

# Deuteronomy 5 Commentary

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[Moses on Mt Nebo](#) (Deuteronomy 34:1+)  
Listen to [Mt Nebo](#) as you Ponder How Moses' [May Have Felt](#)

Deuteronomy by [Irving Jensen](#)- used by permission  
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Source: Ryrie Study Bible

## Deuteronomy

Dt 1:1-4:43	Dt 4:44-26:19	Dt 27:1-34:12
Moses' First Discourse	Moses' Second Discourse	Moses' Third Discourse

Historical Review	Legal Exposition				Prophetical Promises		
Looking Back 40 Years	Looking Up What God Expected of Israel				Looking Ahead What God Will Do for Israel		
Recapitulation of Wanderings	Rehearsal of Israel's Law				Ratification of Israel's Covenant		Historical Appendices
Remembrance of the past	Commandments for the Present				Dt 27:1-30:20 Blessing and Cursing		Dt 31:1-34:12 Death of Moses
Take Heed Don't forget	Ten Commands	Related Commands			Two Choices Affecting the Future		Moses' Parting Words
Dt 1:1-4:43 Looking Back	Dt 4:44-11:32 Exposition of Decalogue	Dt 12:1-16:17 Ceremonial Laws	Dt 16:18-20:20 Civil Laws	Dt 21:1-26:19 Social Laws	Dt 27:1-28:68 Ratification of Covenant	Dt 29:1- 30:20 Terms of Covenant	Dt 31:1-34:12 Moses' Song, Blessing, Death
<b>Plains of Moab</b>							
ca. 2 Months <b>Moses: Author</b> (Except Dt 34)							

**Deuteronomy 5:1** Then Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "**Hear**, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully.

- **all Israel:** De 1:1 29:2,10
- **Hear:** De 4:1
- **Observe,** Mt 23:3
- [Click to see Multiple Bible Versions on this verse](#) - to go to next verse click arrow (➤) at top of page
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passages: LISTEN, HEAR, HEARKEN

Deuteronomy 4:1 "Now, O Israel, **listen** to the statutes and the judgments which I am **teaching** you to **perform**, so that (purpose clause) you may **live** and **go** in and **take possession** of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

Deuteronomy 6:3-4 "O Israel, you should **listen and be careful** to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. 4 "**Hear, O Israel!** The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

Deuteronomy 9:1 "**Hear, O Israel!** You are crossing over the Jordan today to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, great cities fortified to heaven,

Deuteronomy 20:3 "He shall say to them, **Hear, O Israel,** you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them,

Deuteronomy 27:9 Then Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying, '**Be silent and listen, O Israel!** This day you have become a people for the LORD your God.



### [Are You Listening to the Master's Voice?](#)

**Meredith Kline** - When suzerainty treaties were renewed, the stipulations, which constituted the long and crucial central section of the covenant, were repeated but with modifications, especially such as were necessary to meet the changing situation. So Moses rehearsed and reformulated the requirements promulgated in the Sinaitic Covenant (ED: IT IS STILL THE MOSAIC COVENANT BUT WITH SOME CHANGES RELATED TO INHERITING THE LAND). Furthermore, just as treaty stipulations customarily began with the fundamental and general demand for the vassal's absolute allegiance to the suzerain, and then proceeded to various specific requirements, so Moses now confronted Israel with the primary demand for consecration to the Lord (Dt 5:5-11) and then with the ancillary stipulations of covenant life (Dt 5:12-26). This chapter opens and closes (Dt 5:32, 33) with a charge to follow carefully the divine stipulations of the covenant which was in process of solemnization. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**Then** - This expression of time indicates sequence.

**Moses summoned all Israel** - Either Moses voice was supernaturally "amplified" or more likely he spoke to the leaders of the tribes who then relayed his message to the people.

**Pulpit Commentary** - "The calling refers not to the publicity of the address, but to the clear voice which, breaking forth from the inmost heart of Moses, aimed at penetrating, as far as possible, to all (Genesis 49:1; John 7:37)" (Schroeder) (cf Pr 8:4).

**Grant** - It was necessary now for the generation then present to hear these terms as their fathers had done. The principle is one that pertains even up to this present day. Every generation must learn the truth of God for themselves. It is not sufficient to "know" truth merely as something believed and practised by a past generation. The continuing importance of this is recognised in that **every seventh year at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles the terms of the covenant were to be read by the priests** to "men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates" (see Dt 31:9-13 below). ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

Deuteronomy 31:9-13+ So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. 10 Then Moses commanded them, saying, "**At the end of every seven years**, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place which He will choose, **you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing**. 12 "Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may hear and learn and fear the LORD your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. 13 "**Their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the LORD your God**, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."

**And said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing-** Moses is getting ready to review the "10 Commandments" in the following section. **Hear** is sometimes translated "**Hearken**" means listen attentively (alert, pay close attention), take heed. The Hebrew word for "hear" (shama) can include the thought of not just to hear but to obey (shama is the verb word Israel said in Ex 24:7 "we will be obedient"). If you don't hear God's statutes, etc, you cannot learn them or obey them.

**Jack Deere** - The solemn formula **Hear, O Israel** indicates that what follows (the decrees and laws; cf. 4:45) is not incidental but absolutely necessary for the survival of Israel as a nation. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**That** (purpose clause) **you may learn them and observe them carefully** - The **NAS** rendering makes it slightly harder to see that there are actually 3 verbs - **learn, observe, carefully**. **Carefully** in Hebrew is the verb **asah** meaning to do. Thus the **ESV** is more accurate rendering it "you shall **learn** them and **be careful** (**shamar**; Lxx - **phulasso** - watch, guard, preserve) to **do** them: (Dt 5:1ESV). So here is the pattern = **Hear-Learn-be careful** (preserve)-**Do**. This "**tried and true**" "quartet" is the key to life and prosperity in the Promised Land. It is also the key to an abundant life in Christ for believers today! The ultimate action is to do them and failure to do them would be outright disobedience and would potentially forfeit the divine blessing (we're not speaking of one sin, but of a lifestyle of disobedience. We all disobey, but hopefully we quickly confess and repent.) Note that the first two steps (hear-learn) may make one "smart" (like the Pharisees who heard and learned the law, often by heart). God does not want smarter sinners

but men and women who are more like their Savior. James sums it up in commanding "**prove** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves **doers** of the word, and not merely **hearers** who delude themselves.." (James 1:22+)

**Grant** adds that "The Word of God has not only to be "learned" and "kept" as an academic exercise but it must be observed. There must be willingness to put it into practice, not for the purpose of restricting the enjoyment of life, but rather that life will be enjoyed to the full as the Lord intended it should be. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Hear** (listen, obey, understand) ([08085](#)) **shama** means to hear, to obey, to understand. The most famous use of this word is to introduce the Shema, "Hear, O, Israel," followed by the content of what the Israelites are to understand about the Lord their God and how they are to respond to Him (Dt. 6:4+). **Shama** can take on the connotation of obedience in certain contexts such as the following = Ex 24:7+ "Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we **will be obedient** (**shama**)!" In Ge 3:17+ God said "Because you have **listened** (OBEYED) to the voice of your wife..." 2 Ki. 14:11 = "Amaziah would not **listen** (OBEY)."

**Learn** ([03925](#)) (**lamad**) primarily means to learn but in the Piel (intensive) stem it means to teach. **Lamad** conveys the idea of learning and teaching in the sense of educating and training. The first use of **lamad** in the OT is in Dt 4:1+ meaning to teach (Lxx = [didasko](#)) which emphasizes its importance (because Israel was being given instructions prior to entering the promised land). Biblical teaching seeks to guide people to follow the will of God, not by offering mere human opinions or suggestions but by bringing "the authoritative declaration of the Word of God. Most of the uses of lamad are in the book of Deuteronomy and the Psalms. The Lxx translates **lamad** in this verse with [manthano](#) (gives us our word "disciples" = [mathetes](#) which is literally "learners" - the only command in the Great Commission - Mt 28:19+). Learning is intimately linked to reverential **fear of the LORD** which is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom (Pr 1:7, 9:10) (cf the repeated phrase "learn to fear" = Deut. 4:10; 14:23; 17:19; 31:12, 13, cp Ps 34:11). Lamad can be used for training animals (Hos 10:11) where it refers metaphorically to Ephraim "a trained (lāmad) heifer." **All uses of lamad in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 11:19; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 17:19; Deut. 18:9; Deut. 20:18; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 31:19; Deut. 31:22;

**Observe** (guard, watch) ([08104](#)) **shamar** means to watch, to keep, to preserve, to guard, to be careful, to watch over, to watch carefully over, to be on one's guard. In the first use of shamar Adam was placed "into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to **keep** it" (Ge 2:15) Adam did a poor job tending/watching/guarding the garden!

## Deuteronomy 5:2 "The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb.

- De 4:23 Ex 19:5-8 24:8 Heb 8:6-13 9:19-23
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

### JEHOVAH CUT COVENANT WITH ISRAEL AT HOREB

Moses has just drawn their attention to **the statutes and the ordinances** and now he explains that these are not something completely new but were given to the first generation at Mt Sinai in what is known as the Old Covenant. Deuteronomy in fact means just that -- a second giving of the Law. The Old Covenant was still in force and Moses would add nothing new to the first giving of the Law. There would however be some stipulations not specifically stated in the first giving of the Law but they would still clearly be based on the the original Law. It was critical for the second generation to listen to this recounting of the Law so that they could fulfill the covenant responsibilities and enjoy the blessings of God, including prosperity and the Promised Land.

**The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb**(Mt Sinai) - This covenant resulted in God establishing Israel as a **theocratic** nation. The LORD initiated the covenant, not Israel. This was God's idea! It was a covenant between the infinite, holy God and finite, unholy men! That alone tells you how great is the covenant mercy of God. **Made a covenant** is literally "cut a covenant". With us is interesting because only Moses, Joshua and Caleb were at the original covenant cutting ceremony at Sinai, but Moses' point is that even though the first generation had perished, the covenant was with the nation of Israel as a whole. And it was the second generation who constituted the nation of Israel as this time.

**Cut** (make [a covenant], cut off, destroy) ([03772](#)) **karath** literally means to cut, to cut off or to sever an object from its source or cut into parts and implies a violent action. For example, Zipporah "cut off her son's foreskin."

(Ex 4:25) or the Jews "cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes." (Nu 13:2-24, **Karath** is used with **beriyth** meaning to "cut a covenant" or establish a covenant between two parties, either between God and men (Abrahamic Covenant = Ge 15:18, Mosaic Covenant = Ex 24:8, Dt 5:2-3, 9:9; see **Abrahamic versus Mosaic** and **Abrahamic vs Old vs New**) or between men (Ge 21:27, 32, 26:28, 31:44, 2Sa 3:12-13, 21, 5:3; 1Sa 18:3, 20:15-16, 22:8, 23:18 between Jonathan and David [**See discussion of their Covenant - Exchanging of Robes**]; cutting covenant was prohibited = Ex 23:32, Dt 7:2, Jdg 2:2, a dictum which Joshua disobeyed - Josh 9:6-7,11). In the context of cutting covenant **karath** is translated in the Lxx with **diatithemi** (**see detailed discussion**) which is used in the sense of making "a last will or testament" (Heb 9:16).

**Covenant** (01285) **berit/berith/beriyth** means covenant, treaty, compact, agreement between two parties (first use in God's covenant with Noah - Ge 6:18, 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). As discussed more below **beriyth** describes a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh. Covenant is a solemn, binding arrangement between two parties and entails a variety of responsibilities, benefits and penalties depending on the specific covenant which is being studied. OT covenants were made between God and man (eg, God with Noah - Ge 6:18, with Abram - Ge 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44) (**For summary of covenants see - Covenant in the Bible**).

The majority of the the OT uses of **beriyth** are translated as **covenant** (275/285 uses) and the majority of these are translated into Greek using the word **diatheke** [**word study**], which was a common technical word used in the Greco-Roman law to describe the settlement of an inheritance (i.e., a "last will and testament") and used in the NT to describe the "*self-commitment, promises, and conditions by which* [God] entered into relationship with man" (Friberg).

**Covenant** can be summarized as follows...

- (1) Between two parties (sometimes equal, other times superior to inferior) -- (a) **nations** - (peace) treaty, alliance of friendship (b) **individuals** -- a pledge or agreement with mutual obligations to each other (c) **monarch and subjects** (2Sa 3:21, 5:3, 1Chr 11:3) -- a constitution (d) **God and man** -- Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New Covenants. **TWOT** adds that...

Apart from blood ties the covenant was the way people of the ancient world formed wider relationships with each other. The accounts of the relationship between David and Jonathan are the only unequivocal mention of a compact between two individuals in the Old Testament (1Sa 18:3; 20:8; 23:18). It is spoken of as "a covenant of the Lord" because the Lord witnessed the transaction and protected the legal order.

- (2) Accompanied by (a) **signs** (also witnesses, memorials, shared meals) (b) **sacrifices**, (c) **solemn, binding oaths** -- sealing the relationship with promises of blessing for keeping the covenant and curses for breaking the covenant (d) Sometimes with written document on which the words of the covenant, its terms in the form of promises and stipulations were spelled out, witnessed to, signed and sealed. **Behm** (TDNT) notes that in ancient times

There is no firmer guarantee of legal security peace or personal loyalty than the covenant (e.g., Amos 1:9).

- (3) Is depicted in the idiomatic phrase "**make (cut) a covenant**" in which there is was a blood sacrifice as part of the covenant ritual.

**but with us, with all those of us alive here today** - While those who were alive at this time were very young children when Yahweh cut the covenant of the Law with their parents, it is viewed as cut with the nation of Israel.

#### Related Resources:

- [Covenant \(Law\) - 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Covenant \(Agreement\) - 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Covenants - Torrey's Topical Textbook](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Covenant, in the Old Testament](#)
- American Tract Society [Covenant](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Covenant](#)

- Baker's Evangelical Dictionary [New Covenant](#) [Covenant, the New](#) [Covenant](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Covenant](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Covenant](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Covenant](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [New Covenant](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Covenant](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Covenant](#)
- King James Dictionary [Covenant](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Covenant](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Covenant](#) [Make \(Cut\) a Covenant](#) [Covenant](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Covenant](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopaedia [Covenants](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Covenant](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Covenant](#)

**Deuteronomy 5:3 "The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today.**

- De 29:10-15 Ge 17:7,21 Ps 105:8-10 Jer 32:38-40 Mt 13:17 Ga 3:17-21 Heb 8:8,9
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 29:10-15 "You (FIRST GENERATION OF ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT) stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God: your chiefs, your tribes, your elders and your officers, even all the men of Israel, 11 your little ones (THIS WOULD PRESUMABLY BE THE AUDIENCE MOSES IS NOW ADDRESSING), your wives, and the alien who is within your camps, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, 12 that you may enter into the covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath which the LORD your God is making with you today, 13 in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 14 "Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath, 15 but both with those who stand here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God and with those who are not with us here today (IN OTHER WORDS WITH FUTURE GENERATIONS OF ISRAELITES).

### THIS COVENANT WAS WITH NATION OF ISRAEL

**The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers** (cf Dt 4:31, 37, Dt 7:8, 12, Dt 8:18) - **This covenant** refers to the conditional covenant made with the first generation of Israel at Mt Sinai. **Our fathers** refers to the patriarchs, **Abraham, Isaac, Jacob** with whom God cut the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant (Ge 12:1-3+, Ge 15:1-21+), all of whom died without receiving the promises (especially the Promised Land). See the discussion of the [Abrahamic versus Mosaic Covenants](#). While the Abrahamic Covenant **unconditionally** guaranteed Israel the Promised Land, the Mosaic (Old) Covenant was given so they would enjoy the Promised Land, but their enjoyment was contingent (**conditioned**) on whether they obeyed the statutes and ordinances, which is why the Book of Deuteronomy was so critical for the second generation to hear and heed.

**THOUGHT** - When we are saved, we granted eternal life in Christ. That is our possession forever. However, like the Israelites in the Promised Land, our enjoyment of our life in Christ is dependent on obedience. Jesus declared " I came that they may have life, and (present tense = continually) have it abundantly." (Jn 10:10b) Note the verb have in the present tense signifies Jesus desires His followers to have a lifestyle that is beyond measure. If you are not living a life in Christ that is extraordinary, remarkable, exceeding expectations, they perhaps you might want to do some personal inventory (Ps 139:23-24+ helps) to see if you are dabbling with disobedience in some area of your life. If so, confess and repent and get ready to experience an extraordinary life in Christ, nourished by daily intake of His Word and enabled by continual filling of His Spirit. It is your potential in Christ! **Don't miss this "once in a lifetime opportunity."** If you have a persistent sin then ask God's Spirit to enable you to kill it (Ro 8:13b+) and lay it aside so it does not continually easily entangle you (Heb 12:1+), then RUN! (Play "[Run Like Heaven!](#)") God is faithful and you are sincere and serious, He will answer your cry for an abundant life in His Son because in the final analysis He will be greatly glorified by your

supernatural life!

**Deere** has an interesting comment on **did not make this covenant with our fathers** noting "he was teaching the Israelites that this covenant was meant to govern the living, not the dead." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**but with us, with all those of us alive here today** - Yahweh cut this covenant with the people as a whole, with the nation of Israel.

**Deuteronomy 5:4 "The LORD spoke to you face to face at the mountain from the midst of the fire,**

- De 5:24-26 4:33,36 34:10 Ex 19:9,18,19 20:18-22 33:11 Nu 12:8
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 33:11 Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses **face to face**, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

Deuteronomy 34:10 Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew **face to face**,

**Numbers 12:8** With him I speak mouth to mouth, Even openly, and not in dark sayings, And he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant, against Moses?"

## JEHOVAH'S FIERY FACE TO FACE FIERY THEOPHANY

A **theophany** is "Physical appearance or personal manifestation of a god to a person " (See [Feinberg's excellent article below](#))

**The LORD spoke to you face to face at the mountain from the midst of the fire**- This is anthropomorphic language for Israel did not see a form but only heard the voice of Yahweh at Sinai. Even Moses only saw His glory. The picture of **face to face** is one of intimacy, of personal involvement. The point is the the Holy God spoke directly to the people even as He spoke with Moses face to face (see passages above, albeit Moses was clearly in closer communion with Him).

