesus Christ as a supreme court justice in heaven. Psalm 55:2 **Cast your burden upon the Lord; for He will sustain you. He will never permit the righteous one to be shaken.** 1Peter 5:7 **Casting all your cares** [anxieties, stresses] **on Him because He cares for you.**

This is an early version of Faith-Rest with a few points from the more advanced doctrine added in. I added a few comments and a few Scriptures as well.

We are going to approach Hebrews 4:1–10 exegetically, having understood the faith-rest doctrine which we just covered. The rest spoken of here can either refer to the rest of salvation (we are resting from our works) or the rest of the faith-rest life.

The ESV; capitalized will be used below.

Hebrews 4:1–10 Exegesis

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Hebrews 4:1 <i>Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.</i>	Hebrews 4:1 sets up this passage, and it speaks about <i>entering into God’s rest</i> . Clearly, not observing the Sabbath is not the key topic here. The Hebrew people all observed the Sabbath. It was not a situation where the Hebrew people were not following the Sabbath and the writer of Hebrews wrote to straighten this out. Context is the key!
The writer wants his readers to enter into God’s rest (which is not yet defined). He is not looking to strengthen their observance of the Sabbath day (nothing in this passage suggests such a thing).	
Hebrews 4:2 <i>For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.</i>	There is an <i>us</i> and a <i>them</i> specified here. <i>Us</i> refers to the writer of Hebrews and to other believers in the new age. The good news came to <i>us</i> and <i>we</i> believed it. That good news is, <i>Jesus died for our sins and provided us the way to God</i>). The tricky part of interpretation is this: those in the Exodus generation had already believed in the Revealed God. But they were not living a life of faith.
At this point, there is an analogy drawn which is not so obvious at first. The writer of Hebrews is not simply comparing Hebrews today (those reading this epistle) to the Hebrews during the time of Moses, but he is also drawing an analogy between saving faith and living faith.	
Two generations of Hebrews are being looked at here—the recipients of this epistle and the Exodus generation. However, there is also a comparison being done between exercising saving faith in this era (by believing in Jesus Christ), and daily living faith among the Hebrews of the Exodus generation (which we call the faith-rest life).	
The writer of Hebrews is not asserting that the Hebrews of the Exodus generation were not saved. They were saved! Otherwise, God would not have spent so much effort on them bringing them out of Egypt. Remember our study in Exodus. God exerted great power to bring every single Hebrew out of Egypt. God did that because they believed in Him. Furthermore, they follow Moses out of Egypt because they believed in the Revealed God.	
Here is the problem with the Exodus generation: they did not exercise a living faith. They were not living the faith-rest life. God would say, “Here is what we are going to do next;” and the Exodus generation would respond with, “I think not. We have a different plan.”	
Here is the parallel: there is a deficit of faith among Hebrews circa A.D. 67 <i>and</i> among Hebrews circa 1400 B.C. For this reason, some Hebrews hearing the words of this epistle have not yet exercised saving faith in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, many Hebrews hearing this epistle being read and explained believed in Jesus, but they could not let go of their Judaic faith practices. They are being compared to the Hebrews of the Exodus generation who did not ever enter into the faith-rest life. They had enough faith to get them to salvation, but they would not exercise faith in their day-to-day life.	

Hebrews 4:1–10 Exegesis

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Understanding this parallel is key to understanding this passage. Hebrews in 1400 B.C. exercised faith in the Revealed God, but they were not consistently applying faith in their day-to-day lives. Hebrews (Jews) in A.D. 67 either had not exercised faith in Christ or they were not living the faith-rest life in this new era (where many of their rituals should go by the wayside—which is a very big topic in the book of Hebrews).	
There is a rest being offered the Jews in A.D. 67 just as there was a rest offered the Hebrews in 1400 B.C. Will they appropriate <i>that</i> rest by faith?	
Hebrews 4:3 For we who have believed enter that rest, as He has said, "As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,'" although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. (Psalm 95:11)	<p>Those who have believed the good news have Jesus Christ have entered into the rest which God has promised. The <i>rest</i> is the life that the believer enters into after believing that Jesus died for our sins. That rest is God's eternal promise for all of us who have believed. There is nothing that person can bring to God for salvation apart from faith.</p> <p>However, there is also the faith-rest life for those who have believed and are alive.</p>
In the context of Psalm 95, the people about whom God is speaking is the Exodus generation, those whom He led in the desert, but who never developed any trust in Him in their day-to-day lives. They initially believed in the Revealed God, but then did not mix the promises of God with faith afterward.	
At present, the writer of Hebrews is applying this faith-deficit to any Jew who has heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, but has rejected it. They are like the Exodus generation, who also had a faith deficit. Without exercising the correct faith directed to the correct object, they will not enter into God's rest. This applies to the believers of the Exodus generation and to those who hear this epistle read aloud. There must be faith and it must be directed toward the correct object.	
Hebrews 4:4 For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." (Genesis 2:2)	<p>The writer of Hebrews is connecting the rest of the Sabbath day—an observance that virtually every Jew of that day observed—with the true rest God offered the Exodus generation.</p> <p>He ties the observance to the 7th day where God rested from all of His works (He has provided everything necessary for life; there was nothing more for God to do).</p>
The Hebrew people of the Exodus generation did not continue their faith from salvation faith to living faith; and therefore, they did not enter into God's rest for their post-salvation life. God would remove such people from the Hebrew people before going into the land of promise .	
Hebrews 4:5 And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter My rest." (Psalm 95:11)	The writer then goes back and quotes Psalm 95:11, which says, "They will not enter into My rest." Again, this is the rest of salvation which is followed by the rest of the spiritual life. This is not the rest of observing the Sabbath day.
This is all about the rest of salvation followed by the rest of the spiritual life. The Exodus generation believed in the Revealed God, but they did not continue their lives living in the rest which God provided them post-salvation.	

Hebrews 4:1–10 Exegesis	
Scripture	Text/Commentary
Hebrews 4:6–7 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, again He appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." (Psalm 95:7–8)	<p>David wrote this psalm, so his message goes out to those who need to exercise faith (whether during David's time or during the time of the writer of Hebrews).</p> <p>There are many Jews out in the world who still need to enter into God's promised rest. The writer quotes David, saying, "Today, if you hear My voice, do not harden your hearts." What is the voice testifying to? This would be the voice of God the Holy Spirit, which voice speaks the gospel of Jesus Christ. Contextually, even though we are speaking about the rest of God, this is not a reference to stopping work on Saturdays. This is a much greater rest the writer is speaking of (<i>greater</i> with respect to all mankind).</p>
God's voice is telling them about the rest that God wants them to enter—this is the rest from doing all their works (as the Jews thought that they needed to do in order to gain God's approbation).	
David is speaking of the salvation message, but this can also refer to God's direction for our lives.	
Hebrews 4:8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on.	Joshua led the people into the land and they took the land. They lived in the land and they rested on the seventh day. However, if this is all there was to the Sabbath, then God would not have spoken about this later in Scripture (specifically, in Psalm 95, just quoted).
Some Hebrews were not entering into a salvation rest; and some saved Hebrews were not entering into a lifetime rest.	
Hebrews 4:9–10 So then, there remains a Sabbath [-type] rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His.	The people of God are the Hebrew people; and there is a Sabbath-type rest for them that awaits them. They understood that the Sabbath was a reference to rest; and that this new era, there was still such a rest for them. When they enter into that rest, then they can rest from their works just as God has rested from His. That is first the salvation rest offered by faith in Jesus Christ. There are no works which they can bring to God; Christ Jesus did all of the work necessary for them to enter into God's rest. That is the true rest of salvation. Jesus Christ is the correct object of the faith which they should exercise.
Similarly, there is also the faith-rest life, which every person can enter into after salvation. This is <i>not</i> attained by following all of the Levitical rituals. Much of the book of Hebrews is all about explaining what those rituals were all about. "All of the rituals that your fathers did pointed toward the Lord Jesus Christ." Because Jesus has come and presented Himself as our Savior, we do not go back to these rituals as a way of life. We simply recognize toward Whom all of these rituals pointed.	
The life described to the Hebrew people at the end of Exodus and throughout all of Leviticus is no longer the spiritual life for them. There is another rest available to them: the salvation of Jesus (a rest from works) and then the faith-rest life follows.	
When people quote Hebrews 4:9 out of context, they lose 2 important contextual facts: (1) the <i>rest</i> spoken of here is not sitting around on Saturdays, enjoying a day off; and (2) the people of God is a direct reference to the Hebrew people (the recipients of this epistle), not to believers in the Church Age. Context is key.	
Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Exodus 20:8–11 Remember the sabbath day and consider it set apart [to God]. You will work for six days and you will do all of your work [in those six days]; but the seventh day [will be] a sabbath to [honor] Y^ehowah your Elohim. You will not do any work—[not] you or your sons or daughters; [not] your male or female servants; [not even] your cattle or the immigrant within your gates. This is because, in six days, Jehovah made the heavens and the earth; and the seas and everything in them. Therefore, because He was finished, He rested on the seventh day. So, for these reasons, Jehovah blessed the seventh day and set it apart from all other days. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:8–11 Remember the sabbath day and set it aside as a holy day to God. You will complete all of your work in six days, but you will rest on the sabbath day to honor Jehovah your God. You will not do any work on the seventh day, nor will your children, your servants, your cattle or even your immigrants. This is because, in six days, Jehovah made the heavens and the earth; and the seas and everything in them. Therefore, because He was finished, He rested on the seventh day. So, for these reasons, Jehovah blessed the seventh day and set it apart from all other days. (Kukis paraphrase)

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Commandments 5–19; Regarding Fellow Man

The next six commandments make up the *freedom code*, which is how R. B. Thieme, Jr. described them. These laws define freedom and the limitations on human interaction which keep a nation free. If a nation adheres to these laws, even as unbelievers, they will experience a certain amount of blessing and happiness as a result, as well as freedom. When we follow God's laws under any circumstances, our lives cannot help but be better for it. In fact, any society could adopt these laws, enforce the judgements, and experience great benefit from it. It would take a couple generations for people to adjust, but a stronger, better society with greater freedom would be the result. These commandments make up a portion of the laws of divine establishment.

Recall the basic divine institutions:

1. Volition and normal function of the soul.
2. Work, which takes place under perfect environment and after the fall.
3. Marriage, a permanent relationship between one man and one woman.
4. Family. The permanent relationship above + children.
5. Nation. An organization which helps define behaviors which are acceptable and those which must be punished.

These divine institutions hold true for the believer and unbeliever alike. These institutions are preserved by the laws which follow.

Honor your father and your mother to the end that will be long your days on the land which Y^ehowah your Elohim is giving to you.

Exodus
20:12

Give honor to your mother and father so that your days will be prolonged in the land which Y^ehowah your Elohim gives you.

Treat your parents with honor and respect, so that your days will be prolonged in the land that Jehovah your God gives to you.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

Honor your father and your mother to the end that will be long your days on the land which Y^ehowah your Elohim is giving to you.

Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be prolonged upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth to thee.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	My people, the house of Israel, Let every man be instructed in the honour of his father and in the honour of his mother: that your days may be multiplied upon the land which the Lord your God giveth you.
Revised Douay-Rheims	Honour your father and your mother, that you may be long-lived upon the land which the Lord your God will give you.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which Mar-Yah your God gives you.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God gives you.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the good land, which the Lord thy God gives to thee.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	Always be very kind to your father and your mother. Then you will live for many years in the country that the LORD will give to you.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	"You must honor and respect your father and your mother. Do this so that you will have a full life in the land that the LORD your God gives you.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Respect your father and your mother, so that you may live a long time in the land that I am giving you.
<i>The Message</i>	Honor your father and mother so that you'll live a long time in the land that God, your God, is giving you.
Names of God Bible	"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live for a long time in the land Yahweh your Elohim is giving you.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
The Living Bible	"Honor your father and mother, that you may have a long, good life in the land the Lord your God will give you.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Living Translation	"Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Honor your father and your mother, in order that you may live a long time in the land that I, Yahweh your Almighty, will give you.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Honor your father and mother, as Jehovah your God commanded you, so that things may go well for you and that you may live a long time in the land that Jehovah your God is giving to you.
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	Honor your father and your mother so that your life will be long on the fertile land that the LORD your God is giving you.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Honour thy father and thy mother; so thou shalt live long to enjoy the land which the Lord thy God means to give thee.
Translation for Translators	Honor/Respect your fathers and your mothers, in order that you may live a long time in the land that I, Yahweh God, will give you.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	"Honor your father and your mother, so that your days will be prolonged on the ground that the LORD your God gives you." Literally, "Glorify your father and your mother..."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Commandment V. "Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the EVER-LIVING GOD will give to you.
International Standard V	ה "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long [Lit. <i>so your days may increase</i>] in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
Jubilee Bible 2000	Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be lengthened upon the land which the LORD thy God gives thee.
Unlocked Literal Bible	[5] HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, THAT YOUR DAYS MAY BE LONG ON THE LAND THAT YHWH YOUR ELOHIM GIVES YOU.
Urim-Thummim Version	.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	Heavily honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long upon the soil which Jehovah, your God, gives you.
New American Bible (2011)	* ^h Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Lv 20:9; Mt 15:4; Mk 7:10; Eph 6:2–3 * [20:12–17] The Decalogue falls into two parts: the preceding precepts refer to God, the following refer primarily to one's fellow Israelites. h. [20:12–16] Mt 19:18–19; Mk 10:19; Lk 18:20; Rom 13:9.
Revised English Bible–1989	Honour your father and your mother, so that you may enjoy long life in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	ה "Honor your father and mother, so that you may live long in the land which ADONAI your God is giving you.
Kaplan Translation	<i>The Fifth Commandment</i> Honor your father and mother. You will then live long on the land that God your Lord is giving you.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	"Respect your father and your mother, so that your days are prolonged upon the soil which יהוה your Elohim is giving you.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	HONOR YOUR DAD AND YOUR MOM, THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE GOOD LAND, WHICH JESUS YOUR THEOS (<i>Alpha & Omega</i>) GIVES TO YOU. †(<i>Honoring your parents does NOT mean condoning/accepting their sins or putting them first before JESUS. We must be willing to forsake parents, spouses, children, anyone, anything for JESUS if necessary. Mat_10:34 to Mat_10:39; Mat_19:29, Luk_18:28 to Luk_18:30</i>)
Awful Scroll Bible	Be honoring your father and your mother, that you all's days were to be prolonged on the solid grounds, which Jehovah, he of mighty ones, is granting to yous.
Concordant Literal Version	Glorify your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged on the ground which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Honor thy av and thy em; that thy yamim may be long upon ha'adamah which Hashem Eloheicha giveth thee.

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* Honour thy father, and thy mother,—that thy days may be prolonged upon the soil, which Yahweh thy God is about to give unto thee.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	"Honor (respect, obey, care for) your father and your mother, so that your days may be prolonged in the land the Lord your God gives you.
The Expanded Bible	"Honor your father and your mother so that you will live a long time [^L for many days] in the land that the Lord your God is going to give you.
Kretzmann's Commentary	Verses 12-17 The Commandments Concerning the Love of One's Neighbor Honor thy father and thy mother, they are to be given the reverence due to them as the representatives of God, with heart, mouth, and hand, in thought, word, and deed. In the home, in the family, is the foundation of all social life, all governments really being dependent upon the relation of parents and children, the existence and the welfare of the nations depending upon the moral stability given them by the home in its proper form, as the promise indicates; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord, thy God, giveth thee. It is the first commandment with promise, as St. Paul writes Eph. 6:2-3, where he changes the text to apply to all men, and not only to the Jewish nation.
Syndein/Thieme	{5th Commandment} "Honor {obedience to authority in the home} your father and your mother . . . with the result that your days may be long {refers to your life span - a long life} in the land which Jehovah/God your 'Elohiym/Godhead gives you."
The Voice	You are to honor your father and mother. If you do, you and your children will live long and well in the land the Eternal your God has promised to give you.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	Honor your father and your mother, in order that your days be lengthened on the land that the Lord, your God, is giving you. in order that your days be lengthened: If you honor [your parents], your days will be lengthened, and if not, they will be shortened. The words of the Torah are written briefly; they are explained by deriving the negative from the affirmative and the affirmative from the negative. — [from Mechilta]
NET Bible®	"Honor ³² your father and your mother, that you may live a long time ³³ in the land ³⁴ the Lord your God is giving to you. ^{32tn} The verb כָּבֵד (kabbed) is a Piel imperative; it calls for people to give their parents the respect and honor that is appropriate for them. It could be paraphrased to say, give them the weight of authority that they deserve. Next to God, parents were to be highly valued, cared for, and respected. ^{33tn} Heb "that your days may be long." ^{34sn} The promise here is national rather than individual, although it is certainly true that the blessing of life was promised for anyone who was obedient to God's commands (Deut 4:1, 8:1, etc.). But as W. C. Kaiser ("Exodus," EBC 2:424) summarizes, the land that was promised was the land of Canaan, and the duration of Israel in the land was to be based on morality and the fear of God as expressed in the home (Deut 4:26, 33, 40; 32:46-47). The captivity was in part caused by a breakdown in this area (Ezek 22:7, 15). Malachi would announce at the end of his book that Elijah would come at the end of the age to turn the hearts of the children and the parents toward each other again.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...[honor] your father and your mother (so) that your days will be made long upon the ground which "YHWH ^{He Is} your "Elohiym ^{Powers} is giving to you,...

New American Standard B.	“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.
Webster's Bible Translation	“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which Yahweh your God gives you.
Young's Updated LT	“Honour your father and your mother, so that your days are prolonged on the ground which Jehovah your God is giving to you.

The gist of this passage: The people are to honor their parents, that they may enjoy a long life on the land that God gives them.

This brings us to the most fundamental commandment for society, the 5th commandment. The first step away from drug abuse and hedonism is the command given to all young people:

Exodus 20:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kâbêd (כָּבֵד) [pronounced kaw ^b -VADE]	<i>make heavy, make insensible; honor, do honor to</i>	Piel infinitive absolute (for 2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperative?) ²⁵	Strong's #3513 BDB #457
The infinitive absolute has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add <i>ing</i> to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form. ²⁶			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'âb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b v]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; <i>ancestor, grandfather; founder, civil leader, military leader; master, teacher</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'êm (אִם) [pronounced aim]	<i>mother [humans, animals]; grandmother used figuratively for an intimate relationship, for a nation; a metropolis, a great and leading city; metaphorically for the earth; point of departure or division</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #517 BDB #51

²⁵ What is in parentheses comes from Owens.

²⁶ *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

Translation: Give honor to your mother and father...

Nearly everyone translates this as a Piel imperative, but it is actually a Piel infinitive absolute. Although the list of uses does not appear to include an imperative sense, one cannot help but understand that to be the sense of the verb, given this context.

More literally, this reads, [Giving honor to father and mother...](#)

One of the fundamental institutions of any nation is marriage and family. This is why socialist and communist (and liberal) propaganda try to eliminate the family or reduce its influence. This can be accomplished in a myriad of ways, the chief one today being public education, which appears to be more dedicated to overthrowing the values instilled in children by their parents than it is to providing an actual education. This is why so many students come out of a public education with socialist and liberal values, but without the ability to think, reason, spell, or do math. This is obviously not every student, nor does this mean that there is a hidden plot and conspiracy afoot (maybe there is and maybe there isn't; I am simply recording some observational behavior). Liberals just tend to be very adamant about spreading their ideology and they will take every opportunity to do so. This is why so many liberals express a fear of Christians establishing a theocracy in the United States. You see, if they had the power to do it, they would establish a government dedicated to their beliefs (this is pretty much what they have already done). Therefore, they believe that their natural enemies, Christians and conservatives, would do the same.

Application: According to a Gallup Poll (from a [2018 CNBC article](#)), 51% of millennials view socialism favorably with only 45% of them favoring capitalism. This is clearly a result of public education brainwashing, it cannot come from their parents, because adults do not believe in socialism by a 51-45 margin, or anything close to that. If there was any kind of an objective study of China, Russia, Cuba, Venezuela, or even of many liberal European countries which are said to be socialistic (they are not), no one could come away with that kind of conclusion.

Application: There is a push all over the world toward pre-school education, despite the benefits of such an education as being short-lived (if memory serves, they tend to improve the student's performance only up until 3rd grade or so). Here, as soon as a child has some manageable cognitive skills, there is a growing faction who want to get their hands on these children and *raise them correctly* (which their parents are apparently not doing—and kids who are five years old are too old to fully influence).

Application: Parents, when raising their children, tend to have a more objective and realistic view of the world. When a child pays attention and respects their parents, they learn from them. After all, part of what the parent's job is, is to raise a child to be able and capable of taking care of himself (or herself). This objective is in opposition to socialistic programs, which want the state to raise the children, with a predisposition to dependence upon the government.

Application: During the 2012 election, President Obama, running for a second term, proposed the *Life of Julia*, which followed the life of Julia (a fictional woman) from birth to death, and this online, interactive presentation featured the many times her life intersected with the government and how she was helped by the government along the way during many times in her life. Even though a plethora of commentators continued to say, "You cannot call President Obama a socialist" there was never a more blatantly socialist view of the world than the *Life of Julia* (which interactive posting is very difficult to find today, despite the fact that it was parodied massively on the internet). It would be easier to find the parody than the original interactive *Life of Julia* than the original interactive post. For whatever reason, the Obama organization removed this utopian view of woman and government (even though this is something they believe in strongly). You see, the end result was, people would view this and have an unfavorable impression of the life of Julia. A normal person would examine this and think, *hell, I don't want that!*

Application: Children of today would be greatly benefitted by paying closer attention to the values of their parents rather than to the values being taught to them in our schools. Both the parents and the schools have agendas, but the parents' agenda is generally based upon love for their child; where the agenda of liberal education is love for socialism and/or liberal doctrines.

These illustrations which I use will, at some point in time, have little or no meaning for the reader. However, the cosmic system being what it is, there will always be similar illustrations which will rise up and take their place.

I know that some people would take issue with that. People have gotten to the point where they define freedom in terms of how much they are able to sin. Many believe that their sins have no effects on society. One example of this is drug usage. People believe that drugs are here to stay, that drugs should be legalized, and that we should empty the jails of all those there on drug charges. Furthermore, some believe that the state should provide drugs at discount prices or even free of charge to those who desire them. The rationale behind this is that once drugs are provided, then those who use them will no longer be a drain on society and no longer engage in criminal activity. Not true. This is a goofy utopian view constructed pretty much by dopers.

I have been well-acquainted with several people who have spent a great deal of their lives using drugs and some of them have become hopeless and totally useless members of society who are unable to carry their own weight due to continued drug-abuse (such people cannot even take care of themselves). As a result, we pay the bill to help them live (and provide them with drugs in many cases). Our homeless problem, although not made up of 100% drug users, has a very high percentage of drug and alcohol abusers. Our mental institutions have got a large percentage of drug abusers living there. So often the term *self-medication* is used when speaking of drug abusers, but they might as well go into a bin of disposed-of medical drugs and take those by the handful. Drug use can often take a very manageable life and turn it into a non-functioning life.

An outgrowth of hedonistic drug abuse has been hedonistic sexual activity, which has begun an AIDS epidemic which continues to cost society billions of dollars and untold human suffering and grief (including that which is suffered by those who received the HIV virus in birth, conjugal relations with their spouse and through blood transfusions). So every kid who thinks that they should be allowed to take drugs because it doesn't cause anyone else any harm is wrong. The drug epidemic has spiraled out of control beyond what was ever foreseeable in the 1960's. Furthermore, the drug-related crime would not disappear with the provision of free drugs. People who use drugs and cannot function as they should in society—holding a job, producing, and providing for their own—will turn to crime out of their envy and hedonistic tendencies to get the things that they want and are unable to get, being drug users.

Option #2 would be commandment five of the Ten Commandments:

Exodus 20:12a [“Honor your father and your mother,...”](#) (NKJV)

This is where we started. The rest of this verse is:

Exodus 20:12b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
l ^{ma} ʿan (למען) [pronounced l ^{MAH} - gahn]	<i>for the sake of, on account of, to the intent of, to the intent that, to the purpose that, in order that, in view of, to the end that; so that</i>	compound preposition and substantive which acts like a preposition	Strong's #4616 BDB #775
This is the substantive maʿan (מֵאֵן) [pronounced MAH-gahn], which means <i>purpose, intent</i> , combined with the lamed preposition (which is the only way that it is found in Scripture).			
ʾarak ^e (אָרַךְ) [pronounced aw-RAHK]	<i>to prolong [days]; to make [tent cords, poles] long, to lengthen; to be long; to grow long, to continue long, to live long; to retard; to delay, to tarry; to defer</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #748 BDB #73

Exodus 20:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
’ădâmâh (אֲדָמָה) [pronounced uh-daw-MAWH]	<i>ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #127 BDB #9
’ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
’Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>is giving, granting, is placing, putting, setting; is making</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person singular suffix; pausal form	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: ...so that your days will be prolonged in the land which Y^ehowah your Elohim gives you.

That your days might be long has a two-fold meaning. By direct interpretation, *your* is the second person, masculine singular suffix and it refers to the individual believers, men and women. These are Israelites out in the desert-wilderness far south of the promised land, and God has promised to take them into that land. This is a specific promise to them; but this promise can be applied to thousands of later generations of both Jews and gentiles.

When you are properly oriented to authority by being first oriented to the authority of your parents, your life will be fuller in terms of days and in terms of quality. It is those people who are in continual rebellion against all forms of authority who are unhappy. They are unhappy because they will always have some form of authority over them and half of the time that authority will be unjust, unfair and unreasonable. This is normal and the person who has trouble with that will spend great portions of their life in misery because of this. By implication, a nation of people who are authority-oriented, first to their parents and then to authority in general, is a nation which will survive for a long time and will be healthy and strong.

Several times in Scripture, there are ways delineated where a person might extend his life. This would be one of them. You are far better off in life when you respect your parents and heed the words of your parents than the child who is in constant rebellion against his parents. You will live longer and you will more easily adjust to life. In fact, the obedient child is going to live longer than the child always in rebellion.

I believe that this verse, although it certainly has individual application, specifically refers to the people of Israel and the land that they will occupy. The more that they obey and respect their parents, the longer nation Israel will hold onto the land given them by God. This is brought out by the second half of v. 12:

Exodus 20:12b ...that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. (NKJV)

The key to this verse is respect for authority, upon which all orderly societies exist. Without this respect, society is degenerating. The child who believes an adult, a parent, a teacher, a policeman must first earn his respect and then he might consent to respect them—that child is totally disoriented to life. There are not enough hours in the day for those in authority to earn the respect of each and every single person they come into contact with. The primary people who face this daily are policemen (and women). They have an extremely difficult and discouraging job to face. Whereas a teacher who is half-way decent or has a reasonable personality occasionally receives compliments from students and parents, the policeman who has to stop you for speeding, who has to question you because you fit a description of someone just placed on his radio or computer—this man rarely gets a compliment or a word of appreciation for helping to control the lawless elements of our society.

I am reminded of a totally arrogant jerk (a MENSA member, in fact) who once proudly told me and a few of other people how he was questioned by the police while in a bar (I believe that this took place in New Orleans). Realizing he did not have to give the officer of the law a valid driver's license, he gave him one of these plastic cards that you get in the mail with your name on it enrolling you in a record club (this must have occurred in the 1960s or 70s). How unbelievably arrogant and disrespectful! Because he refused to cooperate, he was hauled down to the police station where he spent several hours and was finally released after engaging (and paying) a lawyer. Since I barely knew this person, I thought to myself, but did not express it aloud, *what an arrogant jerk; what a complete idiot!* I was glad that he spent that time in jail and had to go through the hassle that he went through. A policeman has a very difficult job to do and requires as much respect and cooperation as we are able to give—even if we are the one's receiving the ticket. This does not mean that some police officers are not wrong or that they have never exercised poor judgment—they have old sin natures just like you and I have. There are certainly going to be some bad apples in any organization. However, this does not preclude our giving them the respect that they deserve. This verse is the basis for all authority orientation and respect, which, from a well-trained individual or from a grace-oriented person, is automatic.

Another important point—unrelated to this verse, but a pertinent tangent: only those who have been under authority and have respect for authority should wield authority. Those who want to be in control because they think they know what is best or they believe themselves to be smarter than those around them are not qualified either by desire or by intellectual ability to have authority. Even those who have the knowledge of the company, firm or organization should not necessarily be in authority. Just as a teenager sees the freedom that an adult has, yet does not see the accompanying responsibility; often the people who desire a leadership position can only see the power, but have not even a clue as to the related responsibilities. A good policeman is first and foremost a servant of his community; a good administrator in a school is there first and foremost to make certain that his teachers have the opportunity to teach. A good coach is there first and foremost for the growth and training of their young people. A president of a company is there to correctly direct and serve the company, which makes him responsible to and for every single employee there. The higher one climbs in authority, the greater is their responsibility for those below them. The person who thinks that it is all about personal power should not ever be given that power.

Exodus 20:12 Give honor to your mother and father so that your days will be prolonged in the land which Y^ehowah your Elohim gives you. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

After our relationship to God, the most important relationship which we have is with our parents (which includes step-parents, parents via adoption, guardians, relatives acting in place of the parents, etc.). In fact, it is often the relationship with our parents which leads us into salvation. The family is the most basic unit of society, based upon right man/right woman. When that unit breaks down, then society invariably goes in the wrong direction. We have seen that in our country; since the 1960's, the family unit has eroded due to materialism lust, hedonism, sexual infidelity and immorality. This approach is interesting for two reasons: there are two generations of Israelites who

will hear these commandments—those who will die in the desert after wandering for forty years, due to their hatred of God's Word and their children, who will enter the land and begin to take it from the degenerate peoples which occupy it.

With this commandment, God is speaking to the older and younger generation of Israelites. The older generation is condemned by these commandments; the younger generation will benefit by them.

The older generation are those who were born into slavery and they left Egypt as adults. I have designated them Gen X. They have seen God's gracious acts and provision, and yet, over and over again, they rebel against Him. The next generation I call the **generation of promise**. They left Egypt prior to entering adulthood, or they were born while Israel spends 40 years in the desert-wilderness. It is this second generation who will enter into the land of Canaan and take it. Their parents will have died the sin unto death in the desert-wilderness before they all come to the border of Canaan for a second time (in our study of the Torah, we will actually see them come to the southern border of Canaan and get it all wrong).

Even though their parents are spiritually worthless, God mandates that the children give their parents their respect and honor. The second thing which strikes me is that the family begins from the top down; that is, the parents train their children properly and a society benefits greatly.

In the United States, we have many generations of degenerate children who came on the scene, whose parents for the most part did not take on the responsibility which comes with having children. As a young teacher, I observed many families where both parents worked in many cases not to break even but to gain great material possessions.

Instead of giving time, love and guidance, many of the children which I taught received their own rooms, stereos, DVD players, TV's, computers and game boys (some of these are obviously dated references). In other families, the father deserted the family early on, leaving the mother to raise the children. Although this is the fault of the father, this is not only the fault of the father. Women have become immoral; they become disobedient, horsey; and they sleep with men who simply turn them on. As a result, couplings occur between people who are not at all suited for one another; or before either person is really ready for a lifetime commitment. By the time they realize this, they have children and the man leaves. Morality on the part of the woman and character on the part of the man would have turned a lot of families around. However, this approaches the family from the other direction. The child is born, he is old enough to make some decisions, and he learns God's commandments. Regardless of the short-comings of the parents (and every parent has an old sin nature, so every parent has short-comings), the child is told here to honor, respect, revere his parents.

Exodus 20:12 **"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. (NKJV)**

This commandment was so important that any child who struck his parents could be put to death (Exodus 21:15). A child who was rebellious and out of control could be brought before the court and executed (Deuteronomy 21:18–21). Some children were so disrespectful, that even God desired that they be executed (1Samuel 2:22–25). The Bible gives us a much stronger concept of authority orientation that we are used to.

This is certainly a major theme in the New Testament. **Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is honorable. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise [which is]): that you may be prospered and that you may live long on the earth** (Ephesians 6:1–3). **Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is commendable in the Lord** (Colossians 3:20). It is the common thought of the teenager that the rules and the limits set up by their parents have the express intention of curtailing their fun. The parent has made many mistakes by that time and out of love is attempting to save the child from making the same mistakes.

The responsibility of the father is given in Hebrews 12:6–8, given by way of analogy, implies the duties of a father: **For those whom the Lord loves, He disciplines and He scourges every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not discipline? But**

if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. (Proverbs 3:11–12) Notice that even though this passage is not about a father's need to discipline his children, such behavior is expected.

Today, because of some abusive fathers (and mothers), we have gone completely in the opposite direction, where many people think that it is even wrong to spank a child. Many maxims which are false are accepted by society as being true. For instance, the idea that violence begets violence, so a father who spansks his child is apt to turn his son into a violent predator. However, this simply is not true.

But what about abusive parents? The Bible covers that also. **Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart** (Colossians 3:21). **And fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord** (Ephesians 5:4). Notice that—this is the father who works every day all day long and who is put in charge of the child's spiritual growth? The father. I didn't write this and if it were me, I would have put the mother, who is with the children from birth, in charge of their spiritual growth. But God, who has a bit more insight than I do puts the father as the one ultimately responsible for the spiritual growth of the children. Further notice that this is not a mandate to beat your children or to spank them daily. Spankings should certainly be a last resort; they should be painful and they should be sparse. They lose their effectiveness if threatened and never carried out (as is true of all empty threats) and they are worthless when they are overdone. This destroys the fear and respect of the child for the father.

I need to point out that this does not leave the mother out of the picture altogether; for it stands written: **My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother** (Proverbs 6:20). Even though the previous verses listed only the father; this is because he is the head of the household and the one ultimately responsible for the salvation and spiritual growth of his children (within the limits of their own volition—it is possible for a father to do everything right and still end up with degenerate children). However, the man can delegate responsibility and the woman can initiate teaching of spiritual things to her children.

Although the Bible does not forbid women from working (in Proverbs, the business ventures of wives are referenced), it also assigns them the responsibility of teaching their own children. Many women do not realize this, but they set the tone for the next generation. What they teach their children will be the key to what the next generation does. The morality of every generation is what mothers teach their children.

Have you ever argued with a stranger online? Of course you have! And what are the chances that you change that stranger's mind on anything? Perhaps 0.00001. Now, let's say that you have a good grasp of Bible doctrine and therefore, you have a good grasp of the world and what is right and what is wrong. It is somewhat frustrating, is it not, to have this information but, the likelihood of changing the minds of others throughout your life is small. You talking sense into a liberal is going to be, in most cases, frustrating and fruitless. But do you know where your influence is strong and it can actually change lives? With your children! Whether you have one child or 15 children, there is no one in the world better qualified to guide them and to shape their thinking.

Another principle comes out of this (although we are out on the tangent of a tangent). Even though those who were at the **crucifixion** of our Lord were women and even though they seemed to have a clearer picture of what was going on than all of the disciples put together, God places the spiritual responsibility of leadership squarely with the man. It is with men where honor and character should begin, and spiritual dedication. It is unfortunate in a family where only the woman has an interest in things spiritual because she does not have the authority; she is under the authority of her husband and an evil, degenerate husband can undermine the solid teaching she gives her children. And since we are on a tangent, one of the reasons the authority rests with the male in this life is seen with today's single parent families. How many women got themselves into a bad marriage because of their own immorality and materialism lust and sexual lust and then how many of these women as single parents with children living in their home, bring men that they are not married home and sleep with them; how many of these women move in a boyfriend. And we wonder why so many children begin having sex at age 11 or 12. This is behavior learned from who?

Whether a woman wants to or not, she will end up teaching her children, and they may not learn the things that she would like them to.

Exodus 20:12 **"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. (NKJV)**

Before we leave this verse, **notice its promise: that you may live long in the land.** Remember, this is directed to the second generation of those who exited Egypt and this promise is to them; therefore, a strict interpretation is very limited. However, this command certainly has a wider application. For those who obey and honor their parents (which 98% of the time is for their own good), even if it is a matter of *do what I say and not what I do*; God here promises them longer life. Even for unbelievers, those who become involved in drugs and drinking and pre-marital sex and using a car without responsibility as if it is their teenage toy, they would do well to listen to the instruction of their parents and to obey their parents. It does not matter if their parents have been total failures; the children still need to obey their parents in all things and respect their parents. In most cases, they would be told to lay off the drugs and drinking, improve their school work, go to college or learn a trade, stay away from pre-marital sex; save that for marriage; and be responsible when dealing with adult tools, like a car. Obeying these mandates would give them many days in the land. Or, if you will, many more years of life.

Exodus 20:12 **Treat your parents with honor and respect, so that your days will be prolonged in the land that Jehovah your God gives to you. (Kukis paraphrase)**

This fifth commandment is repeated many times in the New Testament:

Matthew 15:4 **For God commanded, saying, "Honor your father and mother," Exodus 20:12; Deut. 5:16 and, "The one speaking evil of father or mother, by death let him die." Exodus 21:17 (Green's literal translation)**

Matthew 19:19 (Jesus is speaking to the rich young man) **"[And] honor your father and your mother," and, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Exodus 20:12-16; Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 5:16-20 (Green's literal translation)**

Colossians 3:20 **Children, obey the parents in all things, for this is pleasing to the Lord. (Green's literal translation)**

Ephesians 6:1–3 **Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise, Exodus 20:12 "that it may be well with you, and you may be long-lived on the earth". Deut. 5:16**

The next three commandments are the shortest commandments. Each consists of two words: the negative and the 2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of some verb.

You will not murder.

Exodus
20:13

You will not murder.

You will not take the life of another by murder.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

You will not murder.

Dead Sea Scrolls

.

Targum (Onkelos)

Thou shalt not kill life.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

My people, the sons of Israel, You. shall not be murderers; you shall not be companions of or partakers with murderers: in the congregations of Israel there

	shall not be seen a murderous people; neither shall your sons rise up after you and teach one another to take part with murderers: for on account of the guilt of murder the sword cometh forth upon the world.
Revised Douay-Rheims	You shall not kill.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"You shall not murder.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	You shall not kill.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Thou shalt not kill. This is v. 15 in the Greek .

Significant differences: The chief difference is, in the Greek, this is v. 15, not 13; making this the 8th commandment rather than the 6th.

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Do not put anyone to death without cause.
Easy English	.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	"You must not murder anyone.
God's Word™	"Never murder.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	No murder.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
The Living Bible	"You must not murder.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	"Do not kill other people.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'You must not commit murder.
Beck's American Translation	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Thou shalt do no murder.
Translation for Translators	Do not murder anyone.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	"Do not murder." The Hebrew הִרְצַח (ratzach) literally means "murder" in the criminological sense.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	COMMANDMENT VI. "You shall not murder.
International Standard V	I "You are not to commit murder.
Unlocked Literal Bible	You must not murder anyone.
Urim-Thummim Version	[6] YOU WILL NOT MURDER.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Do not kill.
The Heritage Bible	You shall not kill.
New American Bible (2011)	You shall not kill.* Mt 5:21

* [20:13] **Kill:** as frequent instances of killing in the context of war or certain crimes (see vv. 12–18) demonstrate in the Old Testament, not all killing comes within the scope of the commandment. For this reason, the Hebrew verb translated here as "kill" is often understood as "murder," although it is in fact used in the Old

Testament at times for unintentional acts of killing (e.g., Dt 4:41; Jos 20:3) and for legally sanctioned killing (Nm 35:30). The term may originally have designated any killing of another Israelite, including acts of manslaughter, for which the victim's kin could exact vengeance. In the present context, it denotes the killing of one Israelite by another, motivated by hatred or the like (Nm 35:20; cf. Hos 6:9).

