



Week 3

Exodus 20:1-17

20:1 Ex 19:3,
Ex 34:28; Dt 5:4,
Dt 5:7, Dt 5:22

The Ten Commandments

20 Then God spoke all these words:

20:2 Ex 13:3;
Ps 81:10

²I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

20:3 Dt 6:14;
Jer 25:6,
Jer 35:15

³You must have no other gods before¹ me.

20:4 Ex 34:17;
Lv 26:1,
Dt 27:15

⁴Do 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. ⁵Do 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. ⁶But I am loyal and gracious to the thousandth generation¹ of those who love me and keep my commandments.

20:5 Ex 23:24,
Ex 34:7,
Ex 34:14;
Nm 14:18;
Dt 4:24

⁷Do 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.

20:6 Dt 7:9

⁸Remember the Sabbath day and treat it as holy. ⁹Six days you may work and do all your tasks, ¹⁰but 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. ¹¹Because the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them in six days, but rested on the seventh day. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

20:7 Lv 19:12;
Jas 5:12

¹²Honor your father and your mother so that your life will be long on the fertile land that the LORD your God is giving you.

20:8 Ex 31:13;
Lv 19:3, Lv
19:30, Lv 26:2

¹³Do not kill.^k

20:9 Ex 23:12,
Ex 34:21,
Ex 35:2; Lv 23:3;
Lk 13:14

¹⁴Do not commit adultery.

20:10 Ex 23:12;
Dt 5:14

¹⁵Do not steal.

20:11 Gn 1:1,
Gn 2:2-3;
Ex 31:17

¹⁶Do not testify falsely against your neighbor.

20:12 Lv 19:3;
Mt 15:4,
Mt 19:19;
Lk 18:20; Eph 6:2

¹⁷Do 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.

20:13 Gn 9:6;
Mt 5:21,
Mt 19:18;
Ro 13:9; Jas 2:11

¹Or *besides* ¹Or *to thousands* ^kOr *murder*

20:14 Lv 18:20,
Lv 20:10;
Mt 5:27; Ro 13:9

20:15 Lv 19:11,
Lv 19:13;
Mt 19:18;
Ro 13:9;
Eph 4:28

20:1-21 These Ten Commandments are the most important of all the Instruction that God gives at Mount Sinai. They are the first set of expectations that God gives there. These commandments are the only instruction that God speaks directly to the people. God gives all the other instructions to Moses, and then Moses passes them on to the people (20:1, 18-21). The form of the Ten Commandments as short, direct commands stands apart from the other instruction in Exodus 20:22–23:19 (see also note on Exod 20:22–23:19). These special “ten words” are written “by God’s finger” (Exod 31:18) on the two stone tablets (Exod 24:4, 12; 34:1, 28; Deut 4:13; 5:22; 10:4). The importance of the Ten Commandments is further highlighted by their repetition in Deuteronomy 5:6-21 and by their placement in the special “wooden chest” (Deut 10:1-3). The Ten Commandments include duties to God (20:2-7), duties to other humans (20:12-17), and one duty that involves God, humans and non-human creation (the Sabbath commandment in 20:8-11).

20:2 *I am the LORD . . . house of slavery:* This introduction to the Ten Commandments is the next step in unfolding the name and character of God in Exodus. In Exodus 3:14, God had revealed God’s name to Moses as “I Am Who I Am.” Here God reveals another layer of God’s name and character as the God who brought the Israelites out of the slavery of Egypt. God is a liberator from slavery. *I am . . . your God:* The Israelites are already God’s people. The instructions that follow grow out of an already established relationship between God and the Israelites whom God has freed from slavery. See note on Exodus 29:46.

20:3 *no other gods before me:* See note on Exodus 15:11. This first rule is the most important of the Ten Commandments.

20:4 *Do not make an idol:* The expectation applies to images of Israel’s God, as well as images of any other foreign gods. The great crisis of the gold calf involves Israel’s breaking this commandment and thus threatening the whole covenant relationship with the Lord (Exod 32:1-10). See also Exodus 20:23; 34:14, 17; Leviticus 19:4; 26:1; Deuteronomy 4:15-20; 6:13-15.