## THEOPHANY Charles Feinberg

Need for a theophany. The basic postulate here is that to see God could be fatal. "He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" (Exodus 33:20NAS; compare Genesis 16:13; Exodus 3:2-6; Exodus 19:20-21; Judges 6:22-23; Judges 13:20-22 . Yet the record is unmistakable that people did see God, such as Moses and others at Sinai (Exodus 24:9-10 ); the Lord's rebuke of Aaron and Miriam (Numbers 12:4-8); and the majestic vision to Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1 ,Isaiah 6:1,6:5). Customarily, God is not revealed to ordinary sight, God at times chooses to reveal Himself in theophanies. Kinds of theophanies.

#### There are some five forms of theophanies.

**1. In human form** Without question the theophany in Exodus 24:10 involved the appearance of a human being, for the text clearly states that a pavement of sapphire appeared "under His feet." At Peniel, Jacob testified that he had seen God face-to-face ( Genesis 32:30 ). On Mount Horeb it was the experience of Moses to speak to God "face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend" (Exodus 33:11 NAS). In the same passage when Moses begged God to show him His glory ( Exodus 33:18 ), the Lord graciously granted Moses a vision of Himself, saying, "I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen" (Exodus 33:23 NAS). If it is protested that the subject is enveloped in mystery, it needs to be remembered that theology without mystery is sheer nonsense. God in His wisdom does not restrict Himself to one method of self-revelation. Notice God's pronouncement in Numbers 12:6-8 , which was quite unlike that of Deuteronomy 4:12-15 where only a voice was granted.

**2. In vision** Even self-seeking Balaam was allowed of God to see the Lord in vision (Numbers 24:3-4 ). Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, giants among the prophets, saw God in visions (Isaiah 6:1; Ezekiel 1:1; Daniel 7:9 ). Jacob, sent off by Isaac to Paddan-aram, was granted a dream in which he saw the Lord (Genesis 28:12-13 ).

**3. By the “Angel of the Lord”** This is the most usual form of theophany, called the “Angel of the Lord” or “Angel of God.” Observe it is not an “Angel of God,” which could include any of the angelic hosts created by God. The “Angel of the Lord” is identified in the accounts with Yahweh Himself. He appears only occasionally in human form. The encounter of the Angel of the Lord with Hagar is of significance in this connection (Genesis 16:7-13 ). See [Angel of the LORD](#).

**4. Not in human form** In some instances the theophany came as at the burning bush (Exodus 3:2-4:17 ) and in the guidance through the wilderness (Exodus 13:21; compare Acts 7:30 ). The glory of the Lord appears to people in numerous passages. See Exodus 16:10; Exodus 33:9-10; Ezekiel 10:4 ). God was also manifest in nature and history (Isaiah 6:3; Ezekiel 1:28; Ezekiel 43:2 ).

**5. As the name of the Lord** God's sacred Name represented His presence (Deuteronomy 12:5; Deuteronomy 102:15; Isaiah 30:27; Isaiah 59:19 ).

Contrast with the incarnation The incarnate Christ was not, and indeed is **not, a theophany**. The phenomena of theophanies were temporary, for the occasion that required them and then disappeared. On the other hand, in the incarnate Christ His deity and humanity were joined, not for time alone, but for eternity. See [Incarnation](#)

**The time factor** Only in the Old Testament economy did God's people need a theophany; since the incarnation, there is no such necessity. The New Testament doctrine of God is final and complete. God is always present in the risen Christ and the Holy Spirit. Still, at times, God's people are more aware of that Presence than at others. ([Holman Bible Dictionary](#))

**Deuteronomy 5:5 while I was standing between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain. He said,**

- De 5:27 Ge 18:22 Ex 19:16 Ex 20:18-21 Ex 24:2,3 Nu 16:48 Ps 106:23 Jer 30:21 Zec 3:1-5 Ga 3:19 Heb 9:24 Heb 12:18-24
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### **Related Passages:**

Exodus 19:16, 19+ So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled....When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder.

Hebrew 12:18+ For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, 19 and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that **those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.** 20 For they could not bear the command, “IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED.” 21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, “I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling.”

### **MOSES THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND ISRAEL**

**While I was standing between the LORD and you at that time**- Moses describes himself as a mediator, a go between, between God and Israel. Moses explains this later in Dt 5:23-27 (see [note](#)).

**To declare to you the word of the LORD**- Yahweh spoke to Moses and Moses spoke God's Word to the people.

**For** - Term of explanation. Moses explains why God had to speak to Him and Moses would pass on what God spoke.

**You were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain**- Israel was fearful of the manifestation of Yahweh on the holy mountain.

In Exodus 19:19-20+ Moses explains why God presented Himself before Israel with such a frightening portrayal on Mt Sinai writing.

Then they said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die.”  
20 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 may remain with you, so that you may not sin.”

**Comment:** God want Israel to fear Him because He knew that if they truly feared Him, this would serve as



an impediment to committing sin against Him. See God's desire for Israel in [note](#) on Deut 5:29.

**He said** - Moses now introduces his quotation of God.

**Deuteronomy 5:6 'I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.'**

- **I am the:** De 4:4 Ex 20:2-17 Lev 26:1,2
- **brought:** Ps 81:5-10
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

**I am the LORD your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery-** The LORD begins by reminding Israel that He was their Deliverer and they He set them free from bondage to the Egyptians. Yahweh introduced the giving of the Law at Sinai with identical words "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Ex 20:2+)

**The LORD your God** - Moses continually emphasizes that Yahweh is Israel's God (279 times in 239 verses out of 396 times in the entire OT! More than 50% of uses in one book!). Uses in chapter 5 - Deut. 5:6; Deut. 5:9; Deut. 5:11; Deut. 5:12; Deut. 5:14; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 5:16; Deut. 5:32; Deut. 5:33;

**Deuteronomy 5:7 'You shall have no other gods before Me.'**

- Ex 20:3 Mt 4:10 Joh 5:23 1Jn 5:21
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 20:3+ "You shall have no other gods before Me.

Deuteronomy 4:39+ "Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.

Deuteronomy 6:13-15+ "You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. 14 "You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, 15 for the LORD your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the LORD your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.

**You shall have no other gods before Me** - More literally the Hebrew reads "there must not be for you other gods," where the phrase "for you" speaks of possession. **Before me** in Hebrew is literally "upon my face," and the Septuagint having "in front of my face" (pros prosopon).

The **NET translation** is "any other gods besides me." The **NET Note** explains "The translation assumes that the phrase indicates exclusion. The idea is that of placing any other god before the LORD in the sense of taking his place. Contrary to the view of some, this does not leave the door open for a henotheistic system where the Lord is the primary god among others. In its literary context the statement must be taken in a monotheistic sense. See, e.g., Dt 4:39; Dt 6:13–15

**Deuteronomy 5:8 'You shall 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.'**

- **an idol** De 4:15-19 Ex 20:4
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 20:4+ "You shall 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.

Deuteronomy 4:15-19+ "So watch yourselves carefully, since **you did not see any form on the day the**

**LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire**, 16 so that you do not act corruptly and make a graven image for yourselves in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the sky, 18 the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water below the earth. 19 "And beware not to lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

## **MAKE NO IDOLS REPRESENTING GOD**

**You shall 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** - When we pursue idols, we are in effect ascribing the glory and praise of God to those who are no gods at all! Hear the word regarding God's glory. **God** Himself declares...

I am the LORD, that is My Name; **I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.** (Isaiah 42:8)

**Paul** explains the pathology of our heart disease which **impels us to pursue idols** - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth (ACTIVELY HOLD DOWN THE TRUTH - THIS IS THE ROOT PROBLEM) in unrighteousness, 19 because that (SPEAKING OF TRUTH) which is known about God is evident within them (INTERNAL CONSCIOUSNESS THAT GOD EXISTS); for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse (CREATION CALLS FOR A POWERFUL CREATOR). 21 For even though they knew God (READ THAT AGAIN - NO "ATHEISTS" HERE!), they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations (DENIAL OF GOD COMPELS "INVENTION" OF GODS), and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 (THE RESULT OF DENYING GOD IS TO MAKE "GODS") and exchanged (A BAD EXCHANGE) the glory of the incorruptible God for an image (IDOLS) **in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.** 25 For they **exchanged the truth of God** for a (LITERALLY "THE") **lie**, and **worshiped and served** (THE VERY PATTERN YAHWEH WARNS ABOUT IN Ex 20:5) the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. (Ro 1:18-25+)

**Guzik** - The second commandment doesn't forbid making an image of something for artistic purposes; God Himself commanded Israel make images of cherubim (Exodus 25:18, 26:31). It forbids the making of images as an aid or help to worship....In John 4:24 Jesus explained the rationale behind the second commandment: God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. The use of images and other material things as a focus or help to worship denies who God is (Spirit) and how we must worship Him (in spirit and truth). ([Enduring Word Commentary](#))

**Phillip Ryken** - This commandment is about worshiping the right God in the right way. God refuses to be worshiped by means of images. This shows that he is spirit, that he does not have a physical form. The mention of the heavens and the earth also shows that he is the Creator. One problem with idols is that they confuse the Creator with his creation. (Moody Bible Commentary)

**Idol** (graven image) ([06459](#))(**pesel** from **pasal** = to hew, cut as in Ex 34:1) is a noun that refers to something carved (graven) or cast image - normally carved from wood or chiseled from rock, but it can also be poured or cast (Isa 40:19; 44:10). Isa40:19 describes the "casting" of an idol that is then plated or overlaid with gold. The first use of **pesel** is here in the Second Commandment in Ex 20:4 (cf Lev 26:2, Dt 5:8) and in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) the Greek word used for **pesel** here is **eidolon** (from **eidos** = that which is seen, what is visible, figure, appearance) is primarily a phantom, form, image, shadow or likeness. Note that other uses of **pesel** are translated with a word found only in the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#), the adjective **gluptos** which means a thing carved or a graven image. (Used in Lxx of Lev 26:1, Dt 4:16, 23, 25).

In Dt 4:23 the result of forgetting the Mosaic covenant is that they make a graven image. Dt 4:25 is a prophecy saying Israel would make idols. In Dt 27:15 God says the man who makes an idol is cursed! The concentration of uses of **pesel** in Judges 17:1-13+ and Judges 18:1-33+ shows the defiling, abominable effect of forgetting the LORD their God (Judges 3:7+).

This commandment is repeated in effect by John at the very end of his first letter writing "Little children, **guard** ([phulasso](#) in the [aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves from idols ([eidolon](#))." (1 John 5:21+) Last words should be lasting words. In this case John's last warning is a lasting warning!

The pattern of the pagan idol worshipping Gentiles in Thessalonica is to be the pattern every man should follow...

1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10<sup>±</sup> For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and **how you** (GENTILES) **turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God**, and to wait (EXPECTANTLY, AS ONE'S LIFESTYLE) for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

This is God's ban on creating images of anything that would attempt to resemble (or be like) Him. In other words do not make an image of the sun or moon or stars, etc and then bow down and worship the thing you created, instead of bowing down to the Creator of everything! How utterly foolish. Read Isaiah 44:6-20 for an extended discourse on the deception and foolishness of making and worshipping graven images [in lieu](#) of the one true and living God!

In the book of Jeremiah the people are repeatedly accused of worshipping the **"Queen of Heaven."** (Jer. 7:18; Jer. 44:17; Jer. 44:18; Jer. 44:19; Jer. 44:25) In their day this was a title for Ishtar (also called Ashtoreth and Astarte), the Babylonian goddess of love and fertility, whose worship involved abominable obscenities (Jer 44:17-19,25). In her role as goddess of fertility, Ishtar was associated with [Tammuz, the god of vegetation](#). Ishtar was sometimes identified with the planet Venus and was designated "Mistress of Heaven" in the [Amarna tablets](#). This sinful worship certainly grieved God, but the people were hurting themselves more than they were hurting the Lord. This pagan immorality was having a devastating effect on their children, and God would send a judgment that would destroy the land, the city, the temple, and people. For more on this worship and it's relation to Mary see [Who is the Queen of Heaven?](#)

**Likeness** (08544)([temunah](#)) means likeness or form. The first use of temunah is in the Second Commandment warning against making images in the likeness of anything which God created (Ex 20:4, Dt 5:8, Dt 4:16, 23, 25). What "form" could be seen of God, Moses was privileged to see (Nu 12:8). It refers to the mental pattern from which the **idol** (pesel) is constructed; it is a real or imagined resemblance. The prohibition against idolatry in the Ten Commandments uses **tēmūnâh** to indicate that no idol is to be made that resembles any object found in creation (Exod 20:4; Deut 5:8).

The **Septuagint** translates **temunah** with [homoíoma](#) which means resemblance or similitude (correspondence in kind or quality = a visible likeness, a thing or sometimes a person that is like or the counterpart of another). Homoíoma refers to that which is made to be like something else, not just in appearance but in reality.

**Temunah** - 10x - form (7x) and likeness(3x). Ex 20:4; Nu 12:8; Dt. 4:12; Dt. 4:15; Dt. 4:16; Dt. 4:23; Dt. 4:25 (See commentary on Deuteronomy 4); Dt. 5:8; Job 4:16; Ps. 17:15

Deuteronomy 4:15-16<sup>±</sup> "So watch yourselves carefully, since you did not see any **form** ([temunah](#)) on the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, so that you do not act corruptly and make a graven image for yourselves in the **form** ([temunah](#)) of any figure, the likeness of male or female

Deuteronomy 4:23<sup>±</sup> "So watch yourselves, that you do not forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the **form** ([temunah](#)) of anything against which the LORD your God has commanded you.

Deuteronomy 4:25<sup>±</sup> "When you become the father of children and children's children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the **form** ([temunah](#)) of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD your God so as to provoke Him to anger,

Deuteronomy 5:8 You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any **likeness** ([temunah](#)) of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

**Or on the earth beneath** - All manner of things have been turned into idols. And of course in the "civilized" world the "idols" take on different shapes and sizes (money, power, sex, sports, etc, etc - see [first resource below](#)) when compared to the Old Testament idols, but they are still idols and still abhorred in the eyes of God!

Israel even turned the jewelry acquired from the Egyptians into an idol shortly after being warned against making idols and also short after unanimously exclaiming "All that the LORD has spoken we will do!" (see Ex 19:7-8<sup>±</sup>)...

"They have **quickly turned aside** from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a **molten calf**, and have **worshipped** it and have **sacrificed** to it and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!'" (Ex 32:8<sup>±</sup>)

**Or in the water under the earth** - This recalls **Dagon** (from dag = fish), the so-called fish god, of the Philistines (Jdg. 16:23; 1 Sa 5:2; 1 Sa 5:3; 1 Sa 5:4; 1 Sa 5:5; 1 Sa 5:7; 1 Chr. 10:10). The Egyptians worshiped the fish goddess [Hatmehit](#).

## Related Resources:

- [What are some modern forms of idolatry?](#) -- READ THIS ONE! ESPECIALLY IF YOU THINK IDOLATRY IS A THING OF THE PAST!
- [Why is idol worship such a powerful temptation?](#)
- [Do Catholics worship idols / practice idolatry?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about eating food/meat that has been sacrificed to idols?](#)
- [Why was the worship of Baal and Asherah a constant struggle for the Israelites?](#)
- [What is a graven image?](#)
- [What should we learn from the golden calf incident in Exodus 32?](#)
- [What sort of pagan revelry did the Israelites indulge in \(Exodus 32:6\)?](#)
- [Why did people keep family idols?](#)
- American Tract Society [Idol, Idolatry](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Idol, idolatry](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Idol, Idolatry](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Idolatry](#)
- CARM Theological Dictionary [Idol, idolatry](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Idolatry](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Idolatry](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Idolatry](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Idolatry](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Idolatry](#)
- King James Dictionary [Idolatry](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Idolatry](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Idolatries](#) [Idolatrical](#) [Idolatry](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Idolatry](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Idolatry](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Idolatry](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Idolatry](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Idolatry](#)
- The Nuttall Encyclopedia [Idolatry](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Idolatry and Idols](#)

**Deuteronomy 5:9 'You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,**

- **You shall not worship them** Ex 20:4-6
- **LORD:** Ex. 3:15.
- **a jealous God:** Ex 34:14
- **visiting:** Ex 34:7 Jer 32:18 Da 9:4-9 Mt 23:35,36 Ro 11:28,29
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## PROHIBITION OF IDILE IDOL WORSHIP

**You shall not worship them or serve them** - This prohibition is an extension of the command not to make them. In that sense it helps understand why they were not to make any idols. Note **worship** is before **serve** which is apropos for what you worship will determine what you serve.

**Worship** (bow down, prostrate one's self) (07812) **shachah** means to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to crouch, to fall down, to humbly beseech, to do reverence, to worship. The idea is to assume a prostrate position as would in paying homage to royalty (Ge 43:28) or to God (Ge 24:26, Ps 95:6). The English word **prostrate** is defined as being stretched out with one's face on the ground in adoration or submission. It is not just that the person has fallen down but pictures them lying at length or with their body extended on the ground and so lying in a posture which is reflective of genuine humility and/or adoration. The Septuagint translates **shachah** in Dt 5:9 with the picturesque verb **proskuneo** (**pros** = before + **kuneo** = kiss or adore)

literally means to kiss toward someone, to throw a kiss in token of respect or homage, to prostrate oneself in homage before another in the full sense of worship, not mere reverence or courtesy.

**for** - Term of explanation. Yahweh explains why not to make them or to worship them.

**I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God**- Note the phrase **your God**, Yahweh condescending to identify Himself with Israel. He is not the God of the pagan nations.

**Jealous** (07067) **qanna** is an adjective that combines the ideas of zeal and jealousy. It expresses a very strong emotion whereby some quality or possession of the object is desired by the subject. All 5 OT uses describe this attribute of Jehovah, His attribute which reflects zero tolerance for the worship of other so-called gods. In the 5 uses note the associated with "consuming fire," (Dt 4:24) and "anger...kindled (also pictures a fire) against" those who violate this prohibition (Dt 6:15) In other words the consequences of bowing down to false gods gives us a clear sense of His hatred of them. How foolish it is for us as finite humans to pursue false gods when we have access to the true and living God! Forgive us O LORD. Amen. **Qanna** is translated in the Septuagint in Ex 20:5 and in Dt 5:9 with the noun **zelotes** which depicts one stirred to action by a strong emotion. It describes one "burning with zeal" (root of **zelotes** = **zeo** = to boil, be hot or glow and then fervent). Zelotes describes Yahweh as earnestly committed to defend His honor!

