



# THE 10 COMMANDMENTS BEFORE MOSES AND SINAI

As we are all well aware of the “10 Commandments” have been under attack within our culture. There have been movements and unfortunately they have been in some cases successful, to remove them from the walls of our courthouses, schools, legislative buildings, etc. However, I believe the most unfortunate attack against the 10 Commandments has been within sectors of some who refer

to themselves as a part of the Body of Christ. Ultimately, there is a full throttle attack against the Word of God in general.

There are movements now that not only want to remove the 10 Commandments but also want to “throw out” the entire Old Testament saying that it is irrelevant and it is nothing but a bunch of myths and legends written by men (like Moses, Samuel, David) who were influenced by other myths, legends and superstitions. There is a movement to remove the teachings of Jesus as found in the Gospels saying they are irrelevant as well because they were before His resurrection. I have heard others say that we need to get rid of and not teach or preach from 1, 2 or 3 John because the Apostle John talks too much about sin. Then there are those that say we do not need the Book of Revelation because everything written in it has already happened (the preterists).

I believe those who say and teach such things are those that we are warned of in Jude and 2Peter. Jesus warned His disciples that would people such as these would come to infiltrate and try to destroy His true Church. The apostle Paul warns of these heretics as well and he states that they come as “angels” of light.” Paul also warns us that it is the enemy’s mission to blind the mind and these eyes of those in this world – including those who call themselves believers. They are called “apostates” who teach such “apostasies.”

There was a person who tried to get me into a discussion and argue the thought that there is no such thing as man ever having a fallen, sinful nature. He told me that it is nowhere in the Bible. I knew their motive was not pure. Therefore, I took Paul’s advise as he tells us that when these people try to suck us into such discussions – *“But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.”* Titus 3:9.

When it comes to the 10 Commandments and the Law, we are somehow under a misconception that these commands when given on Mt Sinai were somehow a “new” concept made up by God just for the Hebrews and for mankind in general to keep them in bondage. However, as we will discuss, these “10 Commandments” given by God on Mt Sinai were in existence way before Moses. Actually, they all have their origins as we will see in Genesis – the Book of Beginnings, and the Book of Job. Job was thought to be a contemporary of the time of Isaac. With that we know that the events of Job would taking place during the time of Genesis and therefore prior to Moses and Sinai.

God, on Mt Sinai, simply declared these “commandments” to the whole earth in a clear concise manner and wrote them in stone. Some use the term “codify” because God wrote them down and made them into a clear “code of conduct and behavior” that those who choose to call upon Him as their God should model their lives upon. For if they chose to obey and live to this lifestyle of moral excellence, than they would be abundantly blessed in the blessings of God.

Of course we know that because of man’s fallen and sinful nature (yes, man after Adam’s failure in the Garden has a “sinful nature”) no one could live in this lifestyle. Therefore, God sent Jesus to free us from the bondage to sin that Adam’s failure brought. Jesus renewed our spirit and sent His Holy Spirit to come and dwell within the believer so that the believer could now live this life of moral excellence. Jesus was the perfect role-model of that type of lifestyle as He walked this earth.

God's Word defines sin as "the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4) Romans 4:15 tells us "*where there is no law there is no transgression.*" If there was no "law" before Moses and Sinai then there would have been no transgression or sin found in the Book of Genesis. Yet, we find plenty of examples of "sin" in the Book of Genesis. You don't have to look far or hard. What about Adam and Eve? What about Cain? What about Sodom and Gomorrah? Etc., etc., etc... We see the word "sin" mentioned in Genesis 4:7. That was way before Moses and Sinai.

In Exodus 16:28 **before Sinai**, God declared to the Hebrews concerning their disobedience as He states "*How long do you refuse to keep **My commandments and My laws?***" (Exodus 16:28). God clearly speaks of both His "commandments and laws" as already being in existence and in force well before He listed the Ten Commandments verbally at Mt. Sinai, as described **four chapters later!** The scriptures clearly show that they existed and were in force well before then.

We read in Genesis 26:5, where God tells Isaac that He blessed his father Abraham, "*Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and **kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.***" If there was no statutes, commands, laws or precepts before Mt Sinai than why would God say what He said?