20:5-6: God reveals another part of God’s name and character. God doesn’t focus here on what God has done for Israel (Exod 20:2) but on God’s intense relationship with Israel: *passionate . . . punish[ing] . . . gracious.* God’s passion for Israel is expressed both as powerful king (see note on Exod 19:3—“covenant”) and as loving parent (Exod 4:22). God will *punish* Israel for disobedience, and the effects may linger for up to three or four generations. God, however, will be *loyal and gracious* in ways that will multiply *to the thousandth generation* for all those who love and obey the Lord. This description of God’s character will be taken up a second time and adapted in crucial ways in Exodus 34:6-7 as part of the unfolding meaning of God’s name throughout the book (see notes on Exod 3:14; 20:2; 23:21; 29:46; 33:19; 34:6-7).

20:5 *third and fourth generations:* Some later prophets declared that future generations wouldn’t suffer in this way for the sins of their parents (Jer 31:29-30; Ezek 18:1-32).

20:7 *God’s name:* One example of misusing God’s name was making a promise in the Lord’s name and then not fulfilling that promise (Lev 6:3; 19:12; Ps 24:4). Making such

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Exodus 20:1-17 (Cont.)

promises using God's name was a common practice (Gen 14:22-24; 24:3). Calling on God's name was also a way to show that an expectation for blessing would help make the blessing happen (Num 6:24-27). Therefore, humans needed to be very careful whenever they used God's name.

20:8-11 The word "Sabbath" is related to a Hebrew verb meaning "to stop" or "break the routine." The earlier manna story in Exodus 16:5 already assumed this rule about not working every seventh day. This restful command is grounded in the story of God's creation of the world. God rested on the seventh day of creation (Gen 2:1-3). Thus God's people should imitate God and also rest every seventh day of every week. The alternate version of this same commandment in Deuteronomy finds its motivation not in God's creation but in God's liberation of the Israelites from their harsh work as slaves in Egypt (Deut 5:12-15). Note that the requirement for rest every seven days applies to family members, workers, immigrants, and even animals. The Sabbath commandment brings together obligations to God, other humans, and nonhuman creation. It is the longest of the Ten Commandments and stands at its center, dividing duties to God (Exod 20:2-7) and duties to other humans (Exod 20:12-17).

20:12 *Honor your father and your mother:* The original and primary concern of this command was for adult children to take care of older parents. *so that your life will be long:* To obey such a command makes it more likely that the next generation will treat their parents in a similar way. Israel's relationship with God was often portrayed in the image of a child's duty to honor a parent (Exod 4:22; Deut 32:16-21; Hos 11:1-11; Isa 1:2; Mal 1:6).

20:13 *Do not kill:* The Hebrew verb can mean "to kill" or "to murder." More precisely,

the command means to stop any individual person from killing another human being without the permission of the larger community. Any acts of purely personal revenge aren't allowed (Exod 21:12; Lev 24:17; Num 35:30-34; Deut 19:11-13). All life belongs to God, so any taking of life is a matter of heavy responsibility (Gen 9:5-6).

20:14 *adultery:* The command seeks to stop any married person from having sexual relations with anyone other than their spouse. Other biblical prohibitions against adultery provide severe punishments (Lev 18:20; 20:10; Deut 22:22; see John 8:1-11). The Bible sometimes uses the image of husband and wife to describe the relationship of God and God's people. Adultery then becomes an image for Israel's going after and worshipping gods other than the true God of Israel (Hos 1-3; Ezek 16:1-63; Mal 2:13-16).

20:16 *testify falsely:* The command probably began in an informal setting where people in the community brought disputes to elders, who functioned as judges. Its aim was to ensure that those who accused someone in a dispute were telling the truth (Exod 23:1; Deut 19:15-19; 1 Kgs 21:13; Prov 6:19; 14:5, 25; 19:5, 9). The expectation eventually came to include lying about someone in any public context (Lev 19:16). Destroying someone's reputation by dishonoring their name is the human counterpart to misusing God's name (Exod 20:7).

20:17 *Do not desire and try to take:* This last of the Ten Commandments focuses on a person's inner thoughts. It is especially aimed at those who are richer and more powerful in the community so that they don't take advantage of the vulnerable (1 Kgs 21:1-19). This last commandment and the first commandment (having other gods) both treat inner commitments and desires. The other commandments, in contrast, focus on outward actions.

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Psalm 19

19:1 Gn 1:6;
Ps 8:1; Ps 50:6;
Ro 1:19-20

Psalm 19

For the music leader. A psalm of David.

19:2 Ps 74:16

¹Heaven is declaring God's glory;
the sky is proclaiming his handiwork.