**Qanna** - 6x in 5v - Exod. 20:5; Exod. 34:14; Deut. 4:24; Deut. 5:9; Deut. 6:15

**Treasury of Scripture Knowledge** note on God - The word {elohim,} which is rendered God, in the singular, {eloah,} and in Arabic {allah,} is derived from the Arabic {alaha,} he worshipped, adored, was struck with astonishment, fear, or terror: and hence, he adored with sacred honour and veneration: it also signifies, he succoured, liberated, kept in safety, or defended. Here we learn that {elohim} denotes the sole object of adoration; the perfections of whose nature must astonish all who contemplate them, and fill with horror all who rebel against him; that consequently he must be worshipped with reverence and religious fear; and that every sincere worshipper may expect help in all his weaknesses, etc., freedom from the power, guilt, and consequences of sin, and support and defence to the uttermost.

**Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children**- **Visiting** is an interesting verb to use, because normally we think of visits as friendly encounters, but that is not the case in this context! This is a visit to "pay back" perpetrators for their idolatrous belief and behavior. Sin makes God visit. Sin is the reason why God visits with sickness and poverty. (see Ps 89:31-32KJV)"

**Visiting** (punishing) (06485) (**paqad**) has the basic meaning or to intervene or to inspect. In a number of context it is used in the good sense (a good "visit")(Ge 50:24-25KJV,) The sense in the present passage is a "bad" visit, a visit by God in which he will call people to account for their sins. The Septuagint uses the verb **apodidomi** which means means to (and in present tense = continually) render recompense, in this context Yahweh's righteous recompense for the idolater's unrighteous behavior.

**Iniquity** (punishment, guilt) (05771) **'avon** from verb **'avah** = to bend, twist, distort) describes the iniquity, evil, punishment or guilt which is associated with a twisting of the standard or deviation from it. Since there is a deliberate twisting or perverting, **'avon** describes sin that is particularly evil. It may also describe the punishment or disaster that befalls those who practice wickedness. **Avon** is the Hebrew word which most distinctly unites sins of all kinds with their penal consequences. Avon is not only the iniquity but can also indicate the guilt that results from the act.

The **Septuagint** renders **avon** in Dt 5:9 with **hamartia** literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later **hamartia** came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. **Hamartia** in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As **Martin Luther** put it "*Sin is essentially a departure from God.*"

**And on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me**- While some take this statement regarding the generations as indicative of a so-called "generational curse," that is a misinterpretation. Yahweh is saying that sinning fathers are more likely to have sinning children who hate Him (because they love their iniquity or sin). The children are held personally responsible for their personal sins and not culpable for the sins of their fathers. Stated another way unbelieving parents generally produce unbelieving offspring. No child is punished by God for the sins of his parents! (See also Ezekiel 18:19-32)

**Hate** (08130) (**sane**) means to detest, abhor, loathe, be hostile, have a feeling of open hostility and intense dislike (Ge 37:4), to be unwilling, the opposite of to love (**ahab**). To be an enemy with open hostility and strife

toward another (Pr 29:24) Note that the Septuagint translates sane with the verb [miseo](#) in the [present tense](#) signifying that this person has an ongoing, unabated willful (miseo is also in the [active voice](#) indicating this is a willful choice to act or behave) hostility toward Jehovah! This explains why God would pay them a visit to pay them back for their persistent iniquity! Be careful if you continue in sin, for it will be like a "divine boomerang" and will come back on your head!

What does this mean? Does this describe a so-called generational curse? What is the key verb (actually the only verb) in this phrase? It is **those who hate Me**. The Hebrew verb "[sane](#)" describes those I would classify as "[insane](#)" because that is what anyone is who actively hates God! And so the Hebrew verb ([sane](#)) describes the recipients (whether first or fourth generation) as individuals who harbor and express and active opposition to Yahweh, Whom they detest and despise (REGARDLESS OF THEIR WORDS TO THE CONTRARY!) and with Whom they desire no contact or relationship. Instead of loving God, they hate God. Whereas love draws and unites, their hatred of God separates and keeps them distant from God. God as the hated Party is considered to be their foe, their enemy, one who is odious and utterly unappealing. Does this description sound harsh? Yes, it does, but it is exactly what the Hebrew verb means to convey! It would not be just and righteous for Yahweh to visit children in the third and fourth generation if they loved Him. The text is clear that the children if visited by Yahweh, will be visited because they have committed iniquity against God which in effect shows their hatred of God. This is a harsh reality, but shows beyond a shadow of a doubt God's hatred of sin in this case the hatred of Him!

Support for this interpretation is found in Dt 24:16 which says "Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; **everyone shall be put to death for his own sin.**"

**John MacArthur** however does point out that "children would feel the impact of breaches of God's law by their parents' generation as a natural consequence of its disobedience, its hatred of God. Children reared in such an environment would imbibe and then practice similar idolatry, thus themselves expressing hateful disobedience. The difference in consequence served as both a warning and a motivation. The effect of a disobedient generation was to plant wickedness so deeply that it took several generations to reverse." (MacArthur Study Bible)

**Mattoon** - How are children affected by the iniquity of their fathers and forefathers? Even though children are not responsible or guilty for their father's iniquity, they are influenced and affected by it. Sons and remote descendants inherit the consequences of their fathers' sins, in disease, poverty, captivity, with all the influences of bad example and evil communications. The deception that Abraham practiced was picked up by his son and grandson. With each generation, the deception increased. (cf lie - Ge 20:2, lie - Ge 26:7, greater lie - Ge 27:32). David's iniquity and lust for women affected Solomon (1 Ki 11:1-3) and his grandson Rehoboam (2 Chr 11:21, 2 Chr 12:1) What a father does in moderation, his kids may do in excess or extremes. Our kids amplify our weaknesses and compromises. The crack in the door that we give to sin, our children will open completely. The Bible stresses the importance of acknowledging the iniquities of forefathers (Neh 9:2, Da 9:16) By acknowledging the iniquities of the fathers, children agree with God that they are wrong and are able to deal with them in a Scriptural manner by building disciplines to avoid repeating them.

**Gotquestions** comments that "A [Jewish Targum](#) specifies that this passage refers to "ungodly fathers" and "rebellious children." So, it is not unjust for God to punish sin to the third or fourth generation – those generations are committing the same sins their ancestors did. There is a trend in the church today to try to blame every sin and problem on some sort of **generational curse. This is not biblical.** God's warning to visit iniquity on future generations is part of the Old Testament Law. A generational curse was a consequence for a specific nation (Israel) for a specific sin (idolatry). The history books of the Old Testament (especially Judges) contain the record of this divine punishment meted out. **The cure for a generational curse has always been repentance.** When Israel turned from idols to serve the living God, the "curse" was broken and God saved them (Judges 3:9, 15; 1 Samuel 12:10-11). Yes, God promised to visit Israel's sin upon the third and fourth generations, but in the very next verse He promised that He would show "love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20:6). In other words, God's grace lasts a thousand times longer than His wrath. For someone worried about a generational curse, the answer is salvation through Jesus Christ. A Christian is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). How can a child of God still be under God's curse (Romans 8:1)? The cure for a "generational curse" is repentance of the sin in question, faith in Christ, and a life consecrated to the Lord (Romans 12:1-2)." ([Source](#))

**Deuteronomy 5:10 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.**

- showing: Isa 1:16-19 Jer 32:18 Da 9:4 Mt 7:21-27 Ga 5:6 1Jn 1:7
- love me: De 6:5,6 10:12,13 Joh 14:15,21-23 15:14 Ro 8:28 Jas 1:25 1Jn 5:2,3
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

**but** - Here is a mercy filled (merciful) contrast.

**Showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments** - Note the contrast between **hate Me** in v9 and **love Me** in v10. Clearly those who hate God do not keep His commandments but those who love God do keep His commandments. Clearly Jehovah elevates love from an emotion to a volitional action. In other words don't say you love God with your lips and then show you hate Him by disobeying His commandments and committing sins. Lips and life must match!

Notice the numerical contrasts - third and fourth in Dt 5:9 and thousands here, picturing God's mercy far outweighing His wrath! Indeed, God's desire is to show lovingkindness! Notice that in addition to the contrast with judgment in Dt 5:9, we also see **love** of God here instead of **hatred** of God. And notice also the clear association of **love** with obedience (**those who...keep My commandments**). How do we "say" we truly "love God?" Clearly we do it not only by our words, our worship, and our service, but especially by our obedience to His **commandments**!

Jesus affirmed this love/obedience relationship declaring **"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."** It could not be stated more clearly. And not only that, Jesus went on to describe a "reward" for loving obedience, one that should surely serve to motivate Spirit enabled obedience. He declared

**"He who has My commandments** (WE "GET THEM" BY READING THEM IN THE BIBLE - SO READ THE BIBLE!) **and keeps** (THIS MEANS OBEYS) **them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose** ([emphanizo](#) = here describes Jesus' self-revelation inwardly communicated to the obedient saint) **Myself to him** (READ [Pr 8:17](#))." ([John 14:21](#))

**THOUGHT** - Do you want to experience more of Jesus like Moses did in Exodus 33:18? Do you feel distant from Jesus? Then John 14:21 is for you. [Memorize](#) it. [Meditate](#) on it. Then live it out enabled by the Spirit of Christ for the glory of God and in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen! Jesus will disclose Himself to you!

**Lovingkindness** ([02617](#)) ([hesed/chesed/heced](#)) is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [cp Hos 2:18, 19, [20+](#), Is 54:5, Je 31:32+] = His "loyalty to covenant"). God's **hesed** His denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man with love and mercy (cf God immediately seeking man Ge 3:9+, who was immediately hiding Ge 3:8+ trying to cover their shame Ge 3:7 - contrast God's lovingkindness manifest by spilling blood to provide skins to cover their shame! Ge 3:21+). **Hesed** expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people along with a faithfulness to keep His promises.

The [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) translates **hesed** in Ex 20:6 with the noun [eleos](#) which is the outward manifestation of pity and assumes **need** on the part of those who are recipients of the mercy and sufficient **resources** to meet the need on the part of those who show it. The idea of **mercy** is to show kindness or concern for someone in serious need or to give help to the wretched, to relieve the miserable. Here the essential thought is that mercy gives attention to those in misery.

**Love** ([0157](#)) [ahab/ahab](#) means to love and can convey the idea of liking things (like bribes - Isa 1:23, wisdom - Pr 4:6, wine - Pr 21:17, peace and truth - Zech 8:19, food - Ge 27:4, 9, 14). The most important uses in the OT are as an expression of God's love of people (Dt 4:37, Hosea 3:1), man's love for God (Ex 20:6, Ps 116:1) and man's love for his fellow man (Ge 29:32, Ru 4:15+, [1 Kings 11:1](#) = a *forbidden* love by backslidden King Solomon!!!) The first use of **ahab** in the OT is instructive as it is found in Ge 22:2 where Yahweh instructed his servant Abraham to ""Take now your son, your only son, whom you **love**, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." Notice that at the outset, we see that an inherent quality of this love (in many contexts) is that it is costly. God wants us to love Him above EVERYTHING, even our own flesh and blood. Matthews writes that Ge 22:2 "is the final test of the man's faith, the closing bookend to his discovery of God's sufficiency to achieve the promises made at Haran." (New American Commentary) In [the Shema](#) Israel is instructed ""You shall **love** the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." (Dt 6:5)

**Ahab** is translated in the Septuagint with the verb [agapao](#) (present tense = lifestyle, habitual practice) which describes unconditional, sacrificial love which seeks the others highest good and is given even if it is not returned (of course it is returned from God for love is Who He is).

**Keep** (careful, guard, kept, observe, watch) ([08104](#)) [shamar](#) means to keep, watch, preserve, to guard, to be careful, to watch over, to watch carefully over, to be on one's guard. The first use of **shamar** in Ge 2:15 is instructive as Adam was placed in the garden (a perfect environment) and was commanded to "**keep**" it which

in the [Septuagint](#) is translated with [phulasso](#) (as it is here in Dt 5:10) which means to guard like a military sentinel would at his post. Clearly Adam did not do a good job at "keeping" the garden safe from intruders! And because of this failure he was cast out of the garden and angels stationed to "**guard** (Lxx = [phulasso](#)) the way to the tree of life" so that he would not eat of it (Ge 3:24). After Cain murdered Abel he answered God "Am I my brother's **keeper**?" (Ge 3:24)

**THOUGHT** - The upshot is "Don't say you love God (which is okay), but show you love God (by obeying)! Do your actions this past week show that you love God?"

**Utley** - It is a characteristic of Deuteronomy to link obedience to YHWH's covenant to **love** for YHWH (cf. Dt 6:5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20). YHWH's love is not capricious, but clearly defined. He shows no partiality. His initiating covenant love is maintained by covenant obedience. "**Keep**" is the key concept in this chapter (cf. Dt 5:1, 10, 12, 29, 32 and many more times in Deuteronomy). The OT was based on the grace of YHWH and human obedience/performance. YHWH wanted to show human inability to respond appropriately (cf. Galatians 3). The NT (cf. Jer: 31–34; Ezek. 36:22–38) is based on God's gracious initiation and redemption in Christ. Believers are still destined to be righteous (cf. Eph. 1:14; 2:10), but they have been accepted and forgiven by grace through faith (cf. Eph. 2:8–9). Now they obey/perform out of a sense of gratitude and family love (i.e., "those who love Me") (**ED: AND ENABLEMENT BY THE INDWELLING SPIRIT**). The goal is the same, a righteous (Christlike) people, but the mechanism has changed from human performance to Christ's performance (cf. Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:21).

**Deuteronomy 5:11 'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.'**

- De 6:13 Ex 20:7 Lev 19:12 Ps 139:20 Jer 4:2 Mt 5:33,34 Jas 5:12
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## **TAKING THE LORD'S NAME IN VAIN**

**You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain-** **Not** is the first word in Hebrew giving the negative statement great force! **Vain** means frivolous, worthless, thoughtless, and here refers to the Great Name of Yahweh!!! It is interesting that the Hebrew word for **vain** (shav) to describe "**worthless** (shav) idols" (Jer 18:15). The Septuagint translates **vain** with [mataios](#) which describes that which is empty, devoid of force, lacking in content, nonproductive, useless, dead, fruitless, aimless, of no real or lasting value! That is how they are treating God's Holy Name! Woe! God's Name is in fact the absolute antithesis of vain, useless, of no lasting value!

Don't say "Oh my God!" unless you are sincerely saying that as a prayer! "Oh, Jeez!" is also to use Jesus' name in vain!

**David Guzik** - There are at least three ways this command is commonly disobeyed. (1) Profanity: Using the name of God in blasphemy and cursing. (2) Frivolity: Using the name of God in a superficial, stupid way. (3) Hypocrisy: Claiming the name of God but acting in a way that disgraces Him. ([Enduring Word Commentary - Exodus 20](#))

**Cole** - This command does not prohibit taking legitimate oaths, since Deuteronomy 6:13 commands, "You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name."

**Currid** on **take** (which he translates it "*pronounce*") "is literally 'to lift up', and it is a synonym for taking an oath (cf. Ex 6:8; Nu 14:30; 1 Ki 8:31). Often used in legal cases, it signifies that no one should invoke the Name of Yahweh frivolously in a court of law. But the commandment is much broader than merely the Hebrew judicial system—it applies to all of life. The reason why this act is considered so sinful may partly be understood because of the Hebrews' conception of the meaning of a name. A name often represents the nature and character of a person...Yahweh is the personal name that God himself revealed to his people. When someone insincerely or thoughtlessly invokes God's name, that person is proclaiming that God's being, nature and essence are worthless. On the positive side, the Third Commandment means that the Hebrews are to revere and honour the name of Yahweh." (Ibid)

**MacArthur** - To use God's Name in such a way as to bring disrepute upon His character or deeds was to irreverently misuse His name. To fail to perform an oath in which His name had been legitimately uttered (cf. Ex 22:10, 11; Lv 19:12; Dt 6:13) was to call into question His existence, since the guilty party evidently had no further thought of the God whose name he had used to improve his integrity. For the believer in the church age, however, the use of the name of God is not a needed verification of his intention and trustworthiness since his life is to exhibit truth on all occasions, with his "yes" meaning "yes" and his "no" meaning "no" (Mt 5:37; Jas



5:12) (MSB)

Considering that Jesus taught His disciples to pray "Our Father (GOD'S NAME) Who art in heaven, **hallowed** (hagiazo = set apart from all that is common and profane) by Thy Name." (Mt 6:9+). The idea of **hallowed** is "May Thy name be held in reverence." To misuse His Name is to profane it, in effect expressing contempt and irreverence for His Holy Name, His Name of course represents the totality of all that God is - His character, His attributes, His grace, His mercy, His holiness, etc. And so in effect by misusing His Name we make Jehovah to be nothing of value! Thus we begin to get a sense of why profaning rather than hallowing (using/treating as holy) His Name is such a serious sin!

**NET Note** - 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.

**Vain** (worthless, deceitful, empty, false) ([07723](#))([shav](#)) is a "masculine noun meaning emptiness, vanity, evil, ruin, uselessness, deception, worthless, without result, fraud, deceit. The primary meaning of the word is deceit, lie, or falsehood. The word is used to describe prohibition of a a "**false** witness" (Dt. 5:20). The most familiar use of shāv' is in the third commandment, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain" (Ex 20:7; Dt. 5:11).

Here are just a few passages that describe God's Name...

Psalm 8:1 For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David. O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!

Psalm 111:9 He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name.