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	י "Do not murder.
Kaplan Translation	<i>The Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Commandments</i>
	Do not commit murder.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	"You do not murder.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	YOU SHALL NOT MURDER. †(<i>Killing animals for food is NOT murder. JESUS commanded us to kill animals for food; Act_10:13, Gen_9:3. Serving in the military is NOT murder. JESUS sent Israel into war many times. HE determines the outcome of every war. Self defense is not Murder, although when it comes to persecution, we must be willing to lay down our lives for JESUS. Accidental killing is not murder. Capital Punishment is not murder. It is ordained & appointed in Scripture. Most of the time, murder is revenge & we are told to not take our own revenge, nor to repay evil for evil</i>) This is v. 15 in the AOB.
Awful Scroll Bible	Was you to murder?
exeGeseges companion Bible	Murder not.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	"You shall not commit murder (unjustified, deliberate homicide).
The Expanded Bible	"You must not murder anyone.
Kretzmann's Commentary	Thou shalt not kill, the duty of preserving the life which God has given to man being enjoined here in all its branches and manifestations.
Syndein/Thieme	"You will not murder {ratsach - means to murder}."
The Voice	You are not to murder.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	Commandments 6–9 are all presented as a single verse.
NET Bible®	"You shall not murder." ³⁵
	³⁵ tn The verb תִּצַּח (ratsakh) refers to the premeditated or accidental taking of the life of another human being; it includes any unauthorized killing (it is used for the punishment of a murderer, but that would not be included in the prohibition). This commandment teaches the sanctity of all human life. See J. H. Yoder, "Exodus 20,13: 'Thou Shalt Not Kill,'" <i>Int</i> 34 (1980): 394-99; and A. Phillips, "Another Look at Murder," <i>JJS</i> 28 (1977): 105-26.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.
English Standard Version	"You shall not murder. The Hebrew word also covers causing human death through carelessness or negligence
Webster's Bible Translation	Thou shalt not kill.
Young's Updated LT	"You will not murder.

The gist of this passage: The sixth commandment from God is not to murder.

Exodus 20:13			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לו' or לו') [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
râtsach (רָצַח) [pronounced <i>raw-TSAHKH</i>]	<i>to murder, to kill, to slay [premeditated, accidental, as a slayer]; to break, to dash in pieces</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7523 BDB #953

Translation: You will not murder.

This is one of the shortest verses in the Bible, consisting of a negative and a single verb.

This verse does not read, *Thou shalt not kill*. Killing, under certain specific conditions, is legitimate. A soldier may kill his enemy in battle. A person may kill another in protection of himself or his family. A policeman may kill a person who is endangering others. The state may execute a person for committing horrendous crimes. All of these are legitimate reasons for killing someone.

What we are not allowed to do is intentionally kill someone simply because we believe that removing them from this world will somehow benefit us.

I recall in my youth attending a Baptist church in Berkeley, California once and listening to a Sunday School teacher teach this verse and point out that there are no exceptions herein stated; that no matter what, under any circumstances, we are not to kill anyone for any reason. This is absolutely false and I remember when I heard this guy expound ineloquently on this verse, I sat there just grinding my teeth thinking to myself, *does this man have even a clue?* In the Hebrew, there are about ten different words for kill and each verb has several stems (the stem of a verb changes its meaning somewhat).

The Hebrew Words for Kill/Murder

1. Nâkâh (נָקָה) [pronounced *naw-KAW*] is one of the most common words in the Old Testament, taking up over six columns of references in *The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance*. Despite its many appearances in the OT, it does not occur in the Qal stem, the most common of the Hebrew stems. It is most often translated *smite* in the KJV, and means *strike* in modern English. It can mean to strike so that the other person is killed, as in Exodus 21:12, 20 Joshua 10:26 11:17 1Samuel 17:50. Nâkâh can be used figuratively to strike an entire city or population as in Joshua 19:47 Judges 1:5, 12. This word first occurs in Genesis 4:15 where it does mean to strike and kill. Strong's #5221, BDB p. 645, NEHC p. 814. When a specific word is followed by three numbers, these are Strong, BDB and NEHC numbers.
2. Mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced *mooth*] means *to die*. It is found many times throughout the Old Testament; it takes up 10 columns in NEHC. It is usually literal (Genesis 44:20) but not always (Job 12:2); and it is not necessarily a result of violence (Genesis 48:7). It is the word which is used the most often when it comes to capital punishment in the Old Testament (Exodus 19:12 21:12 Deuteronomy 13:10 17:5, 12 21:21 22:21) and it is often used of manslaughter (that is, the result of an act of manslaughter) (Exodus 21:12, 28, 35). This is a word which might be described as more the passive of *to kill*; this is the word which the victim does in the active voice, so to speak. Strong's #4191, BDB #559, NEHC p. 675
 - a. You may ask, how does this word not always mean violent death, given that it is used for

The Hebrew Words for Kill/Murder

manslaughter and execution?

b. It depends upon context and/or the stem of the verb.

3. Hârag (גָּרַח) [pronounced *haw-RAG*] simply means *to kill, to slay*. It is primarily used of killing which is done as an act of violence (Genesis 4:23 Joshua 10:11). It is rarely used for capital punishment (Exodus 32:27 Leviticus 20:15–16) or for animals (2Kings 17:25 Job 20:18). Strong's #2026, BDB #246, NEHC p. 374
4. Ṭâbach (טָבַח) [pronounced *taw^b-VAHKH*] is used for slaughtering sheep or other beasts (Genesis 43:16 Exodus 22:1) and is not found near as often as the previous three words. Strong's #2873 BDB #370, p. 473
5. Shâchat (תָּחַשׁ) [pronounced *shaw-KHAT*] is the word used primarily for ceremonial sacrifices (Leviticus 1:5, 11 3:2, 8 4:4, 15). Strong's #7819 & 7829, BDB #1006, NEHC p. 1251
6. Nâqaph (נָקַף) [pronounced *naw-KAHF*] is a bit harder to pin down for a definition; it seems to mean *to strike off, to mutilate, to wound*. It is found once the result of which was death (Isaiah 29:1). It also has what seems to be an entirely unrelated meaning which is how it is found most often (Joshua 6:3 2Kings 11:8 Job 1:5 Psalm 22:16). Strong's #5362, BDB #668, NEHC p. 839
7. Râtsach (רָצַח) [pronounced *raw-TSAHKH*] is the word found in Exodus 20:13 and it means *to murder* (Deuteronomy 22:26 Jeremiah 7:9) and murderer (Numbers 35:16–18). It is, however, found occasionally for capital punishment (Numbers 35:30) and for a person guilty of involuntary manslaughter (Numbers 35:12). Strong's #7523 BDB #953, NEHC p. 1190
8. Numbers 35:30 is a fascinating passage as four forms of three of these words are found in this one verse. *If any one kills (nâkâh) a person based upon the evidence of witnesses, the murderer (the Qal active participle of râtsach) shall be killed (Qal imperfect of râtsach); furthermore, one person will not testify against a person to [cause him to be put to] death (Qal infinitive construct of mûwth)*. Two of the words left out are used for animals so that is most of what we have studied in this doctrine.

Therefore, this particular passage does not outlaw every single form of killing.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The doctrine below is probably similar to R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s doctrine of murder.

The Doctrine of Murder (by Jack M. Ballinger)

1. Satan is called a murderer. John 8:44 *"You are of your father the devil [via the indwelling of Adam's original sin, genetic engineering, spiritual death] and you want to do the desires of your father [negative volition follows the sinful trend of Adam; the people who are addressed here will murder Jesus]. He was a murderer from the beginning [Satan is an accomplice to every murder, since he is the father of the indwelling sinful trend of Adam; from the first murderer to the victims of international politics in the present hour, cp. Revelation 18:24], and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him [Satan is behind every lie, every distortion, every conspiracy and every deception. The indwelling sinful trend of Adam is his greatest tactical victory]. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature [i.e., his fallen nature; he as the god of this world {2Corinthians 4:4} is behind every lie in the person of the indwelling sinful trend of Adam]; for he is a liar and the father of lies*. The fact that he is symbolized as a great red dragon lurking in the sea of humanity emphasizes his murderous ways. Red, as in "blood", is his color.)
2. The first murder victim was Abel, who was murdered by his brother, Cain. Genesis 4:1–15; 1John 3:12
 - 1) The murder was due to a conflict in belief (Hebrews 11:4).
 - 2) Religiously inspired murder is a regular feature of the Angelic Conflict (Jude 11 Matthew 23:34-37 Revelation 17:6, the murder of Jesus).
 - 3) Although Genesis does not describe the murder, apparently Cain watched Abel kill the various animal sacrifices with a sacrificial knife (or blade). He asked to take a look at it, and then he used it on Abel. We know that from the specific meaning of the verb in 1John 3:12. That verb is sphazô

The Doctrine of Murder (by Jack M. Ballinger)

(σφάζω) [pronounced *SPHAHD-zoh*], and it means, *to slay, slaughter, butcher; to put to death by violence; mortally wounded*. Strong's #4969. It is a word most closely associated with animal sacrifice as well as putting someone to death by violence. Those two meanings blend when it comes to Cain killing Abel.

3. Sinful anger constitutes mental attitude murder. Matthew 5:21,22 James 4:1,2
4. Murder is one of the sins God particularly hates. Proverbs 6:16-19
5. Murder and the mental attitude sins that lead up to it are sponsored by the sinful trend of Adam (Mark 7:21 Galatians 5:19–21 James 4:1,2; jealousy, anger, greed, power lust). We all have the sinful trend of Adam, as we inherit this from our human fathers.
6. Heathenism is characterized by this sin. Romans 1:28-32; cp. 3:15
7. A believer can commit murder and still be a believer (1Peter 4:15, King David). However, every murderer does not have eternal life in him (1John 3:15).
8. Murder is prohibited by the sixth commandment of the Mosaic Law (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17 "You shall not commit murder" is the Qal imperfect 2nd person plural of *râtsach* (רָצַח) [pronounced *raw-TSAKH*]. Of the 43X this verb occurs, only once is it used of sanctified killing (Numbers 35:27); some 30X it is used in connection with the act of manslaughter [accidental killing].
9. The general Hebrew word for "killing" is *qâṭal* (קָטַל) [pronounced *kaw-TAHL*], which is used both for legitimate and non-legitimate killing in the Old Testament). This is a rare verb found only thrice in the Old Testament: Job 13:15 24:14 and Psalm 139:19.
10. Capital punishment is the divinely ordained punishment for the crime of murder (Deuteronomy 21:22,23; cf. 17:8-13). It was instituted before the Mosaic Law was instituted.
 - 1) Capital punishment is commanded to Noah's descendants and the nations they founded for the entire course of the postdiluvian civilization. The man who murders must be executed. Genesis 9:6 **"Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man."**
 - 2) Capital punishment was incorporated into the Mosaic Law (Exodus 21:12 **"He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death."** The verb used here is the Hophal imperfect with the Qal infinitive absolute of *mûwth* (מוּת/מות) [pronounced *mooth*]: to die].
 - 3) Capital punishment was taught by Jesus in Matthew 26:50-54 John 13:10, 11 Luke 22:49, 50 cf. 22:36-38.
 - 4) It was taught by Paul as a valid practice of law (Romans 13:14), and by Peter (1Peter 2:13,14).
 - 5) Capital punishment will become a legal reality in the Millennium. Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15
 - 6) Paul taught the Royal Family that one of the lawful uses of the Law in the Church Age was that murder is a crime. 1Timothy 1:8-11 **Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.** (ESV)
11. Killing that does not constitute murder:
 - 1) Killing in self-defense. Exodus 22:2 Luke 22:36
 - 2) Capital punishment. Genesis 9:6
 - 3) War (see Doctrine of; universal military training, Numbers 1).
 - (1) Covert aggression is the basis for declaring war (Numbers 31:1ff).
 - (2) The principle of total victory by killing the enemy. Deuteronomy 20:10-18
 - (3) The use the faith-rest technique when entering battle. Deuteronomy 20:14
 - (4) The Lord is known as **"a man of war"** in Exodus 15:3, and as **"the Lord of the armies"** in 1Samuel 17:45.
 - (5) One of the original books of the Jews was called **"the book of the Wars of Yahweh."** Numbers 21:14
 - (6) David praised God for giving him the skills to fight in combat. Psalm 144:1
 - (7) The Lord sends the army into battle. 2Chronicles 13:12

The Doctrine of Murder (by Jack M. Ballinger)

- (8) God delivered the enemy into Israel's hands. Deuteronomy 20:13
- (9) The Lord will once again strap on His sword and defeat the nations in the Tribulation. Revelation 19:15,16
- (10) He will unleash a new weapon upon the forces at Armageddon not approved by the Geneva Convention! (Zechariah 14:12-15).

From <http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/murder.pdf> accessed June 27, 2019 (edited).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Also see the **Doctrine of Killing and Murder** ([L. G. Merritt](#)).

Exodus 20:13 [You will not murder](#). (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Furthermore, for many of the commandments given in the Law, the penalty for them is execution by man—this obviously indicates that, under certain circumstances, killing is not only allowed but mandated. This is clearly taught, for instance, in Exodus 21:20 where the penalty for intentional manslaughter is death: [He that strikes a man so that he dies, shall be surely put to death](#). See also Exodus 21:15–17. Furthermore, God will command the children of Israel to go into the land of Canaan and in some cases slaughter entire populations of man, woman, child and animal. So obviously there are circumstances where man is commanded by God to kill another man.

In many ways, murder is the ultimate sin because you deprive a man the use of his volition for good or for bad; a person's soul is not longer a part of the Angelic Conflict. The angelic conflict, to some extent, is dependent upon the decisions that we make. Without our volition, there is no angelic conflict. We are never to have our volition taken from us—not by a spiritual bully; not by parents running out lives after we have become an adult and have moved out of their house; and not by the federal government. In murder, one is robbed of his earthly volition forever. When a person is placed into jail unjustly, his volition is severely limited.

This exact commandment of [you will not murder](#) is repeated in the New Testament (Romans 13:9) and, in fact, is taken quite a bit further in the New Testament. Jesus said, "[You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You will not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder will be liable to the courts.'](#) But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother will be guilty before the court; and whoever will say to his brother, 'Raca' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever will say, 'You fool' will be guilty enough to go into the hell of fire" (Matthew 5:21–23). Without going into great detail, which this verse demands, it places hatred on the same plane as murder, insofar as the eventual punishment is eternity in the Lake of Fire. The business about the courts sets up an analogy because a man certainly cannot be executed for anger. The important concept to grasp here is that the motivation behind murder and mental attitude sins are just as wrong in God's sight as the act of murder itself.

Exodus 20:13 [You will not take the life of another by murder](#). (Kukis paraphrase)

[You will not commit adultery.](#)

Exodus
20:14

[You will not commit adultery.](#)

[You will not have sex outside of marriage.](#)

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	You will not commit adultery.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	Thou shalt not commit adultery.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	My people of the house of Israel, Be ye not adulterers, nor companions nor partakers with adulterers: nor in the congregations of Israel shall there be seen an adulterous people, that your sons may not arise after you to teach one another to have part with adulterers: for through the guilt of adultery death cometh forth upon the world.
Revised Douay-Rheims	You shall not commit adultery.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"You shall not commit adultery.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	You shall not commit adultery.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Thou shalt not commit adultery. This is v. 13 in the Greek.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Do not be false to the married relation.
Easy English	You must not have sex with another person's husband or wife.
Easy-to-Read Version–2001	"You must not do the sin of adultery.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
God's Word™	"Never commit adultery.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	No adultery.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Be faithful in marriage.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	"Do not do sex sins.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Do not commit adultery with anyone.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'You must not commit adultery.
Beck's American Translation	.
Translation for Translators	Do not ◀commit adultery/have sex with anyone other than your spouse▶.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Commandment VII.
	"You shall not commit adultery.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	You shall not break wedlock.
International Standard V	"You are not to commit adultery.
Urim-Thummim Version	[7] YOU WILL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New American Bible (2011)	You shall not commit adultery. Lv 18:20; 20:10; Dt 22:22; Mt 5:27.
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Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	ר "Do not commit adultery.
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Kaplan Translation **Do not commit adultery.**

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible **YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.** †(*Adultery is sex outside of marriage when you are already married. When a person looks at another person in a sexual way, when they are already married, they commit adultery in their heart. Mat_5:28. This is talking about when you are already in a sexual relationship/marriage. It is not adultery for a virgin to look at their prospective future mate in a sexual way. JESUS gave us natural sexual desire*) [This is v. 13 in the AOB.]

Awful Scroll Bible **Was you to adulterize?**

exeGesés companion Bible **Adulterize not.**

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible **"You shall not commit adultery.**
Jesus amplified this commandment in Matt 5:27, 28. Not only is adultery forbidden, but also any act of sexual impurity or unchastity, and any form of pornography or other obscenity.

The Expanded Bible
Kretzmann's Commentary **"You must not be guilty of [commit] adultery.**
Thou shalt not commit adultery, the word here used including not only the unfaithfulness of men and women within holy marriage, but every form of impurity directed against the holiness of God's institution of wedlock. Not only is every thought, word, and deed that is sanctioned and commanded within the confines of marriage forbidden outside of these bounds, but also every form of obscenity and every kind of familiarity which is connected with the sexual development of man.

Syndein/Thieme **You shall not commit adultery {na'aph}."**
{Note: Na'aph is a word usually pertaining to a man. It means to have sexual intercourse with another man's wife. The Commandments here are basically a social code with the emphasis on private property and respecting the rights of others. So, to murder is to deprive someone of the right to life, stealing infringes on a person's right to own and enjoy property. To lie in court deprives a person the right to be free. And, to commit adultery is to interfere with a spouse's exclusive right to enjoy an intimate relationship with their opposite number. Finally, remember Jesus told us that if you THINK adultery, you HAVE DONE IT. To think it is just as bad as doing it in the eyes of God.}

The Voice **You are not to commit adultery.**

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach **You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery.** This is v. 13a in the Tanach.

You shall not commit adultery: Adultery applies only [to relations] with a married woman, as it is said: "[And a man who commits adultery with the wife of a[nother] man, who commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor,] [both] the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death" (Lev. 20:10); [and it says,] "[You are] the adulterous wife, who, instead of her husband, takes strangers" (Ezek. 16:32). [In both these verses, the term "adultery" is used in reference to the extramarital relations of a married woman.]

NET Bible® **"You shall not commit adultery."³⁶**

^{36sn} This is a sin against the marriage of a fellow citizen – it destroys the home. The Law distinguished between adultery (which had a death penalty) and sexual contact with a young woman (which carried a monetary fine and usually marriage if the father was willing). So it distinguished fornication and adultery. Both were sins, but the significance of each was different. In the ancient world this sin is often referred to as "the great sin."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.
 English Standard Version "You shall not commit adultery.
 Young's Updated LT "You will not commit adultery.

The gist of this passage: The 7th commandment forbids adultery.

Exodus 20:14			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâ'aph (נָאַף) [pronounced naw-AHF]	<i>to commit adultery; figuratively, to commit idolatry</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5003 BDB #610

Translation: You will not commit adultery.

This verse is just as short as the previous verse, having just a negative and a verb.

There is a dispute just as to how narrow this commandment should be understood. Does it apply to sexual sins in general or is it confined simply to adultery? That would be a moot question, as other sexual sins are dealt with throughout the Law of Moses (some of which will be punishable by death).

Again, there is a law in the Ten Commandments where marriage and family are protected. In ancient Israel, the person who interfered with a family in this way is executed. That is how important the family unit is to God.

Application: I have watched a number of British and Australian shows, and I was struck by how, in so many cases, two women will be talking and one is getting involved with a married man, and the other does not treat this as a sin or a major problem but, in so many cases, speaks of the woman finding her true love in life—rarely does the other woman say, “Your true love in life is not going to be found with another woman’s husband.” Sometimes the bonds of marriage are tenuous, and it is wrong for a man or a woman to insert themselves into a troubled marriage, doing what is certain to be the death blow to that marriage.

Application: Even when adultery does not destroy a marriage, it often causes great pain and suffering to the husband and wife and also to the children (if there are any). What happens in the lives of the adults often affects the lives of their children. Children who are raised by divorced parents are more likely to get divorced themselves.

Although our society no longer executes adulterers, American society still strongly disapproves of adultery.

Adultery is unacceptable (a graphic); from the [Washington Post](#); accessed June 2, 2019. The differences in culture are quite amazing, when 84% of Americans believe that adultery is unacceptable; whereas less than half of France believes that to be so.

The contrast is quite astonishing, but this only goes to show that societies develop different values. There is a huge Christian influence in the United States, and, therefore, fundamental values as expressed in the Ten Commandments are more universally recognized (one of the benefits of a society which is influence by Christian beliefs is, these beliefs are often extended to unbelievers, which strengthens that society).

There is likely a close correspondence between Protestant Christianity and beliefs such as this.

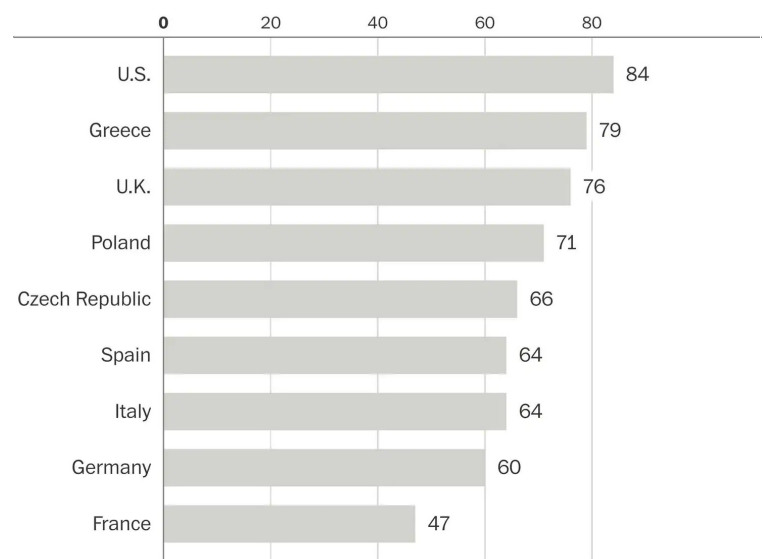
Exodus 20:14 “You shall not commit adultery. (NKJV)

Society functions on the basis of five divine institutions: volition (the function of the soul), work, marriage, family and nation. Societies are preserved and prospered by these divine institutions. With the exception of a very few fringe members, all believers and unbelievers have belonged to and continue to belong to these institutions. The divine institutions were designed by God for believers and unbelievers alike. They are the very structure of society of believers and unbelievers. Attempts to modify or change these institutions are attacks by Satan. It is from him whence comes homosexual marriages; the state controlling our volition (when Obama was president, this was spoken of as nudging the public); the breakdown of nationalism, which is often replaced with some sort of international system; children being raised by the state or by state-controlled child-care institutions—all these are attacks on our society by Satan. Satan is obviously anti-God. But he is also anti-establishment. The five divine institutions are the very core of establishment.

Many studies have been done regarding criminality and family; and drug experimentation and the family. A person raised in a single parent home is far more likely to become a criminal and/or become involved with drugs, as opposed to a person raised in a mother-and-father-run home. Ann Coulter’s book *Guilty* cites the statistics comparing the end results of children who come out of a single-parent home as compared to those with two parents, a mother and a father. These stats present a remarkable contrast. They reveal that, in most instances, parents who rise above their petty problems and hold their marriage together are going to produce better children.

One of the greatest attacks in our society today is the over-emphasis upon sex. People are made to think that, if they are not having a lot of very exciting, erotic sex, then there is something wrong with them. In order to achieve this, people commit adultery, they have sex prior to marriage, they marry and remarry, and chase this illusive hedonistic pleasure. Very few people ever find this great pleasure, and when they do, it is very temporary, and it often comes at the expense of love. Going on a hedonistic, sexual binge short-circuits a portion of your system and it makes it much more difficult, if not impossible, to identify your right man or right woman. And you do not get to go out on a youthful sexual-lust binge for 2-20 years and then think you can straighten it all out later. Adultery is just one of the sexual sins, but just as murder is an attack upon the first divine institution, volition; adultery is an attack on the third and fourth divine institutions, marriage and family.

Do you believe that married people having an affair is morally unacceptable?



Source: Pew 2013

THE WASHINGTON POST

It is certainly worth noting that nearly everything in Hollywood (and from the producers of series and movies in Great Britain and Australia) emphasize sex as the most important factor between a man and a woman and I would be hard-pressed to find any film or series where two young people wait until they are married to have sex.

Current culture teaches that (1) a young couple first has sex (possibly even intended as a one-night stand); (2) they have strong physical lust so they desire to have sex often; (3) then they might next move in together; (4) they might have children; (5) and finally, in the end, they might get married. The Bible teaches, you get to know one another as people (soul to soul); then you get married; then you move in together and then you have children. That's the correct order; and we should not be surprised that society has it all backwards.

Back in an era where the Biblical norms and standards were followed, lifetime marriages were the norm and divorce was rare. Today, when the standards of the movie and television industry are followed, marriage success is around 50%. This leaves out the fact that most children are conceived out of wedlock today and large numbers of children are raised by a single parent (usually the mother). The single parent model is that approved by many governments, as this sort of relationship (one parent—invariably the mother—and one or more children) is subsidized by the government. This often means that the single mother supports a more heavy-handed government (as that is what supports her).

Strictly speaking, adultery is a married man or a married woman fornicating with someone other than their spouse. However, the New Testament takes this further.

Adultery

1. The New Testament clearly forbids adultery in the traditional sense. Matthew 19:18 Romans 13:9
2. The Old Testament forbids adultery. Exodus 20:14
3. Jesus forbids us to look upon a woman with lust and calls this sin equivalent to committing adultery. Matthew 5:27–28
4. Having sex with someone prior to marriage is also forbidden—this is adultery with respect to your future spouse. 1Corinthians 7:1 Hebrews 13:4 The verse in 1Corinthians should read: **It is not good for a man to, by touch [light the fire] of a woman.**
5. Divorcing one's spouse and remarrying is, in most cases, committing adultery. Romans 7:2–3

This does not mean that these things were not against the Law in the Old Testament; all except #3 will be specifically dealt with in the Law in additional commandments of God.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart and Map Index](#)

Links to Doctrines About Sex and Adultery

This would be an ideal time to examine the **60 Verses on Sex** ([Knowing Jesus](#)), Biblical Sex ([Stan Murrell](#)); Sexual Health in the Bible ([Grace Notes](#)), and the **Doctrine of Adultery** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. has done a variety of series on Marriage, Right Man/Right Woman, and Adam's Rib (these are available in booklet form and as lesson sets from R. B. Thieme, Jr. [Ministries](#)). For any young man thinking about women and for any young woman who thinks about men, these studies are fundamental.

Exodus 20:14 [You will not commit adultery.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:14 [You will not have sex outside of marriage.](#) (Kukis paraphrase)

You will not steal.	Exodus 20:15	You will not steal.
You will not steal from others.		

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	You will not steal.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	Thou shalt not steal.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Sons of Israel My people, Ye shall not be thieves, nor companions nor partakers with thieves: there shall not be seen in the congregations of Israel a thievish people; that your sons may not arise after you to teach one another to have part with thieves: for on account of the guilt of theft famine cometh forth upon the world.
Revised Douay-Rheims	You shall not steal.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"You shall not steal.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	You shall not steal.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Thou shalt not steal.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Do not take the property of another.
Easy English	You must not take another person's things for yourself.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	"You must not steal anything.
God's Word™	"Never steal.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	No stealing.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'You must not steal.
Beck's American Translation	.
Translation for Translators	Do not steal anything.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Commandment VIII. ' You shall not steal.
International Standard V	π "You are not to steal.
Unlocked Literal Bible	You must not steal from anyone.
Urim-Thummim Version	[8] YOU WILL NOT STEAL.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New American Bible (2011) **You shall not steal.** Lv 19:11.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible n “Do not steal.
The Scriptures 1998 “You do not steal.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Awful Scroll Bible Was you to steal?

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible “You shall not steal [secretly, openly, fraudulently, or through carelessness].
 The Expanded Bible “You must not steal.
 Kretzmann’s Commentary **Thou shalt not steal**, the Lord here protecting the property of one's neighbor, as the condition of the dignity and peacefulness of life, not only against robbery and theft, but also against unfaithfulness, neglect, and waste.
 The Voice You are not to take what is not yours.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. This is v. 13b in the Tanakh.

You shall not steal: The text refers to kidnapping. [The verse] “You shall not steal” (Lev. 19:11) refers to stealing money. Or perhaps this one [verse] refers only to stealing money and the one written further (in Lev.) refers to kidnapping? You must admit that [the meaning of] a statement is derived from its context. Just as [the former two commandments] “You shall not murder” [and] “You shall not commit adultery” refer to capital sins, “You shall not steal” also refers to a capital sin [i.e., a sin punishable by death]. — [from Sanh. 86a]

Kaplan Translation **Do not steal.**
 Do not steal
 This is primarily a commandment against kidnapping (Exodus 21:16; Mekhilta; Rashi). However, it also forbids all sorts of dishonesty (Targum Yonathan).
 NET Bible® “You shall not steal.”³⁷
 ^{37sn} This law protected the property of the Israelite citizen. See D. Little, “Exodus 20,15: ‘Thou Shalt Not Steal’,” *Int* 34 (1980): 399-405.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner’s Mechanical Trans.
 Modern Literal Version You will not steal.
 World English Bible “You shall not steal.
 Young’s Updated LT “You will not steal.

The gist of this passage: The eighth commandment forbids stealing.

Exodus 20:15

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
gânab (גָּנַב) [pronounced gaw-NAH ^{BV}]	<i>to steal, to take away by theft; to deceive</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1589 BDB #170

Translation: You will not steal.

At least two *Jewish* Bibles suggest that this relates directly to *man-stealing* (taking someone into slavery), but I find no support for this theory.

God tells the people that they may not take things which belong to other people from them.

This verse first and foremostly protects private property. Believers and unbelievers, Hebrews and Gentiles, all have the right to own property and all have the right to have their property safe from violation (meaning safe from being stolen). Nowhere does the Bible state that all the earth is God's, therefore we all own our things in common because they first and foremost belong to God. Furthermore, the Bible also does not say, because we are all brothers, these things belong to all of us. There were special circumstances during times of severe persecution when men and women huddled together in small churches and shared what they had. However, this was always a matter of free will on their part. They believed that circumstances—intense persecution at the time—warranted such behavior.

Earlier, I mentioned the divine institutions, and you may have wondered, *do any of the Ten Commandments protect one's work?* Presumably, people work, over a period of time, to attain more than just necessary food. Work can translate into possessions and shelter. So, this, the 8th commandment and the 10th commandment both protect private property which is attained through work.

Communism and socialist mean to take away our personal property and possessions and our wealth, as such property ultimately belongs to the state (in their opinion; and they often couch this in false principles like, property belonging to the people (in truth, property belongs to the state). Socialism gives the government the choice when and who receives private property and how much. Socialists are anti-God because they sponsor the government doing the exact opposite of what a good government is supposed to do. A good government looks to protect the private possessions of its citizenry—not to take them away at the whim of bureaucratic members. The Bible does not set up a particular form of government that we must all live under. It allows for a reasonable amount of freedom in governmental organization. However, any government which runs exactly counter to these commandments is evil to its core.

Some churches are so bent on taking your money from you, that we are made to feel as though there is something wrong with owning property, personal possessions, luxury items, etc. We have a divine right to property which we have earned legally. There is a place for giving, but that is not in view here. What is in view is that, whatever someone else owns is divinely protected. God demands that we allow others the right to purchase, collect, and own private property and that we have no right as individuals to steal it from others. This may be expanded to today's world where the state has no right to come in and steal private property. This does not preclude taxation, however. The New Testament affirms this as the right of government in Matthew 19:18 and Romans 13:9.

As there are in many issues, there are two divergent poles, both of which claim Biblical support. There are those who believe that we should give until it hurts, that we should not accumulate any material luxuries. There are others who believe that they may accumulate whatever they choose to without repercussion; that if we are spiritually mature, then God will give us great material wealth. The truth, as always, is somewhere in the middle. It is our priorities, our mental attitude, our positive volition toward God's Word and our willingness to share our prosperity which are the fundamental issues—not the accumulation of material things or the eschewing of such ownership.

Giving

1. In the area of priorities, people who spend their entire lives pursuing material things will, at some point, experience great misery and sorrow. *Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have store up your treasure! Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields which you have withheld, cries out! And the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened you hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned and put to death the righteous; he does not resist you* (James 5:1–6).
2. The illustration of the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16–22 is not someone who could not be saved because he was wealthy. The rich young ruler was trying to be saved by works and Jesus Christ illustrated to him that if he was going to be saved by works, then one of the things he needed to do was to give away his material possessions. That was one work which he was unwilling to do. Selling everything and giving it all to the poor would not have saved the man. This merely illustrates where his shortcomings were because he was a very self-righteous, rich young ruler.
3. When a person's material wealth stands in the way of his spiritual growth or his salvation, then wealth is a stumbling block to that individual. Jesus Christ explained to the disciples that wealth sometimes blinds a person to their need for salvation. Matthew 19:23–26
4. Giving is a matter of sharing our resources as we have been prospered (2Corinthians 8–9). God has given great prosperity to some people (David and Solomon come quickly to mind) and some wealthy men use their wealth wisely and support God's work. Similarly, some who do not make a great deal of money, also use what God has given them and support His work (remember the widow and the two mites).
5. There are even periods of time during great persecution where Christians have bound themselves together to share what God has given them (Acts 4:32). Here, we must be careful. We are all members of the same family and the material things which we possess are given to us by God. Therefore, we should be willing to share our material prosperity with the members of our family and be willing to give as God has prospered us. However, at the same time, we are not to deprive our own families (1Timothy 5:8).
6. When churches begin financially supporting their members, great care has to be exercised. Paul gives Timothy advice in 1Timothy 5:9–13; which implies that those on the dole have a tendency to degenerate (see also 2Thessalonians 3:11). Paul writes that those who are not actively working, should not eat (2Thessalonians 3:10).
7. The point in mentioning these divergent passages is that different circumstances require different approaches by God's people. Because people often grab on to one set of verses and ignore anything that they see as contrary, there are often completely opposite viewpoints about what is right or wrong, neither of which is correct. This is a form of propaganda where a person sets up two alternatives and then says to choose one or the other. Often, these are not the only alternatives (a good example is hyper-Calvinism vs. Arminianism).

Exodus 20:15 **You will not steal from others.** (Kukis paraphrase)

Our study has been an examination of the Ten Commandments. The final two commandments are #s 9 and 10. The ninth commandment is:

You will not speak up in a neighbor a witness of falsehood.	Exodus 20:16	You will not testify [as] a false witness against a neighbor [or associate].
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You will not speak falsely about a neighbor or an associate.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	You will not speak up in a neighbor a witness of falsehood.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	Thou shalt not testify against thy neighbour a testimony of falsehood.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Sons of Israel My people, Ye shall not testify against your neighbours a testimony of falsehood, nor be companions or partakers with those who bear false witness nor shall there be seen in the congregations of Israel a people who testify a testimony of falsehood; neither shall your sons arise after you to teach one another to have part with those who testify falsehood: for because of the guilt of false testimony the clouds go up and the rain cometh not down, and dryness cometh upon the world. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
Revised Douay-Rheims	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	You must not say false things about your neighbour.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	"You must not tell lies about other people. Or "You must not be a false witness against your neighbor."
God's Word™	"Never lie when you testify about your neighbor.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Do not accuse anyone falsely.
The Message	No lies about your neighbor.
NIRV	"Do not be a false witness against your neighbor.
New Simplified Bible	»Do not (lie) accuse anyone falsely.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Do not tell lies about others.
The Living Bible	"You must not lie [or "You must not give false testimony in court."].
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	"Do not tell a lie about your neighbor.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Do not falsely accuse anyone of committing a crime.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible 'You must not testify falsely against your neighbor.
 Beck's American Translation .
 Translation for Translators Do not falsely accuse anyone of committing a crime.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation "Do not answer your associate with false testimony."
 Ferrar-Fenton Bible .
 God's Truth (Tyndale) You shall bear no false witness against your neighbor.
 International Standard V u
 "You are not to testify falsely against your neighbor.
 Lexham English Bible "You shall not testify against your neighbor [with] a false witness.
 Urim-Thummim Version [9] YOU WILL NOT TESTIFY AS A FALSE WITNESS AGAINST ANOTHER
 PERSON.
 Wikipedia Bible Project You will not aggrieve your fellow man with false testimony.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible You shall not answer false testimony against your neighbor.
 New American Bible (2011) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. Ex 23:1; Dt 19:16–19;
 Prv 19:5, 9; 24:28.
 Revised English Bible–1989 Do not give false evidence against your neighbour.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible u "Do not give false evidence against your neighbor.
 exeGeses companion Bible Answer not a false witness against your friend.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Awful Scroll Bible Was you to testify falsely, witnessing against your fellow?
 Concordant Literal Version You shall not answer against your associate with false testimony.
 Orthodox Jewish Bible Thou shalt not bear ed sheker against thy neighbor.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible "You shall not testify falsely [that is, lie, withhold, or manipulate the truth] against
 your neighbor (any person).
The Expanded Bible "You must not tell lies about [bear false witness against] your neighbor.
Kretzmann's Commentary Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor, the object being to protect
 truth, not only in all public, civil relations, but also in the home, the malice of evil
 tongues being well known.
Syndein/Thieme "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."
 {Note: Under Jewish law, if two witnesses gave the same story, that was sufficient
 evidence of guilt. To lie in court could have very serious consequences, so to be
 found guilty of this was a serious, serious matter.}.
The Voice You are not to give false testimony against your neighbor.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

Kaplan Translation Do not testify as a false witness against your neighbor.
testify

The Hebrew anah can also mean answer, respond, or speak up. However, it is also used specifically for testimony, see 1 Samuel 12:3, 2 Samuel 1:16, Isaiah 3:9, 59:12, Micah 6:3, Job 15:6, Numbers 35:30.

neighbor

Or, 'countryman.'

NET Bible®

"You shall not give³⁸ false testimony³⁹ against your neighbor.

^{38tn} Heb "answer" as in a court of law.

^{39tn} The expression רָקַשׁ דָּע ('ed shaqer) means "a lying witness" (B. S. Childs, Exodus [OTL], 388). In this verse the noun is an adverbial accusative, "you will not answer as a lying witness." The prohibition is against perjury. While the precise reference would be to legal proceedings, the law probably had a broader application to lying about other people in general (see Lev 5:1; Hos 4:2).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...you will not afflict your companion (with) a witness of falseness,...

English Standard Version "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Updated Bible Version 2.17 You will not bear false witness against your fellow man.

World English Bible "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

Young's Updated LT "You will not answer against your neighbour a false testimony.

The gist of this passage: You are not to lie about anyone or bear false witness against them in court.

Exodus 20:16

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or אֵל) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
'ânâh (הִנָּה) [pronounced gaw-NAWH]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
rêa' (עַר) [pronounced RAY-ahg]	<i>associate, neighbor, colleague; companion, friend; beloved; fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen; another person; one, another [in a reciprocal phrase]</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945
'êd (עֵד) [pronounced gayde]	<i>witness, testimony, solemn testimony, evidence; a statement of truth, something which stands as a testimony or memorial to a fact (e.g., Gen. 31:48 Deut. 31:19)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5707 BDB #729

Exodus 20:16			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sheqer (שֶׁקֶר) [pronounced SHEH-ker]	a lie, lying words, deception, falsehood; a liar; whatever deceives, fraud, vanity; falsely [absolute used as adverb]	masculine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #8267 BDB #1055

Translation: You will not testify [as] a false witness against a neighbor [or associate].

Because the KJV was *the* Bible in western culture for so long, and because certain passages were commonly memorized (the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the first few verses of Genesis), it is difficult to exegete some passages because the translation sometimes comes out differently than what is found in the KJV (for instance, Exodus 20:7).

Exodus 20:16 (a graphic); from [Bible Hub](#); accessed August 7, 2024.

This provides me with most of the information which I need to know. The top line is Strong's #; the second line is the English transliteration of each Hebrew word (as it is

found in the Hebrew text). The third line is the actual Hebrew, which is written from right to left. The original Hebrew letters are large black graphics. Above and below those letters are the vowel points. These vowel points were not given in the original text, so that a person can mentally or physically cover up the vowel points and still read the Hebrew as it was originally written 3500 years ago. The fourth line is the English translation and the fifth line is the morphology of the verb. The blue lines (links) provide even more information if you place your cursor over them.