Genesis 13:13 tells us that "*...the men of Sodom were **exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.***" Since sin is violating God's law, the people of Sodom could not have been judged for being wicked and sinful if there was no law against what they were doing. That would truly make God unfair and unscrupulous, which we know He is not. God is all-loving, just, full of grace, mercy and truth. Therefore, there must have been an understanding and a "passing down" of His statutes, laws, commands and precepts from the beginning. That is exactly where we need to begin – "*In the beginning...*" - in the Book of Beginnings – Genesis.

Two key phrases in all of this are found in Genesis 1:1-31. We read that it was God who spoke everything into existence. As He spoke those things into existence we read, "*it was so...*" and "*it was good...*" Whatever was in the heart of God, He spoke it forth and "*it was so.*" However, most importantly, we must grasp the ultimate fact that not only whatever God spoke came into being but that "**it was good!!!**" Whatever God spoke was and is good. This included everything He spoke to Adam. This includes every statute, law, command and precept, every word spoken by God throughout the scriptures was and is **GOOD!!!**

Before we go further I would like to mention one other thing. Actually, what we call the "Ten Commandments" were never originally called that. The Hebrews originally referred to them as "The Ten Words" In the Greek it is referred to as the "Decalogue." I think this is important because, although I don't necessarily have an issue with this, many people are "turned off" by the word "commandment." We must take note that God gave these "Ten Words" (Decalogue) for the good of the Hebrew people and not to place them in bondage. After all, didn't He set them free from the "bondage of Egypt?" Why would He set them free just to place them in bondage again? No, we must recognize that these "Ten Words" (Decalogue) were actually a roadmap for the Hebrew people to live a life of true freedom in their God.

However, it was still their choice to do or not to do them. If they followed and obeyed, they would be blessed by God. If they chose not to follow and obey but rather reject and rebel against the things of God they would reap the consequences of their actions and open the door for the enemy to come.

We also know that there were "other commandments" expressed before Moses at Mt Sinai. They are referred to as the "Noahide Commandments." The Jewish people are very much aware of these "commandments." They are thought of as commandments given prior to the Mosaic Laws, therefore they are commandments that were given and to be lived out by all mankind. According to their tradition, God gave the Jewish people the 10 Commandments on Sinai but the rest of the people (the Gentiles) were to continue to live by these Noahide Commandments.

The Jewish people refer to Gentiles who they deem as walking in these Noahide Commandments, as “Righteous Gentiles.” They are considered “Sons of the covenant of Noah.” If we look carefully in Acts 15 we see that James used these Noahide Commandments as a guide in his wise counsel concerning the new Gentile believers that were now coming into the Body of Christ.

These seven Noahide Commandments were in motion from Adam to Noah. After Noah and His family left the Ark and made a burnt offering unto the Lord they were to continue to live out these “precepts.” These are also considered as the statutes, laws, commandments and precepts of God that were mentioned in Genesis and Job prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. These Noahide commandments are very similar to those seen within the Ten Commandments. This also therefore, attests to the fact that all of the precepts of the 10 Commandments are found within Genesis and Job from creation to the time of Moses on Mt. Sinai. The following are the seven Noahide Commandments.

- Do Not Deny God
- Do Not Blaspheme God
- Do Not Murder
- Do Not Engage in Incestuous, Adulterous or Homosexual Relationships.
- Do Not Steal
- Do Not Eat of a Live Animal
- Establish Courts/Legal System to Ensure Obedience to these laws

So how did the people of the time before Moses know what would be considered sin. Well the first clue we get is in Genesis 2:9 where we see God planted the “Tree of Life” and the “Tree of Good and Evil.” The Tree of Good and Evil in and of itself expresses that there were actions and behavior that were either acceptable to God or actions and behavior that would be opposite of His character and nature. Before that ate of the tree, Adam and Eve were “clothed in righteousness.” They were living a life of “moral excellence” trusting in and obeying God. The “commands” of loving God and loving each other did not need to be written down on stones or tablets because they were already written upon their hearts.