**For** - [Term of explanation](#). It explains why taking the Name of God in **vain** is such a serious matter.

**The LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain** - "Will not hold guiltless" (NET) The main idea is that there will "pay day, some day" for every misuse of the Name of the LORD! How many today use the great Name of Jesus as a curse word, which makes me cringe every time I hear the Name above every name used as an "**expletive!**"

**Guzik** - The strength of this command has led to strange traditions among the Jewish people. Some go to extreme measures to avoid violating this command, refusing to even write out the word God, in the fear that the paper might be destroyed and the name of God be written in vain. ([Enduring Word Commentary - Exodus 20](#))

As **Gotquestions** explains "In the Old Testament, bringing dishonor on God's Name was done by failing to perform an oath or vow taken in His name (Leviticus 19:12<sub>+</sub>). The man who used God's name to legitimize his oath, and then broke his promise, would indicate his lack of reverence for God as well as a lack of fear of His holy retribution. It was essentially the same as denying God's existence. For believers, however, there is no need to use God's name to legitimize an oath as we are not to take oaths in the first place, letting our "yes be yes" and our "no be no" (Mt 5:33-37<sub>+</sub>). There is a larger sense in which people today take the Lord's name in vain. Those who Name the name of Christ, who pray in His Name, and who take His Name as part of their identity, but who deliberately and continually disobey His commands, are taking His Name in vain. Jesus Christ has been given the Name above all names, at which every knee shall bow (Philippians 2:9-10), and when we take the Name "Christian" upon ourselves, we must do so with an understanding of all that signifies. If we profess to be Christians, but act, think, and speak in a worldly or profane manner, we take His name in vain. When we misrepresent Christ, either intentionally or through ignorance of the Christian faith as proclaimed in Scripture, we take the Lord's name in vain. When we say we love Him, but do not do what He commands (Luke 6:46), we take His name in vain and are possibly identifying ourselves to be among those to whom Christ will say, "I never knew you. Away from me" in the day of judgment (Matthew 7:21-23). The name of the Lord is holy, as He is holy. The name of the Lord is a representation of His glory, His majesty, and His supreme deity. We are to esteem and honor His name as we revere and glorify God Himself. To do any less is to take His name in vain.

**THOUGHT** - Every misuse of the Great Name of God (and Jesus) will one day be paid back in full! How sad that now our entertainment (if you can call it that) prides itself of permeation of the presentation with perverse speech! If you cannot find a show to watch that is free of cursing and taking God's Name in vain (and it is becoming more difficult), you might consider using [Vidangel](#), a service you can subscribe to monthly, which blanks out the bad language and bad scenes (and you can choose what to eliminate).

**Related Resource:**

- [What does it mean to take the Lord's name in vain?](#) Excerpt - Although many people believe taking the Lord's Name in vain

refers to using the Lord's Name as a swear word, there is much more involved with a vain use of God's name.

- [Name of the LORD is a Strong Tower: Summary](#) - Studies on many of the LORD's great names, all of which reveal some aspect of His character or attributes.

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## Word Watch

Good grammar matters to me. As a writer and former English teacher, I'm bothered when I hear the wrong word used by people I think should know better. For instance, using "I" instead of "me" or "who" instead of "whom." There's a proper way to use the language, and it makes me cringe when the standard is violated.

There's another kind of incorrect word usage that is far worse. It happens when Christians utter words that fall short of the standard God expects. Whenever we use words that are considered crude, profane, or obscene, we violate God's clear standards.

Anytime we speak any form of God's name irreverently or in a way that doesn't honor Him, we displease Him (Exodus 20:7). If we joke about sinful practices, we are speaking in a way we shouldn't (Ep 5:12). Or if we participate in coarse talk (Ep 5:4), we bring dishonor to the name of Christ.

James said, "Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. . . . These things ought not to be so" (James 3:10). Such speech is hypocritical.

Controlling our tongue is difficult because it is an "unruly evil" (Jas 3:8). For the glory of God, and with respect for His standards, let's watch our words. —Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

A wise old owl sat on an oak;  
The more he saw, the less he spoke;  
The less he spoke, the more he heard—  
Why aren't we like that wise old bird?  
—Richards

Every time you speak, your mind is on parade

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## The Name

It's not easy to keep up with the shorthand that accompanies today's fast-paced, youth-oriented electronic communication. In IM-speak (Instant Message talk) or text-message language, "laughing out loud" becomes "lol." "By the way" is "btw." And regrettably, some people use "omg" for "Oh, my God!"

This last phrase seems to be on the lips of many who receive startling news. But as Christians, we need to stop before we utter this or any other phrase that flippantly uses God's name.

In Matthew 6, when Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, the first thing He told them to say was this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" ([Mt 6:9](#)). Clearly, God's name itself is special. It encompasses His nature, His teachings, and His moral authority. To speak the name of God is to call on the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

In every way possible, we should honor and protect God's holy name, preserving its use for those occasions when we are speaking of Him or addressing Him in faith.

Let's be careful never to turn the hallowed name of our awesome and mighty God into just another flippant phrase on our lips or in a text message. —Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

May all I am and do and say  
Give glory to my Lord alway;  
And may no act of mine cause shame  
Nor bring reproach upon His name.  
—Anon.

God's name: handle with care.

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## Holy Is Your Name

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. Exodus 20:7

One afternoon I was having a discussion with a friend I considered my spiritual mentor about misusing God's name. "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God," says the third commandment (Ex. 20:7). We may think this only refers to attaching God's name to a swear word or using His name flippantly or irreverently. But my mentor rarely missed an opportunity to teach me about real faith. He challenged me to think about other ways we profane God's name.

When I reject the advice of others and say, "God told me to go this way," I misuse His name if all I am doing is seeking approval for my own desires.

When I use Scripture out of context to try to support an idea I want to be true, I am using God's name in vain.

When I teach, write, or speak from Scripture carelessly, I misuse His name.

Author John Piper offers this reflection on what it means to take God's name in vain: "The idea is . . . 'don't empty the name.' . . . Don't empty God of His weight and glory." We misuse His name, Piper says, when we "speak of God in a way that empties Him of His significance."

My friend challenged me to honor God's name and to pay closer attention to using His Word carefully and accurately. Anything less dishonors Him.

Heavenly Father, help me to glorify Your name and to honor You always in what I say and do.

God's name: handle with care.

INSIGHT: The Ten Commandments are divided into two sections—vertical and horizontal. The first section (Ex. 20:1-11) deals with the response of the people to God (vertical). These laws have to do with God's exclusive right to worship, an admonition against idols, honoring God's name, and setting aside the Sabbath for worship. The remaining commands (Exodus 20:12-17) deal with how we relate to one another (horizontal). This includes honoring parents, life, and marriage; respecting the property of others; being truth-speakers; and not coveting what isn't ours. This two-fold set of instructions mirrors the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40), which calls us to love God with all our being and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Both vertical and horizontal elements are again in view in this commandment. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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**The Third Commandment** EXODUS 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain" (v. 7).

Now that we have considered the three uses of the Law and have briefly considered the comprehensiveness of the Ten Commandments, we will examine two of these statutes and their applications today. The first commandment we will study is probably the most widely broken law in the society at large and perhaps in the church as well. We are speaking of the third commandment, which forbids us from taking the name of the Lord in vain ([Ex. 20:7](#)).

The term vain is a synonym for futile; thus, the third commandment is warning us not to use God's name in a futile or trivial manner. This is something our Creator takes very seriously, for the commandment adds a special note that He "will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain" in order to make us pause before we use the Lord's name flippantly. If the commandments enjoin the opposite of what they forbid, this law mandates that we set apart the name of God as holy. Jesus Himself indicates this is the case when He tells us the very first thing we should pray for is that the Lord's name be hallowed ([Luke 11:2](#)).

Outright blasphemy is an obvious transgression of this commandment, but it can be violated in other ways as well. A common violation of this law occurs in the swearing of oaths. When we ask the Almighty to bear witness to a vow, we testify that He is omniscient and able to see every point at which we break or keep an oath. Moreover, we witness to His omnipotence, confessing that He can and will deal with us even if no one else disciplines us for breaking a promise. To swear an oath by anything besides the Lord attributes these qualities wrongly to something created and makes us guilty of idolatry. For example, we might casually swear on our mother's grave to affirm the truth of our words, but what can our mother's grave do to us if we do not keep our promise?

Christians can misuse God's name in saying things like "the Lord moved me to tell you ..." when we feel that a friend needs to hear a special word. Yet this intuition does not necessarily find its origin in God's prompting, and we should not attribute words to the Lord unless they are found in Scripture. Otherwise we might put false words in His mouth and inadvertently make Him a liar. (Tabletalk)

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### Commandment 3—Respect God's Name

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. —[Exodus 20:7](#)

The third commandment was taken so seriously by Israel that at one time the scribes wouldn't even write the name Yahweh (Jehovah) until they had first taken a bath and changed their clothes. Then after they had written it, they would take another bath and change their clothes again.

Their focus on the word itself, however, often overlooked the broader implications of the commandment. J. I. Packer says, "What is forbidden is any use or involvement of God's name that is empty, frivolous, or insincere." This includes any kind of irreverence, because it fails to take seriously God's character and reputation which is represented by His name. Nor are we to use the name God or Jesus Christ as profanity, because this expresses neither praise, worship, nor faith.

The commandment also relates to breaking a promise when God's name is used to back one's word. But even when no reference is made to God, every promise we make to another is done in God's presence and is therefore as binding as if we had invoked His name.

How the third commandment condemns us all! But thank God for the name Jesus, which means Savior. He provides the forgiveness and help we need to keep the third commandment and become men and women known for being true to their word. ([Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

- In what ways do I hear people misusing God's name?
- How am I guilty of breaking this command?

If you care about God, handle His name with care.

**Deuteronomy 5:12 'Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.**

- Ex 20:8-11 Isa 56:6 58:13
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## **FOURTH COMMANDMENT: KEEP THE SABBATH**

**Observe ([shamar](#)) the Sabbath day, to keep it holy as the LORD your God commanded you-** This is a positive command to **observe** and then it explains that reason the Israelites needed to **observe** was that they needed to keep it as a set apart **day**. The parallel passage in Ex 20:8 commands them to **remember** which precedes the action or behavior necessary to **keep** the Sabbath holy. **To keep it holy** means to treat it as a special day, to celebrate it as a day which is distinct, a day that is considered "separated" (meaning of holy) from the other six days. **Observe** in the Septuagint is [phulasso](#), a command in the [aorist imperative](#), which calls for each person (the verb [phulasso](#) is singular making this a personal choice) to be on one's guard or look out like a watchman guarding an area. In this case the charge is to watch and guard the observing of this special day. Don't let "intruders" keep you from keeping this day!

God in giving Israel manna for 6 days had already taught the sons of Israel the principle that the seventh day, the Sabbath day, was a special day...

Now on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, 23 then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a **sabbath** observance, a **holy sabbath to the LORD**. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning." 24 So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul nor was there any worm in it. 25 Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a **sabbath to the LORD**; today you will not find it in the field. 26 "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the **sabbath**, there will be none." 27 It came about on the **seventh day** that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. 28 Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions? 29 "See, the LORD has given you the **sabbath**; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the **seventh day**." 30 So the people rested on the **seventh day**. (Ex 16:22-30+)

**NET Note** says "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)."

**Guzik** - In their traditions, the Jewish people came to carefully quantify what they thought could and could not be done on the Sabbath day, in order to keep it holy. For example, in Luke 6:1–2, in the mind of the Jewish leaders, the disciples were guilty of four violations of the Sabbath every time they took a bite of grain out in the field, because they reaped, threshed, winnowed, and prepared food.. Ancient Rabbis taught that on the Sabbath, a man could not carry something in his right hand or in his left hand, across his chest or on his shoulder. But he could carry something with the back of his hand, his foot, his elbow, or in his ear, his hair, or in the hem of his shirt, or in his shoe or sandal. Or on the Sabbath Israelites were forbidden to tie a knot—except, a woman could tie a knot in her girdle. So, if a bucket of water had to be raised from a well, an Israelite could not tie a rope to the bucket, but a woman could tie her girdle to the bucket and pull it up from the well.i. In observant Jewish homes today, one cannot turn on a light, a stove, or a switch on the Sabbath. It is forbidden to drive a certain distance or to make a telephone call—all carefully regulated by traditions seeking to spell out the law exactly. ([Enduring Word Commentary - Exodus 20](#))

Practically speaking the celebration of the Sabbath was a divine lesson that would help reenforce in the minds of the Hebrew the essence of the meaning of the word holy. Ultimately God was far more interested in Israel "internalizing" this truth, so that their lives all week would be like the Sabbath day on the seventh day. In other words the keeping of the Sabbath was pointing to the holiness of God, a holiness that He desired for His people to demonstrate. In this way the pagan nations would see a difference in the lives of the people of God and some might be attracted to examine Jehovah and even to come to know Him. One thinks of the pagan Moabitess Ruth who saw a difference in her mother-in-law Naomi prompting Ruth to declare "where you (NAOMI) go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me." (Ru 1:16-17)

**THOUGHT** - Today while believers are not required to keep the Sabbath, nevertheless they are called to a lifestyle to which the Sabbath pointed, a separated life, a distinct life, a holy life. Peter picked up this thought even commanding his readers to live set apart lives "**Sanctify** ([hagiazō](#) [same verb used in Lxx of Ex 20:8 "keep...holy"] in the [aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." (1 Peter 3:15±). We see this same principle of the attractive power of a separated, distinct life in Php 2:14-15± where Paul commands the saints to "**Do** ([present imperative](#) = only possible as we [depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) which is clearly described in the preceding passage where the Spirit gives the DESIRE and the POWER to not grumble! = Php 2:13NLT±) all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 **so that** (PURPOSE CLAUSE) you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, **among whom you appear as lights in the world.**" How are you doing? Is the light of Christ fueled by His Spirit shining brightly in your life, shining into a world that is increasingly becoming spiritually darker and shining in a way that gives a proper opinion to the lost of the invisible God they otherwise cannot see? (Reas Jesus' command in Mt 5:16+) This question is not to put a guilt trip on you, but to remind you of the incredible privilege you have in this short time on "alien territory" to let the lost see the light of Christ and be saved from eternal destruction.

**Sabbath** (07676)([sabbat](#) from verb [shabath](#) = desist from exertion, cease) means intermission, the Sabbath (day), the day of rest, the holy seventh day; a week, the sacred 7th year, a sabbatical year. It was not until the giving of the Law at Mt Sinai that the keeping of the Sabbath became a part of the law and a sign of God's covenant relationship with His people (Ex 20:8-11 Ex 31:12-17). **Sabbath** was a covenant sign indicative of Jehovah's authority. When Israel kept the Sabbath, they showed the pagan nations (the Gentiles had no Sabbath statute - see Ps 147:19-20) that they were a distinctive people and were subject to their God, Yahweh. Keeping Sabbath was in a sense a way of demonstrating Israel's trust in God, trusting that He would honor their labors with fruit. We may plant the seeds and water them, but it is God who gives the increase (1Co 3:6+). In Dt 5:15 "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out with a mighty hand. ...; therefore, Yahweh your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day." In other words in this passage in Deuteronomy, the Sabbath with creation described in Genesis and Deuteronomy connects the Sabbath with deliverance from Egypt described in Exodus. Thus every Sabbath, Israel is to remember that God is an emancipator, a liberator. The early Christians were on target, it seems, when they connected the day of rest

**Steven Cole** - In my experience, sincere Christians who attempt to impose this command (KEEP THE SABBATH) on the church invariably end up mired in legalism (See [Stedman on legalism](#)). They come up with lists of what you can and cannot do on Sundays. Some even say that you have sinned if you talk or even think about anything other than spiritual matters on Sunday! I believe that we are not under the Old Testament Sabbath commandment. It was fulfilled in Christ, who is our true rest (Col. 2:16–17; Heb. 3–4). At the same time, there is a valid principle that carries over to New Testament believers: Set aside the Lord's Day to rest from your

normal work and to gather with God's people for worship, instruction, fellowship, and prayer. (See "[How to Spend the Lord's Day.](#)")

### The purposes of the Sabbath in ancient Israel were many and diverse.

1. First, according to the Fourth Commandment, **the Sabbath reflects God's pattern of creation**. Thus, when someone observes the Sabbath, he or she is commemorating God's creative work. The Sabbath is a repetition and a remembrance of God's past work.
2. Secondly, in the reiteration of the Decalogue in Deuteronomy 5, **Israel's redemption from slavery** is celebrated in Sabbath-keeping (Dt 5:12–15).
3. Thirdly, the day is created as **a time of rest, refreshment and recuperation** for all God's creatures. It is a reprieve from the routine of daily labours (Ex 23:12).
4. Fourthly, the Sabbath serves as **a sign of the covenant between God and His people**—it is a symbol that God has set apart a people unto himself (Ex 31:12–17). When the Israelites celebrated the set-apart day they showed that they were a set-apart people. **(ED: THERE IS NO DEFINITIVE RECORD OF PAGAN NATIONS CELEBRATING A SABBATH.)**
5. Finally, the **Sabbath is a day of holy convocation** (Lev 23:2–3) in which the people gather for public worship and instruction in the Torah (Neh. 8:8). (John Currid - EPSC-Ex)

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**Question:** "[What does it mean to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy?](#)"

**Answer:** The fourth of the ten commandments is "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8ESV). Following the command are statements defining the Sabbath as "the seventh day" (Ex 20:10), dedicating it to "the Lord your God" (Ex 20:10), forbidding all work in it, applying it to everyone in Israel, and citing the basis for it: "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Ex 20:11).

The Israelites under the Mosaic Law were to keep in mind that no work could be done on the seventh day of the week. If we parse the command, we can get a better picture of what it says:

**Remember.** This is the only command of the ten that starts with the word **remember**. This could mean that the Sabbath command had been given earlier—in fact, God had decreed a Sabbath rest in Exodus 16:22–30. Or the word remember could simply mean "keep this command in mind" with no reference to an earlier directive. Regardless, the word is emphatic; the children of Israel were not to grow lax in their observation of this command.

**The Sabbath day.** The word Sabbath comes from a Hebrew word meaning "day of rest." The Bible specifies that this day of rest is the seventh day of the week, what we would call "Saturday," or in the Israelite mindset, sundown on Friday until sundown on Saturday. God set the pattern for the Sabbath rest in Genesis 2:2, ceasing from His work of creation on the seventh day. God's action (or, rather, His inaction) in Genesis 2 foreshadowed the Law's command in Exodus 20:8.

**To keep it holy.** This four-word phrase in English is only one word in Hebrew. It means "consecrate," "set apart," or "sanctify." The Israelites were to make a distinction between the seventh day and the rest of the week. The Sabbath was different. It was to be dedicated to the Lord. The priests were to double the daily sacrifices on the Sabbath (Numbers 28:9–10), marking the day with increased sacred activity. The rest of the Israelites were to mark the day with decreased activity—no work at all—in honor of the Lord. The penalty for desecrating the Sabbath with work was death (Exodus 31:14; Numbers 15:32–36).