Before the internet, in the late 1990s (very few people were on the internet regularly at that time), I purchased 4 very expensive and thick books with this same information put together by a man named John Joseph Owens.

In my chapter-by-chapter studies, I list this information somewhat differently:

Exodus 20:16 (a second graphic); from [Kukis.org](#); accessed August 7, 2024.

This format is one which I developed and is unique in its set up. I believe that it communicates the most amount of information without being too confusing—even for those completely unfamiliar with the Hebrew language. For those who use WordPerfect (a writing or

Exodus 20:16			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
לֹא (לֹא or לֹאִי) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
אָנָּה (עֲנֶה) [pronounced gaw-NAWH]	to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
בֵּ (בְּ) [pronounced beh]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
רֵעִי (רֵעִי) [pronounced RAY-ahg]	associate, neighbor, colleague; companion, friend; beloved; fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen; another person; one, another [in a reciprocal phrase]	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945

word processing program similar to and superior to Word), these charts can be easily integrated into your own notes, if you so choose.

I presented all of that information so that you would not get completely lost in the exegetical approach from the Hebrew below:

V. 16 begins as the previous three verses did: with a negative and the 2nd person, masculine singular, Qal imperfect of a verb. The verb in v. 16 is 'ânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced *gaw-NAWH*], a word with three very diverse meanings (actually, it is better understood as three different words which are spelled the same). It means *to answer, to respond, to testify; to be occupied with, to be busied with* (found very rarely in the Old Testament; Ecclesiastes 1:13 3:10); and *to be afflicted, to be troubled*. Here it obviously means *to answer, to testify*. Strong's #6030 BDB #772. There is a negative with this verb, so this is something that we are not supposed to do.

This is followed by the prefixed proposition b^e (ב) [pronounced *b^{eh}*] and it means *in, into, near, at, by, with against*. No Strong's # BDB #88. It is prefixed to the noun rêa' (רֵעַ) [pronounced *RAY-ahg*] and it means *friend, companion, and even neighbor*, and it is found about 200 times in the Old Testament (Genesis 15:10 Exodus 2:13 32:27 2Samuel 16:17). Rêa' has a 2nd person, masculine singular suffix, translated *your*. A cooperative relationship rather than an adversarial one is implied (however, this depends upon one's understanding of the bêt preposition). Strong's #7453 BDB #945.

'Ed (עֵד) [pronounced *gayde*] means *witness, testimony, evidence* and it is in the construct form. To give you an idea of how the construct is used, let's say that Moses has a tent. If we put *tent* in the construct and follow it with *Moses*, then the translation would be *the tent of Moses* or *Moses' tent*. In Exodus 20:16, this construct state translates to, *a testimony of deception*. Strong's #5707 BDB #729.

The final word in Exodus 20:16 is sheqer (שֶׁקֶר) [pronounced *SHEH-ker*] and it means *deception, disappointment, falsehood*. The traditional way to render these two words is *a testimony of deception, a witness of falsehood, or a false witness*. Strong's #8267 BDB #1055. This changes the commonly rendered *you will not bear false witness against your neighbor* to *You will not testify with your neighbor [or, friend or associate] a witness of deception*. The bêt preposition is also rendered *against*; so this may also be translated *You will not testify against your neighbor [or, friend or associate] a witness of deception*.

What is implied in the first example is collusion of testimony which is false. Our word for this today is perjury, but here the person is perjuring themselves in order to agree with the testimony of another. This does not have to be a court case. Your friend can be gossiping about someone and you can chime in with a rumor which you have heard and possibly unthinkingly embellished. In any case, it is a lie, and it is against God's law to lie. Matthew 19:18 leaves out the portion about the neighbor (it reads, *You shall not bear false witness*). This is the sin of lying.

The second approach has one lying against one's associate. Doing either one of these is wrong; and so wrong as to be one of the Ten Commandments.

In Acts 5 we have one of the most famous cases of collusion and misrepresentation. Ananias and Sapphira were a Christian couple who sold a piece of property and acted as though they had given all of the proceeds from that sale to the church. The problem was not that they held back some of the funds, but that they misled everyone into thinking that they had given the entire amount. We are under no obligation to give all of our funds to the church, to the missionaries that come through our church, etc. We need only give as God has prospered. However, we should not act as though we are giving sacrificially when in reality we are not. Both Ananias and Sapphira died because they had lied to the Holy Spirit, insofar as they misled their fellow believers. Just so there is no misunderstanding here, even though this couple died the sin unto death, they are both in heaven today.

We do not lose our salvation even if we die the sin unto death.

Exodus 20:16 **You will not testify [as] a false witness against a neighbor [or associate].** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Although this appears to be speaking of giving testimony in a courtroom, it is applicable to all forms of false speech against a neighbor or an associate. This does not indicate that person is a friend or close to you in some way.

Exodus 20:16 **You will not testify [as] a false witness against a neighbor [or associate].** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:16 **You will not speak falsely about a neighbor or an associate.** (Kukis paraphrase)

This is the 10th and final commandment; and the last words God will speak to the people of Israel.

Now for the tenth and final commandment. This is the entire verse:

The tenth commandment is Exodus 20:17 **"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 is your neighbor's."** (ESV)

R. B. Thieme, Jr. calls this last commandment the *Magna Carta of Freedom*. It is this commandment which gives us our rights to privacy, property, person and possessions. This is the commandment which tells us not to be envious of what another has; not to crave or desire any of their possessions. If you have owned a nice, relatively new, good-looking car, and it's been stolen or someone has keyed it, you have been the victim of covetousness. Someone envied what you had; someone was jealous of your possession and acting out of their old sin nature. If you have a spouse who is attractive, in soul and/or in appearance, we have possibly experienced (or they have experienced) a male or female Lothario hit on them, despite their wedding ring. You are victims of someone who has broken this commandment. If you have ever had one of your possessions stolen or experienced a break-in to your automobile or your personal residence, your privacy and person have been violated, as well as your right to own of property, by someone who has broken this commandment.

Now let's examine this commandment piece by piece.

You will not desire a house of your neighbor; you will not desire a woman of your neighbor; and his servant and his maidservant; and his ox and his ass; and all which [is] to your neighbor."

Exodus
20:17

You will not desire your neighbor's house; you will not desire your neighbor's wife; [nor] his male servant or female servant; [nor] his ox or his donkey; [you will not desire] anything which belongs to your neighbor."

You will not desire or lust after your neighbor's house, or his wife; or his servants; or his livestock; you will not desire or lust after anything which belongs to your neighbor."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

You will not desire a house of your neighbor; you will not desire a woman of your neighbor; and his servant and his maidservant; and his ox and his ass; and all which [is] to your neighbor."

Dead Sea Scrolls

.

Targum (Onkelos)	Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	Sons of Israel My people, Ye shall not be covetous companions or partakers with the covetous: nor shall there be seen in the congregations of Israel a covetous people; that your sons may not arise after you to teach one another to have part with the covetous: neither shall any among you covet the wife of his neighbour, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass nor anything that belongeth to his neighbour; because through the guilt of covetousness the government breaketh in upon the possessions of men to take them, and the wealthy are made poor, and slavery cometh upon the world.
Revised Douay-Rheims	You shall not covet your neighbour's house: neither shall you desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	"You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour."
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	You shall not covet your neighbors house, you shall not covet your neighbors wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbors.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; nor his field, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any of his cattle, nor whatever belongs to thy neighbour.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Let not your desire be turned to your neighbour's house, or his wife or his man-servant or his woman-servant or his ox or his ass or anything which is his.
Easy English	You must not want to take your neighbour's house, or his wife, or his servants. You must not want to take his cow, or his donkey, or anything that your neighbour has.'
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	"You must not want to take your neighbor's house. You must not want his wife. And you must not want his men and women servants or his cattle or his donkeys. You must not want to take anything that belongs to another person."
Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i>	. No lusting after your neighbor's house—or wife or servant or maid or ox or donkey. Don't set your heart on anything that is your neighbor's.
NIRV	"Do not want to have anything your neighbor owns. Do not want to have your neighbor's house, wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey."
New Simplified Bible	»Do not covet (desire) another man's house. Do not desire his wife, his slaves, his cattle, his donkeys, or anything else that he owns.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Do not want anything that belongs to someone else. Don't want anyone's house, wife or husband, slaves, oxen, donkeys or anything else.
The Living Bible	"You must not be envious of your neighbor's house, or want to sleep with his wife, or want to own his slaves, oxen, donkeys, or anything else he has."
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	"Do not have a desire for your neighbor's house. Do not have a desire for his wife or his male servant, his female servant, or his bull or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Unlocked Dynamic Bible Do not covet someone else's house, someone else's wife, someone else's male or female slave, someone else's livestock, someone else's donkeys, or anything else that another person owns."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible 'You must not desire your neighbor's woman, his house, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his burro, any other animal, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.'

Beck's American Translation .

Common English Bible Do not desire and try to take your neighbor's house. Do not desire and try to take your neighbor's wife, male or female servant, ox, donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.

New Advent (Knox) Bible Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, or set thy heart upon thy neighbour's wife, or servant or hand-maid or ox or ass or anything else that is his.

Translation for Translators Do not «covet/desire to have» someone else's house, someone else's wife, someone else's male or female slave, someone else's livestock, someone else's donkeys, or anything else that some other person owns."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation "Do not covet your associate's house, do not covet your associate's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his bull, nor donkey, nor anything that belongs to your associate."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible .

International Standard V "You are not to covet your neighbor's house. [Or neighbor's family dynasty] You are not to covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Jubilee Bible 2000 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manslave, nor his maids slave, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Unlocked Literal Bible You will not covet your fellow man's house, you will not covet your fellow man's wife, nor his male slave, nor his female slave, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your fellow man's.

Urim-Thummim Version [10] YOU WILL NOT COVET another person's house, you will not covet another man's woman, nor his male or female slave, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is another person's.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

New American Bible (2011) You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. Rom 7:7.

New Jerusalem Bible 'You shall not set your heart on your neighbour's house. You shall not set your heart on your neighbour's spouse, or servant, man or woman, or ox, or donkey, or any of your neighbour's possessions.'

Revised English Bible—1989 Do not covet your neighbour's household: you must not covet your neighbour's wife, his slave, his slave-girl, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to him.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible ' "Do not covet your neighbor's house; do not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox, his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

exeGesés companion Bible Desire not the house of your friend;

desire not the woman of your friend;
neither his servant, nor his maid,
nor his ox, nor his he burro,
nor aught that is of your friend.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE; YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE; NOR HIS FIELD, NOR HIS SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS DONKEY, NOR ANY OF HIS CATTLE, NOR WHATEVER BELONGS TO YOUR NEIGHBOR." †(This is not the same thing as "would like to have" something similar. This is wanting specifically THEIR property)
Awful Scroll Bible	Was you to desire your fellows house? Was you to desire your neighbor's wife, man servant or maidservant, plowing beast, ass, even that of your neighbor?
Concordant Literal Version	You shall not covet the house of your associate. You shall not covet the wife of your associate, his field, his servant or his maidservant, his bull, his donkey or anything which is your associate's.
Darby Translation	Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's wife, nor his bondman, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's bais, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's isha, nor his eved, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible	"You shall not covet [that is, selfishly desire and attempt to acquire] 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."
The Expanded Bible	"You must not want to take [covet] your neighbor's house. You must not want [covet] his wife or his male or female slaves, or his ox or his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor [^C this commandment internalizes previous commandments]."
Kretzmann's Commentary	Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's. Here the thoughts of the entire second table are once more summarized with reference to the source of sin; for it is out of the heart that the evil thoughts proceed which are afterward realized in various actual sins, Matt. 15:19. So the admirable and fitting order of the commandments, as Luther cans it, is brought to an end and the circle of injunctions completed; for it is only by the sanctification of the heart according to the Tenth Commandment that the true worship of God according to the First Commandment can be secured. It should be noted here that both the division of the Decalogue as such and the distinction between the Ninth and the Tenth Commandment are matters of no material consequence.
Syndein/Thieme	"You shall not 'lust for'/covet your neighbor's house, you shall not 'lust for'/covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is your neighbor's."
The Voice	You are not to covet what your neighbor has or set your heart on getting his house, his wife, his male or female servants, his ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

Kaplan Translation

*The Tenth Commandment, Envy***Do not be envious** of your neighbor's house.**Do not be envious** of your neighbor's wife, his slave, his maid, his ox, his donkey, or anything else that is your neighbor's.**Do not be envious**

NET Bible®

This is a continuation of the Tenth Commandment.

"You shall not covet⁴⁰ 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 belongs to your neighbor."⁴¹^{40tn} The verb חָמַד (khamad) focuses not on an external act but on an internal mental activity behind the act, the motivation for it. The word can be used in a very good sense (Ps 19:10; 68:16), but it has a bad connotation in contexts where the object desired is off limits. This command is aimed at curtailing the greedy desire for something belonging to a neighbor, a desire that leads to the taking of it or the attempt to take it. It was used in the story of the Garden of Eden for the tree that was desired.^{41sn} See further G. Wittenburg, "The Tenth Commandment in the Old Testament," *Journal for Theology in South Africa* 21 (1978): 3-17; and E. W. Nicholson, "The Decalogue as the Direct Address of God," *VT* 27 (1977): 422-33.**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...you will not crave the house of your companion, you will not crave the woman of your companion, and his servant, and his bondwoman, and his ox, and his donkey, and all which belongs to your companion,...

English Standard Version "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 is your neighbor's."

Young's Updated LT "You will not desire the house of your neighbour, you will not desire the wife of your neighbour, or his man-servant, or his handmaid, or his ox, or his ass, or anything which is your neighbour's."

The gist of this passage: You are not to have an inordinate desire for things which your neighbor has.**Exodus 20:17a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or אֵין) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
châmad (חָמַד) [pronounced <i>khaw-MAHD</i>]	<i>to delight [in something]; to desire, to covet, to take pleasure in</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2530 BDB #326
The NET Bible: <i>The Hebrew verb used here (חָמַד, khamad) is different from the one translated "crave" (אָוַה, 'avah) in the next line. The former has sexual overtones ("lust" or the like; cf. Song of Sol 2:3) whereas the latter has more the idea of a desire or craving for material things.</i> ²⁷ This particular reference is to Deuteronomy 5.			
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

²⁷ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?deu5.htm> accessed April 11, 2015 (footnote).

Exodus 20:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
rêa' (רֵא') [pronounced RAY-ahg']	associate, neighbor, colleague; companion, friend; beloved; fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen; another person; one, another [in a reciprocal phrase]	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945

Translation: You will not desire your neighbor's house;...

The key word it is *covet*. It is the 2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of the verb *châmad* (חָמַד) [pronounced *khaw-MAHD*], which means, *to delight [in something]; to desire, to covet, to take pleasure in*. Strong's #2530 BDB #326. This is preceded by a negative, which is how most of the commandments are structured.

The wonderful old English word which describes this: *covetousness*—however, this word is such a relic that some people no longer have a full understanding of it. However, you see something which belongs to your neighbor (someone you know or associate with), you develop a great desire for it and you crave it. He may have a beautiful wife and you desire her. He may have recently purchased a new Lamborghini and you crave it. He may have purchased a Renoir and you are jealous and desire to have it. No matter where you look, there will always be someone who is thinner, richer, drives a nicer car, has a better looking spouse (even if they aren't as good-looking as you). They may be smarter or wittier than you. Nevertheless, you do not crave, covet or desire what they have that you lack.

2024 Lamborghini Huracan (a photograph); from [McClaren](#) in Houston; accessed August 7, 2024. I believe that this little vehicle costs about \$420k.



God has provided for our every need. He has made it possible for any one of us to have great happiness and great inner peace and tranquility on this earth; it just requires salvation, rebound, the intake of doctrine, and our trust in and deference to His judgement and guidance. As Paul wrote, *Not because I am speaking with reference to poverty: for I have learned in whatever circumstances I am, to keep on being content. In fact, I have come to know [through experience] how to be degraded [the degradation of reversionistic discipline], also I have come to know what it is to live in prosperity [the supergrace life]: in every place and in all circumstances I have been initiated in both how to be well fed [saturated with doctrine] and to hunger [for more doctrine].* (Philippians 4:11–12; R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s corrected translation).

It is this desire for things which others have which motivates lying, deceit, stealing, adultery and killing. Parents who teach their children not to lust are raising a family of law-abiding citizens. The parent who allow their children to lust for what others have are raising a generation of criminals. Remove the lust for what you do not have but your neighbor does and you remove a massive amount of criminal activity. Covetousness, or lust (which word does not have to be employed exclusively for sexual lust) is forbidden in the New Testament as well. Romans 7:7–8 *To what conclusion are we forced? Is Law the origin of sin? Absolutely not! However, I was not aware of my sin nature had it not been revealed to me in the Law. Furthermore, I would not have recognized my sinful lust pattern if the Law did not say, "You will not lust!" Now, sin took this occasion, through this very command, to bring about my conscious understanding of every lust in me, for apart from an objective Law, I am unable to recognize sin.* [Exodus 20:17] (Kukis paraphrase)

You are probably still thinking about that Lamborghini. What we are studying is:

Exodus 20:17a “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house;... (NKJV)

At this point in time in Israel’s history, the people of Israel live in tents. However, they will occupy houses when they enter into the land of promise. God is telling them not to lust after or desire the house that your neighbor owns.

I have certainly had house lust in my life. I can think of immediately the 3 houses which I have had house lust for: my own house which I currently own; a 2-story home in a nearby neighborhood built as 4 levels; and a house in the country near River Terrace. I could not acquire the latter two homes and that is certainly acceptable to me. I recall things about them which I like, but I certainly do not concentrate on them nor do I feel any grief or serious disappointment that I missed out on two of those homes. The second house I could not afford (how complex those building plans must have been!); and the third house I found out about just a little too late. In any case, my life is not upset simply because I saw two houses which I liked but could not have.

Exodus 20:17b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
lôʾ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong’s #3808 BDB #518
châmad (חָמַד) [pronounced khaw-MAHD]	to delight [in something]; to desire, to covet, to take pleasure in	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #2530 BDB #326
The NET Bible: <i>The Hebrew verb used here (חָמַד, khamad) is different from the one translated “crave” (אָוַה, ’avah) in the next line. The former has sexual overtones (“lust” or the like; cf. Song of Sol 2:3) whereas the latter has more the idea of a desire or craving for material things.</i> ²⁸ This particular reference is to Deuteronomy 5.			
’ishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	woman, wife	feminine singular construct	Strong’s #802 BDB #61
rêaʿ (רֵעַ) [pronounced RAY-ahg]	associate, neighbor, colleague; companion, friend; beloved; fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen; another person; one, another [in a reciprocal phrase]	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #7453 BDB #945

Translation: ...you will not desire your neighbor’s wife;...

The Israelite was not to desire or lust after a neighbor’s wife. Again, this does not limit your lust by using the term *neighbor*; essentially, you are not to lust after any person’s wife. If you are introduced to any woman who is married or is partnered up, then you remove them from your list of possibilities, no matter how charming and gorgeous they happen to be.

Once a marriage has been established, then that particular wife (or husband) should be seen as off-limits to everyone in their periphery. This part of the 10th commandment goes further than forbidding adultery in terms of prohibition. Men are not to concentrate on or think about the wife of another in any inappropriate way.

²⁸ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?deu5.htm> accessed April 11, 2015 (footnote).

Exodus 20:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced GE ^B -ved]	<i>slave, servant; underling; subject</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾâmâh (אִמָּה) [pronounced <i>aw-MAW</i>]	<i>maid, maidservant, handmaid, female servant, female slave</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #519 BDB #51

Translation: ...[nor] his male servant or female servant;...

If your associate has great slaves or servants, you do not desire them. In the ancient world, a successful person was more likely to have servants (slaves). A servant, in that era, like a wife, belonged wholly to the slave owner. Therefore, they were totally off limits to others. Having competent, industrious and intelligent servants in the ancient world was certainly ideal.

Today in the United States (as well as elsewhere), some people have housekeepers who come in a few hours a week (or a day); so this is not a ban against one neighbor asking another about Blanca the housekeeper and if she can take on any new accounts.

This would be different in places like Hong Kong (and in many places in the Middle East), where young women are often hired to live in a home and to take care of children, attend to the dying mother, and to also do cooking and housecleaning. Such people are closer to the concept of being enslaved, with many of the limitations which come out of the Bible (there is a time limitation on Hebrew slaves; and more people employed in HK in similar positions are on 1–3 year contracts).

V. 17 continues with things which we are not to covet:

Exodus 20:17d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shôwr (שׁוֹר) [pronounced <i>shohr</i>]	<i>an ox, a bull, a head of cattle, oxen</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7794 BDB #1004
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Exodus 20:17d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chāmôwr (חֹמֶר) [pronounced <i>khuh-MOHR</i>]	<i>ass, male donkey, he-ass, burrow</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2543 BDB #331

Translation: ...[nor] his ox or his donkey;...

In an agricultural society, livestock represents wealth. This is very much like a person's checking or savings account. You are not to desire the money that belongs to your neighbor.

Exodus 20:17e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>koh</i>]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kôl 'ăsher mean <i>all which, all whom, all that [which]; whomever, whatever, whatever else, all whose, all where, wherever.</i>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
rêa' (רֵעַ) [pronounced <i>RAY-ahj</i>]	<i>associate, neighbor, colleague; companion, friend; beloved; fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen; another person; one, another [in a reciprocal phrase]</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945

Translation: ...[you will not desire] anything which belongs to your neighbor."

These are the final words that God will speak directly to the people of Israel.

Whatever your neighbor has that you might want, you are to end the wanting for it. Now, if you like something that your neighbor has and you want to purchase it, that is fine. But, spending time being concerned about what your neighbor has and that you lack—that is a violation of the 10th commandment.

Application: This commandment has great application to socialist propaganda. Socialists use the fact that there are only a few rich, but many people who are middle class and poor, and they try to drum up jealousy and desire in the many against the few. Power is often in a person's income, so they remove the power of their income, and they take that power to themselves. For communists and socialists, this is a two-fer. They set this as the bait to cause the masses to become jealous of the few who are extremely rich; and, when such people are taken down by the communists, then their wealth and power is absorbed by the very small, communist inner circle. As we have observed in Cuba and Venezuela, such promises do not end up prospering the country.

Application: When Donald Trump announced that he was running for president in 2015, there were great numbers of people who assumed, because he was successful, that he was also dishonest and crooked in business. I am writing in 2024 and I personally know people who still, after all of this time, believe Trump to be a fundamentally dishonest person. They assume that, since Trump is a billionaire, that he had to be dishonest to become wealthy. Much of that comes from socialist propaganda that the wealthy are inherently dishonest. Wealthy people are not inherently dishonest nor are poor people inherently honest.

Application: Politicians today often try to sell the idea of somehow the government grows the middle class; and often that false idea is sold by wealth redistribution. Wealth redistribution is another tool used by socialists. What they desire is the power to decide which money goes to which people. They always favor their friends and supporters; and they always take their own very sizeable cut off the top.

Application: I began to write this in 2019, and the first Democratic presidential debates have occurred, and one of their themes is wealth inequality and growing the middle class. Now, the implication is, they reduce the wealth of the wealthy and that somehow goes to those in the middle class, but, in reality, it never does. Those who are rich are taxed more, taxed excessively, and taxed to the point where they leave the state or the country where they are (if they are able to). New York and California have seen an exodus of the very rich (not all of them) because of their high taxation rate. Great Britain, because of its high tax policies, has seen many a successful rock group leave their country altogether—the very land in which they grew up—to find cheaper living elsewhere. Many of those in the acting profession in Great Britain and Australia spend months (or even years) learning an American accent so that they can act in films in the United States. They are looking for lower taxes and higher paychecks.

Exodus 20:17 *You will not desire your neighbor's house; you will not desire your neighbor's wife; [nor] his male servant or female servant; [nor] his ox or his donkey; [you will not desire] anything which belongs to your neighbor.*" (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Application: Certain politicians, political parties and political movements depend upon covetousness in order to motivate their followers. I have a personal friend (actually, a former student from high school) who believes that McDonald's was an extremely immoral organization because the CEO was making some huge amount of money each year (I believe that the meme this guy posted had him making \$18 million), while all of the employees were making minimum wage or something above that. So, I did a little math for this former math student of mine. I pointed out to him that two million people work for McDonald's (actually 2.15 million, but the math is easier to do with two million). So, let's say this someone took away this CEO's salary and showered McDonald's employees with all of his yearly salary, splitting it up equally among them. That means each employee would make an extra \$9 per year. That is less than an extra dollar a month. Their increase in wages would be perhaps a penny or two extra each hour. This, of course, did not change the thinking of the friend. In his eyes, it was just wrong and immoral for the CEO to make so much money and for the McDonald's workers to make so little. Therefore, he still concluded that the CEO should not be making that much (even though the reduction of his salary to zero did not make any significant change to the millions of McDonald's workers). Somehow, there was this whole fairness aspect to which he was clung.

Exodus 20:17 *"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."* (NKJV)

At this point, we have just completed a reasonably thorough study of the Ten Commandments. The first three are all about God and man; the fourth is the Sabbath-day commandment; and the final six are all about the relationships between man and man.

Paul accepted, to some degree as an unbeliever (before he was converted on the Road to Damascus), the authority of the Bible (which, in his time, was just the Old Testament). A portion of realizing that we need a savior is to recognize that no matter how hard we try, no matter what we do, we are not and never will be perfect. Since we do not fulfill the Law, then we are sinful before God. What clued Paul into his personal inadequacy is this particular commandment. *I would not have come to the point of recognizing sin except by means of the Law; for you see, I would not have known about coveting had the Law not said, You will not covet. But sin, taking*

opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law, sin [would have been] dead [to me] (Romans 7:7b–8). None of us keep any of the commandments except in the most legalistic, limited sense. However, Paul recognized that this is where his inadequacies lie.

Romans 7:7–8 To what conclusion are we forced? Is Law the origin of sin? Absolutely not! However, I was not aware of my sin nature had it not been revealed to me in the Law. Furthermore, I would not have recognized my sinful lust pattern if the Law did not say, "You will not lust!" Now, sin took this occasion, through this very command, to bring about my conscious understanding of every lust in me, for apart from an objective Law, I am unable to recognize sin. [Exodus 20:17] (Kukis paraphrase)

Paul fully understood the sin inside of him based upon his own covetousness (or his materialism lust).

Exodus 20:17 You will not desire or lust after your neighbor's house, or his wife; or his servants; or his livestock; you will not desire or lust after anything which belongs to your neighbor." (Kukis paraphrase)

Now that we have covered the Ten Commandments (lit., the Ten Words), we need to examine the **Doctrine of the Suzerain-vassal Treaties**:

[These are] notes from lectures of Dr. Meredith Kline, presented at Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido, California, Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, in Massachusetts.

The Suzerain-Vassal Treaty

Brief Summary of Suzerain Treaties:

In the Ancient Near East, treaties between kings was common. These were treaties drawn up among equals and mostly outlined agreements to honor each other's boundaries, to maintain trade relations, and return run-away slaves. These treaties are preserved in the Mari Tablets and in the Amarna texts.

Also preserved in these collections are treaties drafted between a superior and his inferior. If the relationship was familial or friendly, the parties are referred to as "father" and "son." If the relationship is bereft of kindness and intimacy, the parties are referred to as "lord" and "servant," or "king" and "vassal," or "greater king" and "lesser king." The greater king is the suzerain and the lesser king is a prince, or a lesser lord in the service of the greater king. The lesser lord is a representative of all the common people who are under the protection of the greater king. He enforces the treaty among the masses.

These Suzerain/Vassal treaties open with two sections: 1) The identification of the Suzerain by his name and titles; 2) The historical survey of the Suzerain's dealings with the vassal. The purpose is to illustrate to the vassal how much the Suzerain has done to protect and establish the vassal who therefore owes submission and allegiance to the Suzerain. These two sections are referred to as the "Preamble."

The next section of these treaties list the "stipulations." What the vassal is required to do is spelled out in principal and detail. This section is often concluded with the requirement that the vassal deposit his copy of the treaty in his temple, where he is to occasionally read and study it to refresh his memory concerning his duties.

The last section of these treaties contains the blessings and curses of the Suzerain. If the stipulations are met by the vassal, he will receive the Suzerain's blessings, which are listed. If the vassal fails to meet the stipulations, he will receive the Suzerain's curses, which are also listed.

The Suzerain would keep one copy of the treaty and the vassal would keep one copy of the treaty. A number of ratifying ceremonies were used depending upon the era and culture. But the most widely used rite was that of cutting the bodies of animals in halves and placing them in two rows with enough space between for the two parties of the treaty to walk side by side. As they walked between the pieces, they were vowing to each other, "May what has happened to these animals, happen to me if I break this covenant with you."

The Suzerain-Vassal Treaty

Covenant Documents of the Bible Patterned After Suzerain Treaties:

Exodus 20

1. "Y^ehowah" is the Suzerain who delivered this Preamble to Moses (and the rest of Israel). Moses is the vassal-lord who represents the people under the authority of the Suzerain. Exodus 20:1–2
2. Names & titles = "I am the Lord, your God." Exodus 20:2
3. Historical prologue = "Who brought you out of Egypt..." Exodus 20:2
4. Stipulations with selected blessings and curses. Exodus 20:3–17
5. Stipulations = the 10 commandments. Exodus 20:3–17
6. Blessings and curses Exodus 20:5b–6, 7b, 12b

Deuteronomy

1. This entire book of Moses is saturated with Suzerain Treaty language and structure. It is not properly the treaty document itself, but it is based upon such a treaty, making reference to it often. Below are some examples.
2. Historical Prologue language and structure. Deuteronomy 4:32–40
3. Stipulations. Deuteronomy 4:44–5:21
4. Blessings and Curses. Deuteronomy 6:4–25
5. Reflects all the sections of a suzerain treaty. Deuteronomy 8
6. Reflects all the sections of a suzerain treaty. Deuteronomy 11
7. Reflects the relationship of a vassal king to the Suzerain., Deuteronomy 17:14–20
8. Reflects the language and structure of war-time arrangements between a Suzerain and his people. Deuteronomy 20
9. Curses and Blessings. Deuteronomy 27–28
10. Covenant Renewal. Deuteronomy 29
11. Classic presentation of Ancient Near East Treaties! Deuteronomy 30:11–19
12. A question along the lines of "what came first, the chicken or the egg?" Did God see fit to present His covenant to His people in a cultural form developed by Near Eastern empires, or did God's original pattern for his covenant in Eden inform and form the cultural pattern of the Ancient Near East?

The point being made here is, the Ten Commandments and the book of Deuteronomy both having striking similarities to the Suzerain-Vassal Treaties of that day and time (which, by the way, also supports the idea that Moses either wrote or dictated the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).

Taken from <http://www.fivesolas.com/suzerain.htm> and edited.

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The Ten Commandments sum up the fundamental laws regarding man and God and regarding man and man. I have read through some systems of ancient law and they come nowhere close to these Ten Commandments.

The concept of Ten Commandments (or some number similar to this) is found throughout our western culture and elsewhere. We have such things as, Ten Commandments of Science; The 10 Commandments of Customer Service; The Ten Commandments of Progressive Christianity; The Ten Commandments of E-Mail; The Ten Commandments of Movement Solidarity, etc. (this list seems to be endless). This is how entrenched these commandments are, even for people who cannot name two or three of them.

Nevertheless, we do not have a similar listing of the most important laws in any other culture (none that I am aware of). Today, we can find hundreds, if not thousands, of *the Ten Commandments of...* However, in the ancient world we find this succinct list only in Jewish culture, insofar as I am aware. Certainly, every ancient culture had some sort of a law system—these can be found online. But a succinct summation of what a culture is all about when it comes to law—I have only come across the Ten Commandments.

Interestingly enough, Jesus summed up the commandments up as two commands.

Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler

Jesus recalling the Ten Commandments: Matthew 19:18–19; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20

One of the most misunderstood incidents from the New Testament is the interaction between Jesus and the rich young ruler. The record of their interaction is found in Matthew, Mark and Luke. We will look at this primarily from Matthew's perspective.

As we study this, remember that Jesus can get a very fast read on any individual. That is, He can speak with someone for a few minutes and know a great deal about that person. This does not come from His **omniscience** (which Jesus does not make use of); but this comes from Him being people-smart. Jesus had this skill developed to a degree greater than anyone else.

The English Standard Version (capitalized) will be used below:

Matthew 19:16 **And behold, a man came up to Him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"**

This man who had come to Jesus actually twice uses the word *good*. He first said:

Mark 10:17 **And as He was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before Him and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"**

When the young man says this, Jesus stops him right there and asks a preliminary question:

Mark 10:18 **And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.**

Jesus seems to be asking this man, "Are you saying that I am God, by calling Me good?"

The young man is not ready to agree with that, but he does have something in particular on his mind. He says:

Matthew 19:16 **And behold, a man came up to Him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"**

You see, this young man has got the word *good* on his mind. He is a good guy and, from all that he has heard about Jesus, He seems to be a good guy as well. But, this young man is not quite ready to say, "Yes, Jesus, I believe that You are God." He certainly does not believe that. On the other hand, he certainly believes that Jesus is a learned teacher and possibly even a prophet. Therefore, he plainly asks Jesus, **"Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"**

Matthew 19:17a **And He said to him, "Why do you ask Me about what is good?"**

A more literal rendering Jesus' words from Matthew 19:17a:

"Why do you keep on asking Me about the good?"

First the young man addressed Jesus as being *good*; and then he asked about what *good* thing he could do for eternal life.

Matthew 19:17b **There is only One Who is good.**

The only entity Who is truly good is God. By the man's expression on his face—by the way he responded to Jesus with various micro-expressions—Jesus decides how to continue this conversation.

Matthew 19:17c **If you would enter life, keep the commandments."**

An expanded translation of Matthew 19:17c **"And if you keep on desiring to enter into the life** [in context, this would be eternal life], **then keep on guarding (preserving, attending to) the commandments."**

The young man knows that there are over 600 commandments in the Torah. So the young man asks for some specificity.

Matthew 19:18a **He said to Him, "Which ones?"**

"Since there are so many commandments found in the writings of Moses, which ones are You talking about?"

The Torah of Moses is filled with commandments. Some were followed by the Jewish people and some were not. But when speaking of personal righteousness, Jesus begins to name some of the Ten Commandments.

Matthew 19:18b **And Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness,...**

We have just studied the Ten Commandments. Do you see what Jesus is doing here? He started with commandment 6, then 7, then 8, then 9. What do we expect to hear next? What does the young man expect to hear next? Commandment #10, *do not covet*. And when it comes to the tenth commandment, this is where the young man excels (in his own estimation). He's rich. If he wants something, he simply buys it. He does not look with great desire to what someone else has to the point where he thinks he must take it. If he wants anything badly enough, he simply buys it for himself. In his mind, this is the exact opposite of coveting.

In fact, you can just picture this young man, as Jesus ticks off the commands. **"You will not murder."** Good there; I have never murdered anyone. **"You will not commit adultery."** I am good there; I am rich, so the most attractive women are attracted to me. **"You will not steal."** This young man has no reason to steal. He can buy whatever he wanted. **"You will not bear false witness."** This young man has never needed to lie in court.

So Jesus is ticking off the Ten Commandments, beginning with #6, and the man is seemingly nodding his head up and down, as if to say, "Yep, I kept that one."

And he expects that Jesus will then say, **"You will not covet."** But Jesus does not go to the tenth commandment. He circles back to the fifth commandment and then He also adds in another command from the Torah.

Matthew 19:19 **Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."**

Jesus is not simply naming random commandments in any order. We know how people-smart Jesus was. He could speak with a person for a few minutes and have a great understanding of that person's psyche (I should say, *soul*). Jesus figured out what this young man was all about. He had money, and for that reason, he did not have to break the commandments (at least, not in his own estimation).

But, what about this fifth commandment? Why did Jesus quote it?

There was a gimmick among the Hebrew people where someone with wealth did not have to be responsible for his parents' debt or needs. He simply dedicated his wealth to the Temple as an inheritance, and when he died, his money (of a significant portion of it) went there. Therefore, as long as this man was alive, his money was God's money. No one could lay claim on it for any reason. Maybe his parents were sickly. Maybe they had accumulated debts. This was not the problem of the young man, as his wealth was qorban (set apart to God).

If anyone came to him, asking for him to make good on his parent's debt, he would simply reply, "This is God's money. I cannot take from it."

We might make a similar guess regarding his neighbor. We don't know the circumstances, but possibly his neighbor was also in need. But the man could not be pressed upon to help him out, because his personal wealth was God's money. Or maybe this young man, while expanding his own homestead, took advantage of some of his neighbors?

The Scriptures do not tell us exactly what was happening in the life of this young man, but we have the fact that Jesus is people-smart and had this guy's number; and we have the fact that Jesus instead of going on to the next commandment, circled back to #5. Jesus knew that this was the pertinent commandment regarding this young man.

Nevertheless, this man responds positively, albeit with less confidence:

Matthew 19:20 **The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?"**

The young man says that he has kept these commandments, but only insofar as the Temple officials agreed with him. They were more than willing to enter into a contract with him so that his money was dedicated to God.

Matthew 19:21 **Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."**

So Jesus says, "To be perfect, then sell all that you have, give that to the poor, and then follow Me."

So that we do not misunderstand this, Jesus is not saying that someone who is rich can simply sell all his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor in order to enter into the Kingdom of God. That is not Jesus' point. Remember the young man's original question, "What good thing must I do in order to gain eternal life?" Jesus is going to show this young man that he is deficient. He does not measure up to God's righteousness as well as he thinks he does.

Certainly, Jesus did say, "You just have to sell everything you have, and give the money away!" But remember what Jesus said first. "If you would be perfect..." The word *perfect* is *téleios* (τέλειος) [pronounced *TEHL-i-os*], which means, *complete, mature, finished*; with reference to people, it means *a full age, fully grown, mature, adulthood*. Strong's #5046. "What good thing must you do in order to be complete? if you want to show yourself as fully grown or mature, then this is what you must do..."

Jesus' point is not that every wealthy person needs to give away all of his stuff in order to be saved. This rich young man believes that he is moral enough and ethical enough to earn God's approbation. In fact, he sees himself as *good* (remember how Jesus reacted to his use of that word?).

At this point in time, this young man is not ready yet for faith in Jesus Christ (the *only* way of salvation). He first has to come to grips with not being the perfectly moral human being that he believes himself to be. Jesus quickly came up with an explanation as to why this man was not meeting the Biblical commandments. He had to express this in a way that would reach this young man.

Strictly speaking, in this young man's eyes, he believed that he was following the commandments and that he was not doing this or doing that. So Jesus gives him a positive command which would reveal that he was not really keeping the commandments.

Jesus' quest to reach the young man was successful. Jesus had shown him that he is deficient with regards to personal righteousness.

Matthew 19:22 **When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.**

The young man has heard all that Jesus has said. He does not disrespect Jesus or question the Lord's wisdom. But he does go away, sorrowful, as he has great possessions.

This young man has very nearly come to the point of recognizing his own need for a Savior. Then he will look to Jesus. We do not know what became of this young man. I believe, at some point that he believed in Jesus, and I base this on the barest of clues in Mark's account.

Mark 10:21a **And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said...**

Jesus, as a man, was capable of human emotions. He had them and expressed them on several occasions (all recorded in the gospel accounts). Jesus did not resent this man; Jesus did not find anything wrong with the fact that this man was wealthy. He simply loved the man, and that would be human love. Let me suggest that Jesus was hopeful that this man would believe in Him, at a later time, and enter into the Kingdom of God as a result. Or, let me suggest in the alternative that Jesus, as a prophet, knew this man's future.

On the other hand, there is a clue in these three narratives that perhaps this young man was never saved. We do not hear his name mentioned in any of the accounts. I am of the opinion that most people named in the Scriptures are those who have believed in the Lord (or, in the Old Testament, have believed in the Revealed God).

In any case, the Lord's disciples were watching and listening to all of this and they had some questions. The young man is gone. He has walked away. So, at this point, the disciples are going to need some guidance, to help to understand this interaction that we just studied. Therefore, we will continue with this passage for our own edification.

