



# Exodus

## THE TEN WORDS Exodus 20:1-21

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### Deliverance - Commission - Covenant

Exodus 1-19 tells the story of Israel's deliverance from Egypt and God's commissioning of His people. Exodus 20 marks the beginning of the Covenant God creates for Israel. The Covenant explanation will not conclude until Leviticus 27.

### Mt. Sinai

In Exodus 19, Israel arrives at Mt. Sinai. They will camp here for almost a year before moving on.

### Old Testament Law

Jewish scholars count 613 laws in the Hebrew Bible. The law in the Old Testament is paradigmatic in nature, not exhaustive in nature.

- Two Foundational Laws: Deuteronomy 6:5 (Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength) and Leviticus 19:18b (Love your neighbor as yourself).
- Ten Words: The 10 Commandments give expression to these two foundational laws. The first 4 commands are connected to the command to love God. The final 6 commands are connected to the command to love neighbor as self.
- There are 601 other laws given in the rest of the Old Testament.

"It has been said the (10) commandments are God's nature expressed in terms of moral imperatives: and it is significant that God chose to reveal Himself so, rather than in terms of philosophical propositions."

-R. Alan Cole

## Exodus 20:1 - God is the God of history and the God of everyday life.

### The Ten Words

- **NO OTHER GODS:** In the ancient world, pagan people believed in three categories of gods: a personal god, a family god, and a national god. The God of the Exodus is the only God!
- **NO IDOLS:** Idolatry was universal, commonplace, and assumed in the ancient world. Yahweh would not tolerate any form of idolatry.
- **HONOR THE LORD'S NAME:** Yahweh's Name signified His essence. His Name was reserved for all that is holy.
- **KEEP THE SABBATH:** This was a public sign of the covenant at Sinai.
- **HONOR YOUR PARENTS:** Family relationships are at the very foundation of the people of God.
- **NO MURDER:** God is the author of life and is sovereign over it.
- **NO ADULTERY:** Marriage is the foundational human relationship, and it is used by God to symbolize His relationship with His people.
- **NO STEALING:** Stealing threatens the social order.
- **NO FALSE WITNESS:** The ancient world's justice system heavily used capital punishment for most offenses. Consequently, bearing false testimony against a neighbor would have drastic results.
- **NO COVETING:** God's people must exercise restraint in managing their very desires.

### Reverence and Awe

Israel responded to God's self-revelation with deep reverence and awe for their God!