

God's Ten Rules That Civilised a World

Bible Studies on the Ten Commandments



WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY DEREK P. BLAKE

God's Ten Rules That Civilised a World

by

Derek P. Blake

First published on www.christianslikeme.net
between January 20 and March 24th 2018

Copyright Notice

© 2018 New Creation Media

All rights reserved. Distribution or copying without permission is prohibited, with the exception of Biblical quotes and 'short passages' (maximum of 99 words). Licensees may copy, distribute, and display only verbatim copies of the work. Licensees may not create any derivative works based on it without the express written permission of the author -

New Creation Media. Electronic edition. to N-C-M@mail.com

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction to the Ten Commandments</u>	4
1. <u>Command 1 - Nothing Before God</u>	8
2. <u>Command 2 – Worshipping Images</u>	13
3. <u>Command 3 - Taking God's Name in Vane</u>	20
4. <u>Command 4 – Keeping the Lord's Day Holy</u>	25
5. <u>Command 5 – Honour Your Parents</u>	31
6. <u>Command 6 – You shall not murder.</u>	37
7. <u>Command 7 – Adultery</u>	41
8. <u>Command 8 – You Shall Not Steal.</u>	42
9. <u>Command 9 – Lying or False Witness</u>	52
10. <u>Command 10 – Coveting</u>	57

The Ten Commandments

Introduction

The Ten Commands, known as the 'Decalogue' by the Greeks, is a set of laws, Given by God to Moses whilst the nation that was to become Israel, were wandering in the wilderness. These laws are the central pillar of both Judaism and Christianity and appear twice in the Bible, in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

In around the year 1445 BC the Hebrew people were camped at, or near, Sinai, they had never stopped grumbling about almost everything, despite what God had done for them. God had brought them out of slavery in Egypt, punished the Egyptians through the plagues and the loss of a huge part of the army. He had sustained them in the desert with many miracles, fed them with heavenly food (manna) and watered them from dry rocks, but still they were not satisfied and blamed Moses for their wows.

Soon after they had established their camp, God called Moses to His mountain, the second time he had met with God face to face. Moses alone was given the honour, and he climbed the mount alone, and into the cloud that had settled over the peak. This was the point at which Jehovah took the Hebrews into a close relationship with God, as one nation under the government of God Himself. God told Moses that they will be a "kingdom of priests, and an holy nation unto God". Moses returned to his people and brought the leaders and elders of the people together, whereupon he repeated all the Jehovah had told him about a covenant. The elders agreed to do all that their God had said, and so entered into a covenant with God, pledging their allegiance to Him as their ruler and becoming subjects of the kingdom of God.

With the agreement of the people, Moses returned to ascend the mountain again and back into the thick cloud. God tells Moses to go and sanctify the people over the following two days, that the people should wash themselves and their clothes and be ready for the third day, when the lord will come down in the sight of everyone. The people were to confess and repent of their sins and devote themselves to fasting and prayer, cleansing the hearts. On the third day the cloud descended upon the mountain, black and more dense than before, a trumpet sounded and the cloud descended to the very base of the mount. From the dark cloud lightening and peals of thunder shook the ground, "The glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount," "The glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount," the trumpet sounded longer a louder. The assembled people fell upon their faces before Jehovah, even Moses shook with fear [Hebrews 12:21].

After a period of solemn and, no doubt, stunned silence, the voice of the Lord God was heard speaking out of the cloud, making known His laws [Deuteronomy 33:2, 3]. God's covenant was a promise that His people accepted in faith believing God would do what He said. In turn, the people promised God complete devotion and dedication to Him. Later Moses was to receive the commandments in writing, carved in stone, Moses ascended the mountain again to meet with God, but time must have stood still for Moses and it was some days before he returns with the stone tablets. As he nears the camp he hears the sound of music and singing in some celebration, [Exodus 32:19]. Moses sees the Golden Calf and in anger throws the tablets down, shattering the stone plates. Moses took the calf, which they had made and burned it with fire, and ground it to powder, and scattered it over the surface of the water and made the sons of Israel drink it. Later Moses returns again to God on the Mountain and Moses himself carved out the Ten Commandments on two more double sided sapphire stone tablets, over another forty day period [Exodus 34:28].