Matthew 19:23 **And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven." (Continued with the ESV; capitalized)**

People who are well-off often do not see any reason to seek salvation. They have it all already.

Matthew 19:24 **Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."**

There is a gate into Jerusalem which has a normal doorway. Jesus is presenting something which is possible, but not easy.

Camel at the Eye of the Needle Gate (photograph); from **Best Travel Deals**; accessed July 17, 2024. You can get a camel through the door, but it was very difficult.

Matthew 19:25 **When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"**

The response of the disciples is fascinating, as at least eleven of them were already saved. They had already trusted in Jesus. However, they did not fully understand soteriology (*being saved* and *understanding being saved* are two very different things).

Matthew 19:26 **But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."**



Man has no way to reach God. No matter what we do, we cannot figure out a way to pursue God and to connect with Him directly. There is nothing that you can do from your own power to reach God; there is nothing I can do

from my own human abilities to reach God. Nevertheless, God makes it possible to be saved. We are able to reach to God through Jesus Christ.

Matthew 19:27 **Then Peter said in reply, "See, we have left everything and followed You. What then will we have?"**

Peter is confusing his post-salvation experience with the fact of him already being saved, which is not uncommon with a person who does not have a full understanding of soteriology. "I have left everything to follow You. What will I have as a result?"

Matthew 19:28 **Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

Jesus assures His disciples that they will have a place in the Kingdom of God. In fact, they will have positions of authority in the kingdom.

Matthew 19:29 **And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for My name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.**

There is salvation and there is reward. Peter was asking about rewards and Jesus explained what he would receive in terms of reward.

Peter is not grasping that he is saved and that he cannot lose this salvation. But this young man could not reach God with his good works. Peter also has good works. His good works were not the basis of his salvation, but the outworking of having already been saved.

Peter's epistles are evidence that he eventually understood and was able to work out salvation, the post-salvation experience, and the rewards of the mature spiritual life.

However, at this point, Jesus says this:

Matthew 19:30 **But many who are first will be last, and the last first."** (ESV; capitalized)

The Apostles periodically argued among themselves as to who was the greatest. However, none of them knew what the future held. The greatest Apostle had not yet been called. Judas will reject Jesus and betray Him. He will be replaced by Saul of Tarsus, later called Paul. He will be the greatest of the Apostles; he will be first among the Apostles. He was the last of the Apostles in terms of his calling, but he will be the greatest of them.

Jesus then gives a parable to help the disciples understand further (Matthew 20:1–16). We will save that for another time.

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The People are Afraid of God's Presence

In the Exodus narrative, which we have been studying, the people of Israel have just heard God speak the Ten Commandments to them. Every one of them audibly heard God's voice. This upset them very much.

And all the people, those seeing the thunderings and the lightning flashes; and a sound of the horn; and the mountain smoking. And so see [possibly, *are afraid*] the people, and so they tremble, and so they stand from a distance. And they say unto Moses, “You speak—you—with us; and we will listen! And should not speak with us Elohim, lest we die.”

Exodus
20:18–19

And all the people, the ones seeing [and hearing all that was going on]: the thunderings and the lightning flashes, the sound of the horn, and the mountain [was] smoking—so the people saw [or, *the people are afraid*], and they are trembling and they stand far away [from the mountain]. They said to Moses, “You speak to us—[and only] you; and we will listen! [Let] Elohim not speak to us, so that we do not die.”

The people could hear and see all that was going on: the great thunder, the lightning flashes, the persistent loud sound of the horn, as well as the mountain [which] smoked—the people saw all of this and they were afraid; they were trembling. They kept moving back away from the mountain. They pleaded with Moses, “Please, only you speak to us and we will listen to you. Please do not let God speak directly with us, or we will die.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And all the people, those seeing the thunderings and the lightning flashes; and a sound of the horn; and the mountain smoking. And so see [possibly, <i>are afraid</i>] the people, and so they tremble, and so they stand from a distance. And they say unto Moses, “You speak—you—with us; and we will listen! And should not speak with us Elohim, lest we die.”
Dead Sea Scrolls Targum (Onkelos)	.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And all the people saw the thunders, and the flames, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and the people saw, and trembled, and stood afar off. And they said to Mosheh, Speak thou with us, and we will hearken; but let it not be spoken to us from before the Lord, lest we die.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And all the people saw the thunders, and were turned back, every one as he heard them coming forth from the midst of the lights, and the voice of the trumpet as it will raise the dead, and the mountain smoking; and all the people saw and drew back, and stood twelve miles off. And they said to Mosheh, Speak thou with us, and we can hear; but let it not be spoken with us any more from before the Lord, lest we die. [JERUSALEM. And all the people saw the thunders and the lights, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and the people saw and trembled, and stood afar off.]
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	And all the people saw the voices and the flames, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mount smoking; and being terrified and struck with fear, they stood afar off, Saying to Moses: Speak you to us, and we will hear: let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die.
Lamsa’s Peshitta (Syriac)	All the people witnessed the thundering, the lightning, the sound of the shofar, and the mountain smoking. When the people saw it, they trembled, and stayed at a distance. They said to Mosha, "Speak with us yourself, and we will listen; but do not let God speak with us, lest we die.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	And all the people observed the thunderings and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw all of this, they were afraid and they stood afar off. And they said to Moses, You speak to us, and we will listen; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.
	And all the people perceived the thundering, and the flashes, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and all the people feared and stood afar off, and said to Moses, Speak thou to us, and let not God speak to us, lest we die.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And all the people were watching the thunderings and the flames and the sound of the horn and the mountain smoking; and when they saw it, they kept far off, shaking with fear. And they said to Moses, To your words we will give ear, but let not the voice of God come to our ears, for fear death may come on us.
Easy English	The people saw the very bright light and they heard the loud noises. They heard the loud music and they saw the smoke on the mountain. They were so afraid that they could not stop their bodies moving. They would not come near. 19 They said to Moses: 'Speak to us yourself. We will listen to you. But do not let God speak to us. If he does, we will die.'
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	The People Are Afraid of God During all this time, the people in the valley heard the thundering and saw the lightning on the mountain. They saw smoke rising from the mountain and heard the sound of the trumpet. They were afraid and shook with fear. They stood away from the mountain and watched. Then the people said to Moses, "If you want to speak to us, then we will listen. But please don't let God speak to us. If this happens, we will die."
Good News Bible (TEV)	The People's Fear When the people heard the thunder and the trumpet blast and saw the lightning and the smoking mountain, they trembled with fear and stood a long way off. They said to Moses, "If you speak to us, we will listen; but we are afraid that if God speaks to us, we will die."
<i>The Message</i>	All the people, experiencing the thunder and lightning, the trumpet blast and the smoking mountain, were afraid—they pulled back and stood at a distance. They said to Moses, "You speak to us and we'll listen, but don't have God speak to us or we'll die."
Names of God Bible	The People's Reaction All the people heard the thunder and saw the lightning. They heard the blast of the ram's horn and saw the mountain covered with smoke. So they shook with fear and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we'll listen. But don't let <i>Elohim</i> speak to us, or we'll die!"
NIRV	The people saw the thunder and lightning. They heard the trumpet. They saw the mountain covered with smoke. They trembled with fear and stayed a long way off. They said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself. Then we'll listen. But don't let God speak to us. If he does, we'll die."

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	The people trembled with fear when they heard the thunder and the trumpet and saw the lightning and the smoke coming from the mountain. They stood a long way off and said to Moses, "If you speak to us, we will listen. But don't let God speak to us, or we will die!"
The Living Bible	All the people saw the lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, and heard the thunder and the long, frightening trumpet blast; and they stood at a distance, shaking with fear. They said to Moses, "You tell us what God says and we will obey, but don't let God speak directly to us, or it will kill us."
New Berkeley Version	.

New Living Translation	When the people heard the thunder and the loud blast of the ram's horn, and when they saw the flashes of lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, they stood at a distance, trembling with fear. And they said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen. But don't let God speak directly to us, or we will die!"
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	When the people heard the thunder and saw the lightning, and when they heard the sound of the trumpet and saw the smoke on the mountain, they were afraid and trembled. They stood at a distance and said to Moses, "If you speak to us, we will listen. But do not let God speak anymore to us. We are afraid that if he speaks anymore to us, we will die."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well all the while, the people were being distracted by all the thunder and lightning, the sounds of the trumpets, and the smoke on the mountain; and everyone was afraid and backing far away. So they told Moses: 'You talk to us... don't let God talk to us, because we're afraid that we might die!'
Beck's American Translation	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	All the people stood watching while thunder rolled and lightning flashed, while the trumpet sounded and the mountain was wreathed in smoke, terrified and awe-stricken so that they kept their distance, and cried out to Moses, Do thou tell us the message; we are ready to obey thee. Do not let us hear the Lord speaking; it will cost us our lives.
Translation for Translators	When the people heard the thunder and saw the lightning, and when they heard the sound of the trumpet and saw the smoke on the mountain, they were afraid and trembled. They stood at a distance, and said to Moses/me, "If you speak to us, we will listen. But do not let God speak anymore to us. <i>We are afraid that</i> if he speaks <i>anymore</i> to us, we will die."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	All the people saw and heard the thunderings and lightnings and trumpet sounds, and the smoking of the mountain. When the people saw all this, they moved away and stood far away. They said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will hear you. But don't let God speak with us, or we'll die!"
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	The Terror of Israel. And all the People perceived the sounds and the flamings, and the trumpet voice, and the smoke from the mountain;—so the people feared and shook in themselves, and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, " You speak with us, and we can listen: but let not GOD speak with us, for fear we should die."
HCSB	The People's Reaction All the people witnessed [Lit saw] the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain surrounded by smoke. When the people saw it [Sam, LXX, Syr, Tg, Vg read <i>smoking; the people (or they) were afraid</i>] they trembled and stood at a distance. "You speak to us, and we will listen," they said to Moses, "but don't let God speak to us, or we will die."
International Standard V	The People are Terrified in God's Presence All the people experienced the thunder and lightning, the sound of the ram's horn, and the smoking mountain. And as the people experienced it, they trembled and stood at a distance. They told Moses, "You speak to us and we will listen, but don't let God speak with us, or we may die."
Urim-Thummim Version	.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible	And all the people saw the voices, and the flames, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw, they vacillated back and forth, and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, You speak with us, and we will attentively hear; and do not let God speak with us lest we die.
New American Bible (2002)	When the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the trumpet blast and the mountain smoking, they all feared and trembled. So they took up a position much farther away and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we shall die."
New American Bible (2011)	<i>Moses Accepted as Mediator.</i> Now as all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the blast of the shofar and the mountain smoking, they became afraid and trembled. So they took up a position farther away and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we shall die." Dt 4:11; 5:22–27; 18:16; Heb 12:18–19
New English Bible—1970	The people's fear. - Dt.5.22-33 When all the people saw how it thundered and the lightning flashed, when they heard the trumpet sound and saw the mountain smoking, they trembled and stood at a distance. 'Speak to us yourself,' they said to Moses, 'and we will listen; but if God speaks to us we shall die.'
New Jerusalem Bible	Seeing the thunder pealing, the lightning flashing, the trumpet blasting and the mountain smoking, the people were all terrified and kept their distance. 'Speak to us yourself,' they said to Moses, 'and we will obey; but do not let God speak to us, or we shall die.'

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	(A: vii) All the people experienced the thunder, the lightning, the sound of the <i>shofar</i> , and the mountain smoking. When the people saw it, they trembled. Standing at a distance, they said to Moshe, "You, speak with us; and we will listen. But don't let God speak with us, or we will die."
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And all the people saw the thunders, the lightning flashes, the sound of the ram's horn, and the mountain smoking. And the people saw it, and they trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Mosheh, "You speak with us and we hear, but let not Elohim speak with us, lest we die."

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	AND ALL THE PEOPLE PERCEIVED THE THUNDERING, AND THE FLASHES, AND THE VOICE OF THE TRUMPET, AND THE MOUNTAIN SMOKING; AND ALL THE PEOPLE FEARED AND STOOD AFAR OFF, AND SAID TO MOSES, "SPEAK YOU TO US, AND LET NOT THE THEOS (<i>Alpha & Omega</i>) SPEAK TO US, LEST WE DIE!"
Awful Scroll Bible	The people are perceiving the thunders and the lightnings, and the loud noise of the ram's horn, and the mountain smoking; even the people were to perceive them, and they drifted away, even were to stand afar. They were to say to Moses: Be you speaking with us, and we were to listen to you - was he of mighty ones to speak to us? - We were to die!
exeGesés companion Bible	And all the people see voices and the flambeaus and the voice of the shophar and the mountain smoking: and when the people see, they shake and stand afar. And they say to Mosheh, Word with us and we hear: but have not Elohim word with us, lest we die.

Orthodox Jewish Bible	And kol HaAm saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the sound of the shofar, and HaHar smoking; and when HaAm saw it, they drew back, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moshe, Thou speak with us, and we will hear; but let not Elohim speak with us, lest we die (see Bereshis 42:23).
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	And, all the people, were witnessing the voices and the torches, and the sound of the horn, and the mountain smoking,—so then the people were struck with awe and shrank back, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak, thou, with us, and we will hear,—but let not God speak with us lest we die.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Now all the people witnessed the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the smoking mountain; and as they looked, the people were afraid, and they trembled [and moved backward] and stood at a [safe] distance. Then they said to Moses, "You speak to us and we will listen, but do not let God speak to us or we will die."
The Expanded Bible	When the people heard the thunder and the trumpet [ram's horn], and when they saw the lightning and the smoke rising from the mountain, they shook with fear [trembled] and stood far away from the mountain. Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself, and we will listen. But don't let God speak to us, or we will die."
Kretzmann's Commentary	Verses 18-21 The Terror of the People And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. The impression was made on all the senses, but that of sight was chiefly involved. The manifestation of God's majesty was so powerful that it effected not only a wholesome awe of the great Jehovah, but an extreme terror as well. And when the people saw it, they removed, they shrank back from the vicinity of the mountain, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die. The consciousness of their own sinfulness, their freshly fear and terror, caused them to promise a ready obedience to the words of Moses.
The Voice	As all the people witnessed <i>the signs of God's presence</i> —the blast of the ram's horn, the <i>roaring</i> thunder, the flashing lightning, and the smoke-covered mountain—they shook <i>with fear and astonishment</i> and <i>wisely</i> kept their distance. Israelites (to Moses): We are afraid to have God speak directly to us; we are certain that we will die. You speak to us instead; we promise to listen.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	<p>And all the people saw the voices and the torches, the sound of the shofar, and the smoking mountain, and the people saw and trembled; so they stood from afar.</p> <p>And all the people saw: [This] teaches [us] that there was not one blind person among them. From where do we know that [there was] no mute person among them? The Torah states: "And all the people replied" (Exod. 19:8). From where do we know that there was no deaf person among them? The Torah states: "We will do and hear" (Exod. 24:7). [from Mechilta]</p> <p>the voices: They saw what was audible, which is impossible to see elsewhere. — [from Mechilta d'Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai]</p> <p>the voices: Emanating from the mouth of the Almighty. Many voices, voices coming from every direction, and from the heavens, and from the earth. — [Rashi above, verse 2]</p> <p>and trembled: Heb. עָנַן וְעָנַן means only trembling. — [from Mechilta]</p>
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so they stood from afar: They were drawing backwards twelve mil, as far as the length of their camp. The ministering angels came and assisted them [in order] to bring them back, as it is said: "Kings of hosts wander; yea they wander" (Ps. 68:13). [from Shab. 88b]

They said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear, but let God not speak with us lest we die." The Complete Tanakh, the Kaplan Translation and other Jewish Bibles have this passage as vv. 15–16, as four of the commandments were combined into one verse.

Kaplan Translation

Aftermath of the Ten Commandments

All the people saw the sounds, the flames, the blast of the ram's horn, and the mountain smoking. The people trembled when they saw it, keeping their distance. They said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will listen. But let God not speak with us any more, for we will die if He does.'

the sounds, the flames

(Rashi). Or, 'the thunder and lightning' (Maaseh HaShem, Maaseh Torah 7; cf. Ramman).

They said to Moses...

According to many, this is in chronological order, and they asked Moses after the giving of the Ten Commandments (Mekhilta; Rashbam; Ibn Ezra, Abarbanel, on Exodus 20:15). Others say that this was before the Ten Commandments (Ramban). According to others, the people said this to Moses after the Second Commandment, and the rest were given through Moses (Chizzkuni; see note on Exodus 20:7).

NET Bible®

All the people were seeing⁴² the thundering and the lightning, and heard⁴³ the sound of the horn, and saw⁴⁴ the mountain smoking – and when⁴⁵ the people saw it they trembled with fear⁴⁶ and kept their distance.⁴⁷ They said to Moses, "You speak⁴⁸ to us and we will listen, but do not let God speak with us, lest we die."

^{42tn} The participle is used here for durative action in the past time (GKC 359 §116.o).

^{43tn} The verb "to see" (הָאָרָא, ra'ah) refers to seeing with all the senses, or perceiving. W. C. Kaiser suggests that this is an example of the figure of speech called zeugma because the verb "saw" yokes together two objects, one that suits the verb and the other that does not. So, the verb "heard" is inserted here to clarify ("Exodus," EBC 2:427).

^{44tn} The verb "saw" is supplied here because it is expected in English (see the previous note on "heard").

^{45tn} The preterite with vav (ו) consecutive is here subordinated as a temporal clause to the following clause, which receives the prominence.

^{46tn} The meaning of נִוָּא (nua') is "to shake, sway to and fro" in fear. Compare Isa 7:2 – "and his heart shook...as the trees of the forest shake with the wind."

^{47tn} Heb "and they stood from/at a distance."

^{48tn} The verb is a Piel imperative. In this context it has more of the sense of a request than a command. The independent personal pronoun "you" emphasizes the subject and forms the contrast with God's speaking.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...and all the people were seeing the / and the torches and the voice of the ram horn and the hill of smoke, and the people saw, and staggered, and they stood from a distance, and they said to "**Mosheh** ^{Plucked out}, you will speak with us and we will hear, and do not let "**Elohiym** ^{Powers} speak with us, otherwise we will die,...

Charles Thomson OT And all the people looked towards the thunder and the lightnings and the sound of the trumpet and the mount which was smoking; and all the people being struck with terror stood at a distance. And they said to Moses, Speak thou to us: and let not God speak to us lest we die.

New American Standard B. All the people perceived the ^[1]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. Then they said to Moses, “Speak ^[g]to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak ^[h]to us, or we will die.”

f. Exodus 20:18 Lit *sounds*

g. Exodus 20:19 Lit *with*

h. Exodus 20:19 Lit *with*

New European Version

The People Are Fearful

All the people perceived the thunderings, the lightnings, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. When the people saw it, they trembled, and stayed at a distance. They said to Moses, Speak with us yourself, and we will listen; but don't let God speak with us, lest we die.

New King James Version

The People Afraid of God's Presence

Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.”

Young's Updated LT

And all the people are seeing the voices, and the flames, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mount smoking; and the people see, and move, and stand afar off, and say unto Moses, `Speak thou with us, and we hear, and let not God speak with us, lest we die.'

The gist of this passage:

Based upon the thundering and lightning, the people are quite afraid of what is happening and they ask Moses to act as an intermediary for them, between them and God.

18-19

Exodus 20:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
‘am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
râ’âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>those seeing; the ones observing; those with understanding; seers, those who perceive</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
qôlôt (קוֹלֹת) [pronounced <i>kohl-OHT</i>]	<i>sounds, voices, noise; loud noises, thunderings</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Exodus 20:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾēth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
lappîydîm (לִּפְלִי) [pronounced <i>hal-lahp-PEED-eem</i>] hallappîydîm (לִּפְלִי) [pronounced <i>hal-lahp-PEED-eem</i>]	<i>lightning, lightning flashes, lightnings; flames</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3940 BDB #542

The second form simply includes the definite article.

Translation: And all the people, the ones seeing [and hearing all that was going on]: the thunderings and the lightning flashes,...

The singular noun lappîyd (לִּפְלִי) [pronounced *lahp-PEED*] means, *torch; firebrand; burning lamp; a flame*. Strong's #3940 BDB #542. The singular noun qôwl (לִּי) [pronounced *kohl*] means, *sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering; a proclamation; a bleating*. Strong's #6963 BDB #876. However, when these words are used in conjunction with one another, in the plural, they likely mean *thunderings and lightning flashes*. Recall that there were not a lot of rain in Egypt so the Hebrews did not require a specialized vocabulary for everything which occurred in a storm. Everyone heard the Ten Commandments, but the people also saw and concerned themselves with the smoking and lightning and the thunder and the trumpet.

It is interesting that we do not have the verb for *to hear*, because they heard the storm, and they heard the Ten Commandments spoken by God, and they heard the blasting horn. The people actually did is described by the masculine plural, Qal active participle of râʾâh (רָאָה) [pronounced *raw-AWH*], the verb which means, *to see*. In this form, it means, *those seeing; the ones observing; those with understanding; seers, those who perceive*. Strong's #7200 BDB #906. This word takes in or includes other forms of perception. All of their senses were fully engaged as the people of Israel stood at the foot of this mountain.

Exodus 20:18a And all the people **perceived** the thunderings and the lightnings... (Modern Literal Version 2020)

Quite a number of translators understood that this was a full-on sensual experience that went far beyond what they saw; and therefore, these translators used some form of *to perceive* here rather than some form of *to see*.

The people heard amazingly loud thunder; they saw constant lightning flashes. This was quite disconcerting. These were things that they were not used to seeing.

I moved from a place that did not have many dramatic weather events and moved to a city with a number of weather events, which could be quite spectacular at times. I recall an evening storm—which I slept through. The next morning, I got up and tried to drive to work. Almost every street in my neighborhood had a tree laying down in it, blocking traffic. Later I drove through an adjacent neighborhood. Everywhere, I saw large limbs and trees either thrust through the houses themselves or on top of every other house. Behind my own house, there was a large tree, laid on top of a two-story house, from end to end, the roots hanging over the edge on one side and the crown of the tree on the other. The roof peak somehow supported this massive tree. I regret today not taking a photo of that. It was as if some giant had pulled this tree out of the ground and then carefully laid it on top of the house, end-to-end.

On the day that God spoke directly to the people, these Israelites had never seen anything like this before. Therefore, their senses were overloaded with great sounds and sights. Furthermore, these lighting flashes and thunderings frightened the people.

Exodus 20:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qôwl (לוֹק) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
shôwphâr (שׁוֹפָר) (also רַפָּשׁ) [pronounced <i>shoh-FAWR</i>]	<i>horn, trumpet; transliterated shophar</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7782 BDB #1051

Translation: ...the sound of the horn,...

The horn is often used to represent power and authority; and all the power and authority of the universe belongs to God. Surely there was a blasting horn, which was louder and more sustained than anything which they had seen before.

Interestingly enough, there are some weather events even today where the sound of horns can be heard. Such events can be searched out on YouTube.

Exodus 20:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
har (הַר) [pronounced <i>har</i>]	<i>hill; mountain, mount; hill-country, a mountainous area, mountain region</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2022 (and #2042) BDB #249
‘âshên (עָשָׁן) [pronounced <i>gaw-SHANE</i>]	<i>smoky, smoking</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #6226 BDB #798

Translation: ...and the mountain [was] smoking—...

The mountain is filled with smoke. One of the ways smoke is used in the Bible as a sweet savor rising up to God. Here, this smoke indicates the Presence of God on the mountain. I would suggest that it came about from lightning striking trees on the mountain.

Exodus 20:18d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to gaze; to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
An alternate reading is:			
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to be afraid; to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...so the people saw [or, the people are afraid],...

There are some alternate readings at this point. The verb used with the word people is disputed. It is either the 3rd masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to see* or of *to fear*. Most translations have some form of the verb *to see*; but a number of them comment about the alternate reading. In any case, their fear will be alluded to in the next phrase.

Exodus 20:18e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nûwa' (נוּוָּא) [pronounced NOO-ahg]	<i>to wave, to quiver, to vibrate, to swing, to stagger, to tremble, to be unstable; to totter, go tottering; to move to and fro; sometimes used of the blind</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5128 BDB #631

Translation: ...and they are trembling...

The reason that we do not necessarily need to verb *to be afraid* in the previous section is because we are told here that the people are trembling. So, what they do here and say after is indicative of how they felt.

Exodus 20:18e ...they trembled... (NKJV)

The next two verbs are in the 3rd masculine plural, which is where we get the pronoun *they* from (the form of a Hebrew verb tells you the gender and number of the subject).

The people of Israel were very much afraid of God; even though He led them out of Egypt and has seen to their every need. They know what they are like inside and they are uncomfortable with such a Holy and powerful God. Moses has been the go-between (or mediator) and the Hebrew people were much more comfortable with Moses standing between them and God. This is a parallelism of the people's own volition which is wonderful. Both religious and anti-religious people sneer or minimize God's great gift to us in the sacrifice of His Son. However, it is because of the cross, that Jesus stands between God and us, as a Mediator. Jesus is able to stand before the perfection and holiness of our God, yet He gives to us a kindly hand. The people of Moses era recognized their own need for a mediator and they asked for Moses to stand in the gap between themselves and God.

Apart from Jesus, we face the wrath of a perfect God, Who can have nothing to do with our sins.

Throughout the Old Testament, with regards to doctrines, pronouncements and narratives, the gospel message is made clear. In shadow form, we see the good news proclaimed again and again.

Exodus 20:18f			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿamad (עמד) [pronounced <i>gaw-MAHD</i>]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand; to stop, to cease</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
min (מן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
râchôwq (רחוק) [pronounced <i>raw-KHOHK</i>]	<i>distant, far; as a noun, it means distance (which can be a reference to time or space)</i>	Noun/adjective	Strong's #7350 BDB #935
Min + râchôwq mean <i>from afar off, far away; from an emotive distance</i> .			

Translation: ...and they stand far away [from the mountain].

In Exodus 19, God told Moses to cordon off the mountain so that the people did not try to get close to God in any way. At this point, that is not necessary. The people are not going to approach the mountain out of curiosity after hearing God's voice.

To get a feel for what is happening, this is a massive crowd of people, and moving them from one point to another is not easy to do. However, it appears that, as this stuff is taking place, the people are inching further and further back, moving away from the mountain.

Although God voiced concern to Moses that the people might come too close to the mountain (Exodus 19:20–22), once the storm kicked in and the voice of God was heard, anyone interested in getting a closer view began to back off.

Exodus 20:18 And all the people, the ones seeing [and hearing all that was going on]: the thunderings and the lightning flashes, the sound of the horn, and the mountain [was] smoking—so the people saw [or, *the people are afraid*], and they are trembling and they stand far away [from the mountain]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Given all that had taken place, the people were no longer pushing forward to get a better look at all that was going on. They were afraid and they trembled, as they backed away from Mount Sinai. At this point, they were too close. This was an experience they did not want to repeat.

Exodus 20:19a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (לָא) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced <i>moh-SHEH</i>]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602

Translation: They said to Moses,...

It appears that, after the Ten Commandments, God's speaking came to an abrupt end. Some men came forward to speak to Moses, to express their concern for all that is happening. They will provide Moses the general pulse of the congregation.

Exodus 20:19b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>speak [on, further], talk [and back with action], give an [your] opinion, expound, make a formal speech, speak out; continue [to speak], promise, propose, declare, proclaim, announce</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Exodus 20:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...“You speak to us—[and only] you;...

The preposition used here is ‘îm (עִם) [pronounced *geem*], which means *with*, not *to*.

The people were very close to the Presence of God, a Presence which was marked by the loud noises and powerful storm. They heard God speak to them, which frightened them considerably. The people were willing to hear Moses. When they ask for Moses only to speak to them, they mean, *instead of God; or, not God*. In this way, Moses would be an intermediary between God and the people, which is what God wanted Moses to be in the first place (remember, that Moses initially resisted this and wanted to bring Aaron into the picture).

God through the Ten Commandments, speaks *to* us; God through Moses spoke *to* the people. However, God spoke *with* Moses, because the people rightfully feared to come too close to God. The people had good reason to fear God and His power. They had seen His strength in action against Pharaoh. And now, they had experienced God's power in the storm.

Exodus 20:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wê (or vê) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâma‘ (שָׁמָע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect; with the Voluntative hê	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

The hê at the end is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word *let, may, might, ought, should*.

Translation: ...and we will listen!

The people promise here that they will listen to Moses when he speaks.

There is some humor in what the people are saying to Moses. “Listen, you speak to us and we will listen to you!” The implication is, they have not really be listening to Moses before—and that is certainly true.

The true breakdown in communication is, the people are not taking what they should be learning and understanding about God and believing it. They are not mixing God-given information with faith, which is the key step in spiritual growth. Because they do not take this step, this generation will fail multiple times while being led by Moses in the desert-wilderness.

Exodus 20:19d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lō' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>speak [on, further], talk [and back with action], give an [your] opinion, expound, make a formal speech, speak out; continue [to speak], promise, propose, declare, proclaim, announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
'îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 1 st person plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
'Ēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: [Let] Elohim not speak to us,...

They ask for a moratorium on God speaking directly to them. They cannot take any more of this. The giving of the Ten Commandments, something which could not have taken more than a few minutes, was very disconcerting to the sons of Jacob.

Exodus 20:19e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced <i>pen</i>]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed; to be put to death; to die prematurely [by neglect of wise moral conduct]</i>	1 st person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: ...so that we do not die.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The people are concerned that they will die if they are exposed to God in the future as now. This had to be a shocking experience.

Certainly, the people are speaking in hyperbole. If they hear God's voice again, the people will not keel over and die. However, it is clear that none of them want to re-experience what they heard directly from God.

Exodus 20:19 They said to Moses, “You speak to us—[and only] you; and we will listen! [Let] Elohim not speak to us, so that we do not die.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The people were rendered fearful due to this great spectacle.

What this represents is, God is perfect and the people cannot have direct contact with God. This is true for all mankind. There is nothing in us which allows for direct contact with God.

Exodus 20:18–19 Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” (NKJV)

A slightly freer translation:

Exodus 20:18–19 The people could hear and see all that was going on: the great thunder, the lightning flashes, the persistent loud sound of the horn, as well as the mountain [which] smoked—the people saw all of this and they were afraid; they were trembling. They kept moving back away from the mountain. They pleaded with Moses, “Please, only you speak to us and we will listen to you. Please do not let God speak directly with us, or we will die.” (Kukis paraphrase)

The people tell Moses that they want him—and only him—to speak with them. They do not want God speaking to them any more. If God speaks to them again, the people fear that they will die (obviously, a hyperbolic expression).

Now the key to the verse that we are about to study is this: there is fear, the mental attitude sin; and there is fear, which is used as a synonym for occupation with Christ (or, in the Old Testament, occupation with the God of Israel). The mental attitude sin of fear is an emotion or an emotional response to a set of circumstances. Fear as a non-emotional mental attitude is the soul of man, through Bible doctrine, directing his own thinking in such a way as to concentrate on Jesus Christ (or, the God of Israel in the Old Testament).

Exodus 20:18–19 And all the people, the ones seeing [and hearing all that was going on]: the thunderings and the lightning flashes, the sound of the horn, and the mountain [was] smoking—so the people saw [or, *the people are afraid*], and they are trembling and they stand far away [from the mountain]. They said to Moses, “You speak to us—[and only] you; and we will listen! [Let] Elohim not speak to us, so that we do not die.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:18–19 The people could hear and see all that was going on: the great thunder, the lightning flashes, the persistent loud sound of the horn, as well as the mountain [which] smoked—the people saw all of this and they were afraid; they were trembling. They kept moving back away from the mountain. They pleaded with Moses, “Please, only you speak to us and we will listen to you. Please do not let God speak directly with us, or we will die.” (Kukis paraphrase)

What follows is, Moses tells the people not to fear; and then he tells them to fear God. What exactly is he saying?

And so says Moses unto the people, “You [all] will not fear for to the intent that proving you [all] has come the Elohim; and in order that is his fear upon your faces, so as not you [all] will sin.”

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Moses then said to the people, “You [all] should not fear, for the Elohim has come with the intent of proving you and in order that the fear of Him be upon your faces, so that you [all] do not sin.”

Moses then answered the people, saying, “You [all] should not be afraid of God, for He has come to you with the intent of proving your obedience to Him and in order that you develop a mental attitude of fear and respect for Him, so that you [all] do not sin against Him.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Moses unto the people, “You [all] will not fear for to the intent that proving you [all] has come the Elohim; and in order that is his fear upon your faces, so as not you [all] will sin.”
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	And Mosheh said to the people, Fear not; for that He may prove you He hath revealed to you the glory of the Lord, and that His fear may be before your face, that you may not sin.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And Mosheh said to the people, Fear not; for the glory of the Lord is revealed to try you, whether His fear is before your faces, that ye may not sin.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And Moses said to the people: Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that the dread of him might be in you, and you should not sin.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Mosha said to the people, "Do not be afraid, for God has come to test you, and that his fear may be before you, that you will not sin."
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	And Moses said to the people, Fear not; for God is come to prove you, that his worship may be before your faces, and that you may not sin.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	And Moses says to them, Be of good courage, for God is come to you to try you, that his fear may be among you, that ye sin not.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Moses said to the people, Have no fear: for God has come to put you to the test, so that fearing him you may be kept from sin.
Easy English	Moses said to the people: 'Do not be afraid. God has only come to test you. He wants you to love him. He wants you to obey him. Then you will not want to do bad things.'
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
<i>The Message</i>	Moses spoke to the people: “Don’t be afraid. God has come to test you and instill a deep and reverent awe within you so that you won’t sin.”
Names of God Bible	Moses answered the people, “Don’t be afraid! Elohim has come only to test you, so that you will be in awe of him and won’t sin.”
NIRV	Moses said to the people, “Don’t be afraid. God has come to test you. He wants you to have respect for him. That will keep you from sinning.”
New Simplified Bible	Moses responded: »Do not be afraid. God has only come to test you and to inspire you to obey him, so that you will not sin.«

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	"Don't be afraid!" Moses replied. "God has come only to test you, so that by obeying him you won't sin."
The Living Bible	They said to Moses, “You tell us what God says and we will obey, but don’t let God speak directly to us, or it will kill us.”
New Berkeley Version	.

New Living Translation	"Don't be afraid," Moses answered them, "for God has come in this way to test you, and so that your fear of him will keep you from sinning!"
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Moses replied to the people, "Do not be afraid! God has come to determine how you will behave. He wants you to honor him and to not sin."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Moses said to them: 'Be courageous! For The God came here to test you and to put the fear of Him into you, so you won't sin.'
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	Moses said to the people, "Don't be afraid, because God has come only to test you and to make sure you are always in awe of God so that you don't sin."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	But Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid; God has come here to make trial of your obedience; he would have you possessed with the fear of him, to preserve you from sin.
Translation for Translators	Moses/I replied, "Do not be afraid! God has come to determine/test <i>how you will behave</i> . He wants you to revere him, and to not sin."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Moses, however, answered to the "Fear not! for GOD has come to you to try you, and to test whether you will fear Him henceforward."
HCSB	Moses responded to the people, "Don't be afraid, for God has come to test you, so that you will fear Him and will not [Lit <i>that the fear of Him may be in you, and you do not</i>] sin."
Urim-Thummim Version	Moses replied to the people, do not be terrified for Elohim has come to test you and to put his fear into your faces so that you do not sin.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid, for God has come to test you, so that the fear of God may be with you, and that you may not sin again."
New English Bible—1970	Moses answered, 'Do not be afraid. God has come only to test you, so that the fear of him may remain with you and keep you from sin.'
New Jerusalem Bible	Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid; God has come to test you, so that your fear of him, being always in your mind, may keep you from sinning.'
Revised English Bible—1989	Moses answered, "Do not be afraid. God has come only to test you, so that the fear of him may remain with you and preserve you from sinning."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Moshe answered the people, "Don't be afraid, because God has come only to test you and make you fear him, so that you won't commit sins."
Tree of Life Version	So Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, for God has come to test you, so that His fear may be in you, so that you do not sin."

Weird English, 𐤀𐤃𐤅𐤃 English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	AND MOSES SAYS TO THEM, "BE OF GOOD COURAGE, FOR THE THEOS (<i>Alpha & Omega</i>) IS COME TO YOU TO TRY YOU, THAT HIS FEAR MAY BE AMONG YOU, THAT YOU WON'T SIN." †(<i>Jude verse 23</i>)
Awful Scroll Bible	Moses was to say to the people: Were yous to be afraid? - He of mighty ones is to have come in order to test yous, indeed the fear of him is to be turned before yous, even were yous to be kept clean.

Concordant Literal Version	Then Moses said to the people: Do not fear, for in order to probe you the One, Elohim has come, and in order that the fear of Him should come over your faces, that you may not sin.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Mosheh says to the people, Awe not: for Elohim comes so as to test you and that his awe be in front of your faces so that you sin not.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Moshe said unto HaAm, Fear not: for HaElohim is come to test you, and that His fear may be upon your faces, that ye sin not.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	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 [that is, a profound reverence for Him] will remain with you, so that you do not sin."
The Expanded Bible	Then Moses said to the people, "Don't be afraid, because God has come to test you. He wants you to respect him [^L to put the fear of him on you] so you will not sin."
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Moses said unto the people, Fear not; for God is come to prove you, His intention was to test the disposition of their hearts, to try them out with this terrifying aspect, that His fear may be before your faces that ye sin not. By the Law is the knowledge of sin, and God wanted to manifest His glory in order to work in their hearts the proper, holy reverence which would keep them from faithlessness and disobedience.
Syndein/Thieme	And Moses said unto the people, "Fear not. For 'Elohiym/Godhead is come to test/prove {nacah} you {nacah - an assayer's term - to test ore to see the quality of gold in it for example}, and that His respect for authority'/fear may be before your faces, that you sin not."
The Voice	Moses: Don't be afraid. These <i>powerful manifestations</i> are God's way of instilling <i>awe and fear</i> in you so that you will not sin; He is testing you <i>for your own good</i> .

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	But Moses said to the people, "Fear not, for God has come in order to exalt you, and in order that His awe shall be upon your faces, so that you shall not sin."
	<p>in order to exalt you: To magnify you in the world, so that your name should circulate among the nations, that He in His glory revealed Himself to you. — [from Mechilta]</p> <p>to exalt: הָלַל, an expression of exaltation and greatness, similar to "lift up a banner (סֵלָה)" (Isa. 62:10); "will I raise My standard (סֵלָה)" (Isa. 49:22); "and like a flagpole (סֵלָה) on a hill" (Isa. 30:17), which is upright. [Thus all these words signify "raising up."]</p> <p>and in order that His awe: By way of the fact that you saw that He is feared and dreaded, you will know that there is none beside Him and you will fear him.</p>
Kaplan Translation	<p>'Do not be afraid,' replied Moses to the people. 'God only came to raise you up. His fear will then be on your faces, and you will not sin.'</p> <p>raise you up (Mekhilta; Rashi). Or, 'test' or 'prove you' (Saadia; Ibn Ezra; Hirsch; cf. Exodus 16:4); 'admonish you' (Rashbam), 'refine you' (Ramban); 'train you' or 'accustom you [to prophecy]' (Moreh Nevukhim 3:24; Sforino; Ramban; cf. Ibn Janach. See Deuteronomy 8:16.</p>

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Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you,⁴⁹ that the fear of him⁵⁰ may be before you so that you do not⁵¹ sin."

^{49tn} תִּסּוֹךְ (nassot) is the Piel infinitive construct; it forms the purpose of God's coming with all the accompanying phenomena. The verb can mean "to try, test, prove." The sense of "prove" fits this context best because the terrifying phenomena were intended to put the fear of God in their hearts so that they would obey. In other words, God was inspiring them to obey, not simply testing to see if they would.

^{50tn} The suffix on the noun is an objective genitive, referring to the fear that the people would have of God (GKC 439 §135.m).