Keeping of the Sabbath was a sign of the covenant between Israel and the Lord: "You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come" (Exodus 31:13). As Israel kept the Sabbath set apart, they were reminded that they were also being set apart: "So you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy" (verse 13). Believers today, being under the New Covenant, are not bound to keep the sign of the Old Covenant. ([Gotquestions.org](#))

### Related Resources:

- [What is the Sabbath day?](#)
- [How can we enter into God's rest?](#)
- [What does it mean that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath?](#)
- [Why does Exodus 35:2 require the death penalty for working on the Sabbath?](#)
- [Does God require Sabbath-keeping of Christians?](#)

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**Deuteronomy 5:13** 'Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

- Ex 23:12 Ex 35:2,3 Eze 20:12 Lu 13:14-16 23:56
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## HOW TO KEEP THE SABBATH HOLY

**Six days you shall labor and do all your work - NLT** = "You have six days each week for your ordinary work." In order to keep the seventh day as a day of rest, one was to do everything necessary to fully complete their work the other six days. They were not to leave some of the work to be finished up on the Sabbath. This was not a new concept, for Israel had already been taught that for 6 days they were to gather manna, but were to rest and not gather manna on the seventh day (Ex 16:22-30<sup>±</sup>).

Christians are no longer under the command to keep the Sabbath. Paul addressed the keeping of "days" in two of his letters...

Colossians 2:16-17<sup>±</sup> Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day— 17 things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

**COMMENT** - Christians are not bound to observe days and months and seasons and years. The rest we enter into as Christians is something to experience every day, not just one day a week—the rest of knowing we don't have to work to save ourselves, but our salvation is accomplished in Jesus (Hebrews 4:9–10).. The Sabbath commanded here and observed by Israel was a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ (Colossians 2:16–17). In the New Covenant the idea isn't that there is no Sabbath, but that every day is a day of Sabbath rest in the finished work of God. Since the shadow of the Sabbath is fulfilled in Jesus, we are free to keep any particular day—or no day—as a Sabbath after the custom of ancient Israel. Yet we dare not ignore the importance of a day of rest—God has built us so that we need one. Like a car that needs regular maintenance, we need regular rest—or we will not wear well. Some people are like high mileage cars that haven't been maintained well, and it shows. ([Enduring Word Commentary - Exodus 20](#))

Galatians 4:9-11<sup>±</sup> But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. 11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

### A Slower Pace

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. — Exodus 20:9-10

When writer Bruce Feiler was diagnosed with bone cancer in his thigh, he couldn't walk without some help for over a year. Learning to get around on crutches caused him to appreciate a slower pace of life. Feiler said, "The idea of slowing down became the number one lesson I learned from my experience."

After God's people were liberated from Egypt, He gave them a commandment that would cause them to slow down and view Him and the world "in pause." The fourth commandment introduced a dramatic contrast to the Israelites' slavery under Pharaoh when they had no break in their daily work routine.

The commandment insisted that God's people set aside one day a week to remember several important things: God's work in creation (Gen. 2:2), their liberation from Egyptian bondage (Deut. 5:12-15), their relationship with God (Dt 6:4-6), and their need for personal refreshment (Exod. 31:12-18). This was not to be a day of laziness, but one where God's people acknowledged, worshiped, and rested in Him.

We too are called to slow down, to be refreshed physically, mentally, and emotionally, and to behold God in His good creation. [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

**Deuteronomy 5:14** but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.

- **sabbath**: Ge 2:2 Ex 16:29,30 Heb 4:4
- **sojourner**: Ne 13:15,21
- **male servant and your female servant** Ex 23:12 Lev 25:44-46 Ne 5:5
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## SABBATH IS DEDICATED TO THE LORD

**But the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God-** To say it another way, the seventh day belonged to Yahweh. It was set apart for Him. To work on this day would be to take some of the day for one's self.

**Guzik** quips "It's as if God said, Having too much to do isn't an excuse from taking the rest you need—I created the universe and found time to rest from My work." ([Enduring Word Commentary - Exodus 20](#))

**Henry Morris on seventh day** - It is important to note the principle of one rest day following six days of work. The Hebrew word for "sabbath" does not mean "Saturday" or "seventh day"; it means "rest" or "intermission." The institution of the sabbath (one day of rest, worship and remembrance of the Creator) was "made for man" but not as an arbitrary legalistic ritual performed on a specific day (Mark 2:27+). In fact, the Christian observance of the first day as the day of rest seems most appropriate, signifying a "marking" not only of God's completed work of creation but also His completed work of redemption of the creation (note His victory cry on the cross--"It is finished!"--John 19:30) affirmed forever by His victory over sin and death on the first day of the Jewish week.

**in it you shall not do any work** - This statement is another way of saying finish all your work in 6 days (Ex 20:9).

**you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you** - This would keep a person from saying "I'll keep the Sabbath, but have these other folks do work for me!"

**NET Note** - 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... 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.

**So that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you-** **So that** always serves to introduce a purpose clause and in this context, the purpose is that everyone **may rest**. This speaks of physical rest, but also speaks of the deep inner need of every soul to experience spiritual rest. And what better way to do that than to have a day set aside that would remind one of the Creator and Sustainer and Giver of every good gift in life. It is as if focusing on Jehovah functions to "purge" one's soul of the pressures and problems of the previous week. The pressures and problems may still be present on Monday, but one day allows you to run into the Name of the Strong Tower (Jehovah) and to be safe (the Hebrew word means be lifted up above the surrounding fray going on around you! - see discussion of Proverbs 18:10).

**THOUGHT** There is an interesting parallel in music which is referred to as **rest** and contributes to the beauty of a composition. [Wikipedia](#) says "**Rests** are intervals of silence in pieces of music, marked by symbols indicating the length of the pause. Each **rest** symbol and name corresponds with a particular note value, indicating how long the silence should last." If that is true in order to create harmonious, beautiful music, how much more important is it to the "music" produced in a soul who takes time to **rest** in Jehovah? We all need a "**rest**" so that the "music" produced by our soul might be harmonious and beautiful! How's your music sounding to those around you these days? Perhaps you need to add a "**rest**" stop in Jehovah to your life!

**Rest** (05117)([nuach/nuah](#)) means to rest or pause and as noted from the many ways it is translated (see list of words below), nuach has many uses in the OT. Nuach essentially conveys a basic sense of absence of movement and of being settled in a particular place with overtones of finality. The first use in Ge 2:15 describes how God "put" Adam in the Garden. The next use describes a physical setting down of something (Ge 8:4). **Nuach** in Deuteronomy - Deut. 3:20; Deut. 5:14; Deut. 12:10; Deut. 14:28; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:4; Deut. 26:10;

Joshua 1:13 says "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying,



'The LORD your God gives you **rest** and will give you this land.'

**THOUGHT** - True **Rest** is a gift from Jehovah (cf Dt 3:20, 12:10, 25:19)! The verb in the Septuagint of Dt 5:14 is [anapauo](#) (middle voice - reflexive - you initiate the action and participate in results thereof) which mean to refresh, to take one's ease, to relax. For believers [anapauo](#) takes on a special sense, because for us **Jesus is our Rest** even as He invited all "**Come** ([deute](#) a command) to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and **I will give you rest** ([anapauo](#))." (Mt 11:28) Real rest, deep rest, rest for our souls comes only from our Savior. Are you taking time each week to meditate on His Word and rest in Him? If not you are surprised that you are often restless? Take a rest stop and listen Steve Green's beautiful version of [Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting](#). This was [Hudson Taylor's](#) favorite hymn and the key to [Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret](#) - abiding in Christ and not striving in self. Here is a quote from his [Spiritual Secret](#) - "The secret of his own strength was not far to seek. Whenever work permitted, Mr. Taylor was in the habit of turning to a little harmonium for refreshment, playing and singing many a favorite hymn, but always coming back to— Jesus, I am resting, resting, in the joy of what Thou art; I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart." Oh, that the Spirit might bring us back over and over to our Jesus, our Rest in this life and the one to come. In His Name. Amen.

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## "Lie Down"

**He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.**

—Psalm 23:2-3

Our golden retriever can get so overly excited that he will go into a seizure. To prevent that from happening, we try to calm him. We stroke him, speak to him in a soothing voice, and tell him to lie down. But when he hears "lie down," he avoids eye contact with us and starts complaining. Finally, with a dramatic sigh of resignation, he gives in and plops to the floor.

Sometimes we too need to be reminded to lie down. In Psalm 23, we learn that our Good Shepherd makes us "lie down in green pastures" and leads us "beside the still waters." He knows that we need the calm and rest that these provide, even when we don't realize it ourselves.

Our bodies are designed to have regular rest. God Himself rested on the seventh day after His work of creation (Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:9-11). Jesus knew there was a time to minister to the crowds and a time to rest. He instructed His disciples to "come aside . . . and rest a while" (Mark 6:31). When we rest, we refocus and are refreshed. When we are filling every hour with activity—even with worthwhile things—God often gets our attention by making us "lie down."

**Rest is a gift**—a good gift from our Creator who knows exactly what we need. Praise Him that He sometimes makes us "lie down in green pastures."

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your care for our well-being in every area of our lives. Help us to be rested and refreshed in You.

If we don't come apart and rest awhile, we may just plain come apart! —Havner

**INSIGHT:** The Ten Commandments, or Decalogue (Greek, meaning "ten words"), are 10 laws given by God as guidelines for daily living. The first four commandments (Ex. 20:1-11) place the worship of God as primary for His people. The first commandment (Exodus 20:3) calls us to worship God alone. He is the only one we are to serve. The second (Exodus 20:4-5) urges us to worship God appropriately and correctly, for God doesn't tolerate idolatry of any kind. The third commandment (Exodus 20:7) directs us to worship God sincerely and reverently. Our actions and attitudes must not dishonor Him. The fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8-11) lays out the frequency, regularity, and consistency of our worship. We are to set aside one day each week for worship. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**Deuteronomy 5:15** 'You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.'

- **remember:** De 15:15 16:12 24:18-22 Isa 51:1,2 Eph 2:11,12
- **the LORD your God:** De 5:6 Ps 116:16 Isa 63:9 Lu 1:74,75 Tit 2:14
- through: De 4:34-37
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## REMEMBERING - MOTIVATION FOR KEEPING SABBATH

**You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm** - The LORD took them (and us) from bondage to liberty, which should serve to motivate loving obedience to Him. Jehovah is our new Master, and is not like the harsh taskmasters we served when we were in bondage. Israel was now free. Freedom is not the right to do as you please, but the power to do as you should.

**THOUGHT** - Are you living in this Spirit enabled freedom in Christ Jesus, your new loving Master? (cf James 1:25+)

**Mighty hand** - Exod. 32:11; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 6:21; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 9:26; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 26:8; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34; Dan. 9:15; 1 Pet. 5:6

**Outstretched arm** - Exod. 6:6; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 9:29; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 26:8; 1 Ki. 8:42; 2 Ki. 17:36; 2 Chr. 6:32; Ps. 136:12; Jer. 27:5; Jer. 32:17; Jer. 32:21; Ezek. 20:33; Ezek. 20:34

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. Since you are free, now rest in Him!

**The LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day**- Our hearts are prone to wander (sometimes to good fields, sometimes not so good), but prone to restlessness rather than restfulness. And so our omniscient God knowing our nature commands us to rest on **the Sabbath Day**. As John wrote "For **this is the love of God**, that we keep ([tereo](#)) His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." (1 John 5:3+) God's command to **observe the Sabbath Day** is a reflection of His amazing love for us!

**Deuteronomy 5:16** **'Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you.**

- Honor: Ex 20:12 Lev 19:3 Mt 15:4-6 Col 3:20
- that your days: De 4:40 27:16 Eph 6:1-3
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

### Related Passage -

Exodus 20:12 **"Honor** your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

## FIFTH COMMANDMENT: HONOR YOUR PARENTS

**Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you**, Like the command to remember the Sabbath, this command is also a positive one. By the nature of this command we see that there is a clear authority structure in the family. It is a command calling for child to obey their parents. Obedience of children to their parents is a foundation stone for a stable society. To honor their parents signified that they loved them, had respect for them and submitted to their authority. To disobey this command is to dishonor God, for He is our Father!

**Currid** - This command goes against human nature. It is impossible to keep because, as Calvin says, it 'strongly conflicts with the depravity of human nature'—a nature that desires power and bears submission grudgingly. Throughout Scripture there is one caveat to this command. The person in authority needs to represent Yahweh in the way he or she treats people (Eph. 5:22; 6:1). If the authority figure transgresses God's law, or demands that his people do unlawful deeds, then, to quote Calvin again, they 'have a perfect right' to regard the authorities 'as strangers who are trying to lead [them] away from obedience to [the] true Father'. The command is thus a two-way street: it relates to how people are to obey their superiors, and how superiors are to treat those over whom they exercise authority. (Ibid)

**Alan Cole** - Those who build a society in which old age has an honoured place may with confidence expect to enjoy that place themselves one day. This is not a popular doctrine in our modern world, where youth is worshipped, and old age dreaded or despised. The result is the folly by which men or women strive to remain eternally youthful, only to find it an impossible task. (TOTC-Ex)

**Steven Cole** - Parents should teach their children when they are very young that they are not permitted to defy their parents, hit their parents, or say that they hate them. The command also applies to adult children showing honor and taking care of their elderly parents. It establishes the family as the foundation of society. I recognize that it is extremely difficult to apply this command if your parents have been emotionally, physically, or sexually abusive. It is difficult for a believing young person to honor parents who attack his or her faith in Christ. In such cases, get godly counsel on how to show respect while protecting yourself from abuse. It may be necessary to report abusive parents to civil authorities. ([Obeying The Big Ten \(Exodus 20:1-17\)](#); see also [Exodus 20:12 Keeping the Fifth - Honoring Parents](#))

**Honor** (03513)(**kabad**) means to weigh heavily, to be heavy (weighty, burdensome), to be honored, to be of great value. The opposite of treating one's parents with "kabad" would be to treat them lightly, disregarding what they say as unimportant. To the contrary this Hebrew word means that the child must receive what their parent says with great seriousness and value.

The **Septuagint** uses the verb **timao** (in the [present imperative](#) (calling for continual obedience - timao is also used by Paul in Eph 6:2) which means to show high regard respect for and so to count as valuable, to esteem, to value, to honor or to revere, to show respect, to recognize their worth and specifically to recognize the validity of their role and their authority. **Timao** means to fix a value or price upon something and so to prize it. The idea is to treat as precious! To honor is a social action describing how people within a society should evaluate one another. Honoring involves a proper (heart) attitude as well as appropriate behavior.

In Matthew 15:3-9 Jesus describes how men were trying to circumvent the command to honor their parents...

And He answered and said to them, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 "For God said, **HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER,**' and, 'HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH.' 5 "But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "*Whatever I have that would help you has been given to God,*" ([Mark 7:11](#) = 'If a man says to his father or his mother, anything of mine you might have been helped by is **Corban** (that is to say, given to God).") 6 he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition. 7 "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: 8 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. 9 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"

**COMMENT** - The tradition of "**Corban**" meant "**an offering dedicated to God.**" This permitted a son to be released from any obligation to care for his parents, thus breaking the fifth commandment. The law clearly commanded **honor your father and your mother**, but here the the Pharisees effectively nullified this commandment in the practice of **Corban** by allowing a callous child to declare his possessions **devoted to God**, so that the parents would have no claim to assistance. He would claim his possessions belonged to God and were therefore unavailable for other purposes. Should the son regret his gift of **Corban**, the Pharisees would insist that the vow be kept in accordance with [Nu 30:2](#). Jesus rejects this practice of using the letter of one commandment to invalidate the intent of another. See also [What does Corban mean in Mark 7:11?](#)

**That** - [Term of purpose](#). Explains the reward (and motivation) to obey honoring parents.

**Your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you-** God is referring to the Promised Land and indeed it would be the children of the parents who heard this command in person who would be beneficiaries of the promise.

Children **obey** ([present imperative](#) see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 **HONOR** (**timao** in [present imperative](#) see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), 3 SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. (Eph 6:1-3<sub>±</sub>)

**John MacArthur** comments regarding disobedience to this command that "Severe consequences, namely capital punishment, could apply (cf. Dt 21:18-21). One of the reasons for the Babylonian exile was a failure to honor parents (Eze 22:7, 15). The Apostle Paul individualized this national promise when he applied the truth to believers in his day (cf. Mt 15:4; Mk 7:10; Eph 6:1-3)." (Ibid)

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**Question: "[What does it mean to honor my father and mother?](#)"**

**Answer:** Honoring your father and mother is being respectful in word and action and having an inward attitude of esteem for their position. The Greek word for honor means “to revere, prize, and value.” Honor is giving respect not only for merit but also for rank. For example, some Americans may disagree with the President’s decisions, but they should still respect his position as leader of their country. Similarly, children of all ages should honor their parents, regardless of whether or not their parents “deserve” honor.

God exhorts us to honor father and mother. He values honoring parents enough to include it in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:12) and again in the New Testament: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise, so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth” (Ephesians 6:1-3). Honoring parents is the only command in Scripture that promises long life as a reward. Those who honor their parents are blessed (Jeremiah 35:18-19). In contrast, those with a “depraved mind” and those who exhibit ungodliness in the last days are characterized by disobedience to parents (Romans 1:30; 2 Timothy 3:2).

Solomon, the wisest man, urged children to respect their parents (Proverbs 1:8; 13:1; 30:17). Although we may no longer be directly under their authority, we cannot outgrow God’s command to honor our parents. Even Jesus, God the Son, submitted Himself to both His earthly parents (Luke 2:51) and His heavenly Father (Matthew 26:39). Following Christ’s example, we should treat our parents the way we would reverentially approach our heavenly Father (Hebrews 12:9; Malachi 1:6).

Obviously, we are commanded to honor our parents, but how? Honor them with both actions and attitudes (Mark 7:6). Honor their unspoken as well as spoken wishes. “A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a mocker does not listen to rebuke” (Proverbs 13:1). In Matthew 15:3-9, Jesus reminded the Pharisees of the command of God to honor their father and mother. They were obeying the letter of the law, but they had added their own traditions that essentially overruled it. While they honored their parents in word, their actions proved their real motive. Honor is more than lip service. The word “honor” in this passage is a verb and, as such, demands a right action.