According to the bible, both the first shattered set and the second unbroken set were stored in the Ark of the Covenant (the 'Aron Habrit' in Hebrew) [Ex. 25:16; & 40:20].

*“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord,
when I will establish a new covenant with
the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah,
not like the covenant that I made with
their fathers on the day when I took them
by the hand to bring them out of the land
of Egypt.
For they did not continue in my covenant
and so I showed no concern for them,
declares the Lord.*

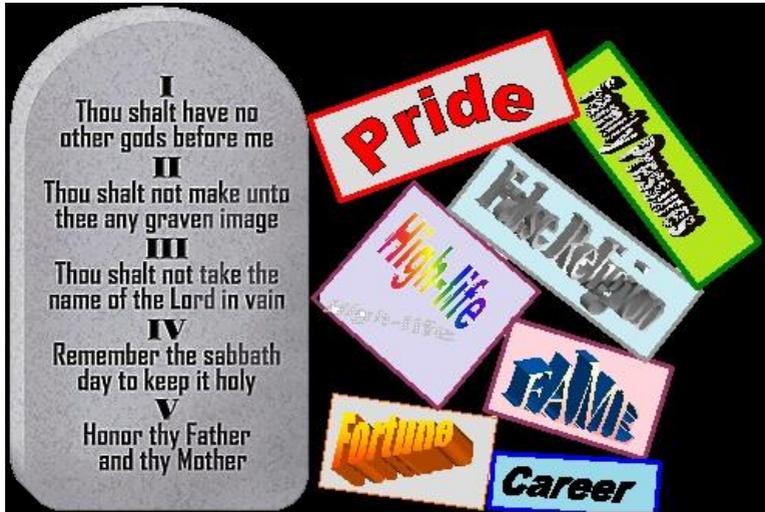
*10 For this is the covenant that I will make
with the house of Israel
after those days, declares the Lord: **I will
put my laws into their minds, and write
them on their hearts, and I will be their
God, and they shall be my people.***

*11 And they shall not teach, each one his
neighbour and each one his brother, saying,
‘Know the Lord’, for they shall all know
me,
from the least of them to the greatest.*

*12 For I will be merciful towards their
iniquities, and I will remember their sins no*

more.” [Hebrews 8:8-12]

The following studies have been written with regard to today, just as the Ten Commandments were written for all ages, for iron-age man as well as the dark and middle ages through to modern times and future generations. The Ten Commandments were given for all men, women and for all times, they are as reliant today as they were to the original receivers and they have been accepted by all ages, up until this perverse generation. Now man thinks that he knows better than God, his creator, and changes the law of God when it becomes inconvenient.



Commandment 1 – Nothing Before God

The structure of the Ten Commandments is evident by reading them, and they appear in order of priority, or importance. The first four commands set down the rules for our relationship with Jehovah, our God; commands five through ten lay down rules for our relationships with each other. So we will take each command in turn, starting today with the first and premier command.

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3“You shall have no other gods before me.” [Exodus 20:2-3]

The command is very short, just eight words, the command comes in two parts, “You shall have no” and the subject, “other gods before (or besides) Me.” Here the word 'no' is the Hebrew word 'lo' or 'low', meaning nay, neither never, no. It is definite negative, with no alternative or get-out. The other word in the verse where there is a slight variance, the word is 'before' or

'besides', this is the Hebrew word, 'pániym'. In this case it means giving an absolute priority, nothing more important or with a higher priority than. So straight away we see that it is not a soft command but a hard one.