^{51tn} The negative form יִתְּלִי (lkvilti) is used here with the imperfect tense (see for other examples GKC 483 §152.x). This gives the imperfect the nuance of a final imperfect: that you might not sin. Others: to keep you from sin.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and " Mosheh ^{Plucked out} said to the people, do not fear, given that " Elohiym ^{Powers} came (with) the intention to test you, and (with) the intention that his fearfulness will exist upon your faces (so) you will (not) err,...
Charles Thomson OT	Whereupon Moses said to them, Take courage; for God is come to you to prove you, that the dread of him may be in you, that you may not sin.
Context Group Version	And Moses said to the people, Don't be afraid: for God has come to prove you (pl), and that his fear may be before you (pl), that you (pl) don't disgrace.
Green's Literal Translation	And Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid, for God has come in order to test you, and so that His fear may be on your faces, that you may not sin.
Young's Updated LT	And Moses says unto the people, "Fear not, for to try you has God come, and in order that His fear may be before your faces—that you [all] sin not."

The gist of this passage: Moses tells the people not to be fearful, and that God's grand entrance was to give them enough fear not to sin against Him.

Exodus 20:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Exodus 20:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
‘al (אֲלֵ) [pronounced <i>a</i>]	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i>]	<i>to fear, to be afraid; to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

Translation: Moses then said to the people, “You [all] should not fear,...

There is the mental attitude sins *fear* and there is the concept of a fear/respect for God. God ought to be feared and respected. However, the Hebrew people are not to give in to an overwhelming fear of what might happen to them.

Moses is telling the people to stop being emotionally afraid. When someone is emotionally afraid, their spiritual life is short-circuited. They cannot move forward in a spiritual sense. They must set aside the emotional fear first, through an admission of this sin to God, in order to spiritually move forward.

Exodus 20:20a *And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear;... (NKJV)*

God has just spoken to them and there is a great deal of commotion on the mountain, but no one is in danger of being harmed. God is great and powerful, but if you are in the plan of God, He is not going to harm you.

God never commands us to feel this or that emotion and this applies to the concept of fear as well. The people of Israel are emotionally afraid, and that short-circuits their spiritual lives. However, God tells them to have the mental attitude of fear toward Him. That is an understanding of God ultimately being in charge and that acting against Him is a very bad idea. We come to this understanding not through the emotion of fear but through the mental attitude of fear/respect.

Exodus 20:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Exodus 20:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ba'ăbûwr (בְּאֲבֹוֹר) [pronounced <i>bah-ġu^b-VOOR</i>]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that; while</i>	preposition/conjunction; substantive always found combined with the bēyth preposition	Strong's #5668 BDB #721
Actually a combination of the bēyth preposition (<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before</i>) and 'ăbûwr (בְּאֲבֹוֹר) [pronounced <i>ġaw^v-BOOR</i>] which means <i>a passing over, a transition; the cause of a crossing over; the price [of transferring ownership of something]; purpose, objective</i> . Properly, it is the passive participle of Strong's #5674 BDB #720. BDB and the e-sword KJV+ list it as Strong's #5676 BDB #719 combined with the bēyth preposition. Strong's #5668 BDB #721.			
The lâmed preposition, the bēyth preposition and the word 'ăbûwr (בְּאֲבֹוֹר) [pronounced <i>ġaw^v-BOOR</i>] together appear to mean <i>to the intent that, with the intent that; for the intent that, to the end that; in order to</i> . That final definition came from BDB; the others came from the meanings of these words and the context of 2Sam. 17:14.			
nâçâh (נָחַח) [pronounced <i>naw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to test, to try, to prove, to tempt, to assay, put to the proof or test; to try to do a thing; to practice doing a thing</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #5254 BDB #650
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>you, you [all]; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to you, toward you</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...for the Elohim has come with the intent of proving you...

The verb here is the Piel infinitive construct of nâçâh (נָחַח) [pronounced *naw-SAWH*], which means, *to test, to try, to prove, to tempt, to assay, put to the proof or test; to try to do a thing; to practice doing a thing*. Strong's #5254 BDB #650.

God has come to this mountain to this people in order to prove, assay or test them. I have many times heard the argument, *why does God test us? Isn't He omniscient? Doesn't He already know whether we will pass or fail?* God's testing of us is for our benefit, not His. This helps us to understand where we are in life and how far He has taken us. Having this understanding is necessary for us to continue on our spiritual journey on this earth.

They are to put together all of the things which have happened to them so far, and realize that God is acting on their behalf. Therefore, despite all that is happening when the Ten Commandments are given, the people are not to fear God, in the sense of believing that, He may harm some of them while giving the Ten Commandments.

They are to consider their circumstances and recognize that they are being tested by God.

Exodus 20:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ba'âbûwr (בְּאֲבֹר) [pronounced <i>bah-ġu^b-VOOR</i>]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that, so that; while</i>	preposition/conjunction; substantive always found combined with the bêyth preposition	Strong's #5668 BDB #721
Actually a combination of the bêyth preposition (<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before</i>) and 'âbûwr (בְּאֲבֹר) [pronounced <i>ġaw^v-BOOR</i>] which means <i>a passing over, a transition; the cause of a crossing over; the price [of transferring ownership of something]; purpose, objective</i> . Properly, it is the passive participle of Strong's #5674 BDB #720. BDB and the e-sword KJV+ list it as Strong's #5676 BDB #719 combined with the bêyth preposition. Strong's #5668 BDB #721.			
BDB lists Strong's #5676 as meaning <i>region beyond or across, [the opposite] side</i> . Most translations suggest that, when this is understood geographically, the combination means <i>on the other [opposite] side; in the region beyond; across on the other side</i> .			
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
yir'âh (יִרְאֶה) [pronounced <i>yir'-AW</i>]	<i>fear, dread, terror, reverence, respect, piety; it can also be used for the object of fear</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3374 BDB #432
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>ġah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular) with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, 'al and pânîym mean *upon your face, against the face of; facing you, in front of you, before (as in preference to) you, in addition to you, overlooking you*. Owens translates this *before your eyes* in Exodus 20:20.

Translation: ...and in order that the fear of Him be upon your faces,...

It seems contradictory that Moses has just said, *fear not*; and now he is telling them to fear. Again, they are to set aside, through rebound, the emotion of fear. However, they are to retain the mental attitude of fear and respect toward God. That fear is a mental attitude and not an emotion.

The people have already expressed their emotional fear. "You speak to us Moses instead of God, or we will die!" That is emotional fear. That is a fear which reveals a deep distrust of God and His power. The people need to set that fear aside. However, the people need to maintain a mental attitude of fear and respect for God.

Literally, this phrase reads, ...in order that the fear of Him be upon your faces...

Upon your faces is the actual literal meaning of the words. However, what they mean is, *upon your face, against the face of; facing you, in front of you, before (as in preference to) you, in addition to you, overlooking you*. His fear is the subject of the verb *to be*; so it is God's fear which is facing the Israelites or is right in front of the Israelites. Clearly, this was the case.

Some translations reorder this verse somewhat to smooth it out. However, the intent is clear; God is revealing His power before them in order to continue to maintain their respect and fear of Him. It may seem like a contradiction that Moses tells the people not to be afraid and then tells them that part of the purpose of God's coming is to make them afraid. It is the same word; it is first a verb and then we have the noun cognate. This is a figure of speech where the *fear of Him* stands for that which makes people afraid. That is, the storm and the power and the trumpets and all the things that cause them to fear—it is those things which God places before their eyes so that they would not sin. Fear is simply a word which stands for their reaction to what God has placed before them.

However, the people are to have fear/respect for God. They have not really developed that yet because they do not yet fully appreciate Who and What God is. He has revealed Himself to His people, but they have not really learned and accepted all that has happened.

Let me put this in another way. At this moment, the people have a real and palpable fear of God and what is taking place, but that fear is emotional. It will be with them as long as this experience continues and as long as they think about and relive this experience. However, this emotional fear will leave them. Now, if their concentration is on this emotional fear which they have, then they cannot take in the other information which God is giving them. Moses is telling them to overcome their emotional fear based upon the circumstances of hearing God's voice from Mount Sinai; but they are to maintain the mental attitude of fear and respect for God.

Exodus 20:20d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bil ^e tîy (יִתְּלֵי) pronounced bil ^e -TEE]	<i>not</i>	adverb/particle of negation	Strong's #1115 BDB #116
This combination means <i>in that not, so that this [will not happen], so as not</i> . With the verb <i>to be</i> , this might be rendered <i>there will not be</i> .			
châtâ' (חָטָא) [pronounced khaw-TAW]	<i>to sin, to miss, to miss the mark, to violate the law, to err; to do wrong, to commit a transgression</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #2398 BDB #306

Translation: ...so that you [all] do not sin."

The purpose of all that has happened is to keep these people from sinning. Their fear of God needs to be a mental attitude of fear and respect. They need to understand God's power and character, so that Israel, as a nation, does not try to turn against God. This would be to their own national detriment.

Positive Commands, Negative Commands and Emotion:

When it comes to a positive command from God, that positive command is *never* to feel any particular emotion or to work up an emotion. Negative commands from God are often about taking control of your emotions and not allowing them to drive your decisions and actions. God's positive commands are all about what you think, say and do. God's negative commands are about what you think, say, do and emote. You cannot allow your emotions to control or guide your thoughts, words or deeds.

The spiritual believer sets his negative emotions aside through the rebound technique.

Exodus 20:20 Moses then said to the people, "You [all] should not fear, for the Elohim has come with the intent of proving you and in order that the fear of Him be upon your faces, so that you [all] do not sin." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

God has given them the fundamental laws for their society, and the people of Israel will be tested insofar as their obedience to these laws.

The people are not to be emotionally afraid based upon this experience of hearing God's voice. However, they need to maintain a mental attitude of fear and respect when it comes to God and obedience to His commandments.

Exodus 20:20 Moses then answered the people, saying, "You [all] should not be afraid of God, for He has come to you with the intent of proving your obedience to Him and in order that you develop a mental attitude of fear and respect for Him, so that you [all] do not sin against Him." (Kukis paraphrase)

This translation of *proving your obedience* needs some explanation. The Hebrew people have already believed in the Revealed God. This took place prior to the exodus from Egypt. It is through their obedience to His Word that the Hebrew people are proved experientially. Every person who is saved, first believed in the Revealed God (or, *in Jesus* in our dispensation). We cannot lose our salvation because our salvation is based upon Jesus rather than upon our own works. However, after salvation, we learn more and more about God, and we obey Him, because His commandments are righteous (these commands tell us what we should or should not be doing). We cannot lose our salvation in our post-salvation life; but we can glorify God by our obedience to Him.

In the Church Age, in the time that we live, we glorify God by growing in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the key to the Christian life.

The Doctrine of Fear (by R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

Unless otherwise noted, Bob's translation is used. Where I did not have his translation available, I used the Berean Study Bible.

1. Fear is a mental attitude and a mental attitude sin. Like all mental attitude sins it attacks the soul and anything that attacks the soul is attacking the vital lifeline. The most important part of your life is what goes on in your soul, the real you is the soul. Therefore fear is a part of the makeup of your soul when obviously you do not have the inner residency of Bible doctrine. 1Samuel 17:11, 24.
2. Fear therefore, is the sign of reversionism. 1Samuel 18:12, 29; 21:12; 28:20.
 - a. 1Samuel 18:12 **So Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had departed from Saul.** (BSB)
 - b. 1Samuel 18:28–29 **When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, he grew even more afraid of David. So from then on Saul was David's enemy.** (BSB)
3. On the other hand lack of fear is a part of mental attitude dynamics.
 - a. Hebrews 13:5-6 **Let your lifestyle be free from love for money, and be content with what you have; for He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you, I will never forsake you,' so that we may say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid of what man can do to me?'**

- b. Hebrews 11:27 *By means of doctrine resident in the soul he [Moses] gave up the throne of Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king [Thutmose III]; for you see he became strong under pressure as long as he kept seeing the invisible one.*
4. Legitimate fear is related to the supergrace believer failing. Hebrews 4:1 *Therefore let us fear, lest at any time a promised blessing being unclaimed of entering into his rest, anyone from among you should think subjectively to the point of defaulting [this is reversionism].*
 5. Love is the absence of fear. Remember that agapê love is a mental attitude. 1John 4:18 *There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. The one who fears has not been perfected in love.* (BSB)
 6. Fear as a mental attitude sin is not a part of the divine plan for the believer. Exodus 14:13,14; Joshua 8:1; Deuteronomy 31:8; Isaiah 41:10; 1Chronicles 28:20; 2Samuel 1:7.
 - a. Exodus 14:13–14 *But Moses told the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the LORD’s salvation, which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians you see today, you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”* (BSB)
 - b. Joshua 8:1a *Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid or discouraged.”* (BSB)
 7. Courage or lack of fear is a sign of supergrace status. Psalm 3:6 56:3,11 Hebrews 11:27.
 8. Fear as used for occupation with Christ is a part of supergrace status. The word “fear” in the original language has another meaning: “occupation with.” There are certain passages where fear is used in that sense. 2Samuel 23:3 Nehemiah 5:9,15 Ephesians 5:21 Job 28:28 Psalm 19:9 34:11 Proverbs 1:7 9:10 10:27 15:16 Malachi 3:16 1Peter 2:17.

Exodus 20:20 *Moses then answered the people, saying, “You [all] should not be afraid of God, for He has come to you with the intent of proving your obedience to Him and in order that you develop a mental attitude of fear and respect for Him, so that you [all] do not sin against Him.”* (Kukis paraphrase)

A brief review of Exodus 20:18–20:

At this point, God has just audibly given the Ten Commandments to the people of Israel, and they are reacting to that experience.

Exodus 20:18–19 *And all the people, the ones seeing [and hearing all that was going on]: the thunderings and the lightning flashes, the sound of the horn, and the mountain [was] smoking—so the people saw [or, the people are afraid], and they are trembling and they stand far away [from the mountain]. They said to Moses, “You speak to us—[and only] you; and we will listen! [Let] Elohim not speak to us, so that we do not die.”* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The people are very shaken up, having heard God’s actual voice. They are filled with fear and they ask for Moses to stand between them and God, and simply convey whatever God wants them to hear. They wanted Moses to act as an intermediary.

Exodus 20:20 *Moses then said to the people, “You [all] should not fear, for the Elohim has come with the intent of proving you and in order that the fear of Him be upon your faces, so that you [all] do not sin.”* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Now Moses is much closer to all of the action, as it were. He is on the mountain. The people see all of the intense weather events taking place, but Moses is right there in the midst of it all. Moses is therefore able to tell the people, “Don’t be afraid!”

And so stand the people from a distance and Moses drew near unto the dark cloud which [is] there the Elohim.

Exodus
20:21

The people stood off from a distance while Moses drew near to the dark cloud, where Elohim [was].

The people stood their distance from the mountain, but Moses drew near to it, approaching the dark cloud where God was.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so stand the people from a distance and Moses drew near unto the dark cloud which [is] there the Elohim.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	And the people stood afar off, but Mosheh drew nigh to the darkness where was the glory of the Lord.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the people stood twelve miles off; but Mosheh drew near to the height of the darkness where was the glory of the Lord.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And the people stood afar off. But Moses went to the dark cloud wherein God was.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	The people stayed at a distance, and Mosha drew near to the thick darkness where God was.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	And the people stood afar off, and Moses went into the darkness where God was.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Easy English	So the people stayed away from the mountain. But Moses walked toward the thick, dark cloud, where God was.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	But the people continued to stand a long way off, and only Moses went near the dark cloud where God was..
<i>The Message</i>	.
NIRV	Moses approached the thick darkness where God was. But the people remained a long way off.
New Simplified Bible	But the people continued to stand at a distance. Only Moses went near the dark cloud where God was.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	But when Moses went near the thick cloud where God was, the people stayed a long way off.
The Living Bible	As the people stood in the distance, Moses entered into the deep darkness where God was.
New Berkeley Version	.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Then, as the people watched from a distance, Moses went close to the black cloud where God was.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	However, the people just kept backing away.
Beck's American Translation	The people stood at a distance while Moses approached the thick darkness in which God was present.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So the people stood their ground far off, while Moses went up into the darkness where God was.
Translation for Translators	Then, as the people <i>watched from</i> a distance, Moses/I went close to the black cloud where God was.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	The people stood far away, and Moses came close to the murkiness where God was.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	And the people stood afar off, and Moses went into the thick cloud where God was.
HCSB	And the people remained standing at a distance as Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.
Urim-Thummim Version	And the people were some distance away when Moses approached the dark cloud-mass where Elohim was.
Wikipedia Bible Project	And the people stood at a distance, and Moses approached the fog, there where God was.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	So the people kept at a distance while Moses went forward to the cloud where God was.
New Jerusalem Bible	So the people kept their distance while Moses approached the dark cloud where God was.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	So the people stood at a distance, but Moshe approached the thick darkness where God was.
exeGeses companion Bible	And the people stand afar off and Mosheh draws near to the dripping darkness where Elohim is:...

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible	AND THE PEOPLE STOOD AFAR OFF, AND MOSES WENT INTO THE THICK CLOUD WHERE THE THEOS (<i>Alpha & Omega</i>) WAS.
Awful Scroll Bible	The people were to stand afar, and Moses is to have drawn near the turbidity of he of mighty ones.
Concordant Literal Version	Then the people stood afar, yet Moses, he came close to the murkiness where the One, Elohim was.
Darby Translation	And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near to the obscurity where God was.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And HaAm stood afar off, while Moshe drew near unto the thick cloud where HaElohim was.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	So then the people stood afar off, and, Moses, approached unto the thick gloom, where God was.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary	And the people stood afar off, remained standing at a distance, and Moses, as the mediator of the people, drew near unto the thick darkness where God was; in order to receive the further commands of the Lord.
The Voice	But everyone remained far away from the mountain as Moses began moving toward the thick, dark cloud where God was.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	<p>The people remained far off, but Moses drew near to the opaque darkness, where God was.</p> <p>drew near to the opaque darkness: Within three partitions: darkness, cloud, and opaque darkness, as it is said: "And the mountain was burning with fire unto the heart of the heavens, darkness, cloud, and opaque darkness" (Deut. 4:11). Opaque darkness is [synonymous with] "the thickness of the cloud," [concerning] which He [God] had said to him [Moses], "Behold, I am coming to you in the thickness of the cloud" (Exod. 19:9). [from Mechilta]</p>
Kaplan Translation	<p>The people kept their distance while Moses entered the mist where the Divine was [revealed].</p> <p>where the Divine was revealed</p> <p>The narrative continues in Exodus 24:1.</p>
NET Bible®	<p>The people kept⁵² their distance, but Moses drew near the thick darkness⁵³ where God was.⁵⁴</p> <p>^{52tn} Heb "and they stood"; the referent (the people) has been specified in the translation for clarity.</p> <p>^{53sn} The word לִפְרֶעֱ (l'p'ra'el) is used in poetry in Ps 18:9 and 1 Kgs 8:12; and it is used in Deut 4:11, 5:22 [19].</p> <p>^{54sn} It will not be hard to expound the passage on the Ten Commandments once their place in scripture has been determined. They, for the most part, are reiterated in the NT, in one way or another, usually with a much higher standard that requires attention to the spirit of the laws. Thus, these laws reveal God's standard of righteousness by revealing sin. No wonder the Israelites were afraid when they saw the manifestation of God and heard his laws. When the whole covenant is considered, preamble and all, then it becomes clear that the motivation for obeying the commands is the person and the work of the covenant God – the one who redeemed his people. Obedience then becomes a response of devotion and adoration to the Redeemer who set them free. It becomes loyal service, not enslavement to laws. The point could be worded this way: God requires that his covenant people, whom he has redeemed, and to whom he has revealed himself, give their absolute allegiance and obedience to him. This means they will worship and serve him and safeguard the well-being of each other.</p>

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and the people stood from a distance, and "Mosheh ^{Plucked outⁿ} [had] been drawn near to the thick darkness which there, is the "Elohiym ^{Powersⁿ} ",...
World English Bible	The people stayed at a distance, and Moses came near to the thick darkness where God was.
Young's Updated LT	And the people stand afar off, and Moses has drawn near unto the thick darkness where God is.

The gist of this passage:	The people stand afar off from the Mountain; and Moses walks towards it and onto it, where the manifestation of God's Presence is.
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Exodus 20:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿamad (עמד) [pronounced ġaw-MAHD]	<i>to take a stand, to stand, to remain, to endure, to withstand; to stop, to cease</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5975 BDB #763
ʿam (עם) [pronounced ġahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
min (מן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
râchôwq (רוחק) [pronounced raw-KHOHK]	<i>distant, far; as a noun, it means distance (which can be a reference to time or space)</i>	Noun/adjective	Strong's #7350 BDB #935

Min + râchôwq mean *from afar off, far away; from an emotive distance*.

Translation: [The people stood off from a distance...](#)

Moses' words did not seem to placate this people. They continued to stand off, away from the mountain. His words did not reassure them.

It seemed like, at first, there might be some men who wanted to see for themselves what is going on, on the mountain. Twice, God talks about keeping them off the mountain (Exodus 19:12–13, 21–22). But after God speaks aloud to all of the people and manifests His Presence at that mountain, the people withdraw from it. They are fine with viewing these events from a distance.

Exodus 20:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Mosheh (משה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
nâgash (נגש) [pronounced naw-GASH]	<i>to draw near, to be brought near</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphil perfect	Strong's #5066 BDB #620

Exodus 20:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'el (לָא) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'ărâphel (לְפָרֶחַ) [pronounced gur-aw-FELL]	<i>cloud, heavy or dark cloud, darkness, gross darkness, thick darkness</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6205 BDB #791
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
shâm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
The two words 'ăsher + shâm can be rendered <i>where, in what place, to what place</i> when found together in the same phrase. Sometimes, the addition of the verb <i>to be</i> might be appropriate to smooth out the phrasing.			
'Ēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...while Moses drew near to the dark cloud, where Elohim [was].

Moses, on the other hand, moved closer to the mountain, toward the dark cloud which enveloped all or a portion of the mountain.

Moses was allowed by God to move towards the mountain; to come onto the mountain. For the past few weeks, Moses had communed directly with God. What Moses saw regarding the stormy and blackened cloud did not appear to concern him. He was going to speak to the same God that he had been speaking to.

Exodus 20:21 *The people stood off from a distance while Moses drew near to the dark cloud, where Elohim [was].* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The Ten Commandments are the basic freedom code, as R. B. Thieme, Jr. put it; they are the skeleton upon which all the other laws hang. They are the essentials for Israel; now God will give Israel the details and the specifics. What the Hebrews did is they took all of these laws, the decalogue and the laws which come from them, and designed more laws to place on top of God's laws. They developed a deeply complex and very legalistic code which attempted to anticipate each and every possible situation and variation and give actions which must accompany those situations (this was related primarily to the Sabbath day).

In their rabbinical study of the Law, they do not see God's grace, their own failures, or the sacrifices of Leviticus as being related to their Messiah. Their own take on the Mosaic Law resulted in the Mishna, the Midrash and the Talmud.

The Mishna is the oral traditions of the Rabbis; a commentary, if you will, on the Torah (which is the Law of Moses). However, they go beyond being a commentary to being an addition to the Torah. The Mishna proffers a great complex list of laws, and if's and then's. It is not too far removed from our American Constitution and then all the laws and statutes and resolutions and regulations which have resulted from the Constitution. We could

remove perhaps 80% of the governmental interpretation of the Constitution and function just as well, if not better, than we are now. The Mishna is the verbal traditions based upon the Torah.

The Midrash is a linguistic study of the Old Testament; however, unlike this commentary, which attempts to derive meaning from the original language, the Midrash enters into this realm of triviality of the linguistics, pursuing such things as, as ZPEB put it, *farfetched connections made on the sheer analogies of the sounds of words*. When the Mishna was committed to writing, the Talmud was also written down and such things and the leading of beasts, the 39 kinds of work, the throwing of objects, the moving of objects, containers, and people were all related to the Sabbath into a huge list of do's and don't's. Although we do not know for certain the time periods in which these documents were produced, many of the legalistic additions to the Torah were obviously in effect at least by tradition, during the time of our Lord's walk on this earth. The first written version which I believe that we have of the Talmud was produced during the first four centuries A.D., although several versions and updates have been made since then.

So, what is the connection between this verse and what I have just written. This verse describes the history of the Hebrews: *the people stood at a distance while Moses approached the thick cloud where God [was]*.

Exodus 20:21 *So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.* (NKJV)

Are believers in the Church Age shortchanged?

Believers in the Church Age do not hear God's voice directly; so, let me ask, have we been shortchanged? In previous generations, God has, from time to time, spoken directly to man. Jesus, for 3 or 4 years, taught truth to the people of Galilee and Jerusalem. People actually learned directly from the Son of God. Jacob, in Genesis 28, received direct revelation from God, and this was at a time when Jacob was simply not a great believer; he was a mediocre believer. Nevertheless, God spoke to Jacob directly.

We might feel in the Church Age that we have somehow been shortchanged. God does not speak to us directly; and people who claim to audibly hear God's voice are loons. But, we grow spiritually based upon God's Word embedded in our souls. **We are told to Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** This does not require God providing a physical manifestation to us; it does not demand that we hear God's audible voice; and it does not mean that God will send us teaching angels. God has this all under control, providing us with His Word and with the proper gifts, in the Church Age, for His Word to be taught.

Most believers will go through their entire lives and not witness a single unequivocal miracle—one which clearly defies the laws of science. Believers in this era (the **post-canon period** of the Church Age) will not ever hear God's voice—not even a still, small voice from deep inside. None of us are going to see some physical manifestation of God, as in the burning bush or a cloud hanging over the Tabernacle. Yet, it is possible for us to grow spiritually just like anyone at any time in history. In fact, our spiritual lives can be supercharged in this era.

We have studied both Moses and Aaron. Both men were exposed to God manifesting Himself to them and speaking to them, directly, audibly. Who seemed to grow the most? Moses. Aaron will be later talked into casting a golden calf for the people to worship. What is the difference between the two men? Positive volition in their souls and the amount of Bible doctrine in their souls.

The generation of Israelites that we are studying will fail miserably in the desert-wilderness. God will say, **"I loathed that generation."** Yet, they heard God's audible voice!

Our lives, our spiritual progress, our divine good production—it is all based upon Bible doctrine in the soul, and that does not require miracles or some special manifestation of God. It requires positive volition toward the teaching of Bible doctrine; and positive volition towards the plan of God, which is revealed in the teaching of God's Word.

And when I use the phrase *the teaching of Bible doctrine*, I am specifically speaking of the pastor-teacher who has both the gift and the training to teach the Word of God. This is key to our spiritual progress in the Church Age.

When it comes to life experiences, every believer has their own set of life experiences. What God expects us to do is to mix the truth that we hear with faith, and then apply that truth to our lives. My point being is, no one in the Church Age has been short-changed. Although, during our lives, we will not have some dramatic spiritual experience, that is the norm. God has given us everything that we need in order to advance spiritually; we just have to choose to do it (or not).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Exodus 20:21 *So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.* (NKJV)

This would have been a good place to end Exodus 20; but the chapter continues on.

Exodus 20:21 *The people stood their distance from the mountain, but Moses drew near to it, approaching the dark cloud where God was.* (Kukis paraphrase)

How God Is and Is Not To Be Worshiped (Altars and Idols)

Preface to Exodus 20:22–40:38: What will follow, for much of the remainder of the book of Exodus will be a series of laws, punctuated by a limited amount of narrative. For many of these laws, I will cover them fairly quickly and give them some modern-day application whenever possible. When it comes to ceremonial laws—and there will be a lot of that in subsequent chapters—I will primarily focus upon what these laws represent. All of the ceremonial observations look forward to the 1st advent of Jesus Christ. A few of them speak to some specifics of the spiritual life: salvation and temporal cleanliness (which is achieved by naming one's sins to God).

As a result of this different approach, we will cover the material much more quickly. So, even though we are at the approximate halfway mark of the book of Exodus (there are 40 chapters in all), we are probably at the three-quarters mark for our overall study of this book.

Even though we are all *New Testament Christians* living in the Church Age, this does not mean that there is little or no value in the Old. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (in His Deity); as is God the Holy Spirit (by Whom every author writes Scripture). God the Father is also unchanged. Therefore, we learn a great deal about God when He interacts with the Hebrew people and with nation Israel.

It appears that, at this point, the people are backing away from the mountain, but Moses has walked towards the mountain and onto it. So, at this time, Moses is with God, on the mountain, and God is speaking to Moses. From this point to the end of Exodus 23, God will begin to give very specific laws to Moses, which laws include some consequences for breaking them. In many cases, these will be laws related to the Ten Commandments; and in many cases, they will just be laws related to living in a new land.

Exodus 20:22–23:33 could have been presented as one very long chapter (perhaps to include the prologue of the previous 4 verses). I have seen some mark off sections of Exodus to match with the Ten Commandments. However, that cannot be done for the next 3½ chapters. Although some sets of laws might be reasonably grouped together, I do not yet fully appreciate the overall organization of these chapters.

To give you an idea what to expect, here is a word cloud:

Most of these headings came from the International Study Bible. The latter three sections might be separated out as they are not, strictly speaking, violations and penalties.

The very specific laws which relate to man interacting with man are not really that extensive. They begin with the Ten Commandments and only carry on for three and third chapters. We do not have any sort of listing of laws until we come to Leviticus 18 where very specific sexual practices are forbidden. These prohibitions might better find a home in Leviticus, as such sexual deviancy might be practiced at heathen Temples or as a result of degenerate cultural practices.

Portions of Leviticus 19–20 may also be seen as additional lists of laws and prohibitions. We will have a few more laws in the book of Deuteronomy, which are pretty much written by Moses rather than by God. God speaks much of Exodus 20–40 and the book of Leviticus. However, it is Moses speaking in most of Deuteronomy. That in itself is somewhat of a wild twist with many implications.

As noted previously, chapter 20 should have ended with v. 21, and we should be beginning a new chapter at this point, but, whoever organized the chapters at this point failed (the division of the Bible into chapters and verses took place after the fact).

At this point, we begin a section of laws which we might entitle *judgments*, as a variety of offences are recorded along with the proper consequences.

At this point, we are going to take in a bird's eye view of the laws and the application of the laws which we will study over the next three chapters and a half.

This is the organization as I see it, grouping some of the laws together.

The Specific Topics of Exodus 20:22–23:33	
Scripture	Text/Commentary
Exodus 20:22–26	God forbids idolatry and describes the function and design of personal altars.
Exodus 21:1–11	Laws regarding servitude to Hebrew masters. There are time limits given. Marriages might take place during servitude.
Exodus 21:12–27	Various forms of violence and penalties for these acts. A general principle is given at the end.
Exodus 21:28–36	Animal control laws; responsibility for what might reasonably be foreseen; and relevant penalties.
Exodus 22:1–15	Theft, restitution; taking responsibility for another's possessions.
Exodus 22:16–31	A series of moral and ceremonial laws, which includes topics such as, the loss of a maid's virginity, witches, bestiality, sacrificing to other gods, the fair treatment of strangers and the destitute, money lending and judges.
Exodus 23:1–9	Justice under the law for several categories of people—the poor, your enemy, the stranger; and the absolute importance of integrity in the judicial system.
Exodus 23:10–13	The Sabbath Year and the Sabbath Day.
Exodus 23:14–19	The 3 primary feasts of Israel.
Exodus 23:20–23	The Angel Who will go before Israel into the land.
Exodus 23:24–33	Warnings against idolatry in the land.

As you can see, God delivers a veritable cornucopia of laws, regulations and warnings to nascent Israel. Always bear in mind that the entire Law, Exodus through Deuteronomy, were written while Israel was in the desert-wilderness and had not come into the land of Canaan yet. That will occur under Joshua.

What follows in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are not simply a series of laws and judgments. There are a great variety of topics to follow, as well as sections of narrative.

Moses will return to commune with God soon after this, and God will deliver a massive set of ceremonial and (therefore) typical laws (Exodus 25–31). By *typical*, I mean laws which look forward to the crucifixion of our Lord. The type would be the ceremonial law and the antitype would be some aspect of the crucifixion of our Lord. The type is the shadow form and the antitype is the reality that the shadow form was revealing. Not all typical laws look forward to the crucifixion; some of them look forward to Israel's future as a nation (and bear in mind, all of this information is given to nation Israel before Israel is actually a full-on nation. At this point in time, they do not live on the land given them by God).

Narrative will resume in Exodus 32, but most of that narrative will be devoted to manufacturing of the items that will be used in the worship of God—primarily the Tabernacle. The items themselves, which the people of Israel are to produce, will *not* be worshiped.

This narrative, punctuated by guidance from God, will continue through Exodus 39. In Exodus 40, we will have the completion of the Tabernacle and God will issue some additional commands concerning the Tabernacle and the initial worship in and around it.

In general, the organization presented above came from the Niobi Study Bible (also called the **Patchworkid Study Bible**) for **e-sword**. At times, their organization is perfectly in line with the International Study Bible outline, and in some places, not aligned at all.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

When it comes to these laws and the application of these laws to our lives today, we have to be careful. Most of us live in client nation USA. This means that the United States has a set of very specific functions which are related to the spiritual life. This is not something that the federal government does (although, on occasion, the federal government might do something which indicates spiritual awareness). This is something which takes place within our nation. These things are done by individuals, by churches and by other groups. This may include the preservation of Scriptures, the translation of the Scriptures, or the accurate explanation of the Scriptures. Missionaries are sent out from our country as well as various forms of aid, which is related to missionary work (I believe that there are some physicians who are believers who go to various impoverished nations and provide medical care for them; and sometimes the gospel message).

It is possible for the spiritual works being done in a client nation to be at odds with the current administration. There have been missions and private food banks and other similar outreaches within the United States which governing authorities have shut down or have made their operation difficult. Some such organizations have simply shut down, being continually frustrated by the local or federal governments.

There is also the simple problem of the believer in today's United States understanding what his role is with regards to our government.

I mention this because many of the laws which we are about to study are fundamental to the laws of divine establishment. Therefore, it is important to understand the laws of divine establishment as well as, *what should we, as born again believers, be doing in our nation?* We have previously studied the laws of divine establishment, and that doctrine can be found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Application: Many believers today see President Trump as a net blessing to the United States (I write this between the years 2019–2024). Many people in this country pray for our nation; and there are, apparently, a

number of believers in the United States. There is also a small pivot listening to doctrine and advancing to spiritual maturity. These things go hand-in-hand with blessings from God.

Application: On the other hand, it seems as if every evil force in the world is aimed at destroying the United States. Even one political party seems to have that aim. Will this blessing that we have enjoyed under President Trump be short-lived because these same believers praying for America are not advancing spiritually as they should be?

Application: It is fine to be informed politically and to vote—particularly if you are a believer who understands the divine institutions and the laws of divine establishment. However, your focus needs to be on spiritual growth and the function of your spiritual gift (which, for the most part, is not going to operate until you reach some level of spiritual maturity). You might on occasion enter into a political discussion; but your focus needs to be upon our nation as a spiritual entity rather than as a political entity. Furthermore, we must be aware that, even when the wrong political party wins or there is not really a stark choice offered to us, that we understand that it is men and women advancing spiritually who make this nation work; not the workings of political figures and movements.

Application: Any president who appears to understand the laws of divine establishment is better than a president who does not. However, how do believers who do not understand these laws select such a president?

Application: As believers, we are not trying to establish a Christian nation—that is, a nation run by Christians with the imposition of Christian laws and Christian doctrines. The nation cannot concern itself with what is taking place in the churches or what doctrines are accepted or rejected. What happens in the local churches runs on a different track from what happens in political circles. We should be interested in honest government which upholds the laws of divine establishment. However, we should not fall apart if we don't get that.

Moses is not after political power; nor is he running for anything. Yet, in this point of time in human history, he is the most important person. We might see him as a spiritual Atlas. Similarly, 600 years previous, the most important person on this earth was a traveling shepherd named Abraham, who moved from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan. Do you remember any kings from that era or any great military men? Probably not. But who you know about—and who is known about throughout the world—is Abraham, being sent by God from the east (Iraq) to Canaan.

God has just given the Ten Commandments to His people. They clearly do not want to hear His voice directly. The people ask for Moses to be their mediator. So the laws which we will study were first given to Moses and then given to the people.

The Law of the Altar (I often retain the subheadings found in e-sword)

Most translations began a new paragraph and often a new section with v. 22. However, a few placed v. 21 with vv. 22–23. This will be reflected in the 90+ translations given below.

And so says Y^ehowah unto Moses, “Thus you will say unto sons of Israel: ‘You [all]—you [all] have seen that from the [two] heavens I have talked with you [all]. You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver; and elohim of gold you will not make for yourselves.

Exodus
20:22–23

And Y^ehowah said to Moses, “So you will say to the sons of Israel: ‘You [all] have [clearly] seen from the heavens that I have spoken with you [all]. You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver and you will not make elohim of gold for yourselves.

Jehovah said to Moses, “This is what you will say to the sons of Israel: ‘You have clearly seen that I have spoke with you from the heavens. Under no circumstances are you to make gods of silver which you dedicate to Me; you are not to make gods of gold for yourselves.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Y ^e howah unto Moses, "Thus you will say unto sons of Israel: 'You [all]—you [all] have seen that from the [two] heavens I have talked with you [all]. You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver; and elohim of gold you will not make for yourselves.
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum (Onkelos)	And the Lord said to Mosheh, Thus shalt thou speak to the children of Israel; You have seen that I have spoken to you from the heavens. You shall not make before Me idols of silver, neither idols of gold shall you make to you.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the Lord said to Mosheh, Speak thus to the sons of Israel: You have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you; sons of Israel, My people, you shall not make, that you may worship, the likeness of the sun or the moon or the stars, or the planets, or the angels who minister before Me; idols of silver, nor idols of gold, ye shall not make to you.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And the Lord said to Moses: Thus shall you say to the children of Israel: You have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver, nor shall you make to yourselves gods of gold.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Mar-Yah said to Mosha, "This is what you shall tell the B'nai Yisrael: 'You yourselves have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall most certainly not make alongside of me deities of silver, or deities of gold for yourselves.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	And the LORD said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall not make for yourselves gods of gold to be worshipped along with me, neither shall you make for yourselves gods of silver.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	And the Lord said to Moses, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and thou shalt report it to the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. Ye shall not make to yourselves gods of silver, and gods of gold ye shall not make to yourselves.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And the Lord said to Moses, Say to the children of Israel, You yourselves have seen that my voice has come to you from heaven. Gods of silver and gods of gold you are not to make for yourselves.
Easy English	Then the LORD said to Moses: 'Tell the Israelites this: "You yourselves have heard me speak to you from heaven. Do not make any gods to be equal to me. Do not make for yourselves gods out of silver or out of gold.
Easy-to-Read Version—2006	The people stood far away from the mountain while Moses went to the dark cloud where God was. Then the LORD told Moses to say this to the Israelites: "You people have seen that I talked with you from heaven. So you must not make idols using gold or silver to compete with me. You must not make these false gods. V. 21 is included for context.
Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i>	. GOD said to Moses, "Give this Message to the People of Israel: 'You've experienced firsthand how I spoke with you from Heaven. Don't make gods of silver and gods of gold and then set them alongside me.
Names of God Bible	General Rules for Worship

Yahweh said to Moses, “This is what you must say to the Israelites: You’ve seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven. Never make any gods of silver or gold for yourselves. Never worship them.

NIRV

Worship the LORD

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Here is what you must tell the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘You have seen for yourselves what I said to you from heaven. Do not put any other gods in place of me. Do not make silver or gold statues of them for yourselves.

New Simplified Bible

Jehovah commanded Moses to tell the Israelites: »You have seen how I have spoken to you from heaven. »Do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gold to be worshiped in addition to me.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible

Contemporary English V.

.
The LORD told Moses to say to the people of Israel: With your own eyes, you saw me speak to you from heaven. So you must never make idols of silver or gold to worship in place of me.

The Living Bible

And the Lord told Moses to be his spokesman to the people of Israel. “You are witnesses to the fact that I have made known my will to you from heaven. Remember, you must not make or worship idols made of silver or gold or of anything else!.

New Berkeley Version

New Life Version

.
Then the Lord said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven. Do not make any gods other than Me. Do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold.