We should seek to honor our parents in much the same way that we strive to bring glory to God—in our thoughts, words, and actions. For a young child, obeying parents goes hand in hand with honoring them. That includes listening, heeding, and submitting to their authority. After children mature, the obedience that they learned as children will serve them well in honoring other authorities such as government, police, and employers.

While we are required to honor parents, that doesn’t include imitating ungodly ones (Ezekiel 20:18-19). If a parent ever instructs a child to do something that clearly contradicts God’s commands, that child must obey God rather than his/her parents (Acts 5:29).

Honor begets honor. God will not honor those who will not obey His command to honor their parents. If we desire to please God and be blessed, we should honor our parents. Honoring is not easy, is not always fun, and certainly is not possible in our own strength. But honor is a certain path to our purpose in life—glorifying God. “Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord” (Colossians 3:20). (Source: [Gotquestions.org](http://Gotquestions.org))

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## **Honoring Your Parents**

Honor your father and mother. —Ephesians 6:2

Today’s Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17

My dad recently turned 90 years old and his physical capabilities are fading. He can still move around with his walker, but he needs someone to cook his meals and help him with other tasks.

My older brother Steve and his wife Judy lived close to him, so they decided to move in with Dad to care for him. Wanting to help in some way, my wife and I flew across the country to help out a bit by watching Dad while my brother and his wife had some time away together. We enjoyed our time with my father and were glad to ease Steve and Judy’s load—even if it was only for a few days.

The Bible says to “honor your father and mother” (Eph. 6:2). One New Testament commentary says that to honor someone is to “treat him with the deference, respect, reverence, kindness, courtesy, and obedience which his station in life . . . demands.”

For young children, this means obeying parents. For teenagers, it indicates showing respect for Mom and Dad even if you think you know more than they do. For young adults, this means including your parents in your life. And for those in middle-age and beyond, it means making sure that parents are cared for as they move into old age or their health declines.

How can you honor your parents this week? By: Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Don't miss the opportunity  
To honor and obey  
The parents God has given you—  
For they'll be gone someday.  
—Sper

Honoring our parents has no age limit.

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## The Gift Of Family

Through her books and lectures, Edith Schaeffer has become much appreciated for her insights into the value of life's ordinary days. When she and her husband Francis were first married, both sets of parents lived nearby. The newlyweds divided each Sunday afternoon and evening between the Schaeffers and the Sevilles.

After a few years, Edith and Francis moved to Switzerland, where they could talk with their parents only once a year in a brief phone conversation.

Looking back half a century later, Edith wrote of being glad for the way they had used those Sunday afternoons. She noted that "proximity of loved ones is not an endless situation." She concluded that a package labeled "time to care for parents and exhibit love" doesn't just arrive someday. We must show love while we can.

The fifth of the Ten Commandments says: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12). The command to love and respect our parents applies equally to children living at home, newly independent young couples, and empty-nesters.

Seize each moment you have to love and honor your family. The opportunity won't last forever. —David C. McCasland [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### Putting It Into Action

- Plan a regular time to call a family member.
- Help an aged relative with a project or housework.
- Write a letter to someone you love but cannot visit.

Time is one of the greatest gifts we can give each other.

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## Long Life

AN old man who lived to be one hundred attributed his longevity to booze, black cigars, beautiful women—and never going to church. "That kind of impious longevity may be the exception, not the rule," says Dr. George W. Comstock of Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health.

In a study of the relation of the social and economic factors to disease, Comstock and his colleagues made an incidental but fascinating discovery. Regular churchgoing and the clean living that often goes with it seem to help people avoid "a whole bagful of dire ailments and disasters." Comstock concludes, "Nice guys do seem to finish last."

The Bible also has something to say about how to have a long life. It admonishes children to honor their parents so that they may live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:2, 3). Harold W. Hoehner, in [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) says, "This states a general principle that obedience fosters self-discipline, which in turn brings stability and longevity in one's life."

Of course, there are exceptions. Some very disciplined Christians die young, and some wicked people live long. But the general principle applies: Living right not only pleases God, it can also add years to your life.—R W De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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## Honoring Your Parents

Honor your father and mother. —Ephesians 6:2

My dad recently turned 90 years old and his physical capabilities are fading. He can still move around with his walker, but he needs someone to cook his meals and help him with other tasks.

My older brother Steve and his wife Judy lived close to him, so they decided to move in with Dad to care for him. Wanting to help in

some way, my wife and I flew across the country to help out a bit by watching Dad while my brother and his wife had some time away together. We enjoyed our time with my father and were glad to ease Steve and Judy's load—even if it was only for a few days.

The Bible says to “honor your father and mother” (Eph. 6:2). One New Testament commentary says that to honor someone is to “treat him with the deference, respect, reverence, kindness, courtesy, and obedience which his station in life . . . demands.”

For young children, this means obeying parents. For teenagers, it indicates showing respect for Mom and Dad even if you think you know more than they do. For young adults, this means including your parents in your life. And for those in middle-age and beyond, it means making sure that parents are cared for as they move into old age or their health declines. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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To honor and obey  
The parents God has given you—  
For they'll be gone someday.  
—Sper

Honoring our parents has no age limit.

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## Commandment 5—Honor Your Parents

Read: Ephesians 6:1-4

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land. —Exodus 20:12

It was a sad, unsigned letter from an elderly mother. “I have an only son,” she wrote, “who does all sorts of things for other people but hates to do anything for me. He rarely visits me although I live only 8 minutes away. He seldom even phones.”

God puts a high priority on family relationships throughout life—so says the fifth commandment. On the surface it seems directed exclusively to children, but parents must set the example. Children learn to honor, respect, and obey their parents when they see Mom and Dad honoring one another, when they feel respected, affirmed, and loved by their parents, and when they observe their obedience to God. This commandment to children actually touches us all.

How many of us have been as thoughtful of our parents as we could have been? And who of us as parents have been to our children all that we should have been? Although we've broken this commandment, our guilt has been removed by Jesus' death on the cross. He gives the courage to ask forgiveness of our children and our parents. And if they are not living, we can show the sincerity of our repentance by strengthening our other family relationships. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We honor our Father when we honor our parents.

Children who honor their parents  
Are doing what's good in God's sight;  
Parents who love and admonish  
Are teaching to do what is right.  
—Sper

Honoring our parents is learned by example.

### Deuteronomy 5:17 'You shall not murder.

- Ex 21:14,20,29 Ge 4:8-23 9:5,6 Lev 24:21 Nu 35:16-34 De 5:17 De 19:11-13 2Sa 12:9,10 2Ki 21:16 2Ch 24:22 Ps 10:8-11 Pr 1:11,18 Isa 26:21 Jer 26:15 Mt 5:21,22 Ac 28:4 Ro 13:9 Ga 5:21 1Ti 1:9 Jas 2:11,13 1Jn 3:12-15
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

### Related Passages:

Exodus 20:13 “You shall not murder.

Matthew 5:21-22+ "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' 22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

**You shall not murder** - Two terse words in Hebrew "No murder!" **KJV** says "Thou shalt not kill. This is straightforward. Just as straightforward was the penalty imposed for murder - "He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death." (Ex 21:12, cf Nu 34:17-21).

**Murder** (07523)(**ratsach**) means to murder or slay, all 47 uses (in 40v) speaking of one human being killing another and never of a person killing an animal. Ratsach is never employed in contexts of war, capital punishment, or self-defense. The taking of a human life is the primary concept behind this word. It refers to the premeditated (Dt. 5:17; 1 Kgs. 21:19; Jer. 7:9), or accidental taking of the life of another human being (Nu. 35:11; Josh. 20:3) and includes any unauthorized killing. The word 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. The first use is in the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." (Ex 20:13) Unpremeditated killing, known as manslaughter in English common law, is also prohibited (Nu 35:11). **Ratsach** also includes an act of revenge (Nu 35:27) and death from animal attack (Pr. 22:13). **MacArthur** adds that "Careful appraisal of the word (**ratsach**) Moses used (one of 7 different Hebrew words for killing) suggests a broad translation of "to kill, slay" but denoting the taking of life under a legal system where he would have to answer to the stipulations of a legal code, no matter whether he killed unintentionally or intentionally. By this command, men would be reminded and exhorted to strive after carefulness in the affairs of life so that on the person-to-person level no one would die by their hand."

**Currid** comments "It should be noted that the verb does not specify any particular person(s) as its direct object. The form is thus not qualified in that way. Consequently, it is likely that suicide is included in the prohibition." (Ibid) (See also [What does the Bible say about suicide?](#)).

**Steven Cole** - Sinful actions always begin with unchecked sinful thoughts. Thus while most of us think that we are incapable of murdering someone, if we don't deal with bitterness and anger, we're feeding the root that grows into murder. (See my message [5/4/08], "[Taming Your Temper.](#)") This command does not prohibit nations from armed conflicts or wars to protect their citizens from outside aggression. It does not prohibit governments imposing capital punishment for serious crimes after a fair trial with conclusive evidence. It does not forbid law enforcement officers from using deadly force when necessary to protect the innocent. And, it does not forbid self-defense or defense of one's family or of innocent victims if law enforcement officers are not on the scene. It does prohibit killing babies in the womb unless the physical life of the mother is at stake. (See my messages [1/25/04], "[What the Bible Says About Abortion](#)"; and [4/21/96], "[The Sanctity of Human Life.](#)")

Recall that Moses was a murderer who had been forgiven and restored by God. Moses knew what it meant to connect with God on the ground of grace, not what one deserved.

Genesis 1:26-27 says man was made in the image of God

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 9:5-6 explains that one who murders should be killed and gives as the reason that man is made in the image of God

"Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.

Jesus addressed the deeper meaning of this commandment in His Sermon on the Mount taking murder well beyond the physical act, in effect forbidding "murder of the heart" (John Calvin). As **Currid** says "Indeed, it is the hand that gives birth to murder, but it is the heart infected and inflamed with hate and anger that conceives it! (cf. 1 John 3:15+)."

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**Question:** [Why is "You shall not murder" in the Ten Commandments?](#)

**Answer:** Simply stated, the sixth of the Ten Commandments forbids the unjustified taking of a human life. However, the commandment itself has a couple of interesting elements that bear mentioning. First and foremost, different Bible translations give

the appearance of different meanings, and there is potential for misunderstanding the actual meaning of the verse. Second, man was never created for the act of murdering another, and there needs to be an explanation for such a violent and final act towards another human being. Third, because of the translational challenge, we need to understand the difference between “murder” and “killing.” And last but not least, how does God view murder? To God, murder is not just physical in nature but also the condition of one’s heart towards another.

There are two different Hebrew words ([ratsach](#), mut) and two Greek words (phoneuo, apokteino) for “murder” and “killing.” One means “to put to death,” and the other means “to murder.” The latter one ([ratsach](#)) is the one prohibited by the Ten Commandments, not the former. In fact, ratsakh has a broader definition than the English word “murder.” [Ratsach](#) also covers deaths due to carelessness or neglect but is never used when describing killing during wartime. That is why most modern translations render the sixth commandment “You shall not murder” rather than “You shall not kill.” However, a very large issue can arise depending on which translation one studies. The ever-popular King James Version renders the verse as “Thou shalt not kill,” therefore opening the door to misinterpreting the verse altogether. If the intended meaning of “Thou shalt not kill” was just that—no killing—it would render all of the God-endorsed bloodletting done by the nation of Israel a violation of God’s own commandment (Deuteronomy 20). But God does not break His own commandments, so, clearly, the verse does not call for a complete moratorium on the taking of another human life.

**Why does man murder?** We know that we were created in God’s image (Genesis 1:27) and we were made to live in harmony with God and with our fellow man. This harmony became impossible once sin entered into the picture (Genesis 3). With sin came the propensity for acting violently against one another. Anger, jealousy, pride and hatred can fuel man’s evil bent towards life-ending aggression. The first recorded act of murder was when Cain killed his brother Abel (Genesis 4:8). From that moment on, taking the life of another has been commonplace and, in some circles of society, acceptable. However, to God every life is important, and since God knew that man was sinful and evil and had become “lawless,” He enacted guidelines that would seek to modify man’s behavior (1 John 3:4).

**So, is there a difference between murder and killing?** First, it is important to note that not all killing is wrong. For instance, the apostle Paul talks about the right of the state to take the lives of evildoers (Romans 13:1-7). This relates to what is commonly referred to as capital punishment. Most countries have consequences for murder. In some cases this requires the life of the perpetrator and a suitable means of putting one to death is chosen and administered (Matthew 5:21; Exodus 21:14). Another instance of acceptable “killing” is that which is done during times of war and at the command of superiors. There were quite a few instances in Scripture where God endorsed and allowed the taking of other lives (1 Samuel 11; Judges 6–7). And finally, although far from acceptable, manslaughter is yet another form of killing someone. This unintentional act apparently happened so often in biblical times that cities of refuge were designated for the manslayer to seek refuge in (Exodus 21:13; Joshua 20). Again, it was never God’s intent to have to use such a drastic measure as taking one’s life to rectify a situation. So, God does make exceptions for the taking of another’s life as long as it lines up with His will. However, premeditated murder of an individual is never God’s will.

**What is murder in God’s eyes?** From the human perspective, murder is the physical act of taking another’s life. However, we also must consider that God defines murder as any thought or feeling of deep-seated hatred or malice against another person. In other words, it is more than just a physical act that constitutes murder to God, who tells us that “everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15ESV). When we harbor hatred in our hearts for another, we have committed the sin of murder in God’s eyes. The disdain towards another person never has to be demonstrated outwardly because God looks upon the heart for the truth (1 Samuel 16:7; Matthew 15:19). As Christians and as human beings, we know that unjustified killing is wrong. God’s Word is very clear on this point: “You shall not murder.” And what God says we must obey, or we face the consequences on judgment day. (Source: [Gotquestions.org](#))

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#### Related Resources:

- Torrey Topical Textbook [Murder](#)
- American Tract Society [Murder](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Murder](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Murder](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Murder](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Murder](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Murder](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Murder](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Murder](#) [Murder \(2\)](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [Murder](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Murder](#)



- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Murder Murderer](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Murder](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Murder](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Murder](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Murderers Murder](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Self Murder Murder](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Murder](#)

## In Defense Of Life

You shall not murder. —Exodus 20:13

The Jews clearly understood that God's commandment not to kill refers to murder—the malicious taking of human life. It doesn't forbid governments to use the death penalty or to wage war. This commandment deals solely with private morality.

Exodus 20:13 is based on the divine truth that human life is sacred and that we must protect and preserve it. Every human being bears God's image. Even an embryo is marked with a unique identity from the moment of conception. Life is God's most precious gift, and only He has the right to take it. Abortion, euthanasia, and physician-assisted suicide must all be viewed in the light of God's right to our life.

Jesus brought this commandment to everyone's doorstep when He said that to be angry at someone without cause makes us guilty of murder (Matthew 5:21-22). And John wrote, "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15). This makes us all murderers in desperate need of God's forgiveness and mercy.

Thank You, Lord, for Your love and forgiveness. Help us by Your Holy Spirit to love others as You have loved us, and in so doing to value life, protect life, and enrich life as a gift from You. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Points To Ponder

- What did John mean when he said that if we hate
- someone we are murderers? (1 John 3:15).
- How does this truth help us to forgive those who hurt us?

**Anger is just one letter short of danger.**

## Deuteronomy 5:18 'You shall not commit adultery.'

- **Adultery** Lev 18:20 20:10 2Sa 11:4,5,27 Pr 2:15-18 6:24-35 7:18-27 Jer 5:8,9 29:22,23 Mal 3:5 Mt 5:27,28 Mk 10:11,12 Lu 18:20 Jas 2:10,11 Ro 7:2,3 Eph 5:3-5 Heb 13:4 Jas 4:4 Rev 21:8
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT NO ADULTERY

**You shall not commit adultery** - Only 2 words in Hebrew, but two words that can either save or destroy a marriage and family depending on whether they are obeyed or disobeyed! This command served to protect the sanctity of the marriage covenant. God's commandments concerning sex are not for the purpose of robbing people of joy, but rather of protecting them that they might not lose their joy. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" builds a wall around marriage that makes the relationship not a prison, but a safe and beautiful garden. To "break through this wall" around a marriage often results in destruction of the home. When homes begins to be destroyed, a nation is in serious trouble! This commandment against adultery applies to both husband and wife (Lev. 20:10<sup>+</sup>; Heb. 13:4<sup>+</sup>)

In the OT, the penalty for committing adultery in the marital relationship was death...

If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (Lev 20:10<sup>+</sup>).

**NET Note** - 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."

**Alan Cole** has an interesting comment - The law allowed [polygamy](#) (perhaps a necessary social institution to secure the protection of unattached women), but it never allowed [polyandry](#) (the taking of several husbands simultaneously by one woman). For a man to have intercourse with another man's wife was considered as heinous sin against God as well as man, long before the law, in patriarchal times (Ge 39:9). (TOTC-Ex)

**Steven Cole** - This is not to say that mental lust is as serious or harmful as physical adultery. But it is to say that if you look at pornography or lustfully check out women, you are guilty of adultery in God's sight. God requires moral purity on the thought level. (See my message, [6/1/97], "[Moral Purity in a Polluted World.](#)")

In Genesis 20 Abraham lied to Abimelech about Sarah calling her his sister and not his wife. Abimelech took her but did not have relations with her. In Ge 20:6 God said to Abimelech in a dream "I also kept you from sinning against Me." So adultery is a sin against God. In a similar way when Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce Joseph, Joseph said "There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9). So clearly adultery is first and foremost a sin against God.

**Adultery** was punishable by stoning. If a man forces an engaged girl, he was to die. Premarital sex required the man to marry the woman with whom he had sex. In Deuteronomy 22:22-30 says "If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel. 23 "If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her, 24 then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because **he has violated his neighbor's wife.**" Thus you shall purge the evil from among you. 25 "But if in the field the man finds the **girl who is engaged, and the man forces her and lies with her,** then only the man who lies with her shall die. 26 "But you shall do nothing to the girl; there is no sin in the girl worthy of death, for just as a man rises against his neighbor and murders him, so is this case. 27 "When he found her in the field, the engaged girl cried out, but there was no one to save her. 28" If a man finds a girl who is a virgin, who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her and they are discovered, 29 then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall become his wife because he has violated her; he cannot divorce her all his days. 30"A man shall not take his father's wife so that he will not uncover his father's skirt.

**Believer's Study Bible** - The seventh commandment protects the sanctity of the home and expresses the value God places upon faithfulness in relationships, esp in the most intimate relationship of life (cf. Mal 2:14-16<sup>±</sup>).