They were given one command to obey, *“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”* Genesis 2:17. Notice, that God told them to not eat of the Tree of Good and Evil because if you do you will die. He did not tell them not to eat of the Tree of Life. Why? This was because they already had the God given life that He gave them when He created them.

We see in the beginning that the “command” to not eat of the Tree of Good and Evil was the only thing God warned them not to do. This whole account reveals to us God’s perfect love. His perfect love is revealed by giving them a choice. The statutes, laws, commands and precepts of God are actually a beautiful expression of God’s perfect love and His awesome grace and mercy. Choice is an expression of perfect love and grace. If God did not give them a choice, then they would have been under bondage to God and forced to live His ways. However, the choice to obey expresses His love and grace by expressing to them the blessings and as well as the consequences of the choices they would make.

By partaking of the fruit of “Good and Evil,” when they ate of it, it “opened their eyes” to a whole new, but unfortunately tainted and perverted world that now knew what sin was. They became “naked.” Perverted ways of thinking and looking at each other came into being. Their relationship became affected. Their eyes were truly opened and they immediately entered the world of a life that now understood what sin and its ways were. The “wonderful world” of death, stealing, killing, dishonoring others, lying and bearing false witness against each other, covetousness of what others was very much now instilled within the minds and conscious. It did not need to be written down on stones. It was now written in their heart – both the good and now the evil.

Let's take a look and see if we can find "The Ten Commandments" (The Ten Words/ Decalogue) being established first by God in the Books of Genesis and Job.

- **"Thou shalt not have no other Gods before me"** – Genesis 1:1-26 reveals that God is the creator of all things. Therefore, He is the one and only true God. He always existed before anything else came into existence. He created everything that we read in Genesis. Even prior to the creation story we know that He created the angels. Remember, He created these angels and they were good. Yet they had the freedom of choice. They made their choice and one third of the angels rebelled and followed after Lucifer. Lucifer and his followers tried to usurp God and become God but we know how that worked out. The Tower of Babel was built by men to enter into heaven and "dethrone" God and make themselves god over all things. We know how that worked out. God created all things so therefore there is nothing greater than Him. *"Hath not the potter power over the clay?"* (Romans 9:21.) God declared this to Abraham in Genesis 17:7-9, *"I will be your God and you shall be my people."* The qualifying factor in this was if Abraham would choose to allow God to be his God – as we know, he did. In Genesis 35:1-3 we read concerning Jacob, *"And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, 'Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.'*
- **"Thou shalt not make unto thee 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"** – Genesis 1:26 tells us, *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..."* The only thing that is made in the image of God was man and man was created for His pleasure and to worship Him. In Genesis 35:4 we read again concerning Jacob and what He told his family in the same account as above, *"So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem."* In this we see Jacob understood the importance of getting rid of idols and only worshipping the true God. In Job we see Job disavowing worship of the idols of the sun and the moon. *"If I have observed the sun when it shines, or the moon moving in its brightness, so that my heart has been secretly enticed, and my mouth has kissed my hand; 28 This also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, For I would have denied God who is above."* (Job 31:27-28)
- **"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain"** – This means to curse either using the God's name in a derogatory manner or simply "cursing" God. We see in Job that he was concerned that his children were doing just that as we read in Job 1:5, *"So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them [his children], and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, 'It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' Thus Job did regularly."* We also know that after all the calamities that came upon Job his wife encouraged him to "curse God." Yet we read in Job 2:10, *"In all this, Job did not sin with his lips."* Job knew it would be sin if he cursed the name of God. Taking "God's name in vain" can also mean to use His name in misrepresenting who He is and what He says. The serpent (the devil who already sinned in heaven and therefore, was full of evil) misrepresented God as he tempted Adam and Eve. The serpent (the devil) reaped the consequences by forever slithering in the dust and ultimately being crushed by the seed of the women. Adam and Eve unfortunately, misrepresented God by adding to His word by stating... **"God hath said we should not eat from the tree of life nor shall we touch it..."** God never said anything about touching the tree. They both used God's name but they both misrepresented what He said and what His heart truly was. They tried to "clarify" and add to what God had originally said and meant. They were saying that God's Word was not enough but needed to be clarified. Finite man needs to explain things better than the infinite all wise, all knowing God. Hmmm...