New Living Translation

Proper Use of Altars

And the LORD said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: You saw for yourselves that I spoke to you from heaven. Remember, you must not make any idols of silver or gold to rival me.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible

Then Moses went into the darkness where God was. 22 And Jehovah said to Moses:

‘This is what you must say to the house of Jacob and what you must report to the children of IsraEl: *Now you have seen Me speaking to you from the sky; so, don’t make gods of silver or gold for yourselves.*

Beck’s American Translation

Common English Bible

Instructions about worship

The LORD said to Moses: “Say this to the Israelites: You saw for yourselves how I spoke with you from heaven. Don’t make alongside me gods of silver or gold for yourselves.

New Advent (Knox) Bible

And the Lord gave Moses this further message for the Israelites: You stood watching while I spoke to you out of heaven; it is not for you to make yourselves gods of silver or of gold.

Translation for Translators

Yahweh said to Moses/me, “Say this to the Israeli people: ‘You have heard how I, Yahweh, have spoken to you from heaven. I told you that you must not make any idols of silver or gold *that you will worship instead* of me.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	The LORD said to Moses, "Say this to the Sons of Israel: 'You saw that I spoke with you from the heavens. You will not make silver gods with me, nor make golden gods for yourselves.'"
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Then the EVER-LIVING said to Moses; "Say this to the children of Israel, you have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you. Never make for yourselves a God of silver, or a God of gold. You shall not make them for yourselves.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	And the Lord said unto Moses: thus you shall say unto the children of Israel: you have seen how that I have talked with you from out of heaven. You shall not make therefore with me gods of silver nor gods of gold: in no wise shall you do it.
HCSB	Moses Receives Additional Laws Then the LORD told Moses, "This is what you are to say to the Israelites: You have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. You must not make gods of silver to rival Me; you must not make gods of gold for yourselves [Hb obscure].
International Standard V	Instruction about Idols and Altars The LORD told Moses, "This is what you are to say to the Israelis, 'You have seen for yourselves that I spoke to you from heaven. You are not to make gods of silver alongside me, nor are you to make for yourselves gods of gold.
Lexham English Bible	Instructions for Building Altars And Yahweh said to Moses, "Thus you will say to the {Israelites}, 'You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from the heavens. You will not make alongside me gods of silver, and gods of gold you will not make for yourselves.
NIV, ©2011	Idols and Altars Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites this: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven: Do not make any gods to be alongside me; do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold.
Unlocked Literal Bible	Yahweh said to Moses, "This is what you must tell the Israelites: 'You yourselves have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. You will not make for yourselves other gods alongside me, gods of silver or gods of gold.
Urim-Thummim Version	Then YHWH spoke to Moses, This is what you will say to the children of Israel, You have seen that I have talked with you from the sky. You will not make elohim of silver to be worshipped along with me, neither will you make to yourselves elohim of gold.
Wikipedia Bible Project	And Yahweh said to Moses: So you will say to the sons of Israel: "You have seen that I have spoken with you from the sky. With me you shall not make gods of silver and gods of Gold; these you shall not make for yourself.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from the heavens. 23.Do not make any gods of silver or gold to stand beside me.
New American Bible (2002)	The LORD told Moses, "Thus shall you speak to the Israelites: You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven. Do not make anything to rank with me; neither gods of silver nor gods of gold shall you make for yourselves.
New American Bible (2011)	<i>The Covenant Code.</i> * The LORD said to Moses: This is what you will say to the Israelites: You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make alongside of me gods of silver, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. Ex 20:3–4 * [20:22–23:33] This collection consists of the civil and religious laws, both apodictic (absolute) and casuistic (conditional), which were given to the people through the mediation of Moses. They will be written down by Moses in 24:4.
New English Bible–1970	Laws about Altars.

THE LORD SAID TO MOSES, Say this to the Israelites: You know now that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver to be worshipped as well as me, nor shall you make yourselves gods of gold.

New Jerusalem Bible Yahweh said to Moses, 'Tell the Israelites this, "You have seen for yourselves how I have spoken to you from heaven. You must not make gods of silver to rival me, nor must you make yourselves gods of gold.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible **(A: Maftir)** ADONAI said to Moshe, "Here is what you are to say to the people of Isra'el: 'You yourselves have seen that I spoke with you from heaven. You are not to make with me gods of silver, nor are you to make gods of gold for yourselves.

Hebraic Roots Bible And YAHWEH said to Moses, You shall say this to the sons of Israel, You have seen that I have spoken with you from the heavens. You shall not make Elohim of silver along with Me, and you shall not make Elohim of gold for yourselves.

The Scriptures 1998 And יהוה said to Mosheh, "Say this to the children of Yisra'el: 'You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from the heavens. 'You do not make besides Me mighty ones of silver, and you do not make mighty ones of gold for yourselves.

Tree of Life Version Then ADONAI said to Moses, "Say this to *Bnei-Yisrael*: You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. Do not make gods of silver alongside Me, and do not make gods of gold for yourselves.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Alpha & Omega Bible AND JESUS SAID TO MOSES, "THUS SHALL YOU SAY TO THE HOUSE OF JACOB, AND YOU SHALL REPORT IT TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, 'YOU HAVE SEEN THAT I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU FROM HEAVEN. YOU SHALL NOT MAKE TO YOURSELVES GODS OF SILVER, AND GODS OF GOLD YOU SHALL NOT MAKE [these] TO YOURSELVES.

Awful Scroll Bible Jehovah was to say to Moses: You was to say to the sons of Isra-el: You are to have perceived, that I am to have spoken from the expanse. Were yous to make they he of mighty ones of silver, even were yous to make they he of mighty ones of gold? -

exeGeses companion Bible ...and Yah Veh says to Mosheh,
Say thus to the sons of Yisra El,
You see that I word with you from the heavens.
Neither work me elohim of silver
nor work yourselves elohim of gold:...

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Hashem said unto Moshe, Thus thou shalt say unto the Bnei Yisroel, You yourselves have seen that from Shomayim I have spoken with you.
Ye shall not make beside Me elohei kesef, neither shall ye make for yourselves elohei zahav.

Rotherham's *Emphasized B.* Then said Yahweh unto Moses, Thus, shalt thou say, unto the sons of Israel,—Ye yourselves, have seen that out of the heavens, have I spoken with you. Ye shall not make aught beside me,—neither gods of silver, nor gods of gold, shall ye make to yourselves.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible Then the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make other gods [to worship] besides Me; gods of silver or gods of gold, you shall not make [these lifeless idols] for yourselves.

The Expanded Bible

The people stood far away from the mountain while Moses went near the dark cloud where God was. Then the LORD told Moses to say these things to the Israelites [^L sons/^T children of Israel]: “You yourselves have seen that I talked with you from heaven. You must not use gold or silver to make idols for yourselves; do not worship these gods in addition to me. V. 21 is included for context.

Kretzmann's Commentary

Verses 22-26

The Precept Concerning the Altar

And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. This fact proved the superiority, the authority of the Lord, His right to express His demands as He was now preparing to do. No false God would have had this power, and the incident was bound to establish Jehovah as the true God in the sight of Israel. **Ye shall not make with Me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.** The children of Israel were not to make and place on a level with Jehovah, for purposes of worship, idols of any kind, which they would then regard as their gods. The Making and worshipping of such images, every form of idolatry, was absolutely prohibited.

The Voice

Eternal One (to Moses): This is what I want you to tell the people of Israel: “You yourselves witnessed that I have spoken to you from heaven. *It is essential that you not make any idols to rival Me. Do not make any idols out of silver or gold for yourselves!*

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach

The Lord said to Moses, "So shall you say to the children of Israel, You have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you.

So shall you say: with this language. — [from Mechilta] I.e., with this exact wording and in Hebrew. — [Mechilta]

You have seen: There is a difference between what a person sees and what others tell him. [Concerning] what others tell him, sometimes his heart is divided whether to believe [it or not]. — [from Mechilta]

from the heavens I have spoken: But another verse states: “The Lord descended upon Mount Sinai” (Exod. 19:20). The third verse comes and harmonizes them: “From the heavens He let you hear His voice in order to discipline you, and on earth He showed you His great fire” (Deut. 4:36). His glory was in heaven, His fire and His power were on the earth. Alternatively, He bent down the [lower] heavens and the highest heavens and spread them out upon the mountain. So [Scripture] says: “And He bent the heavens, and He came down” (Ps. 18:10). [from Mechilta]

You shall not make [images of anything that is] with Me. Gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves.

You shall not make [images of anything that is] with Me: You shall not make a likeness of my servants who serve Me on high. — [from Mechilta, R.H. 24]

Gods of silver: This [statement] comes to warn about the cherubim, which you make to stand with Me [in the Temple], that they may not be [made] of silver, for if you deviate to make them of silver, they are to Me as gods. — [from Mechilta]

or gods of gold: This [statement] comes to warn [us] that one shall not add [more cherubim] to [the two, which is the number God required]. For if you make four [cherubim], they are to Me as gods of gold. — [from Mechilta]

you shall not make for yourselves: You shall not say, "I will make cherubim in the synagogues and in the study halls, in the manner that I make [them] in the Temple." Therefore, it says: "you shall not make for yourselves." -[from Mechilta]

Kaplan Translation

Concluding Rules

God said to Moses: This is what you must tell the Israelites:

You have seen that I spoke to you from heaven.

Do not make a representation of anything that is with Me. Do not make silver or gold gods for yourselves.

Do not make a representation...

Literally, 'Do not make with me.' This is a commandment not to make a statue of anything associated with God, such as angels. It also extends to making replicas of articles used in the Holy Temple (Avodah Zarah 43a,b; Yad, Avodath Kokhavim 3:10; Sefer HaMitzvot, Negative Commandment 4).

NET Bible®

The Altar

⁵⁵ The Lord said ⁵⁶ to Moses: "Thus you will tell the Israelites: 'You yourselves have seen that I have spoken with you from heaven. You must not make gods of silver alongside me, ⁵⁷ nor make gods of gold for yourselves. ⁵⁸

^{55sn} Based on the revelation of the holy sovereign God, this pericope instructs Israel on the form of proper worship of such a God. It focuses on the altar, the centerpiece of worship. The point of the section is this: those who worship this holy God must preserve holiness in the way they worship – they worship where he permits, in the manner he prescribes, and with the blessings he promises. This paragraph is said to open the Book of the Covenant, which specifically rules on matters of life and worship.

^{56tn} Heb "and Yahweh said."

^{57tn} The direct object of the verb must be "gods of silver." The prepositional phrase modifies the whole verse to say that these gods would then be alongside the one true God.

^{58tn} Heb "neither will you make for you gods of gold."

sn U. Cassuto explains that by the understanding of parallelism each of the halves apply to the whole verse, so that "with me" and "for you" concern gods of silver or gods of gold (Exodus, 255).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...and "YHWH ^{He Is} said to "Mosheh ^{Plucked out}", in this way you will say to the sons of "Yisra'el ^{He turns El aside}", you saw that I spoke with you from the skies, you must not (make) me a "Elohiym ^{Powers} of silver and a "Elohiym ^{Powers} of gold, you will not (make) them (for) yourselves,...

Charles Thomson OT

And the Lord said to Moses, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob and announce to the children of Israel, You have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make for yourselves gods of silver, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold.

Context Group Version

And YHWH said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, You (pl) yourselves have seen that I have talked with you (pl) from the skies. You (pl) shall not make me [into anything]. Gods of silver or gods of gold you (pl) shall not make for yourselves.

English Standard Version

Laws About Altars

And the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold.

Modern English Version

The Law About the Altar

Then the LORD said to Moses: Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, "You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver alongside Me or make gods of gold for yourselves.

New King James Version

The Law of the Altar

Young's Updated LT

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall not make anything to be with Me—gods of silver or gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. And Jehovah says unto Moses, "Thus will you say unto the sons of Israel: You [all]—you [all] have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you; you [all] do not make with Me gods of silver, even gods of gold you [all] do not make to yourselves.

The gist of this passage:

God begins a long set of laws by speaking directly to idolatry and how God is and is not supposed to be worshiped.

22–23

Exodus 20:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Mosheh (משה) [pronounced moh-SHEH]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602

Translation: And Y^ehowah said to Moses,...

God then speaks to Moses.

It appears that God has called Moses into the mountain; or perhaps he was simply drawn there. So, while the sons of Israel attempt to draw back from the mountain, fearful of the cataclysmic weather events that they are witnessing, Moses walks towards the mountain and, apparently, onto it. We do not know how far up Moses goes into the mountain or if he is simply within the cordoned-off area.

There are many things which are atypical about these writings of Moses, the person who most directly experienced these things. Had it been me, I would describe the climb up the mountain, where I went, what I saw. And when God spoke, I would describe everything about that experience. But Moses does not do this. God will speak to Moses a great many times, particularly over the next year (a great deal of the Law will be given over the next year). Moses does not describe anything as a typical author might do. He does not attempt to place us, the reader, into his moment, as it were. This is because his subjective experience is not key to what we are studying. Our study needs to concentrate on God's words and what they mean to Israel. What we are studying are meant to govern Israel for about 1600 years. Furthermore, even though these are specific laws give at a very specific time to a

very specific people, there is also application which we can make. Very large portions of the Mosaic Law (by which I mean Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) will give us concepts regarding divine establishment laws, the client nation, and divine discipline for a nation. In other words, we can study these laws and the incidental narrative, and have application to our own day and time.

However, just to be clear, our purpose on earth of believers in Jesus Christ is not to take the Mosaic Law and integrate it into our system of national laws and supplant existing law. Nor is it our purpose to select a set of these laws and lobby our congressman to introduce these laws as national laws.

Exodus 20:22b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced koh]	<i>so, thus, here, hence; now; in the meantime</i>	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (לֵא) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yisʿrâ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-row-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...“So you will say to the sons of Israel:...

God is giving Moses the pertinent message to deliver to the people.

God has a message for Moses to deliver to the people. They have heard the Ten Commandments; and they have made a desperate request to never hear God's voice again, as it clearly frightened them. They want Moses to deliver all other messages himself, speaking these words himself. They do not want to hear God's voice again.

Exodus 20:22c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'attem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced aht-TEM]	<i>you all, you guys, you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

Exodus 20:22c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to gaze; to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced shaw-MAH-yim]	<i>heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)</i>	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	1 st person singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...*You [all] have [clearly] seen from the heavens that I have spoken with you [all].*

God uses the verb *to see* for something that the people *saw and heard*. Again, this word refers to a complete and total perception which takes place among the people—the smoke, the sounds and God's voice. They know that this was God; they have no question about that.

We have two words translated *with* in these two verses. In v. 22, we have the preposition ‘îm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem] and it means *with, in conjunction with, together with, as long as [in conjunction with time], close to, beside, in the possession of, in the custody or care of, besides (except)*. Strong's #5973 BDB #767. When we come to v. 23, we will look at the second word which is also translated *with*.

Where this verse reads, *I have spoken with you from heaven*, this is not God speaking to Moses because *you* is in the plural and not the singular. A reasonably literal translation of v. 22 is:

Exodus 20:22 And Y^ehowah said to Moses, “So you will say to the sons of Israel: ‘You [all] have [clearly] seen from the heavens that I have spoken with you [all]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

God speaks to Moses directly, and he will speak to the people. “I have spoken with you (all) from heaven.” These were God’s words for the people.

All of the Israelites heard God speak to them from heaven.

Exodus 20:22 And Y^ehowah said to Moses, “So you will say to the sons of Israel: ‘You [all] have [clearly] seen from the heavens that I have spoken with you [all]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 20:23a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object) with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
This preposition can also refer to being in one’s possession or in one’s keeping. This can also mean <i>to proceed from someone</i> . The key to this word is <i>close association with, close proximity to</i> beyond simple geographical proximity.			
Or, this may be understood to be a direct object:			
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>me; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to me, toward me</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
’êlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated elohim, Elohim</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43
keçeph (כֶּסֶף) [pronounced KEH-sef]	<i>silver, money; silver [as a metal, ornament, color]; shekels, talents</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3701 BDB #494

Translation: You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver...

The implication here is more than God speaking *to* the people (as He spoke *to* Egypt through Moses), here He speaks *with* the people, even though it is through Moses; a closer association is implied. Any young student can tell you the difference between a teacher speaking *to* them and *with* them. In v. 23, we have another preposition ’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth] and this is a preposition of nearness, often translated *with, by, at among*. It is a

preposition which is even closer than ׳im.²⁹ Strong's #854 BDB #85. It is context which differentiates between the sign of the direct object and this preposition (they are exactly the same in the Hebrew).

The people are not to make gods of silver dedicated to God. Nothing that they make with their hands should have anything to do with some representation of God. If you have some special spot in your home with maybe there is a chair and a cross and a picture of Jesus (or Mary), let me be the first to tell you that that approach violates the idolatry clause of the Ten Commandments; and this violates this law here.

Exodus 20:23b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated elohim, Elohim</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43
zâhâb (זָהָב) [pronounced <i>zaw-HAW^BV</i>]	<i>gold; a measure of weight [related to gold]; [figuratively used for] brilliance, splendor</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2091 BDB #262
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʾâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: ...and you will not make elohim of gold for yourselves. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The people are not to make gods of gold for themselves. The second commandment is: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or 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. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20:4–6; ESV; capitalized)

God explicitly forbids the creation of any sort of idol, even if it is dedicated to Him.

Exodus 20:23 You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver and you will not make elohim of gold for yourselves. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

²⁹ I often complain of the ignoring of the prepositions by Strong and by Owen. Both of these prepositions have Strong's numbers and Owen at least notes the BDB reference of the second preposition.

Even if the idol is made from expensive material and is said to represent the True God, it was not accepted by God.

God's intent is for us to relate to Him and understand Him by our thinking, not by pictures of Jesus, pictures of Mary, special beads, or with a good-luck cross. You get absolutely nothing from looking at any of those objects, touching them, holding them up, etc. Not only are they not good luck for you; they are detrimental to your spiritual life.

We must relate to God by what we think, religious symbols be damned.

Exodus 20:22–23 And Y^ehowah said to Moses, “So you will say to the sons of Israel: ‘You [all] have [clearly] seen from the heavens that I have spoken with you [all]. You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver and you will not make elohim of gold for yourselves. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Not too long after God gave the people the Ten Commandments, this in particular was one of the very first laws which the Hebrews broke. This was a continuation of the second commandment; this law expanded on the second commandment. There were to be no idols, not even if the idol was supposed to represent the one true God. The second preposition, 'êth, means that no matter how closely the Hebrews associated the statue with God, it was still forbidden to them to make such an idol. Even if the idol was made out of the most precious metals, this was not what God wanted. Do you worship or often look toward that so-called picture of Jesus; do you have a statue of Mary, the mother of the humanity of God? This is idolatry. We do not know what either one looked like. Even in His time, Jesus was not easily recognized (recall that Judas had to reveal to the mob which one Jesus was). What we have is a picture which was based upon artistic guesses from, if memory serves, the fifth century A.D.

We do not have Church Age altars (that is, altars for today).

God is no longer speaking to all of the people, but He is speaking to Moses directly; and Moses is to get this information to all of the sons of Israel.

Exodus 20:22–23 And Y^ehowah said to Moses, “So you will say to the sons of Israel: ‘You [all] have [clearly] seen from the heavens that I have spoken with you [all]. You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver and you will not make elohim of gold for yourselves. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

God is giving a more specific prohibition with regards to the second commandment. The second commandment reads: Exodus 20:4–6 You shall not make for yourself an idol of any kind, or an image of anything in the heavens above, on the earth beneath, or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on their children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving devotion to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Berean Study Bible)

In our passage, God specifies that such gods should not be made of gold or silver, even if such gods are made to Yehowah-Elohim.

Do you know what is coming in the final chapters of Exodus? God will have His people build the Tabernacle along with seven specific pieces of furniture (five of them involving the fabrication of a lot of gold). So, how do we explain that? First of all, the five articles of furniture made from gold (or from gold covered acacia wood) were not actually seen by the public. Secondly, people worshiped at the Tabernacle or outside the Tabernacle; but they did not worship the Tabernacle itself or the furniture in the Tabernacle (even though, as we will find, this furniture represented Jesus Christ in shadow form). 99.99% Israelites would never see any of the gold or gold and acacia wood furniture pieces. The Tabernacle furnishings were all kept inside of the Tent of Meeting. The Tabernacle was not like a modern-day church. People did not go into the Tabernacle (apart from a handful of priests and possibly Levites who performed limited functions in the Tabernacle).

Exodus 20:22–23 Jehovah said to Moses, “This is what you will say to the sons of Israel: ‘You have clearly seen that I have spoke with you from the heavens. Under no circumstances are you to make gods of silver which you dedicate to Me; you are not to make gods of gold for yourselves. Kukis paraphrase

For the people in general, this was the command of God concerning altars:

An altar of earth you will make for Me and you have sacrificed upon it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings—your sheep and your oxen—in all the place where I cause to be remembered My name. I will come unto you and I have blessed you.

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20:24

You will make an altar of earth for Me and sacrifice upon 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 I will bless you.

You will make an altar of earth for Me and you will sacrifice your burnt offerings and your peace offerings upon it. You will offer up your sheep and oxen in every place where I cause My name to be known. I will come to you and I will bless you.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	An altar of earth you will make for Me and you have sacrificed upon it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings—your sheep and your oxen—in all the place where I cause to be remembered My name. I will come unto you and I have blessed you.
Dead Sea Scrolls Jerusalem targum	. An altar grounded in the earth shalt thou make unto My name, and shalt offer upon it your burnt offerings and sacred oblations, your sheep and your oxen. In every place in which ye shall memorialize My holy Name, My Word shall be revealed to you, and bless you.
Targum (Onkelos)	An altar of earth shalt thou make before Me, and shalt sacrifice upon it thy burnt offerings and thy sanctified victims, thy sheep and thy oxen. In every place where I may cause My Shekinah to dwell, thither will I send My blessing, and will bless thee.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	An altar of earth ye shall make to My Name, and sacrifice upon it thy burnt offerings and thy sanctified oblations from thy sheep and from thy oxen. And in every place where My Shekinah shall dwell, and thou worship before Me, there will I send My blessing upon thee, and will bless thee.
Revised Douay-Rheims	You shall make an altar of earth unto me, and you shall offer upon it your holocausts and peace offerings, your sheep and oxen, in every place where the memory of my name shall be: I will come to you, and will bless you.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	You shall make an altar of earth for me, and shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I record my name I will come to you and I will bless you.
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	An altar of earth shall you make to me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I shall make a memorial to my name I will come to you and I will bless you.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	Ye shall make to me an altar of earth; and upon it ye shall sacrifice your whole burnt-offerings, and your peace-offerings, and your sheep and your calves in every place, where I shall record my name; and I will come to thee and bless thee.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Make for me an altar of earth, offering on it your burned offerings and your peace-offerings, your sheep and your oxen: in every place where I have put the memory of my name, I will come to you and give you my blessing.
Easy English	Make a table out of earth for me. Burn your dead animals upon it and also your other gifts to me. I will cause people in many places to love my name. And in those places, I will come to you and I will make you happy.
Easy-to-Read Version—2006	“Make a special altar for me. You should use dirt to make this altar. Offer sheep and cattle as burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on this altar. Do this in every place where I tell you to remember me. Then I will come and bless you.
God’s Word™	“You must build an altar for me made out of dirt. Sacrifice your burnt offerings and your fellowship offerings, your sheep, goats, and cattle on it. Wherever I choose to have my name remembered, I will come to you and bless you.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Make an altar of earth for me, and on it sacrifice your sheep and your cattle as offerings to be completely burned and as fellowship offerings. In every place that I set aside for you to worship me, I will come to you and bless you.
The Message	Make me an earthen Altar. Sacrifice your Whole-Burnt-Offerings, your Peace-Offerings, your sheep, and your cattle on it. Every place where I cause my name to be honored in your worship, I’ll be there myself and bless you.
NIRV	“ ‘Make an altar out of dirt for me. Sacrifice your burnt offerings and friendship offerings on it. Sacrifice your sheep, goats and cattle on it. I will come to you and bless you everywhere I cause my name to be honored.
New Simplified Bible	»Make an altar of earth for me. Sacrifice your sheep and your cattle as offerings to be completely burned and as peace offerings. In every place that I set-aside for you to worship me, I will come to you and bless you.

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	Build an altar out of earth, and offer on it your sacrifices of sheep, goats, and cattle. Wherever I choose to be worshiped, I will come down to bless you.
The Living Bible	“The altars you make for me must be simple altars of earth. Offer upon them your sacrifices to me—your burnt offerings and peace offerings of sheep and oxen. Build altars only where I tell you to, and I will come and bless you there.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	Make an altar of earth for Me, and on it give your burnt and peace gifts in worship, your sheep and cattle. In every place where My name is to be remembered, I will come to you and bring good to you.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	Make for me an altar from earth. Sacrifice on it your burnt offerings, your offerings to promise friendship with me, and also your sheep and oxen. Worship me in any place that I choose for you to honor me; if you do that, I will come to you and bless you.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<i>You may make an Altar to Me from the dirt in whichever place that I record My name, and that’s where you must sacrifice your whole burnt offerings, as well as the peace offerings of your sheep and calves, and that’s where I will come to you and bless you.</i>
Beck’s American Translation	.
Common English Bible	Make for me an altar from fertile soil on which to sacrifice your entirely burned offerings, your well-being sacrifices, your sheep, and your oxen. I will come to you and bless you in every place where I make sure my name is remembered.

New Advent (Knox) Bible	It is enough to build me an altar of turf, on which to present burnt sacrifices and welcome-offerings, of sheep or oxen, wherever my name is honoured; so I will come to thee, and give thee my blessing.
Translation for Translators	Make for me an altar from dirt. Sacrifice on it the animals that you will burn completely. Also sacrifice on it the animals that you will not burn completely, to maintain fellowship with me. Worship me [MTY] in any place that I choose for you to honor/worship me; and if you do that, I will come to you and bless you.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ferrar-Fenton Bible	You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall offer upon it your sacrifices and your thank offerings, your sheep, and your oxen. In every place where I record MY NAME, I will come to you and bless you.
Urim-Thummim Version	An altar of earth you will fashion for me, and will sacrifice on it your Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings, your sheep and oxen in every place where I record my Name. I will come to you and I will bless you.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	For me you are to make an altar of earth, and on it you will sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where you come to remember my name, I will come to you and bless you.
The Heritage Bible	You shall make to me an altar of soil, and shall sacrifice your burnt offerings, and your peace offerings, your flock animals, and your cattle upon it; in all places where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you, and I will kneel down with goodness to you.
New American Bible (2002)	"An altar of earth you shall make for me, and upon it you shall sacrifice your holocausts and peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In whatever place I choose for the remembrance of my name I will come to you and bless you. I choose for the remembrance of my name: literally, "where I make my name to be remembered": at the sacred site where God wishes to be worshiped and his name revered.
New American Bible (2011)	An altar of earth make for me, and sacrifice upon it your burnt offerings and communion sacrifices, your sheep and your oxen. [Dt 12:5, 11; 14:23; 16:6] In every place where I cause my name to be invoked* I will come to you and bless you. * [20:24] Where I cause my name to be invoked: i.e., at the sacred site where God wishes to be worshiped. Dt 12 will demand the centralization of all sacrificial worship in one place chosen by God.
New English Bible—1970	You shall make an altar of earth for me, and you shall sacrifice on it both your whole-offerings and your shared-offerings, your sheep and your cattle. Wherever I cause my name to be invoked, I will come to you and bless you.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	(S: Maftir) For me you need make only an altar of earth; on it you will sacrifice your burnt offerings, peace offerings, sheep, goats and cattle. In every place where I cause my name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you.
exeGesés companion Bible	...but work to me a sacrifice altar of soil and sacrifice thereon your holocausts and your shelamim - your flocks and your oxen in all places wherever I memorialize my name I come to you and I bless you:...

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Awful Scroll Bible	An altar of ground were yous to make, and are to have sacrificed you all's whole burnt offerings, and peace offerings, of the small cattle and large cattle. That place was to be a memorial for my name, and I was to come, and am to have approved of yous.
Concordant Literal Version	An altar of ground soil shall you make for Me, and you will sacrifice on it your ascent offerings and your peace offerings, your flock and your herd. In every place where I shall record My name I shall come to you and will bless you.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Mizbe'ach adamah thou shalt make unto Me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy olot, and thy shelamim, thy tzon, and thine oxen; in all places where I cause My Shem to be remembered, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	An altar of earth, shalt thou make to me, then shalt thou offer thereupon thine ascending-sacrifices and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen. In every place where I may mention my name, will I come in unto thee and will bless thee.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and 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 recorded and remembered [through revelation of My divine nature] I will come to you and bless you.
The Expanded Bible	"Make an altar of dirt for me, and sacrifice on it your whole burnt offerings [Lev. 1] and ·fellowship [or peace; Lev. 3] offerings, your sheep and your cattle. Worship me in every place that I choose, and I will come and bless you.
Kretzmann's Commentary	An altar of earth thou shalt make unto Me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep and thine oxen. Such offerings were a type and figure of the heart of man, as it arose in true worship to the throne of God, for which reason also plain ground, the soil as the Lord created it, was the material which He preferred, that being found practically everywhere where the children of Israel would assemble for worship. In all places where I record My name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. God is confined neither to Temple nor to Tabernacle, but is able to reveal His glorious majesty at any place which He may choose. And wherever this takes place, those who are fortunate enough to be witnesses of such a revelation will become partakers of God's blessings. It is this fact which is of such great value to us believers of the New Testament, since we have the assurance that the presence of the Lord in the Word and in the Sacraments guarantees to us His blessings.
The Voice	Take earth and build an altar to Me and sacrifice all of your burnt offerings and peace offerings there. Offer Me <i>the best of</i> your sheep and oxen. Wherever I choose for My name to be remembered, I will come to you and shower blessings upon you.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach	An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and you shall slaughter beside it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. Wherever I allow My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you.
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An altar of earth: Attached to the ground, [meaning] that it should not be built on pillars or on a block of wood (another version: [on] a base). [According to the Mechilta and Rashi on Zev. 58a, the reading is "archways."] Alternatively, תִּבְנֶה מִבְּזָמַת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ means] that he [Moses] would fill the hollow of the altar with earth when they [the Israelites] encamped. [from Mechilta]

you shall make for Me: That from the beginning, it shall be made in My name. [i.e., it should not be made for another purpose and then later used as an altar.]-[from Mechilta]

and you shall slaughter beside it: Heb. וַיִּלֶּע, like “And beside it (וַיִּלֶּע) was the tribe of Manasseh” (Num. 2:20). Or perhaps וַיִּלֶּע means literally “upon it.” Therefore, Scripture says: “the flesh and the blood on the altar of the Lord, your God” (Deut. 12:27), [meaning that only the flesh and blood are to be put on the altar] but the slaughtering is not [to be performed] on top of the altar. — [from Mechilta]

your burnt offerings and your peace offerings: which are from your sheep and your cattle. “Your sheep and your cattle” is the explanation of “your burnt offerings and your peace offerings.”

Wherever I allow My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you: Heb. וְיִזְכָּר, lit., I will mention. [This should apparently read וְיִזְכָּרְךָ, you will mention. Therefore, Rashi explains that it means: whenever] I will permit you to mention My Explicit Name, there I will come to you and bless you. I will cause My Shechinah to rest upon you. From here you learn that permission was given to mention the Explicit Name only in the place to which the Shechinah comes, and that is in the Temple in Jerusalem. There permission was given to the priests to mention the Explicit Name when they raise their hands to bless the people. — [from Mechilta, Sifrei, Num. 6:23, Sotah 38a]

Kaplan Translation

Make an earthen altar for Me. You can sacrifice your burnt offerings, your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle on it. Wherever I allow My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you.

burnt offerings

See note on Genesis 8:20. Also see Exodus 24:5.

[Note on Gen. 8:20:] Oloth in Hebrew, literally, offerings that ascend, since the entire offering ascends when it is burned. Usually translated as 'burnt offerings.' Others, however, interpret it as 'uplifting offerings' (Hirsch). Also see Genesis 22:2, Exodus 18:12, 24:5.

peace offerings

See Leviticus 3:1. Also see Exodus 24:5, 32:6. Or, 'fellowship offerings.'

Wherever I allow...

That is, in the Holy Temple, where the Tetragrammaton was used in prayers and blessings (Sotah 38a; Rashi).

'You must make for me an altar made of earth,⁵⁹ and you will sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings,⁶⁰ your sheep and your cattle. In every place⁶¹ where I cause my name to be honored⁶² I will come to you and I will bless you.

^{59sn} The instructions here call for the altar to be made of natural things, not things manufactured or shaped by man. The altar was either to be made of clumps of earth or natural, unhewn rocks.

^{60sn} The “burnt offering” is the offering prescribed in Lev 1. Everything of this animal went up in smoke as a sweet aroma to God. It signified complete surrender by the worshiper who brought the animal, and complete acceptance by God, thereby making atonement. The “peace offering” is legislated in Lev 3 and 7. This was a communal meal offering to celebrate being at peace with God. It was made usually for thanksgiving, for payment of vows, or as a freewill offering.

^{61tn} Gesenius lists this as one of the few places where the noun in construct seems to be indefinite in spite of the fact that the genitive has the article. He says בִּוְקֹמָה־לְכָב (bakkhol-hammaqom) means “in all the place, sc. of the sanctuary, and is a dogmatic correction of “in every place” (בִּוְקֹמָה־לְכָב, kol-maqom). See GKC 412 §127.e.

^{62tn} The verb is זָכַר (zakhar, “to remember”), but in the Hiphil especially it can mean more than remember or cause to remember (remind) – it has the sense of praise or honor. B. S. Childs says it has a denominative meaning, “to proclaim” (Exodus [OTL], 447). The point of the

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verse is that God will give Israel reason for praising and honoring him, and in every place that occurs he will make his presence known by blessing them.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	..you will (make) an altar of ground (for) me, and you will sacrifice upon him your rising sacrifices and your complete sacrifices, your flocks and your cattle, in all the area (where) I will make my title remembered, I will come to you and I will [respect] you,....
Charles Thomson OT	An altar of earth you shall make for me, and sacrifice thereon your whole burnt offerings and your offerings of thanksgiving, both your sheep and your young bulls in every place where I record my name.
Context Group Version	An altar of land you shall make to me, and shall sacrifice on it your ascension [offerings], and your peace-offerings, your sheep, and your oxen: in every place where I record my name I will come to you and I will esteem you.
English Standard Version	An altar of earth you shall make for me and 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.
New European Version	You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I record My name I will come down to you and I will bless you.
New King James Version	An altar of earth you shall make 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 record My name [cause My name to be remembered] I will come to you, and I will bless you.
Young's Updated LT	"An altar of earth you will make for Me, and you have sacrificed on it your burnt-offerings and your peace-offerings, your flock and your herd; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered I come in unto you, and have blessed you.

The gist of this passage: One approach to worship would be to make an altar of earth and to offer up burnt offerings or peace offerings. This would be done wherever God has caused His name to be remembered; and He would come to them and bless them.

Exodus 20:24a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
miz ^e bêach (מִזְבֵּחַ) [pronounced miz-BAY-ahkh]	altar; possibly monument	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4196 BDB #258
'ădâmâh (אֲדָמָה) [pronounced uh-daw-MAWH]	ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth	feminine singular noun	Strong's #127 BDB #9
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: You will make an altar of earth for Me...

Altars were not be made in such a way for them to be extremely fancy. They would be made up of the materials from the ground. Many times, an altar used in one generation would not even be recognizable as an altar in the next generation, having been exposed to the elements for a few decades. About the only clue might be, an oblong rock was often set on end as a part of the altar.

The association of these sacrifices with the earth is an association with the humanity of Jesus Christ. It is the humanity of our Lord which died for our sins (the Lord's Deity could not die, it could not experience spiritual death, and it could not have any contact with our sins).

Exodus 20:24b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zâbach (זָבַח) [pronounced zaw ^b -VAHKH]	<i>to slaughter [usually an animal for sacrifice]; to sacrifice [an animal]; to slay, to immolate [an animal sacrifice]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2076 BDB #256
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
‘ôlâh (עֹלָה) [pronounced go-LAW]	<i>burnt offering, ascending offering</i>	feminine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong #5930 BDB #750

Translation: ...and sacrifice upon it your burnt offerings...

On each altar that is made, there would be burnt offerings sacrificed upon them. The smoke of these burnt offerings would ascend into heaven.

The burnt offerings represent Jesus and the burning represents the judgment of God.

Exodus 20:24c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Exodus 20:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shelem (שֶׁלֶם) [pronounced SHEH-lem]	<i>peace-offerings, sacrifice for alliance or friendship</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8002 BDB #1023
This is the first use of this word in the Bible.			

Translation: ...and your peace offerings...

This is the first time we have the word for *peace offering*; this is an offering which establishes peace between man and God. Of course, this offering is symbolic. It is typical (that is, it represents something else). Peace between man and God is established by Jesus Christ. The peace offering is the type and Jesus is the Antitype. The peace offering is the shadow and Jesus is the reality (or, you might say, Jesus is the reality that casts that shadow).

Exodus 20:24d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
tsô'n (צֹאן) [pronounced tzohn]	<i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i>	feminine singular collective noun; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6629 BDB #838
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
bâqâr (בָּקָר) [pronounced baw-KAWR]	<i>bull, cow, ox, collectively: herd, cattle, oxen</i>	masculine singular collective noun; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1241 BDB #133

Translation: ...—your sheep and your oxen—...

The sacrifices would be primarily domesticated animals like sheep and oxen. Other animals could be offered up as well. I believe that these animals are illustrative rather than limiting.

The animals were to be without spot and without blemish. In this way, they also represented our Lord. They are without spot and blemish; and they are associated with sin that they had nothing to do with; and Jesus is without sin and He will be associated with our sins that He had nothing to do with.

Exodus 20:24e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
kôl (ל) [pronounced koh]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
mâqôwm (מִקוֹמָה) [pronounced maw-KOHM]	<i>place, situated; for a soldier, it may mean where he is stationed; for people in general, it would be their place of abode (which could be their house or their town)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4725 BDB #879
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
zâkar (זָכַר) [pronounced zaw-KAHR]	<i>to speak of; to remember, to cause to be remembered, to call to one's own mind, to bring to remembrance [before someone]; to make mention of [often with praise and/or celebration], to offer a memorial offering</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #2142 BDB #269
When the Hiphil is associated with the <i>name of Jehovah</i> (or a similar phrase), we may translate it <i>to call upon, to invoke</i> . The relationship to the original words is, if Jesus Christ is in your memory center because you have studied the Word of God, certain circumstances will reasonably cause you to <i>invoke</i> His name from memory. See the exegesis of Psalm 20:7 for confirmation of this.			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

Translation: ...in every place where I cause My name to be remembered.

The altars would be put up wherever God's name is made known and remembered. This does not mean that God would point down from heaven to a spot and say, "There—remember My Name there!" For whatever reason, people would understand this or that place to be where God would be thought of. Perhaps something very personal like where a cow dropped a calf, or the first crops came up; or perhaps something more national, such as a place where a battle was won. Or, maybe there is a place where some great miracle took place. Whatever the reason, a person would associate that place with God. At least for a time.

Exodus 20:24f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced baw-RAHK ^e]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	1 st person singular, Piel perfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1288 BDB #138

Translation: I will come to you and I will bless you.

When the sons of Israel do this, God would come to them and God would bless them. This does not mean that God would appear to subsequent generations as He is appearing to Israel right now on Mount Sinai. Many times, the people would simply experience the blessing (or discipline) from God. This blessing or cursing is the manifestation of God to them.

Exodus 20:24f I will come to you and I will bless you. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

These sorts of things would go hand-in-hand. That is, the people being motivated to offer up a sacrifice to God; and God coming to them and blessing them.

We have been studying Exodus 20:24:

Exodus 20:24 You will make an altar of earth for Me and sacrifice upon 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 I will bless you. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Throughout this verse, *you* and *your* are all in the singular. This is all about what individuals in Israel do. We are not talking about the national altar which would be built and kept outside the Tabernacle; but these would be times when an individual or a family is moved to make an offering to God.