This first command of the ten sets the scene for all of the first four of the commandments, that we put God first in all things, that we must love Him with every fibre of our being, heart, soul and strength [Deuteronomy 6:5]. This is what Jesus described as 'The Great Commandment' [Matthew 22:37-38]. When we consider Jesus' response to His Father and the law, we need to factor in the fact that He was fully human, so when Satan tempted Him, he was not tempting God but the human Jesus. At the end of Jesus' forty days fasting in the wilderness Satan tempted Him about food, and tried to get Him to bow down and worship Satan. Jesus told Satan that you shall only worship the Lord your God, and only Him [Matthew 4:10]. Satan also took Jesus to a high mountain and offered Him all kingdoms of the Earth if He would bow or fall down and worship him.

Satan wanted Jesus to fall or bow down to worship him, and bowing down seems to be a part of, of an action of worship. There are plenty of examples in the scriptures that would suggest that bowing is an act of worship, that every knee shall bow [Romans 14:11]; "let us worship and bow down . ." [Psalm 95:6]. In the UK people are expected to bow before our Queen, not so long ago people were expected to bow before a 'Lord of the Realm' and before that a surf was expected to bow to their Liege Lord. Was this a form of worship or a way of showing respect to one's betters? Because under Christ there is neither freeman or slave [Galatians 3:28], which begs the question should Christians bow to anyone? Jesus also pointed out that a person cannot serve two masters, we cannot serve God and the god of materialism, the god of this world [Matthew 6:24],

have you ever been placed into the situation at work when one boss tells you to do one thing and another something different? How did that make you feel, did it affect your view on either of the bosses?

God, we are told in the first commandment must be above all else, a priority over all else, because of His awesome power. Scripture tells us to fear God, which has always seemed strange to me, I am not afraid of God, how can love and fear be compatible? God, however, is so powerful that when He demonstrates that power people are in awe, at Mount Sinai

“Now all the people witnessed the thundering s, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off” [Exodus 20:18].

This verse makes me smile; here's God on a mountain and there is cloud covering the top and out of that cloud comes the loud crashing, banging and deep rumblings like thunder, accompanying flashes of light and lightning with the sounds of trumpets with the mountain smoking like a volcano, and the people “stood afar off.” Wouldn't you stand well clear? Now that was the fear of God!

Although this is the first and most important commandment, it is possibly one of the easiest commands to break, everywhere there are other things competing against God for our priority. The command is not just about pagan gods and false religions although there are many of these today; like the new Jedi Religion. The premier command is about everything we give a higher priority to than the true God, and causes us to sin. The highest on that list must be pride, the most common of human failings, pride places self above God. God stands against the

proud and is full of grace toward the humble [James 4:6], if we come closer to God, He promises that He will come closer to us and if we humble ourselves He will raise us up [James 4:10]. By humbling ourselves we allow God to lift us up, to give us help see Him from His point of view, and to leave our selfish world-view behind.

The Bible is full of warnings about human failings, forgetfulness, pride neglect of our duty to God [Deuteronomy 8:11-19], man gets himself into situations that he would never get into if we maintained our focus on God. It is not about the problems and disasters we face, but how we respond and deal with them, this shows if we place God first or not, do we turn to God or our best friend? Yes things are different now than during either the Old or New Testament times, but what has changed is the world, not God [Psalm 33:11] His plan never changes. He is as steadfast and unchanging as the stars above [James 1:17], so when God says that we must put nothing before Him, it is not just for our iron-age ancestors, it is also for us, her today and forever. In Jehovah's own words, he says "For I the Lord do not change;" [Malachi 3:6] so neither do His laws.