19:4 Ps 104:2;
Ro 10:18

²One day gushes the news to the next,
and one night informs another what needs to be known.

19:5 Jl 2:16;
1Co 9:24;
Heb 12:1-2

³Of course, there's no speech, no words—
their voices can't be heard—

19:6 Ps 113:3;
Ecc 1:5

⁴but their sound^k extends throughout the world;
their words reach the ends of the earth.

19:7 Ps 23:3;
Ps 93:5, Ps 111:7;
Ps 119:130

God has made a tent in heaven for the sun.

19:8 Ps 12:6,
Ps 119:14

⁵The sun is like a groom coming out of his honeymoon suite;
like a warrior, it thrills at running its course.

19:9 Ps 119:142

⁶It rises in one end of the sky;
its circuit is complete at the other.

19:10 Ps 119:72,
Ps 119:103,
Ps 119:127;
Prv 8:10,
Prv 8:19

Nothing escapes its heat.

19:11 Prv 29:18

19:12 Ps 90:8

19:13 Nm 15:30;
1Sa 25:39;
Ps 119:133;
Ro 6:12

⁷The LORD's Instruction is perfect, reviving one's very being.¹

The LORD's laws are faithful, making naive people wise.

19:14 Ex 6:6;
Ps 18:2,
Ps 104:34;
Is 43:14, Is 47:4

⁸The LORD's regulations are right, gladdening the heart.

The LORD's commands are pure, giving light to the eyes.

⁹Honoring the LORD is correct, lasting forever.

The LORD's judgments are true.

All of these are righteous!

¹⁰They are more desirable than gold—than tons of pure gold!

They are sweeter than honey—even dripping off the honeycomb!

¹¹No doubt about it:

your servant is enlightened by them;

there is great reward in keeping them.

¹²But can anyone know what they've accidentally done wrong?

Clear me of any unknown sin

¹³and save your servant from willful sins.

Don't let them rule me.

Then I'll be completely blameless;

I'll be innocent of great wrongdoing.

^kLXX, Vulg, Sym; MT *line or string* ¹Or *soul*

19:1-14 Because 19:1-6 focuses on creation and 19:7-14 focuses on Instruction, Psalm 19 is often viewed as two separate psalms. But the two sections clearly belong together, and together they suggest that God's Instruction (or Torah) is built into the very structure of the created order. Because it features God's Instruction, Psalm 19 is a torah psalm (see Pss 1; 119; see sidebar, "Torah [Instruction]: Psalms 15–24").

19:1-6 The creation itself testifies to God, silently but eloquently (see Pss 8:1, 9; 97:6). Many ancient cultures worshipped the sun (see 19:4-6) because of its life-giving light and heat.

19:7-14 In this section, what the sun does for the earth—energizing it and making life possible—will be claimed by the psalmist for God's Instruction. The various synonyms for Instruction look forward to Psalm 119.

19:7 *perfect... being*: "Perfect" has the sense of being complete or comprehensive. As nothing escapes the sun's heat (Ps 19:6), so God's Instruction touches everything, making life possible. *wise*: God intends wisdom that produces obedience (see Ps 2:10; Deut 4:6).

19:8 *giving light*: This is another way that Instruction functions like the sun, giving life (see Ps 13:3).

¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart
be pleasing to you, LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Torah (Instruction): Psalms 15–24 Because Book I has so many prayers for help, the sequence that begins with Psalm 15 is noticeable. Of the next nine psalms, only two are prayers for help; and Psalm 24 is an entrance liturgy like Psalm 15. Between Psalms 15 and 24, the psalms are arranged in a pattern known as a *chiasm*, as follows:

Psalm 15	entrance liturgy
Psalm 16	psalm of trust
Psalm 17	prayer for help
Psalm 18	royal psalm
Psalm 19	t Torah psalm
Psalms 20–21	royal psalms
Psalm 22	prayer for help
Psalm 23	psalm of trust
Psalm 24	entrance liturgy

A chiasm focuses on the first, last, and middle elements. In this case, Psalms 15, 19, and 24. Psalms 15 and 24 involve entering the temple, or living in God's presence as God intends. Neither psalm uses the word *torah*, but the pattern in the psalms suggests that life in God's presence will center on following God's Instruction. At the heart of Book I, Psalms 15 and 24 (in relationship with Ps 19) emphasize God's Instruction that is present at the beginning of the Psalter (Ps 1:1-2; see Ps 119). This focus on torah invites readers of the Psalms to look at the ways that the Psalms show the importance of commitment to live as God intends.