**Adultery** (05003)([nā'ap](#)) is a verb meaning to commit adultery and is used literally of the physical act (Ex. 20:14; Lev. 20:10; Prov. 6:32; Jer. 5:7; 7:9; 29:23; Hos. 4:2; Mal. 3:5). Na'ap is also often used of spiritual adultery as well and as such is often equated with idolatry (Isa. 57:3; Jer. 3:9; Ezek. 23:37).

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **na'ap** with the verb [moicheuo](#) (in Mt. 5:27, 28, 32; Mt 19:18; Mk 10:19; Lk 16:18; Lk 18:20; Jn 8:4; Ro 2:22; Ro 13:9; Jas 2:11; Rev. 2:22) which means to be unfaithful to one's marriage vows speaking of sexual intercourse with someone who is married to another. In some uses **moicheuo** can also be a figure of speech ([Rev 2:22](#)) as in the Old Testament where "adultery" described unfaithfulness to God especially through the practice of idolatry (which in the NT equates with greed and in essence is anything that comes between you and God).

**Na'ap** - 26v - adulterer(3), adulterers(5), adulteress(3), adulteresses(2), adulteries(1), adulterous(1), adultery(1), commit adultery(6), commits adultery(3), committed adultery(5), committing of adultery(1). Exod. 20:14; Lev. 20:10; Deut. 5:18; Job 24:15; Ps. 50:18; Prov. 6:32; Prov. 30:20; Isa. 57:3; Jer. 3:8; Jer. 3:9; Jer. 5:7; Jer. 7:9; Jer. 9:2; Jer. 23:10; Jer. 23:14; Jer. 29:23; Ezek. 16:32; Ezek. 16:38; Ezek. 23:37; Ezek. 23:45; Hos. 3:1; Hos. 4:2; Hos. 4:13; Hos. 4:14; Hos. 7:4; Mal. 3:5

**Jesus** took this command from the external act to the internal heart attitude, the lust that leads to the act.

"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; 28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28+)

**COMMENT** - This statute is striking in the light of pagan sexual practices. Leviticus 18 lists many of these depravities, such as temple prostitution, incest and adultery. Israel is to act differently. Sexual purity is one of the marks of being set apart. (Currid)

The writer of **Hebrews** adds that

Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. (Hebrews 13:4+)

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#### Related Resources:

- Solomon's warnings and preventative against sexual immorality and adultery - See exposition of Pr 5:1-23, Pr 6:20-35 and Pr 7:1-27 (**Notes** = [Proverbs 5:1-14](#); [Proverbs 5:15-23](#); [Proverbs 6:20-35](#); [Proverbs 7:1-27](#))
- [What does the Bible say about adultery?](#)
- [What is the biblical punishment for adultery?](#)
- [Why is "You shall not commit adultery" in the Ten Commandments?](#)
- [What is spiritual adultery?](#)
- [Is remarriage after divorce always adultery?](#)
- [What is the difference between fornication and adultery?](#)
- [What can we learn from the woman caught in adultery?](#)
- [Do I have to confess my adultery to my spouse?](#)
- Nave Topical Bible [Adultery](#)
- Thompson Chain Reference [Adultery](#)
- The Topic Concordance [Adultery](#)
- American Tract Society [Adultery](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Adultery](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Adultery](#) [Adultery](#)
- King James Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Adulterer](#). [Adulterous](#). [Adultery](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Adulteries](#) [Adultery](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Adultery](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Adultery](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Adultery](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Adultery](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Adultery](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Adultery](#)

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**Question:** "[Why is 'You shall not commit adultery' in the Ten Commandments?](#)"

**Answer:** Before we can answer this question, we need to be clear on the definition of adultery. The dictionary defines "adultery" as "voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a person who is not his or her spouse." The Bible would concur with this definition. In Leviticus 18:20, God told Moses, "Do not have sexual relations with your neighbor's wife and defile yourself with her," and in Deuteronomy 22:22, we find a similar definition: "If a man is found sleeping with another man's wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die." It is clear from these definitions that adultery refers to a consensual sexual union. What is not explicitly clear is whether or not both partners in this illicit sexual union are married. The biblical commands prohibit a man from taking another man's wife, but do not indicate whether or not the man is also married. Be that as it may, it is safe to say that if a person who is married willingly seeks a sexual encounter with another person, whether or not that person is also married, both people are guilty of committing adultery.

God's reasons for instituting His commandment against adultery are two-fold.

**First,** God established the institution of marriage as being between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24; reiterated by Jesus in Matthew 19:5 and parallel passages). God created marriage to be the building block of His creation and of society. Even after the fall (Genesis 3), marriage is still a sacred union and the foundation for society. In marriage, the full expression of the image of God is made manifest as the man and the woman complement and complete each other. The Bible also teaches us that marriage is the

vehicle through which God designed the procreation of the human race and the preservation of godly offspring (Genesis 1:28, 9:1; Malachi 2:15). With such a premium placed on marriage, it's no wonder God would seek to protect this union from defilement (Hebrews 13:4), and thus prohibit adultery, which is the violation of the sacred marriage union.

The **second** reason for the commandment is found in Leviticus 18:1-5. As God's chosen people, the Israelites were to reflect God's character in the Promised Land. God commanded His people to be holy for He is holy (Leviticus 11:44), and part of holy living is sexual purity. God did not want His people emulating the behavior of the Egyptians from whom He delivered them, nor did God want His people copying the behavior of the people into whose land He was bringing them. The implication was that adultery (and other sexual sins) was commonplace in the lands where the Israelites had been and were going to.

So now we know what adultery is and why God instituted this command. Finally, we need to learn what God meant by the command itself. As with all of the Ten Commandments, there are things we need to avoid doing (the negative part of the command) and things we need to be doing (the positive part of the command). The negative part of the command is self-explanatory: Do not commit adultery. However, there is more to this command than the simple avoidance of extramarital relationships. One can make the argument that wrapped up in this prohibition are all sorts of sexual sin (e.g., incest, fornication, homosexuality, etc.), and that argument can be made on the basis of chapters such as Leviticus 18. Also important is avoiding things that would lead or tempt one to consider adultery, such as the unnecessary withholding of conjugal rights (1 Corinthians 7:1-5). Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, made further clarification of this command (Matthew 5:27-30) by including all kinds of lustful thoughts. Fantasizing about having sexual relations with someone is the same, in God's eyes, as actually committing adultery. Therefore, we must avoid all things that would create within us lustful thoughts (e.g., suggestive songs, sensuous movies, pornography, etc.). We should also avoid immodest clothing or anything that might cause a brother or sister in the Lord to stumble in this area (1 Timothy 2:9; 1 Peter 3:3).

The positive part of the command would entail doing the opposite of what the command prohibits: chastity in body, mind, words and action; keeping watch over what we take in with our eyes and the other senses; an attitude of temperance and self-control (i.e., moderation); being discerning over the company we keep; dressing modestly; and fulfilling our marriage vows in regards to sexual relations and cohabitation. Regarding sexual sin, the Apostle Paul said, "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body" (1 Corinthians 6:18). When it comes to sexual sin, the best course of action is to remove ourselves from temptation and avoid such situations altogether.

Adultery is the complete corruption of God's good creation of marriage. Through the sin of adultery, Satan tempts us to seek sexual fulfillment in avenues other than the one God has ordained—within the bounds of monogamous, heterosexual marriage. Adultery rips at the fabric of society because it tears apart marriages and families which are the building blocks of society. God's law in general, and the 7th commandment in particular, is held up as the standard for Christian behavior. (Source: [Gotquestions.org](http://Gotquestions.org))

## Deuteronomy 5:19 'You shall not steal.

- Ex 20:15 Ex 21:16 Lev 6:1-7 19:11,13,35-37 De 24:7 25:13-16 Job 20:19-22 Pr 1:13-15 11:1 Am 3:10 8:4-6 Mic 6:10,11 7:3 Zec 5:3,4 Mt 15:19 19:18 21:13 Lu 3:13,14 Joh 12:6 Ro 13:9 1Co 6:10 Eph 4:28 1Th 4:6
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## NO STEALING

**You shall not steal** - Two words in Hebrew - "No stealing." In simple terms this commandment had as its purpose the protection of the property of individual Israelites. **Criswell** adds this commandment "underscores the importance of human boundaries, responsibilities, and limitations." The commandment to not covet is clearly related to this commandment. We see something we want and we take it.

An excellent, tragic example of stealing is **Achan** who in effect stole from God, for God had instructed Israel to take nothing under the ban (the **devoted things**). Jericho was **devoted to destruction** as described in Joshua 6:17ESV, which reads "And the city and all that is within it shall be **devoted to the LORD** for destruction ("all that is in it belongs to the LORD" = Josh 6:17NASB)" But Achan disobeyed that clear command. Here is the summary of why it happened and you will see the pivotal role of the tenth commandment coveting that led to stealing...

Joshua 7:20-21 So Achan answered Joshua and said, "Truly, **I have sinned against the LORD**, the God of Israel, and this is what I did: 21 when I **SAW** among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, **THEN I COVETED THEM** and **TOOK THEM**; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it. (For the punishment of

Achan read Joshua 7:22-26).

#### Related Resources:

- [Who was Achan in the Bible?](#)
- [Why did God judge the sin of Achan so severely?](#)
- [What is the significance of the Valley of Achor in the Bible?](#)
- [What is the significance of Ai in the Bible?](#)

**MacArthur** - Any dishonest acquiring of another's goods or assets greatly disturbs the right to ownership of private property, which is an important principle for societal stability. (Ibid)

**Ryken** - The God who gave this commandment is our Creator and Provider. To keep it is to recognize that ultimately everything belongs to Him, and that therefore we do not have the right to take what He has given to someone else. (Ibid)

**Currid** comments that "The Torah requires the thief to return double the amount stolen (Exod. 22:7). Thus, in an ironical turn of events, the criminal loses the exact sum he had hoped to gain. It is the concept of restitution, in which not only is the original condition restored, but a payment is made for time and trouble." (Ibid)

**Steven Cole** - This command acknowledges the right to own private property. It forbids all theft, robbery, extortion, embezzlement, and taking bribes. It prohibits cheating on your income taxes, as well as welfare and Medicare fraud. You violate this command if you steal intellectual property through plagiarism or copyright violations. It's wrong to steal office supplies or equipment, or to steal time from your employer. It's sin to incur debt that you know you are unable to pay back. While sometimes bankruptcy is unavoidable, Christians should do their best to pay creditors what is owed. (See my message [4/6/08], ["To Cure a Thief."](#)) ([Obeying The Big Ten Exodus 20:1-17](#))

**Steal** (01589)([ganab](#)) means to carry away, to take that which belongs to another and generally signifies taking something that belongs to another secretly, without consent. Thus to steal is a nuance distinguished from the concept "to rob" in the sense that stealing is done in secret. There are other Hebrew verbs for violent aspect of theft. Kidnapping (2 Ki. 11:2) or selling one into slavery without legal right (Ge 40:15) is conveyed by this verb. Thus, taking anything, human, animate or inanimate, without legal right, is described by this verb. It is surprising that the penalty for stealing was milder than in other societies of the time. While death was the penalty for stealing humans, in all other cases of theft, restitution with interest was the penalty (Ex 22:1ff). Death was the penalty for a number of types of theft in most other Ancient Near East societies. [Ganab](#) has the sense of deceiving when used with the word for heart, as when Jacob literally stole Laban's heart (Ge 31:20, 26). With storm as its subject, the word means to carry away quickly and violently (Job 21:18), especially the wicked (Job 27:20).

**Paul** repeats this command in the NT and gives the alternative...

He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. (Eph 4:28+)

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#### Related Resources:

- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Robbery](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Robbery](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Robbery](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Robbery](#)
- King James Dictionary [Robbery](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Robbery](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Robbery](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Robbery](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Robber; Robbery](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Robbery](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Steal](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Stealing](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Stealing](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Stealing](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Steal](#)

- Wilson's Bible Types [Steal](#)
  - Webster Dictionary [Stealing](#) [Stealer](#) [Steal](#)
  - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Stealing](#)
  - McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Steal](#)
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## Commandment 9—Tell The Truth

Read: Zechariah 8:14-17

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. —Exodus 20:16

How prone we are to lying! With a stroke of exaggeration here, an omitted detail there, or a misleading silence we distort the truth. Yet truth is the foundation and superstructure of all relationships. Remove the girders of truth, and society crumbles in on itself. This moral absolute is so self-evident that even criminals punish their own who lie to them.

The ninth commandment forbids purposeful deceit against our neighbor and underscores the sacredness of truth in all our dealings. The two Hebrew words used for “false” in Exodus 20:16 and in Deuteronomy 5:20 mean “untrue” and “insincere.” Any expression of insincerity and untruthfulness, therefore, is bearing false witness against our neighbor.

This commandment also exposes two underlying motives that God hates—malice and pride. When we lie, it is usually to cast a person in a bad light or to place ourselves in a good light. The first springs from malice, the second from pride.

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (Jn. 14:6). The closer we are to Him, the more truthful we will become with ourselves and with others. The question is, “Are we followers of Him who is the truth?” ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, cleanse my heart of all deceit

And teach me what is true;

Help me to have integrity

In all I say and do.

—Sper

**Nothing weakens the truth more than stretching it.**

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**Question:** ["Why is 'You shall not steal' in the Ten Commandments?"](#)

**Answer:** “You shall not steal” (Exodus 20:15) is one of the Ten Commandments people can readily recall, even though it is number eight in the Decalogue. And while there may be those who attempt to undermine the authority of the Ten Commandments by suggesting it is part of the Old Covenant, our Lord Jesus, speaking to the rich young ruler, quoted five of them, including this one (Matthew 19:18). The Ten Commandments are part of the moral law of God and, unlike the ceremonial and sacrificial laws of the Old Testament which were given to Israel, they apply to all men in all ages.

Stealing is defined as “taking another person’s property without his or her permission.” However, there are many other forms of theft. For example, taking longer over our lunch breaks at work or arriving late and leaving early are actually forms of stealing from our employers, stealing time they have paid for. Taking advantage of employers in that way indicates a lack of love for others. The apostle Paul, when discussing God’s commandments, sums up the entire law in the same way as our Lord Jesus did, with “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31; Romans 13:9). And, again like Jesus, he states that this is the fulfillment of the “Law” (Matthew 22:39-40). So, we know from such instructions that “Do not steal,” as with all of the Ten Commandments, is about “loving one another” (John 13:34-35).

Victims of theft know the horrible feeling it produces. The very act of someone taking what may have been an especially precious gift from a loved one really pierces our hearts and makes us feel vulnerable and unsafe. Theft has a tremendous impact not only on individuals, but on society as a whole. Theft disturbs societal stability and the results are feelings of fear and insecurity and a desire for revenge. One has only to look at some third world countries where laws against stealing are ignored to see how detrimental it is to the population. God’s laws are not only moral and spiritual; they are infinitely practical as well.

Christians have received tremendous physical and spiritual gifts from God, and we should desire to give back to Him all that we have. When we withhold the things that are rightly His—our time and talents, our possessions and our finances, indeed our very lives—we are in effect stealing from Him. The prophet Malachi put it this way when addressing the Israelites: “Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' 'In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse — the whole nation of you — because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,' says the

Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it'" (Malachi 3:8-10). One day we will be judged by God and expected to give an account of what we did with the gifts God has so generously bestowed on us (Romans 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 4:13). (**Source:** [Gotquestions.org](http://Gotquestions.org))

## Deuteronomy 5:20 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Ex 20:16 Ex 23:1, 6,7 Lev 19:11,16 De 19:16-21 1Ki 21:13 1Sa 22:8-19 1Ki 21:10-13 Ps 15:3 101:5-7 Pr 6:19 Pr 19:5,9 Pr 10:18 11:13 Mal 3:5 Mt 26:59,60 Ac 6:13 Eph 4:31 1Ti 1:10 2Ti 3:3 Jas 4:11
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

### THE NINTH COMMANDMENT NO FALSE WITNESS

**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor-** NET says "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor." When a witness gives untruthful testimony, justice is not possible. A society cannot function without righteous justice. Of course as testimony to the validity of God's commandment, most societies say something like this "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, so help you God." (but not every culture would use "God" as we use the term).

Jesus identified this sin as coming from one's heart - "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, **false witness**, slanders." (Mt. 15:19)

**Steven Cole** - The command primarily focuses on bearing false witness against your neighbor in a legal setting, where lying or misrepresenting something about him would damage him or wrongly be to your advantage. But it also extends to lying to or about someone or spreading half truths about him in any setting. God is the God of truth who cannot lie (Isa. 65:16; Titus 1:2). Jesus is the truth (John 14:6). To be like Him, we must be people who speak the truth and do not bear false witness. This doesn't mean that we are required to tell everything we know about a situation. And, sometimes to be brutally honest is not the loving thing to do. We are to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). Love seeks the highest good of the other person. To bear false witness undermines your integrity, undermines relationships, and damages or destroys the other person. (See my message [3/16/08], "[To Tell the Truth.](#)" ([Obeying The Big Ten \(Exodus 20:1-17\)](#))

**False** (08267)(**sheqer** from **shaqar** = to deal deceitfully) means a lie, vanity, without cause and in general describes words or activities that are "false," in the sense of being without basis in fact or reality. For example, David spoke of those who were his enemies without cause (Ps 35:19; 38:19).deception, disappointment, falsehood, lie, vanity. Speaks of words or activities which are false in the sense that they are groundless, without basis in fact or reality (Ps 38:19). The **false** witness of Exodus 20:16 (Dt. 19:18) involves a false accusation, an accusation that is groundless, not based on fact. The first use is by Satan's tool the Pharaoh in Ex 5:9 where the Septuagint translates **sheqer** with the word kenos which means empty, without truth, futile, without result. **Sheqer** defines a way of life that goes contrary to the law of God. The psalmist, desirous of following God, prayed: "Remove the **false** way from me" (Ps 119:29; cf false way in Ps. 119:104, Ps 119:128). **Vine** says "As "faithfulness" is a relational term, "falsehood" denotes "one's inability to keep faith" with what one has said or to respond positively to the faithfulness of another being.

**Ryken** - This commandment comes from the God of truth, who is true in all he is, says, and does. As the Scripture says, "He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie" (1 Sam. 15:29a).