- ***“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*** – Obviously, we can see this very clearly as God, in the beginning, establishes the Sabbath and the Sabbath rest in Genesis 2:1-3. We also see that Moses told the people to prepare for the Sabbath even before they got to Mt Sinai. (Exodus 16:22-31) Obviously, he knew about the keeping of the Sabbath prior to Mt Sinai. It was passed down from generation to generation.
- ***“Honor thy father and thy mother”*** – A good example of this “commandment” being followed even before given at Sinai is found in Genesis 25:29. We see the account of Isaac and Ishmael both coming together to bury their father, Abraham. Ishmael experienced a very traumatic rejection by his father. Yet, he overcame that tragic event in his life that was done to him by his father and joined Isaac, the one who replaced him, in burying Abraham. In doing so Ishmael showed honor and respect towards the one who gave him life – his father. Even though many of us do not like to hear it, but the fact remains that God blessed both Isaac and, yes, even Ishmael abundantly. It was because Ishmael honored His father. He lived to be 137 years old. This is a good lesson for us today for those who have been hurt or even abused by a parent or both parents. God is the giver of life. He chose to use our parents to bring each one of us who were found in His heart from the beginning of time to be birthed into this life. God used our mothers and fathers to bring us into being upon this earth. They were His tools to bring life to us. Now, I know that many times our mothers and fathers have hurt us and even, yes there has been abuse. However, we still need to honor our father and mother as the ones God used to give us life. We are not to honor their frailties and misdeeds but we are never to replace them in our hearts for being used by God to give us life. We are to honor their position but not their misdeeds. The scriptures are clear that we have a responsibility to our parents and the promise of doing so is that *“it will be well with thee and you will have long life.”*
- ***“Thou shalt not kill.”*** – This is literally referring to murder which is premeditated. Manslaughter is accidental and God had made provisions, even prior to the giving of the law. There were many cultures that had made “places of refuge” for people who committed manslaughter. Genesis 1:28 tells us to “be fruitful and multiply.” This was God’s command. Anything opposite of this would be breaking His command – murder is breaking His command because it goes against the command to be fruitful and multiply. God is life and the giver of life. Taking life is contrary to God’s character. When confronted by God concerning his incorrect offering, we see that Cain refused to be corrected and became angry (another side effect of a sinful nature – hmmm...). Job tells us in Job 24:14, *“The murderer rises with the light; He kills the poor and needy; And in the night he's like a thief.”* The precept of “murder and killing” and it being wrong was known by civilization prior to Sinai. God told Cain that because of this anger and refusal to be corrected *“sin lieth at the door”* – the door of his heart. If there was no law about murder then there would be no incorrect attitude of heart that would lead to the action of sin that needed to be confronted with by God. Therefore, Cain knew that murder was wrong and opposite of God’s heart for man to be fruitful and multiply and to celebrate life. It did not matter to Him. Cain had already thought of killing Abel in his heart. God knew his heart. Cain was told it was sin by God. Yet, he still went out and committed murder. Then even when confronted and given the opportunity to repent after murdering Abel, he refused. The consequence was that Cain was “marked” for life.
- ***“Thou shalt not commit adultery”*** – Genesis 2:23-24, tells us, *“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”* God created one woman for one man. Genesis 12:17-19 tells us about Abraham and Sarah. Even though Pharaoh was not aware that Sarah was Abraham’s wife, he still was “plagued” and affected by what would be the consequences of the “sin” of adultery. We see the same thing happened with Isaac and Rebecca in Genesis 26:6-11. Even the pagan king, Abimelech knew

adultery was wrong. In Genesis 39:7-9 we read of Joseph being tempted by his master's wife. Joseph knew it was wrong to go in to be with his master's wife. How did Pharaoh, Abimelech and Joseph all know that being with another man's wife was wrong? Because it was already initiated by God back in Genesis 2:21-24