The pattern of Psalms 15–24 combines "Instruction" and kingship, since royal psalms surround Psalm 19. This pattern looks like the beginning of the Psalter where Psalm 1, which features Instruction, comes before Psalm 2, which highlights the importance of God's "anointed one" (see sidebar, "God's Anointed One" at Ps 2). The pairing is appropriate, since the king was given the task of doing God's will in the world (see Ps 72; Deut 17:14-20).

19:9 *judgments... righteous!*: This verse pairs these two concepts that are basic to life as God intends it (see Pss 5:8; 9:4; 96:13; 98:9).

19:11-14 The psalm has moved from the vastness of the heavens (Ps 19:1-6) to the individual worshipper, whose *words* (19:14) will be in harmony with creation's speech, because of God's life-giving Instruction (Ps 19:7-10) and God's willingness to forgive (19:12-13).

19:11 *enlightened*: The sense of this word fits the sun images, but the word can also mean "instructed," which fits with the focus on Instruction. *reward*: The psalm isn't commending a system of retribution, since the psalmist finally depends on God's forgiveness (Ps 19:12-13). Rather, God's Instruction offers a path to a truly valuable and rewarding life.

19:13 *blameless*: The word doesn't mean sinless. It means "completion, wholeness," and is sometimes translated "integrity" (see Ps 18:25). Listening to God's Instruction and being forgiven by God, the psalmist will be fully in relationship to God.

19:14 *redeemer*: The term is grounded in the obligation of family members to help each other in times of trouble and loss (see Ruth 3:10–4:10). The cosmic God (Ps 19:1-6) is now pictured as a close relative who proves to be the ultimate helper.

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Week 3

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

1:18 Ro 1:16;
1Co 1:21,
1Co 1:23-25

Human wisdom versus the cross

¹⁸The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are being destroyed. But it is the power of God for those of us who are being saved. ¹⁹It is written in scripture: *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will reject the intelligence of the intelligent.* ^a ²⁰Where are the wise? Where are the legal experts? Where are today's debaters? Hasn't God made the wisdom of the world foolish? ²¹In God's wisdom, he determined that the world wouldn't come to know him through its wisdom. Instead, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching. ²²Jews ask for signs, and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, which is a scandal to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. ²⁴But to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ is God's power and God's wisdom. ²⁵This is because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

1:19 Job 5:13;
Is 29:14;
1Co 3:19

1:20 Ro 1:22;
1Co 3:19

1:21 Mt 11:25;
Lk 10:21;
1Co 1:18,
1Co 6:2,
1Co 11:32

1:22 Mt 12:38;
Mk 8:11; Jn 4:48

1:23 1Co 1:18,
1Co 2:2; Ga 3:1,
Ga 5:11; 1Pt 2:8

1:24 Ro 1:16;
1Co 1:18,
1Co 1:30; Col 2:3

^aIsa 29:14

1:25 Ro 11:33;
1Co 1:18;
2Co 13:4

1:18-25 Paul sets out six contrasts to show how different groups of people in his culture perceived the message of Christ crucified.

1:18 *The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are being destroyed:* Crucifixion was a dehumanizing form of torture and death. To preach that a crucified Jew was God's means of saving the world would have seemed complete nonsense to Greeks. Instead, they valued learning, philosophy, and high social status. By way of contrast, *it is the power of God for those... being saved:* The message of the cross is experienced as powerful because it is able to transform people's lives, bringing about their salvation.

1:19 Paul quotes Isaiah 29:14 as a scriptural proof for God's judgment against the wise and learned, the elite who fail to understand God and God's wisdom.

1:20-21 *Where are the wise?:* the wealthy and educated elite. *the legal experts:* Jewish scholars of the Law of Moses. *today's debaters:* people trained in public speaking who engaged in public performances to demonstrate their skills. *wisdom of the world:* the

knowledge and values of the educated elite who trusted in their own cleverness. This wisdom stands in contrast to *God's wisdom* for human salvation through believing in what unbelievers see as the *foolishness* of preaching the cross of Christ.

1:22 *signs:* indications of God's involvement in the world. *wisdom:* the understanding and knowledge of how the world works from a human perspective.