The altar that they make is not to be anything fancy. It is to be made from the things of the earth, but there is to be no human craft imposed upon it. Perhaps things are taking place in the life of this person or family, and they believe that it is appropriate to make an offering to God. This can take place based upon the blessings of God which have been experienced. This verse suggests that additional blessings might be given by God.

Exodus 20:24 **An altar of earth you shall make 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 record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you.** (NKJV)

With an altar, there is no attempt on the Hebrews' part to make a likeness of God; to attempt something to even spiritually represent His features. The altar made of earth speaks of Jesus Christ coming to this earth and taking on a body made of earth, just as Adam was fashioned out of the chemical elements of the earth. However, the altar itself is not worshipped, nor is it thought by anyone to represent some kind of physical likeness of God (particularly since **"God is a Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in doctrine"**—John 4:24). Although burnt offerings have only been mentioned in a few places and although there is not much detail afforded to them prior to this time; the believers did have some kind of knowledge of their importance and the procedure which was to be followed. Such things existed and there may have even been a well-defined procedure given before. However, now Israel is receiving the Law, and that will be the regulation of their lives from Exodus 20 through the end of Deuteronomy.

When we come to the end of the book of Exodus, certain artisans will build the bronze altar, which will sit inside of the courtyard for the Tabernacle. So what is this all about? This is an altar which will be used thousands of times. This is an altar which will be a national altar before which all Israel will come on many occasions.

The Hebrew people—at least some of them—have been previously inspired to offer up blood sacrifices to God wherever they happen to live (you may recall Abraham or Jacob making offerings to God in various places). Such offerings often brought to mind what God had done for them in their recent past; and sometimes what God might do in the future. Even for Jews in the Exodus generation and beyond, there will be times when they do not travel to worship God. They will offer up an animal in their own place. This verse describes the altar which is acceptable to God.

Exodus 20:24 **You will make an altar of earth for Me and you will sacrifice your burnt offerings and your peace offerings upon it. You will offer up your sheep and oxen in every place where I cause My name to be known. I will come to you and I will bless you.** (Kukis paraphrase)

And if an altar of stones you will make, you will not build them [of] hewn stone, for your tool you have shaken upon her and so you will profane her. And you will not go up in steps My altar, that is not exposed your nakedness upon him.

Exodus
20:25–26

If you make an altar of stones, you will not build it [with] hewn stonework, for [by] your tool you wield on it, you will profane it. You will also not go up to My altar by steps, so that your nakedness is not exposed upon it.

If you make an altar of stone, then you will not use hewn stonework to build it. The use of a human tool on it will profane the altar. Also, you will not go up to My altar by steps, so that your nakedness is not exposed by it.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And if an altar of stones you will make, you will not build them [of] hewn stone, for your tool you have shaken upon her and so you will profane her. And you will not go up in steps My altar, that is not exposed your nakedness upon him.

Dead Sea Scrolls
Jerusalem targum

.
But if you make an altar of stones unto My Name, you shall not build it with sculptured ones, because the sword is made of iron. If thou workest with iron upon

	it, thou wilt profane it. You also, the priests, the sons of Aharon, who stand and minister beside Mine altar, shall not ascend by steps unto Mine altar, lest your shame be disclosed upon it.
Targum (Onkelos)	And if thou wilt make Me an altar of stone before Me, thou shalt not build it with hewn stones lest thou lift up thy cutting-tool [Lit., "thy sword."] upon it and profane it. And thou shalt not ascend by steps to My altar, that thy nakedness may not be discerned upon it.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	But if thou wilt make an altar of stones unto My Name, thou shalt not build them sculptured; for if thou lift up iron, from which the sword is made, upon the stone, thou wilt profane it. And you, the priests, who stand to minister before Me, shall not ascend to My altar by steps, but by (sloping) bridges; that thy shame may not be seen thereupon.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And if you make an altar of stone unto me, you shall not build it of hewn stones: for if you lift up a tool upon it, it shall be defiled. You shall not go up by steps unto my altar, lest your nakedness be discovered.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	If you make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of cut stones; for if you lift up your tool on it, you have polluted it. Neither shall you go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed to it.'
Lamsa's Peshitta (Syriac)	And if you make me a stone altar, you shall not build it of hewn stones; for if you lift a tool of iron upon it, you will have polluted it. Neither shall you go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness be not exposed on it.
Updated Brenton (Greek)	And if thou wilt make to me an altar of stones, thou shalt not build them hewn stones; for thou hast lifted up thy tool upon them, and they are defiled. Thou shalt not go up to my altar by steps, that thou mayest not uncover thy nakedness upon it.

Significant differences:

Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And if you make me an altar of stone do not make it of cut stones: for the touch of an instrument will make it unclean. And do not go up by steps to my altar, for fear that your bodies may be seen uncovered.
Easy English	You can make a table of stone for me also. But do not build it with stones that you have cut. If you use tools on the stones, the table will not be clean for God. Do not climb up to my table on anything, because someone may see parts of your body."
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	But if you use stones to make an altar, then don't use stones that were cut with an iron tool. [Literally, "sword."] If you do that, it will make the altar unacceptable. And you must not make steps leading up to the altar. If there are steps, when people look up to the altar, they will be able to see under your clothes."
God's Word™	If you build an altar for me made out of stones, never make it with cut stone blocks. If you use a chisel on it, you will make it unacceptable to me. Never use stairs to go up to my altar. Otherwise, people will be able to see under your clothes."
Good News Bible (TEV)	If you make an altar of stone for me, do not build it out of cut stones, because when you use a chisel on stones, you make them unfit for my use. Do not build an altar for me with steps leading up to it; if you do, you will expose yourselves as you go up the steps.
The Message	.
NIRV	If you make an altar out of stones to honor me, do not build it with blocks of stone. You will make it "unclean" if you use a tool on it. Do not walk up steps to my altar. If you do, someone might see your naked body under your robes.'

Thought-for-thought translations; dynamic translations; paraphrases:

Casual English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	If you ever build an altar for me out of stones, do not use any tools to chisel the stones, because that would make the altar unfit. And don't build an altar that requires steps; you might expose yourself when you climb up.
The Living Bible	You may also build altars from stone, but if you do, then use only uncut stones and boulders. Don't chip or shape the stones with a tool, for that would make them unfit for my altar. And don't make steps for the altar, or someone might look up beneath the skirts of your clothing and see your nakedness.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Life Version	If you make an altar of stone for Me, do not build it of cut stones. For if you use an object to cut it, it will be unclean. And do not go up on steps to My altar, so no part of your body may be seen without being covered.'
New Living Translation	If you use stones to build my altar, use only natural, uncut stones. Do not shape the stones with a tool, for that would make the altar unfit for holy use. And do not approach my altar by going up steps. If you do, someone might look up under your clothing and see your nakedness.
Unlocked Dynamic Bible	If you make for me an altar from stones, do not make it from stones that you have cut to make them look nice because you will make the altar unsuitable for worshiping me if you use tools to cut the stones. Do not make an altar that has steps in front of it because if you do that, the Almighty could see your naked body as you go up the steps.'"

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<i>'However, if you should choose to build a stone Altar to Me, don't use cut stones; because, if you use tools on them, they will become unclean. And don't build any steps up to My Altar, so that the naked [parts of your bodies] will be seen from [below].'</i>
Beck's American Translation	.
Common English Bible	But if you do make for me an altar from stones, don't build it with chiseled stone since using your chisel on the stone will make it impure. Don't climb onto my altar using steps: then your genitals won't be exposed by doing so."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Even if thou shouldst make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stones; to use any tool in the making of it is to profane it. And when thou goest up to my altar, thou shalt not mount by steps, for fear of exposing thy body's nakedness.
Translation for Translators	If you make for me an altar from stones, do not make it from stones that you have cut <i>to make them look nice</i> , because you will make the altar unsuitable for <i>worshiping</i> me if you use tools to cut the stones. Do not make an altar that has steps in front of it, because if you do that, <i>people</i> could see your naked <i>buttocks</i> as you go up the steps.' "

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Conservapedia Translation	If you make Me an altar of stone, you will not build it out of trimmed stone. If you lay any tool on it, you will profane it. And do not climb the stairs to My altar, so that your nakedness will not be exposed on it."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	But if you make an altar of stone to Me, it shall not be of cut stones, for if you carve with a cutter upon it, then it will be polluted. And you shall not pile up pyramids for an altar so that your nakcdncss may not be discovered when you go up to it.
Urim-Thummim Version	.
Wikipedia Bible Project	And if you make for me an altar of stone, you will not build them from hewn stones, because you strike it with your blade, and defile it. And you will not go up steps to my altar, so that your nakedness will not be revealed upon it.

Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	If you build an altar of stone, do not make it of cut stones, for you will defile it by using tools on it. And you will not ascend my altar on steps lest you expose your nakedness on it.
The Heritage Bible	And if you will make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of cut stone, because if you move your cutting instrument back and forth upon it you have profaned it. And you shall not ascend by steps to my altar, so that your nakedness is not revealed upon it.
New American Bible (2002)	If you make an altar of stone for me, do not build it of cut stone, for by putting a tool to it you desecrate it. You shall not go up by steps to my altar, on which you must not be indecently uncovered.
New American Bible (2011)	But if you make an altar of stone for me, [Dt 27:5; Jos 8:31] do not build it of cut stone, for by putting a chisel to it you profane it. You shall not ascend to my altar by steps, lest your nakedness be exposed.
New English Bible—1970	If you make an altar of stones for me, you must not build it of hewn stones, for if you use a chisel on it, you will profane it. You must not mount up to my altar by steps, in case your private parts be exposed on it.
New Jerusalem Bible	If you make me an altar of stone, do not build it of dressed stones; for if you use a chisel on it, you will profane it. You must not go up to my altar by steps, in case you expose your nakedness on them." ' "

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	If you do make me an altar of stone, you are not to build it of cut stones; for if you use a tool on it, you profane it. Likewise, you are not to use steps to go up to my altar; so that you won't be indecently uncovered."
exeGeses companion Bible	...and if you work me a sacrifice altar of stone, build it not of hewn stone: for if you shake your sword on it, you profane it: and ascend not to my sacrifice altar by degrees, so that your nakedness be not exposed thereon.
Hebraic Roots Bible	And if you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build them of cut stones. When you swing your tool on it, you defile it. And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be uncovered on it.

Weird English, Old English, Anachronistic English Translations:

Awful Scroll Bible	Were yous to make an altar of stone - was it to be built by hewing it? - are yous to have wield it with a sharp tool? - Yous were to profane it. Were yous to ascend up as by steps, to the altar? - You all's nakedness were to be disclosed.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And if thou wilt make Me a Mizbe'ach avanim, thou shalt not build it of cut stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast rendered it polluted. Neither shalt thou go up by stairs unto Mine Mizbe'ach, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.
Rotherham's <i>Emphasized B.</i>	But if, an altar of stones, thou wilt make to me, thou shalt not build them hewn,—for as soon as thou hast lifted, thy sharp tool, thereupon, thou hast profaned it; neither shalt thou go up, by steps unto mine altar,—lest by any means thy shame be discovered thereupon.

Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Expanded Bible	If you use stones to make an altar for me, don't use ·stones that you have shaped with tools [hewn/cut stones]. When you use any ·tools [chisel] on them, you ·make
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Kretzmann's Commentary

them unsuitable for use in worship [profane them]. And you must not go up to my altar on steps, or people will be able to see under your clothes [^L your nakedness will be exposed on it; ^C meant to avoid a Canaanite-style fertility worship].”

And if thou wilt make Me an altar of stone, if the children of Israel should prefer such an altar, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for it thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it, literally: for thy sharpness thou swingest above it, and thou desecratest it. Ornamentation of the altar of the Lord under the circumstances in which the Israelites found themselves would have redounded to their own glory, and not to that of the Lord. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto Mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon, as would happen with the loose-fitting clothes then worn. Since the consciousness of sin came to man with the feeling of shame, therefore the revealing of nakedness is equivalent to a shameless exhibition of sin, and thus not permissible in the worship of Jehovah.

The Voice

But if you decide to build an altar out of stones for Me, use *only natural* stones, not hand-cut stones, because any attempt to shape them with your tools will desecrate the altar. Also, do not approach My altar by walking up steps, for *you might profane the altar by exposing your nakedness*.”.

Bible Translations with Many Footnotes:

The Complete Tanach

And when you make for Me an altar of stones, you shall not build them of hewn stones, lest you wield your sword upon it and desecrate it.

And when you make for Me an altar of stones: Heb. אָבָן. Rabbi Ishmael says: Every [mention of] אָבָן in the Torah is optional except [for] three. [One of them is in this verse:] “And when (אָבָן) you make Me an altar of stones.” Behold, this אָבָן serves as an expression of אָכַח, when, [meaning] and “when you make Me an altar of stones, you shall not build them of hewn stones.” [This אָבָן cannot mean “if,”] for it is incumbent upon you to build an altar of stones, for it is said: “[Of] whole stones shall you build” (Deut. 27:6). Similarly, “When (אָבָן) you lend money” (Exod. 22:24) is obligatory, for it is said: “and you shall lend him” (Deut. 15:8). This one, too, serves as an expression of אָכַח, when. Similarly, “And when (אָבָן) you offer up a first fruits offering” (Lev. 2:14). This is the omer offering, which is [also] obligatory. Thus [all] these instances of אָבָן are not conditional but are definite and serve as an expression of אָכַח, when. — [from Mechilta]

hewn stones: Heb. אֲבָנֵי יָד, an expression of shearing (אֲבָנֵי יָד), [meaning] that [the stone-cutter] hews them and cuts them (וְאֲבָנֵי יָד) with iron [tools].

lest you wield your sword upon it: Heb. יָד. This [instance of] יָד serves as an expression of אָכַח, lest, which is the same as “perhaps.” Perhaps you will wield your sword upon it.

and desecrate it: Thus you have learned that if you wield iron upon it, you have desecrated it, for the altar was created to lengthen man's days, and iron was created to shorten man's days [because it is used to make swords]. It is improper that the “shortener” be wielded over the “lengthener” (Middoth 3:4). Moreover, the altar makes peace between Israel and their Father in heaven. Therefore, the cutter and destroyer shall not come upon it. The matter is a kal vachomer [a fortiori] conclusion-if [concerning the] stones, which neither see, hear, nor speak, because [of the fact that] they make peace, the Torah said, “You shall not wield iron upon them” (Deut. 27:5), how much more [are we certain that] one who makes peace between husband and wife, between family and family, between man and his fellow, will have no troubles befall him!-[from Mechilta]

And you shall not ascend with steps upon My altar, so that your nakedness shall not be exposed upon it.' "

And you shall not ascend with steps: When you build a ramp for the altar, do not make it with steps, eschalons in Old French, but it must be smooth and slanting. — [from Mechilta].

so that your nakedness shall not be exposed: Because due to the steps, you must widen your stride, although it would not be an actual exposure of nakedness, for it is written: “And make them linen pants” (Exod. 28:42). Nevertheless, widening the strides is close to exposing the nakedness [of the one ascending the steps], and you behave toward them [the stones] in a humiliating manner. Now these matters are a *kal vachomer* [a fortiori] conclusion, that if [concerning] these stones—which have no intelligence to object to their humiliation—the Torah said that because they are necessary, you shall not behave toward them in a humiliating manner. [In contrast,] your friend, who is [created] in the likeness of your Creator and who does object to being humiliated, how much more [must you be careful not to embarrass him]!—[from Mechilta]

Kaplan Translation

When you eventually build a stone altar for Me, do not build it out of cut stone. Your sword will have been lifted against it, you will have profaned it. Do not climb up to My altar with steps, so that your nakedness not be revealed on it.

When...

This is saying that a permanent stone altar would have to be built eventually, for the Holy Temple. It was built of stone and filled with earth. (Mekhilta; Rashi). See Exodus 27:1.

with steps

Instead, it had a ramp (Mekhilta; Rashi).

NET Bible®

If you make me an altar of stone, you must not build it⁶³ of stones shaped with tools,⁶⁴ for if you use your tool on it you have defiled it.⁶⁵ And you must not go up by steps to my altar, so that your nakedness is not exposed.⁶⁶

^{63tn} Heb “them” referring to the stones.

^{64tn} Heb “of hewn stones.” Gesenius classifies this as an adverbial accusative — “you shall not build them (the stones of the altar) as hewn stones.” The remoter accusative is in apposition to the nearer (GKC 372 §117.kk).

^{65tn} The verb is a preterite with *vav* (i) consecutive. It forms the apodosis in a conditional clause: “if you lift up your tool on it...you have defiled it.”

^{66tn} Heb “uncovered” (so ASV, NAB).

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner’s Mechanical Trans.

Charles Thomson OT

And I will come to thee and bless thee. And if thou makest for me an altar of stones; thou shalt not build it of hewn stones: for thou hast put thy workmanship on them and they are polluted. Thou shalt not go up to my altar by steps, that thou mayst not discover thy nakedness on it.

New American Standard B.

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. And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, so that your nakedness will not be exposed on it.’

New King James Version

And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it. Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.’

Young’s Updated LT

“And if an altar of stones you will make to Me, you will not build them of hewn work; when your tool you have waved over it, then you will pollute it; neither will you go up by steps on Mine altar, that your nakedness be not revealed upon it.

The gist of this passage:

The other acceptable altar is one made of stones. However, they may not be cut stones, as that would pollute the altar. There is also not to be stairs up to the altar, as they would expose the nakedness of the priest.

25–26

Exodus 20:25a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, whenever; since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
miz ^e bêach (מִזְבֵּחַ) [pronounced <i>miz-BAY-ahkh</i>]	<i>altar; possibly monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4196 BDB #258
ʾeben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced <i>EH^B-ven</i>]	<i>stones [large or small] [in its natural state, as a building material]; stone ore; used of tablets, marble, cut stone; used of a tool or weapon; a precious stone, gem; rock; a weight of the balance; vessels of stone [to hold water]</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #68 BDB #6
ʾâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: *If you make an altar of stones,...*

Altars were allowed to be made out of earth using existing stones.

Exodus 20:25b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (אֵל or אֵל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced <i>baw-NAWH</i>]	<i>to build, to construct; to erect; to rebuild, to restore</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person feminine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Exodus 20:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gâzîyth (גִּזְיֹת) [pronounced gaw-ZEETYH]	<i>a cutting, hewing; squaring [a stone]; a hewn stone (s)</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1496 BDB #159

Translation: ...you will not build it [with] hewn stonework,...

A person was not to modify the stones used. The stones were not to be cut and shaped. No artistic skill was to be applied.

This is different than we might expect. We would think that a home altar ought to be the most well-designed, artistic endeavor around the home; but that is *not* what God required. What the Hebrew family could do was quite the opposite.

Exodus 20:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
chereb (כֶּרֶב) [pronounced khe-RE ^B V]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
nûwph (נֹוֹף) [pronounced noof]	<i>to wave, to shake [e.g., the hand to beckon someone]; to scatter, to shake forth [rain]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5130 BDB #631
‘al (עַל) [pronounced ‘gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Translation: ...for [by] your tool you wield on it,...

When a person uses a tool on the stone, that represents the use of human effort. There was to be no human effort to be involved in worship. These are works. Human works never will attain to salvation.

Exodus 20:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Exodus 20:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châlal (חָלַל) [pronounced khaw-LAHL]	<i>to profane, to make [to treat as] common, defile, pollute; to violate the honour of, dishonour; to violate [break] (a covenant); to cast down, to destroy</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect; with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #2490 BDB #320

Translation: ...you will profane it.

Châlal (חָלַל) [pronounced khaw-LAHL] is based upon a root *to bore into*; thereby *wound*. It means *profane, pollute, defile, corrupt*. Châlal (חָלַל) is the antonym of *consecrate, set apart, purify*. The latter takes something which was common and sets it apart to God or dedicates it to God. Châlal takes something which is holy and desecrates it, pollutes and defiles it; associates it with that which is common and filthy. This is in the Piel imperfect, 2nd masculine singular with a 3rd feminine singular suffix (which refers to the stone). This phrase is addressed to each individual Jew and it is in the intensive (Piel) stem, indicating the severity of this pollution of that which is holy. The imperfect indicates that the altar continues to be desecrated. Strong's #2490 BDB #320.

Those who are **grace oriented** understand the analogy immediately. The sacrifice is not to be associated with human works in any way, shape or form. We have saved by faith alone in Christ alone. If you stand upon your faith in Him **and** trust some little good deed that you have done, some attempt to be better, some vow to please God, some intention to turn your life around for Him; then you are not saved. Our salvation does not come from asking Jesus into our hearts or into our lives; it does not come from repenting of our sins; it does not come from making Him Lord over our lives; it comes from one thing and one thing only: by believing in Jesus Christ for our salvation. Our part in the salvation process is to trust in His finished work upon the cross. There can be no mixture of human works into our salvation. Therefore, in the Old Testament, when an altar is made, then a sacrifice upon that altar looks forward to Christ's work on the cross on our behalf. Therefore, a family altar cannot be associated with human works, human artistic ability, or artisan stone work. Attempting to associate our puny works with His marvelous work on the cross profanes His holy work on our behalf.

The person who uses a tool on the stone, to made better stones, or better looking stones, profanes the work of our Lord, because human effort is applied. Human effort profanes the plan of God.

Application: How do we bypass human works as believers? We need to be filled with the Spirit by rebound and we need to think like God thinks (which requires knowing His Word).

Exodus 20:25 **If you make an altar of stones, you will not build it [with] hewn stonework, for [by] your tool you wield on it, you will profane it.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The altar and offering a sacrifice upon an altar looks forward to the salvation work of Jesus Christ. Therefore, human works were not to be involved.

Exodus 20:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Exodus 20:26a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or אֵין) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	<i>to go up, to ascend, to come up, to rise, to climb</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
bê (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ma'âlâh (מַעְלָה) [pronounced mah-ġuh-LAW]	<i>what comes up; steps, stair, stories, ascent; degrees; an upper room</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #4609 BDB #752
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ġah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
miz ^e bêach (מִזְבֵּחַ) [pronounced miz-BAY-ahkh]	<i>altar; possibly monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #4196 BDB #258

Translation: You will also not go up to My altar by steps,...

A series of steps was not to be set up for an altar so that it was higher than everywhere else. Climbing up a series of steps could be perceived to be related to man's effort to make himself better, step-by-step. There are some Catholic churches where salvation by faith alone in Christ alone is clearly taught; where there are no works involved and no dependence upon the Catholic church. There are other Catholic churches where faith alone in Christ alone is distorted and related to the sacraments of the church.

Exodus 20:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lô' (לֹא or אֵין) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ġâlâh (גָּלָה) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	<i>to be uncovered, to be made naked; to be revealed; to appear; to depart, to uncover, to remove, to reveal</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #1540 BDB #162
ʿer ^e wâh (עֶרְוָה) [pronounced ġer-VAWH]	<i>nakedness; lewdness, indecency, shameful exposure; shame; improper behavior; exposed, undefended</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6172 BDB #788

Exodus 20:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Translation: ...so that your nakedness is not exposed upon it. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The explanation given is, their nakedness might be exposed when going up these steps. I am not sure what the application here would be. My guess is, people ascend up the stairs—which suggests that they are going up or reaching heights, which implies works.

I would think that, with the typical clothing worn by priests in that era would have potentially exposed a priest standing on a high platform.

It is likely that similar altars of heathen faiths featured nudity of the priests and priestesses. There were human sacrifices taking place as well as sex with the priests and priestesses. The altar where God would be worshiped must not ever be mistaken for the heathen practices of that time.

Solomon will, in the future, build the Temple and there will be an altar outside of the Temple where the priest goes up steps to get to it. I don't believe that the nakedness of the priest was revealed here, but is Solomon violating these words of God?

One of the things which we will study in the remaining chapters of the book of Exodus is the building of the Tabernacle and the furniture of the Tabernacle. An altar would be built for Tabernacle and that altar would be different from the home altar being described here. That will also be a legitimate altar, and its construction will not be the work of man, as God the Holy Spirit would be a part of the construction of the Tabernacle. That is, the Holy Spirit would temporarily fill the artisans called upon to build the Tabernacle and its furniture.

Exodus 20:26 **You will also not go up to My altar by steps, so that your nakedness is not exposed upon it.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The altar used at home—or an altar used at any other sort of gathering (let's say, an altar for a city)—was not to be elaborate or carefully and artfully constructed. It is not to represent man's effort or works.

Application: Whereas, I love architecture, God's plan was not for these massively ornate cathedrals to be built throughout the world, having sucked up the resources of the believers (and unbelievers) in that area. I will admit that I really like some of the architecture for the Catholic churches, but man's efforts when it came to architecture are not God's plan for the Church Age.

Exodus 20:25–26 **If you make an altar of stones, you will not build it [with] hewn stonework, for [by] your tool you wield on it, you will profane it. You will also not go up to My altar by steps, so that your nakedness is not exposed upon it.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Just as we have in v. 25, any sort of human works profanes the family or city altar. Going up by steps (possibly not unlike the stations of the cross?) implies that there are some works involved to come to the altar of God. However, when we come to God with our works in hand, we embarrass ourselves with their worthlessness. We in God's sight are exposed for the wretched creatures that we are. Our works that we bring do not please him. **For the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked** (Jeremiah 17:9). **Our righteousnesses are as menstruous rags in His sight** (Isaiah 64:6).

Exodus 20:25–26 If you make an altar of stone, then you will not use hewn stonework to build it. The use of a human tool on it will profane the altar. Also, you will not go up to My altar by steps, so that your naked ness is not exposed by it. (Kukis paraphrase)

Beginning of Document	Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines
Introduction and Text	First Verse	Addendum
www.kukis.org	Exodus folder	Exegetical Studies in Exodus

A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary

A Brief Review of Exodus 20:

We have completed Exodus 20, which contained the giving of the Ten Commandments, the immediate response of the people to hearing God's voice, and some additional laws were added at the end (which laws should have been placed with Exodus 21).

I believe that the best approach to this chapter is a verse-by-verse review, where the entire chapter is seen as a whole.

The Bible translation which I used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other primary name for God is *YHWH* (also given as, *Jehovah*, *Yahweh*, *Adonai*, *Lord*, *JHWH*, *Y^ehowah*). In the Hebrew, this name is represented with the actual four Hebrew consonants יהוה (often referred to as the Tetragrammaton). The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word was recorded without any vowels. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masoretes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message, uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation, both translating the same Hebrew consonants (יהוה).

The Ten Commandments

At this point, God speaks directly to the people of Israel. This is not actually made clear until we get to Exodus 20:22, which reads, *And Yahweh said to Moses, "Thus you will say to the sons of Israel, 'You+ yourselves have seen that I have talked with you+ from heaven.'"* (Updated Bible Version 2.17; I added in quotation marks). *You +* means *you all, you (plural)*. When did Israel see and hear all of this? In Exodus 20:2–17.

Exodus 20:22 helps us to frame this entire chapter. Moses is *not* telling the people what God said to him in Exodus 20 (which could be one understanding of Exodus 19:25). Moses did come down and he did speak to the people, and he told them what God told him in Exodus 19:21–24 (warning the people not to approach the mountain).

So Moses comes down from Mount Sinai and speaks to the people and tells them, “Do not rush the mountain; do not come close to this mountain.” At that point, God speaks aloud to all the people. He does not use Moses as His intermediary for these commandments.

In the text of Exodus, what we read here is very abrupt. Moses does not give us an introduction, so that we know that God is speaking to the people directly. Let me suggest that the recording of this information is abrupt because, in fact, it was abrupt in the experience as well. It was abrupt to Moses as well.

This is how this all took place:

Exodus 19:21 And הוהי [= YHWH, Y^ehowah] said to Moshe [= Moses], “Go down, and warn the people, lest they break through unto הוהי to see, and many of them fall.

At this point, Moses is on Mount Sinai speaking directly to God. God tells Moses to go back down the mountain and tell the people to get back and not to come any closer to the holy mountain. Obviously, some of them were inching closer and close to the mountain.

Exodus 19:22 “And let the priests who come near הוהי set themselves apart too, lest הוהי break out against them.”

“Listen,” God says, “do not even allow the priests to come closer to the mountain, or Y^ehowah will break out against them!”

Exodus 19:23 And Mosheh said to הוהי, “The people are not able to come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, ‘Make a border around the mountain and set it apart.’ ”

Moses speaks to God telling Him, essentially, “I have already taken care of this. I already told the people not to come close to the mountain. This has been done.”

Exodus 19:24 And הוהי said to him, “Come, go down and then come up, you and Aharon with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to הוהי, lest He break out against them.”

God tells Moses again. “You are going to go back down the mountain and you can afterward return with Aaron. But, do not let the priests try to come up with you.”

Exodus 19:25 And Mosheh went down to the people and spoke to them.

So Moses goes back down the mountain and he speaks to the people.

Let me add one more thing. Not everything that takes place is spelled out for us. That is, when it says that God spoke to Moses; then Moses comes down from the mountain and speaks to the people, that is not exactly what happens. Moses does not come down and speak to one million adult males. He would speak to elders or leaders of the people, and then they would disseminate this message to all the tribes (probably the men speak to the men). The exact mechanics are not given to us. That is what I have logically presumed to be taking place.

While Moses is down among the people, telling them not to come forward toward the mountain and warning the priests not to come near. Then, at that point, God speaks.

So, no one is on the mountain. Moses is down below with the people, warning them not to come closer to the mountain, and then suddenly, God begins speaking so that everyone could hear Him.

Exodus 20:1–2 And Elohim [= God] spoke all these Words, saying, “I am הוהי [= YHWH, Y^ehowah] your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim [= Egypt], out of the house of slavery.

For the most part, the commandments are given to the people using the 2nd person masculine singular. If we wanted to lay particular emphasis to this, we might modify this verse as follows:

Exodus 20:1–2 **And Elohim [= God] spoke all these Words, saying, “I am הוהי [= YHWH, Y^ehowah] the Elohim of each one of you, who brought each one of you out of the land of Mitsrayim [= Egypt], out of the house of slavery. (The Scriptures 2009 slightly modified)**

Throughout this chapter, God addresses the people in the 2nd person masculine singular. This emphasizes the individual responsibility of each and every person with regards to the commandments.

Throughout the giving of the Law (the Torah), God identifies Himself as *the Elohim Who brought you (the people of Israel) out of Egypt*. Exodus 22:21 23:9 29:46 Leviticus 11:45 19:36 23:43 Numbers 15:41 etc.

Exodus 20:3 **“You have no other mighty ones against My face.**

Mighty ones is actually the word *’ēlōhîm* (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced *el-o-HEEM*], a masculine plural noun; and it means, *gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels*; transliterated *elohim, Elohim*. Strong's #430 BDB #43. This is modified by the word *other, another*.

Then *against My face* is a very literal translation. That is exactly what the text says (I say exactly, with the caveat that *face* is always plural in the Hebrew—this does not mean that God manifests many faces at the same time; it simply means that every face is a collage of various and even disparate elements).

A very literal translation would be: **“There is not to be to you other gods before Me.”** When combining the verb *to be* with *to you*, this can be understood to mean, *you will not have*. So, also a literal translation, **“You will not have [any] other gods before Me [or, against My face (s)].”**

That is commandment #1: **You will have no other gods before Me.** (MLV 2020; capitalized)

Exodus 20:4 **“You do not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of that which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth,...**

God goes into detail. The early Hebrew people were very demonstrative. So, even though they clearly had the mental capacity to have various gods in their thinking; God spoke specifically against physical idols (even though, these are not the only kind of idols which a person can have).

Exodus 20:5 **...you do not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, הוהי your Elohim am a jealous Ėl [= God], visiting the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,...**

God warns the Israelites not to bow down and serve these other idols, or they will be punished, and their children and grandchildren and great grandchildren will be punished.

We understand that the way this works is, God punishes the later generations *if* they are guilty of committing the same sins. The influence of their parents often results in their children committing the same type of sins. When they commit the same category of sins, then they are disciplined as well.

In other words, “You will set up a very dangerous and harmful precedent, which precedent your children will follow, which precedent your grandchildren will follow. And when they do this, I will discipline them!”

Exodus 20:6 **...but showing loving-commitment to thousands, to those who love Me and guard My commands.**

Putting one group of people under strict punishment is not contradicted by God showing a loving commitment to those who love Him and guard His commandments. God desires for everyone to be in this second category. However, we all have free will.

Commandment #2:

Exodus 20:4–6 **YOU WILL NOT MAKE TO YOURSELVES ANY IDOL OR ANY IMAGE OF ANYTHING THAT IS IN COSMOS ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE LAND, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER.** You will not bow down yourself to them nor serve them, for I (YHWH your Elohim) am a jealous Elohim, punishing the depravity of the fathers upon the children to the 3rd and 4th generation of those that hate Me. And showing goodness to thousands of them that love me, and observe my commandments. (Urim-Thummin Version)

Physical representations of any god, including the God, are forbidden.

Exodus 20:7 **“You do not bring^a the Name of יהוה your Elohim to naught, for יהוה does not leave the one unpunished who brings His Name to naught.**

^aOr lift up, or take.

Lifting up the name of Y^ehowah your God indicates a use of the names or designations for God. However, the name or names are being lifted up for naught, for emptiness, for man’s vanity. God’s name/names is/are being treated trivially, casually, or irreverently. For example, this is the way that these names are used in nearly every HBO and Showtime series. I would suggest that the proper names most used in any ten or more series from HBO and Showtime are *Jesus*, *Christ* and *Jesus Christ*. You will find the Lord’s name used on these shows far more than the names *Bob*, *Jason*, *Noah* etc.

The empty or trivial use of God’s name would include phrases like, *I swear to God*, *thank God it’s Friday*, *oh my God*, *God spoke to me*, etc. Obviously, swearing using God’s name is disallowed.

Commandment #3:

Exodus 20:7 **You do not take up the Name of your God YHWH for a vain thing, for YHWH does not acquit him who takes up His Name for a vain thing.** (Literal Standard Version)

Exodus 20:7 **“Never use the name of the LORD your God carelessly. The LORD will make sure that anyone who carelessly uses his name will be punished.”** (God’s Word™)

Exodus 20:7 **“You shall not misuse the name of Yahweh your God,** [Literally “take up/bear/carry the name of Yahweh your God for what is worthless/false/empty”] **because Yahweh will not leave unpunished anyone who misuses his name.”** [Literally “bears his name for what is false”] (Lexham English Bible)

Many times, it is helpful to see several translations of the same verse.

Those were the three commandments related to the Hebrew people and God. But then there is the fourth commandment, which also relates the Hebrew people to their God:

Exodus 20:8 **“Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart.**

Some mentions of the Sabbath day have been made before, but here, it is clearly set apart as a day specifically designated for God.

Exodus 20:9 **“Six days you labour, and shall do all your work,...**

Six days for the Hebrew people is to be devoted to work. Work is the 2nd divine institution. Work was given to man before the fall as a blessing and after the fall as a part of the curse.

Exodus 20:10 ...but the seventh day is a Sabbath^b of יהוה your Elohim. You do not do any 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.

^bThere are other Sabbaths, but this is the weekly Sabbath.

Just as God restored the earth in six days, so man would be given six days each week to work.

The Sabbath is a day set apart specifically to Y^ehowah, the God of the Hebrew people.

Exodus 20:11 “For in six days יהוה made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore יהוה blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart.

The verb used here is the Qal perfect of ‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*], which means, *to do, to make, to construct, to produce, to fashion, to form, to prepare*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. We also have the dual noun shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced *shaw-MAH-yim*], which means, *heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)*. Strong's #8064 BDB #1029.

During these six days, God did not *create* the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but He *made* them—that is, *He prepared them*. Over a period of six days, God prepared the atmosphere and the earth for a population of animals and human beings.

God prepared the environment to be populated; and then God created the animals and humans to live in this environment.

All of this was done over a period of six days because angels were watching and learning from what God did (original creation, which took place in Genesis 1:1, was instantaneous, because there were no creatures around at that time to watch and learn).

When God completed His work, everything was done. He was not tired; He was finished. God did not go back on the 7th day and say, “Hmmm, I think that I could tweak this a bit more and make it better.” God did not do that because everything that He did, He pronounced as *good*. The earth was ready to be populated and God allowed for its population (days 5 and 6).

Working for six days and then resting for one day is a recognition of what God has done; and acknowledgment of what God has done.

Throughout the world, we have seven-day work weeks—not six-day weeks, not ten-day weeks, but seven-day weeks.

The fourth commandment:

Exodus 20:8–11 **REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY AS CONSECRATED.** Six days will you labor, and do all your work. But the 7th day is the Sabbath of YHWH your Elohim, in it you will not do any work, you, your son, daughter, male and female slave, livestock, nor the foreigner that resides within your gates. For in 6 days YHWH made the visible universe and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the 7th day, then YHWH blessed the Sabbath day, and consecrated it. (Urim Thummim Version)

The Sabbath day observance was extended to all members of the family and to their servants and to their livestock.

The final six commandments deal with man's relationship to man. Each commandment is contained in one verse. The first of these is:

Exodus 20:12 “Respect your father and your mother, so that your days are prolonged upon the soil which הוהי your Elohim is giving you.

The Ten Commandments were given specifically to the Hebrew people, as the rationale for the fifth commandment is related directly to the land where God would plant them. The translation *soil* above is unfortunate. The Hebrew word here means *land*.

You will note how these commandments which regulate the interactions between men are closely related to the divine institutions.

The concept of volition is presupposed in the concept of Ten Commandments. The concept of work is found in the fourth commandment. The concept of marriage and family is found in the fifth commandment (so far, this is a recognition of the first four divine institutions).

Commandment #5:

Exodus 20:12 “Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long [Lit. so your days may increase] in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. (International Standard Version)

Giving respect to one's own parents increases the stability of society. When a society is stable, it continues for a longer period of time as a nation. This would be true for Israel in the land of Canaan; and it is certainly true of any national entity.

Exodus 20:13 “You do not murder.

Murder, which was prohibited immediately after the flood (Genesis 9:6), is also prohibited here in the Ten Commandments. Later in the book of Exodus, violations of these laws would be given specific assigned penalties (for instance, a man who murders will be put to death—the violation is murder and the penalty is death).

Man and the exercise of his free will is integral to the Angelic Conflict. When one man kills another, he removes that man's ability to exercise his free will. The criminal is to be executed as a result.

As an aside here, executing the criminal is *not* the responsibility of the friends and relatives of the murdered victim; executing the criminal is a matter of state action, which give us the fifth divine institution, *government (or nation)*.

Commandment #6:

Exodus 20:13 **YOU WILL NOT MURDER.** (Urim Thummim Version)

There are several words in the Hebrew for killing. This is specifically used of murdering another human being.

Exodus 20:14 “You do not commit adultery.

Adultery was forbidden because this violates one or two of the fundamental divine institutions, which are marriage and family.

The divine institutions include man and the function of his volition along with marriage and family. Work and the national entity are the other two divine institutions.

Exodus 20:15 “You do not steal.

Stealing is forbidden because people are allowed to accumulate private property and that private property belongs to them during their lives.

The accumulation of things comes as a result of the divine institution of work. When we work beyond the minimum which provides food and shelter for the family, work over and above that may provide some additional things for the family. These things were not to be stolen from them.

Exodus 20:16 “You do not bear false witness against your neighbour.

False witness against a neighbor is forbidden, whether this takes place in a courtroom or is done simply among others in the form of gossip.

Exodus 20:17 “You do not covet your neighbour’s house, you do not covet your neighbour’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbour.”

Interestingly enough, after four very overt sins are forbidden, the tenth commandment forbids a mental attitude sin. This commandment deals with the lust pattern of the soul.

What our neighbor has in comparison to what we have is only a problem if we allow it to be a problem. If we allow our mental attitude to be consumed with lust for what our neighbor has, then that is a problem. However, it is not a problem your neighbor can solve; it is a problem that only you can solve in your soul.

Now the Ten Commandments, taken as a whole, are unique in human history. We have no evidence of any previous society or nation which put together a concise set of basic prohibitions and requirements of a people. This event is unique in human history; and this set of commands in such a concise format are also unique.