Is there ANYTHING in your life that comes before God that in any circumstance you would place as a higher priority? This may be you spouse, job, money, leisure activities, car, home, friends, demands of others, or any thing where God is put to one side. We must examine our hearts, and if there is something, we must be rid of it. Follows a few verses to study:

Money	Matthew 6:19-34
Relationships	1 John 3:11
Work	Luke 10:38-42

Self	Romans 6:11; Romans 7:15-21; Psalm 139:23-24; Matthew 6:33
Others/world	Galatians 1:10; 1 John 2:15
Pride	Isaiah 2:11
Lust	Matthew 5:27, 28
Entertainment	Colossians 3:17
Human Rules	Mark 7:8, 9, 13
Religion	Matthew 23:27-31
Fear /Worry	Philippians 4:6

“The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”
[Ecclesiastes 12:13]

Commandment 2 – Worshipping Images



“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. 5 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, 6 but showing steadfast love to thousands[*of generations*] of those who love me and keep my commandments. [Exodus 20:4-6]

This is always a hot topic, mainly because certain denominations use imagery extensively in their church buildings and their Christian life. Let's be clear here, the above verse is split into four parts, parts one and two, both prohibit, part three gives a warning of punishment, and part four declares the reward. We will look at each of these parts individually.

Part 1 & 2: Prohibition 1

It is obvious that these two prohibitions are linked together, the first part obviously prohibits the manufacture of images, for the express purpose specified in the second part. God is the Creator, and we are created in His image [Genesis 1:27], which explains man's need to create. Despite man's fallen nature, he has created many beautiful things from paintings to buildings, this need goes back to the earliest times when man felt the

need to create pictures of his life on his cave walls. King David and other psalmists created beautiful music, and from the days of the first temple, he has created beautiful buildings to glorify God. We decorate our churches, and create stunning windows that tell the stories of Jesus, or illustrate Biblical themes. These things were created to glorify God, not made to worship.

The verse [4] specifically states, 'carved images', so seems to ignore two-dimensional images, paintings and drawings. My Cambridge Bible Dictionary, defines the graven image as: "an image of carved wood (sometimes enclosed in a metal casing, [Isaiah 30:22]) or stone, such as were common in antiquity, and are so, of course, still among heathen nations. [Deuteronomy 4:16]. So it would seem that Commandment Two refers to three-dimensional carvings of stone or wood. It was believed in ancient times that a idol needed to be three-dimensional so that the god could physically inhabit the effigy. The prohibition is general, in that it includes both images of Jehovah and false gods. It is therefore impossible to represent Jehovah with any physical likeness as He is a spiritual being, so the command is all-encompassing [Deuteronomy 4:15-19]. Despite this, images were commonly used by those who worshipped of Jehovah up until the time of the prophets when God spoke through His prophets.

It has been pointed out by some atheists, that God has double standards, this is of course impossible as God never changes. This view is based upon the account of Jehovah orders Moses to create a serpent of bronze and mount it on a pole [Numbers 21:8-9]. This was because many of the people rebelled, and groaned about their conditions and food, and God punished them by sending "fiery serpents" and many died [Numbers 21:6]. Anyone who looks upon the bronze serpent would be healed of the snake-bite. Of course God, knowing where it will lead, realises that within short order His people will start to look

upon the serpent as an idol and start to worship it. Later they started worshipping the serpent and even gave it a name 'Nehushtan', and King Hezekiah had to destroy it [2 Kings 18:4], along with the 'Asherah poles'. "Asherah poles is a sacred tree or pole that stood near Canaanite religious locations to honour the Ugaritic mother-goddess Asherah, consort of El." (ref: Wikipedia). So why did Jehovah-God order Moses to make this serpent when He knew what would happen? Some would say that the statue helped as a visual aid for God's power, majesty and mercy; others maintain that it was an early version of the cross, the ultimate sign of God's love. Still others may hold that the bronze serpent was a sign, rather like our use of virus' to combat viral infections, others as a test, which seems unlikely as God knew what would happen, Why do you think God gave the people an effigy for healing?