- ***"Thou shalt not steal"*** – The precept against stealing property from another person has been found in every culture in history. There are scriptures in the Book of Job that clearly support the concept that Job and his companions considered stealing to be wrong. (Job 22:5-6; 24:14; 31:39-40). In Genesis 30:33 we see in an exchange between Jacob and Laban that Jacob says, *"So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me."* Therefore, the concept of stealing being wrong is found prior to Moses.
- ***"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."*** – We see this throughout the Book of Job as his "close" friends came to "comfort" him. They assumed things and accused Job of having incorrect motives, having done some horrible deeds, etc, all against God. Their motives were that of self-righteousness and being accusatory. They continually spoke incorrect things (slander) concerning Job. Job's close friends had him all wrong. That must have hurt more than his boils. God came and told them that they all needed to repent of their words. This is also referring to someone being "slandorous" towards an individual. By the way, that is where we get the term "satan" from for that is one of the characteristics of the enemy. Revelation 12:10 tells us the satan is *"...the accuser of the brethren."* In Genesis, the devil brought false accusations against God to Adam and Eve. In Job, the devil tried to bring false accusations about Job before God.
- ***"Thou shalt not covet..."*** – Coveting is simply the desire to have what someone else has. Its motives could be greed, jealousy, pride, etc. It is no coincidence that this is mentioned at the conclusion of the 10 commandments. *"Thou shalt not covet"* truly goes right to the root of falling into the trap of disobedience in all of the other commandments. This one expresses and reveals that it is all about the attitude of heart that an individual has towards God. Is the person satisfied and therefore totally trusting in their God? Just opening up the door to the enemy's tactics can lead to being covetous and jealous. Even though Adam and Eve wore the garments of righteousness, when the seed of doubt and mistrust of God was presented to them by the serpent they allowed it to be planted. It was just enough to open the door for this "sin" to take place in their heart. We see that God gave Adam and Eve everything but told them not to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life or of the Tree of Good and Evil. Adam and Eve, when tempted and allowed to be taken in by the serpent's lies concerning God, they all of a sudden "saw" that the tree was to be "desired" and to make them wise as God and ultimately to be as God. They entered into coveting these things within their heart. This led them to disobey God's. Therefore, they disobeyed (sin) and the result was death. The wages of sin and disobedience of all these statutes is death – separation from God. (Romans 6:23) John refers to coveting as *"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life."* (1John 2:16)

As we look through and study the Bible – THE WORD OF GOD – we see that the statutes, the laws, commandments and precepts of God are found from Genesis 1:1 – Revelation 22:21. They go to the core of living a life of moral excellence that is pleasing to God. The statutes, laws, commandments and precepts of God always were, still are and always will be (every "jot and tittle") in effect until all things are passed away. This means that God's Word is in full force until this heaven and earth passes away and the New Earth and the New Jerusalem are brought forth. It is at that time that God will declare that we "ARE HIS PEOPLE and HE IS OUR GOD!!!

Jesus states in John 14:15 that, *"If you love me, keep my commandments."* The Ten Commandments and all of God's statutes, laws and precepts concerning living a life of moral excellence are who Jesus is. He is the

Living Word who came in the flesh and who is the Word of God. God is love. Jesus, who is God, is love. Therefore, His commandments are **GOOD** and are an expression of His love to His people. We express our love to Him by obeying His ways. Not out of fear or bondage but out of love and gratitude.

Revelation 22:14 tells us, *“Blessed are they that **do his commandments**, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”* The Apostle John after being given the Revelation by God of what is to come declared this statement. He encourages all believers to do God’s commandments. For the reward will be the “tree of life” – eternally in the everlasting arms and being in a never ending relationship with the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

However, John also states in Revelation 22:15, *“For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”* These sound a lot like the commandments of God understood in Genesis and Job, stated clearly and written upon the two tablets on Mt Sinai in Exodus 20. Hmm... Those that oppose and rebel against the statutes, laws, commandments and precepts of God will be *“...without.”* In other words they will be “on the outside looking in.” Hmm...

Finally, the Apostle John writes to all believers in 1John 5:3, *“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And **His commandments are not burdensome.**”* They are not burdensome because they are GOOD!!! We should not look at any of God’s statutes, laws, commandments or precepts as a mode of bondage. We do them and obey them out of love unto our God who first loved us.