Certainly, other societies and nations forbade murder and stealing, but we do not have a foundational list of God’s basic commands. I have heard over and over again that the Hebrew people stole their laws from other nations, but we have yet to uncover any evidence that is true; and we have yet to find any example of such a concise listing of prohibitions anywhere else.

Because of the Ten Commandments, such a list has become iconic, but it is because all of the world is attempting to copy God’s fundamental laws, but with putting their own spin on them. Google “The ten commandments of...” and you will get thousands of examples of such attempts by individuals attempting to set up their own list of ten commandments.

If a person needed to have a shorthand explanation of the laws of divine establishment, he could simply take the five divine institutions (volition, work, marriage, family, nation) and combine them with the Ten Commandments, and that would give us God’s basic requirements for any people or nation. This does not mean that God requires every nation on earth to observe the Sabbath, but the concept of a work week and a day of rest has become almost universally observed in our world. If no day off is given, such a society is understood to be oppressive and inhuman.

Although it is not clear whether the next verse describes the sensory perception during the giving of the Ten Commandments or what suddenly happened after. I would suggest that once the final commandment was given, these other things became suddenly very apparent to all of the Hebrew people.

Exodus 20:18a And all the people saw the thunders, the lightning flashes, the voice [or, sound] of the shophar [horn], and the mountain smoking.

The people, hearing the voice of God, were frozen in their tracks. They could not say anything. They made no comments. However, while God spoke, there was thundering and lightning. Perhaps these things increased in intensity when God came to the end of the Ten Commandments.

There was the sound of a horn, which is likely the sound of the wind. This sound is not unique to this particular event. People have claimed to have heard something similar to this and such events have actually been recorded and placed on YouTube.

All of these things occurring at the same time—the thunder, lightning, sound of the horns and mountains smoking—is a rarer experience. This was devastating to the psyche of the people of Jacob.

Exodus 20:18b–19 *And the people saw it, and they trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Mosheh, “You speak with us and we hear, but let not Elohim speak with us, lest we die.”*

The people have just heard the Ten Commandments given from the mouth of God. They heard God’s voice. Then they observe everything else, and this causes them to feel great fear and uneasiness.

Maybe they speak among themselves, and finally come forward to Moses and express their concern for all that they have just seen and heard.

Recall that Moses came back down the mountain and spoke to the people, so he is right in front of them now. God has spoke the Ten Commandments, and everyone is certainly cognizant of the dramatic sounds and visuals coming from Mount Sinai.

Now, apparently during the time of the giving of the Ten Commandments—which would not have taken very long—these sights and sounds may have been occurring. Even if God stopped for a dramatic pause between each commandment, the entirety of this experience was probably ten minutes at most. This was probably closer to five minutes. However, I would submit to you that, apart from the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, this is the second-best known event from the Bible (despite its relatively short duration).

If there were considerable weather events taking place at the same time—occurring before, after and during the giving of the Ten Commandments—then maybe this event was stretched out for a slightly longer in time, with God allowing some time to pass when the visual and auditory events became more intense.

While this is all taking place, Moses is right there with the people. He is in front of the people as God speaks to Israel.

Finally, someone approaches Moses and makes this very strong request: “Listen, Moses, you speak to us. Whatever God has to say, you listen to it and then tell us what He said. Please do not allow God to speak directly to us anymore.” This was likely the informal request of many leaders and elders.

Exodus 20:20 *And Mosheh said to the people, “Do not fear, for Elohim has come to prove you, and in order that His fear be before you, so that you do not sin.”*

Moses tells the people not to be afraid. God will test these people, and God has given them what they are to be tested with—His commandments.

V. 20 or v. 21 should have ended this chapter. Ideally speaking, v. 21 should have been the beginning of the next chapter.

Exodus 20:21 *So the people stood at a distance, but Mosheh drew near the thick darkness where Elohim was.*

The people are no longer pushing and shoving, trying to get closer to the mountain. Nevertheless, Moses draws near to the thick darkness which is hanging over the mountain. He draws near to receive additional instructions from God for the people of Israel.

From this point forward in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, God will speak to Moses and Moses will speak to the people. This will be interspersed with some narrative. In the book of Leviticus, for instance, almost every chapter begins with the words, *And so God spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the sons of Israel, and say...”*

Although Moses and the people do not realize this at this point in time, the people of Israel will live in this desert-wilderness for 39 more years. They are not to settle here because God has not given them this land—God has

given them Canaan. God will lead them right up to the border of Canaan in the book of Numbers, but the first generation of adult Israelites will fail. Therefore, God will keep them in the desert-wilderness until this generation of reversionists (apostate believers) dies out.

There are two generations of Israel which make up the Exodus generation. There are those who were adults when they left Egypt and I will occasionally call them Gen X. They are the generation about whom God said, **"I loathed that generation."** (This is found several times in the Old and New Testaments. Because of their rebellion against God, everyone from this generation will die out before God leads Israel into the land of promise (which will take place in the book of Joshua). Their children and those born to them while in the desert-wilderness will make up the next generation, whom I have designed as the GOP (the generation of promise). It is this next generation of Israelites who will actually take the land given them by God.

From this point forward to the end of Deuteronomy, about 40 years will pass. During that time, God will remove those of Gen X until only the generation of promise remains. That second generation of Israelites will go into the land to take it, being led by men like Joshua and Caleb and a handful of others who will remain alive from Gen X.

One of the reasons I like to review a chapter like this is, it allows us to get the big picture, to see where we are and where we are going. I recently talked with a couple of Christians about the book of Acts, the events which transpire in that book, and how far it goes. They did not have a full appreciation for the time factor. Time and geography and human history are fundamental to our understanding of the Word of God. When we integrate these things with the Word of God, we develop a much better understanding of the Word of God. For this reason, I believe that it is imperative that we stop at the end of each chapter to review in order to apprehend the big picture.

What follows next in Exodus 20 should have been placed with chapter 21. From this point through Exodus 24, we will have a series of laws. These will have similarities to laws which preceded them and laws which were written afterwards. This is because many different nations attempted to put together a system of laws which would work for them.

Laws About Altars

Exodus 20:22 And יהוה said to Mosheh, **"Say this to the children of Yisra'el: 'You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you [lit., you all, you+, you (pl)] from the heavens.**

The Ten Commandments were given to the people using the 2nd person masculine singular. However, in this section of Exodus 20, the 2nd person masculine plural will be used.

From this point forward, God will speak to Moses and He will tell Moses what to say to the people.

Exodus 20:23 **'You do not make besides Me mighty ones [lit., *elohim*] of silver, and you do not make mighty ones of gold for yourselves.**

Here, God forbids the people of Israel from making idols that represent various gods. Such idols were often fashioned from gold or silver to emphasize their divine nature (not a true divine nature, but one given to them by their people).

Exodus 20:24 **'Make a slaughter-place of earth for Me, and you shall slaughter on it your ascending offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I cause My Name to be remembered I shall come to you and bless you.**

Just as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had stopped from time to time to make burnt offerings to Y^ehowah, the people of Israel will be required to do the same.

Exodus 20:25 'And if you make Me a slaughter-place of stone, do not build it of cut stone, for if you use your chisel on it, you have profaned it.'

When an offering place was to be made, it should not involve human ingenuity, design or craftsmanship. "You can pile up some existing stones for such an altar but you cannot chisel these stones in any way."

Exodus 20:26 'Nor do you go up by steps to My slaughter-place, lest your nakedness be exposed on it.'

It was common for societies to make the slaughter places high up (remember, they are called *high places* throughout the Old Testament). The Hebrew people were not to do this. The implication is, there is an ascension process to get to God. Not true. God revealed Himself to man, and we believe in Him or we don't.

Although God will have a very specifically-designed place for animals to be offered up as sacrifices (the brazen altar outside of the Tabernacle), God apparently will still allow groups, families and even individuals to offer up animal sacrifices; however, they would be limited to altars made up only of the natural rocks found where an offering is to be made. No one is to design and construct some ornate, well-crafted altar to be used elsewhere in the land of Canaan.

The idea here is, there are things which we find in this chapter which are extremely important.

Why Exodus 20 is in the Word of God

9. T
- 10.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

These are things which we learn while studying this particular chapter.

What We Learn from Exodus 20

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- 2.

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Many chapters of the Bible look forward to Jesus Christ in some way or another. A person or situation might foreshadow the Lord or His work on the cross (or His reign over Israel in the Millennium). The chapter may contain a prophecy about the Lord or it may, in some way, lead us toward the Lord (for instance, by means of genealogy).

Jesus Christ in Exodus 20

[Chapter Outline](#)

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Shmoop tends to be rather flippant.

Shmoop Summary of Exodus 20

The Ten Commandments

- Big chapter, people. Heads up.
- The Ten Commandments are some of the most influential words in the entire Bible, and they've influenced thousands of years of Western thinking. Even in our day-to-day lives, the Ten Commandments resonate with how people think about right and wrong. As you go through them, think about how they relate to your life. We dare you.
- God gives the people the Ten Commandments orally. Let's tackle them one by one.
- **Commandment One: We're Exclusive...or are we?**
- "You shall have no other gods before me." (20:3)
- "Before" has also been translated as "besides." Naturally, this has provoked a lot of debate. "Before me" seems to imply that the worshipper can mess around with other gods as long as God is number one, but "besides me" implies an exclusive relationship. See how this can get tricky?
- If this sounds like two lovers talking about their relationship, then you're on the right track. God often acts like a spurned lover, and there are a lot of complicated issues in this marriage. Bottom line: God is getting promoted.
- **Commandment Two: No Idols. Ever.**
- "You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments." (20:4-6)
- Back in the ancient world, idol worship of statues and other objects was very common. It's pretty natural to attach yourself to an object, if you think about it.
- The main idea here is that these idols were contrary to the religious ideas of the writers. They believed that their God held something more intangible, more powerful than could be produced in a crude clay statue.
- This doesn't mean that God doesn't appear to the Israelites physically. No one is saying "God is an idea, not a force." After all, God is saying this to the Israelites in person in smoke and fire.
- What the Commandment does say is, "We're not going to engage in this particular form of physical worship anymore."
- **Commandment Three: Oaths, Swearwords, and Blasphemy**
- "You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name." (20:7)
- This one is all about respect for God. For the ancients, it wasn't a ban on naughty words, but an attempt to elevate God's name and give it some cultural currency. In other words, the writers wanted to make sure that God's name had some panache behind it.
- Think about The Godfather when Vito "swears on the souls of his grandchildren," or when Westley in The Princess Bride refuses to accept Inigo's word as a Spaniard because, "I've known too many Spaniards." Oaths means something and the writers here are just trying to give this stuff a punch.
- Blasphemy isn't just a ban on swearwords, but a ban on using God's name flippantly.
- **Commandment Four: Chillaxin' on a Weekend**
- "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it." (20:8-11)
- When you think about it, this is a pretty good idea for society. Why shouldn't everyone just work all the time? We'd get way more done. Especially for the ancients, who had crops to worry about, this was a big deal.
- Taking aside one day for higher concerns (like God) is a major breakthrough because it moves the ancient world from pure survival mode to a more cosmopolitan way of life. If you're thinking about the next

Shmoop Summary of Exodus 20

place to find food all day, you definitely aren't thinking about man's condition in the universe.

- **Commandment Five: The One Parents Always Cite**
- "Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you." (20:12)
- This one isn't just an attempt by parents to overcome their children. It's about setting up a society that works, and works well.
- Here's the thing. You probably can't have a functional society that standardizes parental disrespect (unless you're George Orwell and this is 1984).
- **Commandment Six: Killing...or Murder?**
- NRSV: "You shall not murder." (20:13)
- KJV: "Thou shalt not kill." (20:13)
- Ah, translations.
- "Murder" implies that you took another life for your own advantage. "Killing" might imply that there was a better reason—after all, Moses himself killed a man. This is nasty moral territory, folks.
- Given that God himself authorized Israelites to kill Amalekites, it's reasonable to assume that this rule only applies to your community. War seems like an exemption, and God himself takes life. It's messy, but the writers probably left it that way intentionally.
- **Commandment Seven: No Adultery**
- "You shall not commit adultery." (20:14)
- Remember, in ancient times, one man could have multiple wives, no problem. This isn't a romantic endorsement of marriage or anything. The writers are just trying to make sure that their society has rules.
- What this passage is really saying is that a married woman cannot have sex with a man who is not her husband. Sorry, gals—that's just the way this world worked.
- **Commandment Eight: No Stealing**
- "You shall not steal." (20:15)
- Seems pretty straightforward, right? But what about the Israelites "plundering" the Egyptians in 3:21-22? Wouldn't you say that counts as a kind of stealing?
- Also, what about taking the land in Canaan that God himself said belonged to other people? God has made it clear from the beginning that he's giving the land of others to the Israelites. Is that stealing, or just ancient regional politics?
- Yeah, it's complicated.
- **Commandment Nine: Testifying and Witnessing**
- "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (20:16)
- Basically, you could take this two ways. You could interpret in Law & Order style and say that this commandment only prohibits lying on the stand in a trial. So if you see something happen, you can't lie about it when asked by the man. Makes good social sense, right?
- You could also take it as a complete ban on all lying. On a smaller scale, isn't lying bearing false witness? If you're not being truthful, then aren't you technically just a bad witness to life?
- In both cases, here's another attempt to regulate society and create a functional system of laws. That's not to say that there were no laws before the Commandments, but this represents an attempt to get everything written down.
- **Commandment Ten: Hey Jealousy**
- "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." (20:17)
- On one level, this seems like a good idea. Envy and jealousy produce crime, so why not just ban it?
- A few historical goodies on this commandment. First, doesn't this seem like a way for people to deal with social inequalities? If everyone had an identical ox, why would you need to be envious of someone else's?
- Second, check out how "wife" gets lumped in with all kinds of property. That's just the way it was. Slavery is also taken for granted. No surprise there, since it's all over the Bible.
- Finally, did you notice that the images on this list are very pastoral? It's basically farm equipment and animals. Moses's is a very farming-oriented society. What would you put on today's list? iPads? Computers? Houses? Money?

Shmoop Summary of Exodus 20

- **The End**
- And that's it. Those are your ten commandments.
- But we're not done. Duh.
- Think about these commandments in this way: If you're a city planner, would you put up a "No Smoking" sign in a place where people don't smoke? Of course not. We're not saying that the ancient world was anarchy before these commandments, but you wouldn't make rules unless you had good reason. Whoever wrote this stuff (God, Moses, the Biblical writers, or your grandmother) had a very certain idea in mind about how they wanted society to look.
- When we think of this chapter in a literary framework, even more question pop up: How would these rules look if Moses had said them? How would they look if God wasn't cloaked in fire and smoke? The point is that context matters. If Dumbledore or Gandalf says something, we shut up and listen. There's some speculation that the writers of the Exodus story inserted these rules to make them seem like God said them—if that's the case, it's kind of a brilliant strategy.
- If you want to dig into the archaeological, legal, and historical meat of these commandments, you'll find endless work on the subject. Most scholars agree that whoever wrote these commandments was heavily influenced by the world around them. Basically, the list boils down to Hittite influences to the north, Egyptian influences from the south, and Mesopotamian influences from the west. Hammurabi's Code looks an awful lot like the Ten Commandments, and Hittite treaties may have also been at work.
- A quick dip back into the story: After God gives out the Commandments, the people freak out and tell Moses that he should be the one talking to God. They're too scared. We might be, too.

The Book of the Covenant

- Whoa. Why are we suddenly combining all these chapters?
- Fear not, Shmoopers. We've got your back. This chunk of Exodus is considered to be one of the oldest pieces of legal mumbo-jumbo in the entire Bible.
- The thing is, the tone and content of this group of writings doesn't match the Ten Commandments and the stuff before it. We basically go from cosmic concerns about human life to technical laws about slaves and property.
- The document looks a lot like Mesopotamian legal code, and the Hebrew itself is a bit older. If you were writing this volume, and you needed to insert an older document into the new stuff, the moment right after the Ten Commandments is a great place to do it. It's like a network putting a new TV show on right after something they know people will watch. Better ratings, you know?
- P.S. This all comes to us as a revelation from God to Moses. Apparently God is a sucker for property law.
- The whole thing is worth reading, but we're going to give you a greatest hits section that gets at all the relevant pieces. Most of these laws are laid out in a format that was very common in the ancient world at the time: "If...then..." Hypotheticals were the basis for law—and for exceptions to it.
- Okay. On your mark, get set...
- **20:22-26: Altar Law**
- God makes it clear here that he doesn't want any gold or silver idols around his altar: "You shall not make gods of silver alongside me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. You need make for me only an altar of earth and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings" (20:23-24). This sounds kind of new age. Back to the earth, right? Also, check out how pastoral this statute is; anyone could build an altar to this guy. Oh, and one other thing: if you use stones, just make sure that they're not "hewn" stones that have felt iron. Only the super-organic stuff.

From <https://www.shmoop.com/exodus/chapter-20-summary.html> accessed June 13, 2019.

And from <https://www.shmoop.com/exodus/chapter-20-verse-22-chapter-23-summary.html> accessed June 13, 2019. As is often the case, the Shmoop *summary* is far longer than the actual Biblical text.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant.

This comes from Chapter , entitled *The Exodus and The Wanderings in the Wilderness*.

Edersheim Summarizes Exodus 20

Israel At The Foot Of Mount Sinai - The Preparations For The Covenant - The "Ten Words?" And Their Meaning
Exodus 19-20:17

The revelation of God's will, which Israel heard from Mount Sinai, is contained in the ten commandments, or, as they are called in the Hebrew original, "the ten words."* These were prefaced by this declaration of what Jehovah was and what He had done:

"I am Jehovah thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."
(Exodus 20:2)

* The Decalogue, comp. Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13.

This (as Calvin says) "to prepare the souls of the people for obedience." The "ten words" were afterwards written on two tables of stone, which were to be kept within the ark of the covenant, "the mercy-seat" being significantly placed over them. (Exodus 25:16; 40:20) It is not easy to say how they were arranged on these two tables, but not improbably the first four "words" with "the Preface" (in ver. 1) may have occupied the first, and the other six commandments the second Table of the Law.* But we only know for certain, that "the tables were written on both their sides, on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables."**

* Most likely not the whole of each commandment, but in every case only the actual direction (such as "Thou shalt not steal") was graven on the tables. This would give in the Hebrew, for the first four commandments, along with the "Preface," seventy-three words, and for the other six commandments thirty-one words. It is well known that the Roman Catholics and the Lutheran Church combine the two first commandments into one, and divide the tenth into two. But for this there is not the shadow of ground or authority, either in the Hebrew text or even in Jewish tradition.

** Exodus 32:15, 16. When we read that the law was "received by the ministration of angels" (Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2), we are not to understand by it that God Himself did not speak all these words, but either to refer it to those "ten thousands" of angels who were His attendants when He spoke on Sinai (Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalm 68:17); or, more probably, to the difference between the Old and the New Testament dispensations. In the former, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity appeared only in the Angel of the Covenant; in the latter, he became incarnate in the Person of Jesus Christ, the God-Man.

Considering more closely these "ten words", of the covenant," we notice, first, their number, ten, as that of completeness. Next, we see that the fifth commandment (to honor our parents) forms a transition from the first to the second table - the first table detailing our duties towards God; the second those towards man. But our duty to our parents is higher than that towards men generally; indeed, in a certain sense is Divine, just as the relationship to an earthly father symbolizes that to our Father in heaven. Hence the command is to honor, whereas our duty to men only requires us to love them. Again, almost all the commands are put in a negative form ("thou shalt not"), implying that transgression, not obedience, is natural to us. But "the commandment is exceeding broad," and requires a corresponding right state of mind. Accordingly we find that the law of the ten commandments is summed up in this. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself." Lastly, the first five "words" have always some reason or motive attached to them. Not so those of the second table, which are mostly put quite generally, to show that such commands as, not to kill, not to commit adultery, not to steal, not to bear false witness, are intended to apply to all possible cases, and not only to friends or fellow-citizens.

Passing from general considerations to particulars, we find that the "first word" not only forbids all idolatry in thought, word, and deed, but enjoins to love, fear, serve, and cleave to the Lord. (Deuteronomy 6:5, 13; 10:12, 20) The second word shows the manner in which the Lord will be served - more particularly, not under any

Edersheim Summarizes Exodus 20

image or by any outward representation. As Calvin remarks, it condemns "all fictitious worship which men have invented according to their own minds," and not according to the word of God. The third word forbids the profaning of the name of Jehovah, in which He has manifested His glory, by using it either for untruth or in vain words, that is, either in false or idle swearing, in cursing, in magic, or such like. The fourth word, which implies a previous knowledge of the Sabbath on the part of Israel, enjoins personal, domestic, and public rest from all manner of labor on God's holy day, which is to be spent in His service and for His glory. The fifth word directs honor to parents as (in the language of Luther) "the vicars of God," and hence implies similar reverence towards all God's representatives, especially magistrates and rulers. The Second Table progresses from outward deed (in the sixth, seventh, and eighth "words") to speech (ninth commandment), and finally to thought and desire. The sixth, seventh, and eighth words apply equally to what may injure our own life, chastity, or property, and those of others. The ninth word should be literally translated: "Thou shalt not answer against thy neighbor as a false witness" (or "as a witness of falsehood"). Comparing this with the statement in Deuteronomy 5:20, where the expression is "a witness of vanity," we gather that not only all untrue, but all unfounded statements against our neighbor are included in this commandment. Lastly, the tenth word sounds the inmost depths of our hearts, and forbids all wrong and inordinate desires in reference to anything that is our neighbor's.*

* In Deuteronomy 5:21 two different expressions are used - the "desire" being awakened from without by that which is seen to be beautiful; while the "coveting" springs from within - from the evil inclinations or supposed requirements of him who covets.

Such law was never given by man; never dreamed of in his highest conceptions. Had man only been able to observe it, assuredly not only life hereafter but happiness and joy here would have come with it. As it was, it brought only knowledge of sin. Yet, for ever blessed be God: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17)

CHAPTER 11

Civil & Social Ordinances Of Israel As The People Of God - Their Religious Ordinances In Their National Aspect - The "Covenant Made By Sacrifice" And The Sacrificial Meal Of Acceptance
Exodus 20:18-24:12

THE impression produced upon the people by the phenomena accompanying God's revelation of His law was so deep, that they entreated that any further Divine communication might be made through the mediatorship of Moses. As Peter, when the Divine power of the Lord Jesus suddenly burst upon him, (Luke 5:8) felt that he, a sinful man, could not stand in the presence of his Lord, so were the children of Israel afraid of death, if they continued before God. But such feelings of fear have nothing spiritual in themselves. While Moses acceded to their request, he was careful to explain that the object of all they had witnessed had not been the excitement of fear (Exodus 20:20), but such searching of heart as might issue, not in slavish apprehension of outward consequences, but in that true fear of God, which would lead to the avoidance of sin.

And now Moses stood once more alone in the "thick darkness, where God was." The ordinances then given him must be regarded as the final preparation for that covenant which was so soon to be ratified. (Exodus 24) For, as the people of God, Israel must not be like the other nations. Alike in substance and in form, the conditions of their national life, the fundamental principles of their state, and the so-called civil rights and ordinances which were to form the groundwork of society, must be Divine. To use a figure: Israel was God's own possession. Before hallowing and formally setting it apart, God marked it out, and drew the boundary lines around His property. Such was the object and the meaning of the ordinances, (Exodus 20:22; 23) which preceded the formal conclusion of the covenant, recorded in Exodus 24: Accordingly the principles and "judgments" (21:1), or rather the "rights" and juridical arrangements, on which national life and civil society in Israel were based, were not only infinitely superior to anything known or thought of at the time, but such as to embody the solid and abiding principles of national life for all times.

And in truth they underlie all modern legislation, so that the Mosaic ordinances are, and will remain, the grand model on which civil society is constructed.*

Edersheim Summarizes Exodus 20

* Fully to understand the sublime principles of the Mosaic, or rather the Divine Law, they must be examined in detail. This, of course, is impossible in this place.

Without entering into details, we note the general arrangement of these ordinances. They were preceded by a general indication of the manner in which Israel was to worship God. (Exodus 20:22-26) As God had spoken to Israel "from heaven," so they were not to make any earthly representation of what was heavenly. On the other hand, as God would "come unto" them - from heaven to earth, and there hold intercourse with them, the altar which was to rise from earth towards heaven was to be simply "an altar of earth" (ver. 24), or if of stones, of such as were in the condition in which they had been found in the earth. Moreover, as the altar indicated that place on earth where God would appear for the purpose of blessing Israel, it was only to be reared where God recorded His name, that is, where He appointed it. In other words, their worship was to be regulated by His manifestation in grace, and not by their own choice or preferences. For grace lies at the foundation of all praise and prayer.

The sacrifices and worship of Israel were not to procure grace; grace had been the originating cause of their worship. And so it ever is. "We love Him, because He first loved us," and the gift of His dear Son to us sinners is free and unconditional on the part of the Father, and makes our return unto Him possible. And because this grace is free, it becomes man all the more to serve God with holy reverence, which should show itself even in outward demeanor (ver. 26).

From www.biblestudytools.com/history/edersheim-old-testament/volume-2/chapter-10.html accessed June 13, 2019 and <https://www.biblestudytools.com/history/edersheim-old-testament/volume-2/chapter-11.html>.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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Introduction and Text	First Verse	Addendum
www.kukis.org	Exodus folder	Exegetical Studies in Exodus

Addendum

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

Antiquities of the Jews - Book III

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF TWO YEARS.

FROM THE EXODUS OUT OF EGYPT, TO THE REJECTION OF THAT GENERATION.

CHAPTER 5.

HOW MOSES ASCENDED UP TO MOUNT SINAI, AND RECEIVED LAWS FROM GOD, AND
DELIVERED THEM TO THE HEBREWS. ⁽¹⁶⁾

2. So they passed two days in this way of feasting; but on the third day, before the sun was up, a cloud spread itself over the whole camp of the Hebrews, such a one as none had before seen, and encompassed the place where they had pitched their tents; and while all the rest of the air was clear, there came strong winds, that raised up large showers of rain, which became a mighty tempest. There was also such lightning, as was terrible to those that saw it; and thunder, with its thunderbolts, were sent down, and declared God to be there present

Josephus' History of this Time Period

in a gracious way to such as Moses desired he should be gracious. Now, as to these matters, every one of my readers may think as he pleases; but I am under a necessity of relating this history as it is described in the sacred books. This sight, and the amazing sound that came to their ears, disturbed the Hebrews to a prodigious degree, for they were not such as they were accustomed to; and then the rumor that was spread abroad, how God frequented that mountain, greatly astonished their minds, so they sorrowfully contained themselves within their tents, as both supposing Moses to be destroyed by the Divine wrath, and expecting the like destruction for themselves.

3. When they were under these apprehensions, Moses appeared as joyful and greatly exalted. When they saw him, they were freed from their fear, and admitted of more comfortable hopes as to what was to come. The air also was become clear and pure of its former disorders, upon the appearance of Moses; whereupon he called together the people to a congregation, in order to their hearing what God would say to them: and when they were gathered together, he stood on an eminence whence they might all hear him, and said, "God has received me graciously, O Hebrews, as he has formerly done; and has suggested a happy method of living for you, and an order of political government, and is now present in the camp: I therefore charge you, for his sake and the sake of his works, and what we have done by his means, that you do not put a low value on what I am going to say, because the commands have been given by me that now deliver them to you, nor because it is the tongue of a man that delivers them to you; but if you have a due regard to the great importance of the things themselves, you will understand the greatness of Him whose institutions they are, and who has not disdained to communicate them to me for our common advantage; for it is not to be supposed that the author of these institutions is barely Moses, the son of Amram and Jochebed, but He who obliged the Nile to run bloody for your sakes, and tamed the haughtiness of the Egyptians by various sorts of judgments; he who provided a way through the sea for us; he who contrived a method of sending us food from heaven, when we were distressed for want of it; he who made the water to issue out of a rock, when we had very little of it before; he by whose means Adam was made to partake of the fruits both of the land and of the sea; he by whose means Noah escaped the deluge; he by whose means our forefather Abraham, of a wandering pilgrim, was made the heir of the land of Canaan; he by whose means Isaac was born of parents that were very old; he by whose means Jacob was adorned with twelve virtuous sons; he by whose means Joseph became a potent lord over the Egyptians; he it is who conveys these instructions to you by me as his interpreter. And let them be to you venerable, and contended for more earnestly by you than your own children and your own wives; for if you will follow them, you will lead a happy life you will enjoy the land fruitful, the sea calm, and the fruit of the womb born complete, as nature requires; you will be also terrible to your enemies for I have been admitted into the presence of God and been made a hearer of his incorruptible voice so great is his concern for your nation, and its duration."

4. When he had said this, he brought the people, with their wives and children, so near the mountain, that they might hear God himself speaking to them about the precepts which they were to practice; that the energy of what should be spoken might not be hurt by its utterance by that tongue of a man, which could but imperfectly deliver it to their understanding. And they all heard a voice that came to all of them from above, insomuch that no one of these words escaped them, which Moses wrote on two tables; which it is not lawful for us to set down directly, but their import we will declare ⁽¹⁰⁾

5. The first commandment teaches us that there is but one God, and that we ought to worship him only. The second commands us not to make the image of any living creature to worship it. The third, that we must not swear by God in a false matter. The fourth, that we must keep the seventh day, by resting from all sorts of work. The fifth, that we must honor our parents. The sixth that we must abstain from murder. The seventh that we must not commit adultery. The eighth, that we must not be guilty of theft. The ninth, that we must not bear false witness. The tenth, that we must not admit of the desire of any thing that is another's.

6. Now when the multitude had heard God himself giving those precepts which Moses had discoursed of, they rejoiced at what was said; and the congregation was dissolved: but on the following days they came to his tent, and desired him to bring them, besides, other laws from God. Accordingly he appointed such laws, and

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afterwards informed them in what manner they should act in all cases; which laws I shall make mention of in their proper time; but I shall reserve most of those laws for another work, ⁽¹¹⁾ and make there a distinct explication of them.

7. When matters were brought to this state, Moses went up again to Mount Sinai, of which he had told them beforehand. He made his ascent in their sight; and while he staid there so long a time, (for he was absent from them forty days,) fear seized upon the Hebrews, lest Moses should have come to any harm; nor was there any thing else so sad, and that so much troubled them, as this supposal that Moses was perished. Now there was a variety in their sentiments about it; some saying that he was fallen among wild beasts; and those that were of this opinion were chiefly such as were ill-disposed to him; but others said that he was departed, and gone to God; but the wiser sort were led by their reason to embrace neither of those opinions with any satisfaction, thinking, that as it was a thing that sometimes happens to men to fall among wild beasts and perish that way, so it was probable enough that he might depart and go to God, on account of his virtue; they therefore were quiet, and expected the event: yet were they exceeding sorry upon the supposal that they were deprived of a governor and a protector, such a one indeed as they could never recover again; nor would this suspicion give them leave to expect any comfortable event about this man, nor could they prevent their trouble and melancholy upon this occasion. However, the camp durst not remove all this while, because Moses had bidden them afore to stay there.

8. But when the forty days, and as many nights, were over, Moses came down, having tasted nothing of food usually appointed for the nourishment of men. His appearance filled the army with gladness, and he declared to them what care God had of them, and by what manner of conduct of their lives they might live happily; telling them, that during these days of his absence he had suggested to him also that he would have a tabernacle built for him, into which he would descend when he came to them, and how we should carry it about with us when we remove from this place; and that there would be no longer any occasion for going up to Mount Sinai, but that he would himself come and pitch his tabernacle amongst us, and be present at our prayers; as also, that the tabernacle should be of such measures and construction as he had shown him, and that you are to fall to the work, and prosecute it diligently. When he had said this, he showed them the two tables, with the ten commandments engraven upon them, five upon each table; and the writing was by the hand of God.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Of this and another like superstitious notion of the Pharisees, which Josephus complied with, see the note on Antiq. B. II. ch. 12. sect. 4.

⁽¹¹⁾ This other work of Josephus, here referred to, seems to be that which does not appear to have been ever published, which yet he intended to publish, about the reasons of many of the laws of Moses; of which see the note on the Preface, sect. 4.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-3.htm> accessed June 13, 2019. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 2, Chapter 1.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of Exodus 20

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Preamble to the Ten Commandments

Elohim spoke all of these words, saying, "I [am] Y^ehowah your Elohim; [it is] I Who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out from the house of slavery.

God spoke all of these words directly to the people of Israel, saying, "I am Jehovah your God. I am the One Who brought you out from the land of Egypt, taking you out of bondage.

A Complete Translation of Exodus 20	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Commandments #1–3 (regarding God)	
[There] will not be to you other gods [= elohim] before [or, <i>against, besides, in addition to</i>] Me.	You will have no other gods before Me.
You will not make for yourself [any] sculpted image or any representation [of] that [which is] in the heavens above, or in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You will not bow down to these images [lit., <i>to them</i>] and you will not [be caused] to serve them; for I, Y ^e howah your Elohim, [am] a jealous Êl [= God], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their [lit., <i>the</i>] sons; and upon the third and fourth generations [if necessary] of those who hate Me. However [lit., <i>and</i>], [I will] manufacture grace to thousands, to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.	You will not make any sort of sculpted image which represents some deity figure in the heavens above, in the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You will not make such images and you will not bow down to them nor will you serve them, for I am Jehovah-God and I am a jealous God. Furthermore, I will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon their sons and upon the next two generations after them of those who hate Me. But, I will provide grace for those who love Me and I will give grace to those who keep My commandments.
You will not lift up the name of Y ^e howah your Elohim for vanity [or, <i>iniquity, falsehood</i>], for Y ^e howah will not leave unpunished whoever lifts up His name for vanity [or, <i>iniquity, falsehood</i>].	You will not take the Lord your God's name in vain; Jehovah will not leave you unpunished if you do that.
Commandment #4 (regarding the Sabbath)	
Remember the sabbath day and consider it set apart [to God]. You will work for six days and you will do all of your work [in those six days]; but the seventh day [will be] a sabbath to [honor] Y ^e howah your Elohim.	Remember the sabbath day and set it aside as a holy day to God. You will complete all of your work in six days, but you will rest on the sabbath day to honor Jehovah your God.
You will not do any work—[not] you or your sons or daughters; [not] your male or female servants; [not even] your cattle or the immigrant within your gates.	You will not do any work on the seventh day, nor will your children, your servants, your cattle or even your immigrants.
For, in six days, Yehowah made the heavens and the earth, and the sea and all that is in them. Therefore, He rested on the seventh day.	This is because, in six days, Jehovah made the heavens and the earth; and the seas and everything in them. Therefore, because He was finished, He rested on the seventh day.
For this reason, Yehowah blessed the sabbath day and set it apart [to Himself].	So, for these reasons, Jehovah blessed the seventh day and set it apart from all other days.
Commandments #5–10 (regarding one's fellow man)	
Give honor to your mother and father so that your days will be prolonged in the land which Y ^e howah your Elohim gives you.	Treat your parents with honor and respect, so that your days will be prolonged in the land that Jehovah your God gives to you.
You will not murder.	You will not take the life of another by murder.
You will not commit adultery.	You will not have sex outside of marriage.
You will not steal.	You will not steal from others.

A Complete Translation of Exodus 20	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
You will not testify [as] a false witness against a neighbor [or associate].	You will not speak falsely about a neighbor or an associate.
You will not desire your neighbor's house; you will not desire your neighbor's wife; [nor] his male servant or female servant; [nor] his ox or his donkey; [you will not desire] anything which belongs to your neighbor."	You will not desire or lust after your neighbor's house, or his wife; or his servants; or his livestock; you will not desire or lust after anything which belongs to your neighbor."
The people plead with Moses to speak for God because they fear God's voice greatly	
And all the people, the ones seeing [and hearing all that was going on]: the thunderings and the lightning flashes, the sound of the horn, and the mountain [was] smoking—so the people saw [or, <i>the people are afraid</i>], and they are trembling and they stand far away [from the mountain].	The people could hear and see all that was going on: the great thunder, the lightning flashes, the persistent loud sound of the horn, as well as the mountain [which] smoked—the people saw all of this and they were afraid; they were trembling. They kept moving back away from the mountain.
They said to Moses, "You speak to us—[and only] you; and we will listen! [Let] Elohim not speak to us, so that we do not die."	They pleaded with Moses, "Please, only you speak to us and we will listen to you. Please do not let God speak directly with us, or we will die."
Moses then said to the people, "You [all] should not fear, for the Elohim has come with the intent of proving you and in order that the fear of Him be upon your faces, so that you [all] do not sin."	Moses then answered the people, saying, "You [all] should not be afraid of God, for He has come to you with the intent of proving your obedience to Him and in order that you develop a mental attitude of fear and respect for Him, so that you [all] do not sin against Him."
The people stood off from a distance while Moses drew near to the dark cloud, where Elohim [was].	The people stood their distance from the mountain, but Moses drew near to it, approaching the dark cloud where God was.
God tells Moses how He should be worshiped	
And Y ^e howah said to Moses, "So you will say to the sons of Israel: 'You [all] have [clearly] seen from the heavens that I have spoken with you [all].	Jehovah said to Moses, "This is what you will say to the sons of Israel: 'You have clearly seen that I have spoke with you from the heavens.
You [all] will not make to Me elohim of silver and you will not make elohim of gold for yourselves.	Under no circumstances are you to make gods of silver which you dedicate to Me; you are not to make gods of gold for yourselves.
You will make an altar of earth for Me and sacrifice upon it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings—your sheep and your oxen—in every place where I cause My name to be remembered.	You will make an altar of earth for Me and you will sacrifice your burnt offerings and your peace offerings upon it. You will offer up your sheep and oxen in every place where I cause My name to be known.
I will come to you and I will bless you.	I will come to you and I will bless you.
If you make an altar of stones, you will not build it [with] hewn stonework, for [by] your tool you wield on it, you will profane it.	If you make an altar of stone, then you will not use hewn stonework to build it. The use of a human tool on it will profane the altar.

A Complete Translation of Exodus 20	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
You will also not go up to My altar by steps, so that your nakedness is not exposed upon it.	Also, you will not go up to My altar by steps, so that your nakedness is not exposed by it.
Chapter Outline	Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The following Psalms would be appropriately studied at this time:

Doctrinal Teachers* Who Have Taught Exodus 20			
	Series	Lesson (s)	Passage
R. B. Thieme, Jr. taught this	1969 Basic Series (102)	#59	Exodus 20:4-6
	1992 Spiritual Dynamics (376)	#1022	Exodus 20:2-6
	1992 Spiritual Dynamics (376)	#1023	Exodus 20:5-6
	1985 Ephesians (412)	#1212	Exodus 20:4-6
	1970 Jeremiah (540) (Also the called the 1971 Ten Commandments Special #1-6)	#72-77	Exodus 20:1-17
	1976 Teens (776)	#12	Exodus 20:1-17
	1976 Teens (776)	#208	Exodus 20:1-17
Wenstrom	https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&view=libwritten&selCat=2&Itemid=124 (Search "Exodus")		
Jeremy Thomas	https://fbgbible.org/?s=exodus		
Syndein	http://syndein.com/exodus.html		
Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on Exodus	https://www.gracenotes.info/exodus/exodus.pdf		
Todd Kennedy overview of Exodus	http://www.spokanebiblechurch.com/books/exodus		

* By doctrinal teacher, I mean a man whose primary focus is the teaching of the Word of God, verse-by-verse and book by book. A believer under the teaching of such a man should fully understand the gospel and **rebound** after less than a month in attendance.

When it comes to teaching, I should think that a 45 minute teaching session would be the bare minimum; and that, at least 3x a week (with provisions for getting teaching in some way on the other days of the week). Although this man may interact or even learn from other teachers, he should clearly be the authority over his church; and the authority over him is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit (Who guides the pastor in his study).

ICE teaching would also be a part of the package, ICE being an acronym standing for Isagogics (a teaching of the history of that time in order to understand a passage), Categories (a study of categories of Bible doctrine), and Exegesis (a close study of each passage).

R. B. Thieme, III has not taught this chapter in any available lesson.