Again, later in Exodus, Jehovah orders Moses to build a special box in which the two tablets of the law should be stored and transported. He first instructs Moses to take a 'contribution' from the people [Exodus 25:1-9] from which the sanctuary was to be made. Jehovah then instructs Moses how to construct the box, the 'Ark of the Covenant', with precise measurements and materials [Exodus 25:10-16]. Next God gives instructions about the Mercy Seat, which shall be surmounted with golden cherubim [Exodus 25:18]. Here we have another, seemingly contradictory case of a graven (carved) image of a heavenly creature being ordered by God, but it seems that the mercy seat is not for man but for God Himself [Exodus 25:22]. Would these cherubim also encourage worship later? No. If we read about the Ark we find that the Ark, with the mercy seat and cherubim were always located in the 'Holy of Holies', the innermost part of sanctuary, and only the High Priest was allowed to enter, and then just once a year, on the 'Day of Atonement'. A study of the scriptures will reveal that the High Priest was never instructed to bow before the cherubim or to

pray to the spiritual beings they represented. These cherubim were also embroidered into the drapes and tapestries from which the sanctuary was constructed [Exodus 26:1 & Exodus 26:31]. Again there is no indication that these images were ever bowed to or prayed to as worship of angels were strictly forbidden. When John the Evangelist once bowed to worship an angel, the angel quickly stopped him [Revelation 22:8-9] because the angel knew better. Later in the Hebrew history Solomon included statues of cherubim in his original temple [1 Kings 6:23], which God sanctioned and blessed. None of the images of angels in the Sanctuary involved angel worship, unlike today when the New Age followers pray and look upon angels as on the same level as God Himself, as do some who claim to be Christians.

So we see that the two prohibitions must be linked together, images and statuary are acceptable as long as we do not bow to them in worship or pray to them or the physical creature they represent. The New Testament then builds upon and fulfils the Old Testament, and this is true when it comes to religious imagery, as well. See, for example, Jesus' teaching in Matthew 22:15-22. Jesus was manoeuvred into a trap here asking if it was right to pay tax to Caesar? Jesus knew their intent and asked them whose image was on the denarius coin He had been given, He answered "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." [Matthew 22:21] Whilst therefore, the coin was in the image of Caesar, each of us, including Caesar, is made in the image of God [Genesis 1:27], so we should give everything to Him. Jesus uses here a graven image of Caesar to make the point, the very person who demanded worship from his subjects as a living god.

Because Jehovah-God is of spirit there is nothing in heaven or Earth that can represent Him in any physical way,



we are reminded of this in **Acts 17:29**, that God we cannot think of God as being gold, silver or stone or any image formed by man. There is however another facet to this commandment and that is the things we look to as our idols, the things we view as our ideals for life, the things consume our lives. Those things may be sexual immorality, passion for something other than God, our evil desires, and the things we covet, that we hold as aspirations for our lives [**Colossians 3:5**]. Today idols are common place, from musicians to to movie stars and millionaires, riches to fame, motor cars and houses, and You Tube personalities. We may not physically bow down to them but many worship them anyway. Here in the UK we had a comedy show called 'The Vicar of Dibley', which was about a female vicar of the Church of England, it was a hit. Several times the vicar, kissed a picture of Jesus that hung on the vicarage wall, I could never decide whether this counted a idol worship or not, how would you perceive this action.

Whilst certain denominations seem to ignore this commandment, they are not on their own, for many other denominations would also fall into this trap. We must not hold anything up as a worshipful image, whether it be ambition or our favourite celebrity, but we must worship in Spirit and truth [**John 4:23-24**]. Otherwise we can be sure that no immoral or impure person, an idolater, will enter the kingdom [**Ephesians 5:5**]. Do not be deceived because as we approach many believers will be drawn away from the faith by deceitful spirits and wrong teaching [**1 Timothy 4:1**]. They will listen to people who will teach myths [New Age] rather than the truth and follow their own passions (idols) [**2 Timothy 4:3-4**]

Part 2 - Warnings

In verse five of Exodus 20 there is a frightening warning about breaking this commandment where God states that He will

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