1:23 *a scandal to Jews:* because the "Christ" wasn't supposed to be executed. Some Jews would have viewed Jesus as cursed by God because of his death on a cross (or tree; see Deut 21:23; Gal 3:13). *foolishness to Gentiles:* They would have found it ridiculous that one dying a slave's death could be a savior figure.

1:24 *But to those who are called:* Those who respond to the invitation of the gospel in complete trust see Christ for who he really is. He is the power and wisdom of God for human salvation.

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John 2:13-22

2:13 Dt 16:1;
Lk 2:41; Jn 2:23,
Jn 5:1, Jn 11:55

Jesus in Jerusalem at Passover

¹³It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴He found in the temple those who were selling cattle, sheep, and doves, as well as those involved in exchanging currency sitting there. ¹⁵He made a whip from ropes and chased them all out of the temple, including the cattle and the sheep. He scattered the coins and overturned the tables of those who exchanged currency. ¹⁶He said to the dove sellers, "Get these things out of here! Don't make my Father's house a place of business." ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it is written, *Passion for your house consumes me.*^e

2:14 Mt 21:12;
Mk 11:15;
Lk 19:45,
Lk 19:46

2:15 Mt 21:12

2:16 Mt 21:12,
Mt 21:13;
Lk 2:49

2:17 Ps 69:9;
Lk 2:49

2:18 Mt 12:38;
Jn 1:19, Jn 4:48,
Jn 6:30

2:19 Mt 16:21,
Mt 26:61,
Mt 27:40;
Mk 14:58,
Mk 15:29

2:20 Ezr 5:16;
Lk 21:5

2:21 1Co 6:19

2:22 Ps 16:10;
Lk 24:8; Jn 12:16,
Jn 14:26, Jn 20:9

¹⁸Then the Jewish leaders asked him, "By what authority are you doing these things? What miraculous sign will you show us?"

¹⁹Jesus answered, "Destroy this temple and in three days I'll raise it up."

²⁰The Jewish leaders replied, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and you will raise it up in three days?" ²¹But the temple Jesus was talking about was his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered what he had said, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

^ePs 69:9

Cleansing the Temple Only the Gospel of John places the cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem at the beginning rather than the end of Jesus' ministry. In the other three Gospels, Jesus drives the money changers from the temple near the end of his ministry, less than a week before his crucifixion (Matt 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45). Any reader familiar with these accounts may be confused by John's placement of the temple story in John 2, as if this Gospel is to be a very short one indeed! When did this event actually happen, or did it happen twice? The other three Gospels are probably right about the chronology. The author of John's Gospel may have moved the account to the beginning of his Gospel to make the raising of Lazarus later on the reason for Jesus' arrest and execution (see John 11:47-53). Putting the temple scene at the beginning also highlights from the start the certainty of Jesus' death and resurrection (John 2:19-22). It's unlikely that he cleansed the temple twice, since all four Gospels agree in recounting the event just once. Still, it's quite possible Jesus did visit Jerusalem at Passover very early in his ministry and even performed miracles there (see John 2:23-25; 5:1-18).

2:13-25 Jesus goes to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival, where he forcibly drives money changers out of the temple. When the Jews ask him on what authority he does this, he gives them a riddle about rebuilding the temple in three days. He performs more *miraculous signs*, and *many believed* (2:23); but he isn't convinced their faith is genuine.

2:15 *chased them all out*: There's no reason to assume he uses the whip (or threatens to do so) only on *the cattle and the sheep*.

2:17 *His disciples remembered*: probably "after he was raised from the dead," as in John 2:22. *Passion for your house consumes me*: quoting from Psalm 69:9. The Greek verb is in the future tense, "will consume" or "will destroy," foreshadowing Jesus' death.

2:19 *Destroy this temple*: the basis of a legal charge against Jesus at his trial in two other Gospels (Matt 26:61; Mark 14:58).

2:20-21 *the temple... was his body*: This explanation is consistent with the use of the Greek verb "to raise" rather than "to build" (2:20). It's also consistent with *in three days*, which is used repeatedly in connection with Jesus' resurrection (e.g., 1 Cor 15:4; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34).

2:22 *his disciples remembered*: In light of Jesus' resurrection, they come to understand what he meant. *the scripture*: Psalm 69:9. *the word that Jesus had spoken*: This refers to the entire quote in John 2:19, a reference to his body. The disciples' post-resurrection faith moves well beyond what they "believed" after his first sign (John 2:11).

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