**Currid** - Several of the Hebrew words in this commandment are legal terms reflecting a judicial setting. Thus, it is forbidden to bear false witness against one's neighbour in a court of law. Perjury is condemned. The Torah takes this law so seriously that it requires at least two witnesses for evidence to be considered valid (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15). In addition, in capital punishment cases, 'The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people' (Deut. 17:7)....The Hebrew word shāqer means 'to give an empty promise'. To promise, to give one's word, to covenant with one's neighbour—all come within the scope of this law. To speak falsely about one's neighbour, to the prejudice of his or her character and reputation, is also forbidden. Such things as gossip, slander and unwarranted flattery are to be shunned. (Ibid)

**NET Note** - The expression אֲדַבְרֵי שֶׁקֶר ('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).

## Related Resources

- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [False Witness](#)
  - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [False Swearing, Witness](#)
  - The Jewish Encyclopedia [False Witness](#)
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**Question:** "[Why is 'You shall not give false testimony' in the Ten Commandments?](#)"

**Answer:** Part of the Ten Commandments, also known as the Decalogue, this 9th commandment forbids the Israelites from bearing false witness or giving false testimony against one another (Exodus 20:16; Deuteronomy 5:20). To bear false witness against others is to lie about them, especially for personal gain. The Hebrew word translated "neighbor" in this commandment can mean an associate, a brother, companion, fellow, friend, husband, lover, or neighbor. In other words, the Israelites were commanded to be truthful in all things, but especially when speaking about another person. The people were not to lie publicly, as in a court of law by laying at another's feet any false charge that could injure him, nor were they to lie privately by whispering, talebearing, backbiting, slandering, or destroying his character by innuendos, sly insinuations, and evil suggestions.

The reasons for God's prohibiting lying and testifying falsely against one's neighbor are three-fold. First, God's people are to reflect God's character. The Lord is a truthful God who does not and cannot lie. Numbers 23:19 says, "God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?" The people who were called by God's name and who represented Him in the heathen world were expected to accurately reflect His character. Lying to or about one another brought reproach upon His holy name, and this He would not tolerate. Second, bearing false witness against another was destructive to the individual who was the victim of the lie, and he suffered by it in his credibility and reputation, as well as in his trade and business. Leviticus 19:18 makes it clear that the Israelites were to love their neighbors as themselves, a command reiterated by both Jesus and Paul (Matthew 22:39; Romans 13:9). Loving our neighbors precludes lying about them.

Third, false witness was seen as so destructive to society that courts of law, both in the days of the Israelites and today, could function only if the witnesses who were called to testify could be trusted to tell the truth. Without a trustworthy judicial system, based on eyewitness testimony from reliable, truthful witnesses, societies are at risk of the breakdown of law and order. When this happens, chaos ensues and the innocent suffer.

As noted before, the New Testament is equally condemning of false witness. Colossians 3:9–10 explains the reason for the continued prohibition against lying. Christians are new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), and, as such, we reflect His nature. We have been released from our "old self" with its evil practices such as lying and bearing false witness. As the Israelites were to reflect the character of the Lord God, Christians are to reflect to the world the character of Christ that identifies us as His own. (Source: [Gotquestions.org](#))

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### **[Exodus 20:16](#) Creeping Deception**

IF television commercials are telling the truth, glamorous movie stars and athletes use products that everyone ought to buy. But, as Time magazine reports (and most viewers suspect), many celebrities don't use the products they endorse.

And what about autobiographies? According to the same article, they are not always written by the individuals whose names they bear but by writers who aren't mentioned.

This dishonesty, Time suggests, is a symptom of the deception that is creeping into our society. What will civilized life become as people increasingly ignore God's commands against lying? (Exodus 20:16; Leviticus 19:11; Ephesians 4:25).

Jesus had strong words for those who stood in the way of the truth. He said they were children of their father the Devil (John 8:44), and they were incapable of speaking the truth because they refused to hear it (John 8:43, 44, 45, 46, 47).

God's Word urges us to tell the truth (Proverbs 12:17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22). Only as we obey can we hope to prevent our society from being consumed by suspicion and mistrust.

We are to be truth-tellers like Jesus, of whom Scripture says, "Nor was deceit found in His mouth" (1Peter 2:22). He has the right to expect honesty from us because He has been honest with us.—Vernon C Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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### **Tabletalk - The Ninth Commandment EXODUS 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex 20:16).**

As with most other technological advancements, the Internet has proven to be something of a mixed blessing. Resources that used



to be available only if one was willing to drive several miles to a library are now readable in seconds if one connects to the World Wide Web. Communication with those who live thousands of miles away is far easier with the advent of tools like email. At the same time, ungodliness has yet one more way into our homes, not only in the form of pornography and anti-Christian websites, but also in the guise of irresponsible bloggers and gossip columnists who can destroy reputations with half-truths and lies.

Gossip, lying, and other such sins are all encompassed within the scope of the ninth commandment: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex. 20:16). Although we do not always take such transgressions seriously, gossip in particular being a frequently overlooked sin, Scripture is clear that God hates false witness. Christ is the very embodiment of truth itself (John 14:6), and imitating Him requires us to pursue what is true in our speech.

The ninth commandment is closely connected to the eighth commandment, which prohibits theft (Ex. 20:15). For example, merchants can lie about their weights and measures and thereby defraud those who want to purchase from them. This explains the Bible's concern for truthfulness in buying and selling (Prov. 20:10). Today, the truth is routinely stretched in advertising with ads that promise far more than any product invented by man can deliver.

Slander, libel, and other related matters are also prevalent in our day. Obedience to the ninth commandment means that we do not give ear to those who are clearly intent on maligning another's character for their own personal gain. Also, we must not repeat something if we are unsure of its veracity.

In the church we must be careful to tell the truth as we share Christ with others. Out of a zeal to see others believe in Jesus, we can be tempted to say that coming to Him will make one's life easier. Let us always be honest about the high cost of following the way of the cross (Mark 8:31–38).

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A Christian should never tell any type of lie. The most familiar kind of lie is saying something that isn't true. But there are other kinds, such as exaggeration. I once heard the story of a certain Christian man who shared a powerful testimony, but one day he stopped reciting it. When asked why, he said that through the years he had embellished it so much he had forgotten what was true and what he'd made up. Cheating in school, in business, at work, and on your taxes is a form of lying. So is the betrayal of a confidence, flattery, making excuses, and remaining silent when the truth should be spoken. There's no place for lying in the Christian life. We are to tell the truth. (John MacArthur - Truth for Today)

**Deuteronomy 5:21 'You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.'**

- **You shall not covet your neighbor's house** - Ge 3:6 14:23 34:23 Jos 7:21 1Sa 15:19 Ps 10:3 119:36 Ec 4:8 5:10,11 Isa 33:15 57:17 Jer 22:17 Eze 33:31 Am 2:6,7 Mic 2:2 Hab 2:9 Lu 12:15 16:14 Ac 20:33 Ro 7:7 1Co 6:10 Php 3:19 Col 3:5 1Ti 6:6-10 Heb 13:5
- **you shall not covet your neighbor's wife** - 2Sa 11:2-4 Job 31:1,9 Pr 4:23 6:24,25 Jer 5:8 Mt 5:28
- **anything that belongs to your neighbor** - Mt 20:15 Ac 5:4
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## THE TENTH COMMANDMENT DO NOT COVET

**You shall not covet your neighbor's wife** Not only are we not to covet our neighbor's house, but what is in his house! (wife, servants, etc). The summary phrase "**anything** that belongs to your neighbor" takes care of **everything** else one might see and then desire to possess.

**Guzik** says to **covet** "is the itch to have and to possess what someone else has. It speaks of a dissatisfaction with what we have, and a jealousy towards those who have something better."

Paul links covetousness (greed) with idolatry in his command "Therefore (based on the truth in Colossians 3:1-4+) consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and **greed, which amounts to idolatry**. (Colossians 3:5+) In another passages Paul says " For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or **covetous man, who is an idolater**, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." (Eph 5:5+)

Jesus warned against covetousness "Then He said to them, **Beware**, and **be on your guard** (both verbs are in [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." (Luke 12:15+)

Some people think that they can get right with God by keeping the Ten Commandments. Wrong! Many people think that God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us to be **good**. Wrong! In fact He gave them to show us that we are **bad**. A right understanding of the law demonstrates that we are all great sinners and in need of great grace in a great Savior. James sums it up for all of us "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all." (James 2:10+).

The **LAW**, therefore, elicits great fear and trepidation. In Bunyan's **The Pilgrim's Progress**,

Christian ventured to Mount Sinai, but he was afraid ... lest the Hill should fall on his head; wherefore there he stood still, and he wot [i.e. knew] not what to do. Also his Burden now seemed heavier to him than while he was in his Way. There came also flashes of fire out of the Hill, that made Christian afraid that he should be burned: Here therefore he sweat[ed] and did quake for Fear.' (**Read this entire section of Pilgrim's Progress - [Beneath the High Hill](#)**) [See the preceding notes](#) summarizing the purpose of the Law.

**And you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.'** - Nine commandments deal with the external but this one with the internal. In other words the previous nine commandments deal with actions, but this commandment deals with our heart, where greedy desires originate and which may or may not result in external actions. This command addresses the greedy desire for something belonging to a neighbor, an evil desire that may lead one take or attempt to take it. Of course, the truth be told although the previous commandments focus on actions, the root of those actions is always man's heart.

**THOUGHT** - Coveting is related to a lack of contentment with what God has given us. See article on [Christian Contentment](#).

Note both negatives ("**not...not**") are the so-called [apodictic](#) negatives expressing or of the nature of necessary truth or absolute certainty and thus supplies a heightened negativity to this entire section.

Paul was cut to the quick by this commandment in Romans 7 writing

What shall we say then? Is the **LAW** sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know **SIN** except through the Law; for I would not have known about **coveting** if the **LAW** had not said, "**YOU SHALL NOT COVET.**" 8 But **SIN, taking opportunity (aphorme)** through **the commandment** (Exodus 20:17), produced in me **coveting of every kind**; (COVET, COVET, COVET!) for apart from the Law **SIN** is dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the **LAW**; but when **the commandment** came, **SIN** became alive and I died; 10 and **this commandment (Exodus 20:17)**, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; (Ro 7:7-10+)

**COMMENT** - The law is like a x-ray machine; it reveals plainly what might have always been there, but hidden before; and you can't blame a x-ray for what it exposes. The law sets the "speed limit" so we know if we are going too fast; we might never know that we are sinning in many areas (such as covetousness) if the law did not spell this out to us specifically. Notice the effect of the **LAW** - it stirs up **SIN**! Earlier Paul stated in Ro 7:5+ that "while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law (WHAT AROUSED THE SINFUL PASSIONS?), were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death." (See [additional note](#) below)

**Covet** (02530)(**chamad/hamad**) means to take pleasure in something, and as such is a neutral word. In the negative sense it speaks of an inordinate, ungoverned, selfish desire for something = to covet (or lust after). **Chamad** focuses not on an external act but on an internal mental activity behind the act, the motivation for the act (e.g., stealing or adultery). In one Ugaritic text this same word is used of Baal coveting a fertile parcel of land. **Chamad** can be used in a good sense, e.g., describing the judgments of the Lord "are more desirable than gold." (Ps 19:10+) This verb had a major role in the fall of man in Eden for Eve - "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was **desirable** (chamad - unquenchable desire and unbridled passion) to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate." (Ge 3:6+) Notice that Eve's primary sin was craving for the fruit which led her to take the action to pick it and eat it.

The Septuagint translates **chamad** in Ex 20:17 with the verb **epithumeo** (**epi** = used intensively + **thumós** = passion) means literally to fix the desire upon (object could be good [Mt 13:17, Lk 22:15 used of Jesus] or bad [1Co 10:6]). Jesus used **epithumeo** with its evil connotation in Mt 5:28, where **epithumeo** describes a husband's lustful passion directly toward a woman who is not his wife. It means to have a strong desire to do or secure something. Note that the preposition **epi** can express motion toward or upon and thus one lexicon defines it as to set one's heart upon. In sum, **epithumeo** describes a strong impulse toward something so that

one's passions or affections directed toward some object, thing or person.

The Tenth Commandment basically has to do with contentment as well as trust in God as our faithful provider of everything we need (not everything we want!). Paul dealt with this important truth concerning contentment in his first letter to Timothy...

But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by **contentment**. 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be **content**. 9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (1Ti 6:6-10)

**ILLUSTRATION:** A "Frank and Earnest" cartoon [5/8/98] pictured Moses on the mountain before God, holding the Ten Commandments. He tells God, "It's your call but I still think 'The Ten Habits of Highly Effective People' is a catchier title." But they're not "ten habits of highly effective people" or "ten suggestions for a happy life"! They're Ten Commandments from the holy God, given for His glory and your good. If you think seriously about them, you've broken every one on the heart or thought level. That's why you need a Savior who died to forgive your sins! When you trust in the Lord Jesus to save you, He gives you the Holy Spirit to indwell you and enable you joyfully to obey His commandments out of love for Him! (Steven Cole)

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#### Related Resources:

- Torrey Topical Textbook [Covetousness](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Covetousness](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Covetousness](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Covetousness](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Covet](#), [Covetous](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Covetousness](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Covetousness](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Covet](#), [Covetous](#), [Covetousness](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Covetous](#), [Covetousness](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Covetousness](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Covetousness \(2\)](#), [Covetousness](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Covetousness](#)

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**Question:** ["Why is 'You shall not covet' in the Ten Commandments?"](#)

**Answer:** The key to understanding this commandment is in the definition of the word "covet." Two different Hebrew words are used in the passages condemning coveting (Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21), and both mean "to lust after or to long for with great desire." Since the commandments are given as "you shall not's," the desire in this case is for something that is not the property of the desirer and not rightfully his to long after. In this commandment, the Israelites are told not to lust after their neighbor's possessions—his house, land, ox or donkey, or the people in his life—his wife or servants, both male and female. The Israelites were not to desire, long for, or set their hearts on anything that belonged to anyone else.

Whereas several of the commandments prohibit certain actions, such as murder and theft, this is one of the commandments that address the inner person, his heart and mind. As James 1:15 tells us, the inner person is where sin originates, and in this case, covetousness is the forerunner of all manner of sin, among them theft, burglary, and embezzlement. At its root, coveting is the result of envy, a sin which, once it takes root in the heart, leads to worse sins. Jesus reiterated this very thought in the Sermon on the Mount when He said that lust in the heart is every bit as sinful as committing adultery (Matthew 5:28). **Envy goes beyond casting a longing glance at the neighbor's new car. Once dwelled upon, envy of the neighbor's possessions can turn to feelings of resentment and hatred for the neighbor himself.** That can turn into resentment against God and questioning Him: "Why can't I have what he has, Lord? Don't you love me enough to give me what I want?"

God's reasons for condemning covetousness are good ones. At its very core, envy is love of self. Envious, selfish citizens are unhappy and discontented citizens. A society built of such people is a weak one because envious malcontents, as stated before, will be more likely to commit crimes against one another, further weakening the societal structure. Furthermore, the New Testament identifies covetousness as a form of idolatry, a sin which God detests (Colossians 3:5). In the end, envy and covetousness are Satan's tools to distract us from pursuing the only thing that will ever make us happy and content—God Himself. God's Word tells us that "godliness with contentment is great gain" and that we should be content with the basic necessities of life (1 Timothy 6:6-8), because true happiness is not attained by things, but by a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. By this alone do we

gain that which is worthy, true, solid, satisfying, and durable—the unsearchable riches of God’s grace. (Source: [Gotquestions.org](http://Gotquestions.org))

**Deuteronomy 5:22** "These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, of the cloud and of the thick gloom, with a great voice, and He added no more. He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

- **These words:** De 5:4 4:12-15,36 Ex 19:18,19
- **He wrote:** De 4:13 Ex 24:12 Ex 31:18
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 4:13 "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone.

Exodus 24:12 Now the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction."

Exodus 31:18 When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.



Mt Sinai by Eizen

**These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire** Words spoken **from the midst of (a) fire** would/should arrest anyone’s attention! This reminds me of Jeremiah 23:29 **"Is not My word like fire?"** declares the LORD, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock?" (cf Jer 20:9, Heb 4:12-13+) In the last days of this age God will send two witnesses (Rev 11:3+) who do not speak **from** fire but **with** fire to warn the world of impending divine judgment for "if anyone wants to harm them, **fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies**, so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way.." (Rev 11:5+) This is still the day of grace, so God’s good and perfect commandment (Ro 7:12+) is given for Israel’s (and all men’s) good, not for his destruction.

**Of the cloud and of the thick gloom, with a great voice, and He added no more-** God said it that settles it! Sometimes I heard "God said it. I believe it!" That is good but the point is that when God said the "10 Words," that settled it! As we often hear today **"case closed!"**

**He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me-** So in addition to a clear audible witness, God provided a permanent visible witness. The upshot? No Excuse not to obey! **He wrote them** of course is [Anthropomorphic Language](#). I love Ex 31:18 that they were "written by the finger of God." What a beautiful picture this presents. It is as if God takes a divine index finger and letter by letter, word by word points man to some of the most important words ever written. When I point with my finger to something on the page, I do it to make sure the person I am talking with does not miss the point! God wants to make sure by this [anthropomorphic picture](#) that we do not miss His point!

**Deuteronomy 5:23 "And when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders.**

- Ex 20:18,19 Heb 12:18-21
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## THE AWESOME SCENE AT SINAI

**And when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders** - Notice they did not just hear a "sound" but God's "voice." Can you imagine for a moment what this experience must have been like! But praise God, one day soon all believers will have the surpassing great privilege of hearing His voice forever and ever. Amen! Jehovah's awesome voice and the fearful sight drove the leaders to approach Moses. The writer of Hebrews reminds his Jewish audience of this awesome scene at Sinai.

Hebrew 12:18+ For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, 19 and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that **those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.** 20 For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED." 21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling."

**Deuteronomy 5:24 "You said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives.**

- **we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire** Dt 5:4-5 Ex 19:19
- **he lives:** Dt 4:33 Ge 32:30 Ex 33:20 Jdg 13:22
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

### Related Passages:

Exodus 19:19+ When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder.

Deuteronomy 4:33+ "Has any people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and **survived?**

Genesis 32:30 So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, "I have seen God face to face, **yet my life has been preserved.**"

Judges 13:22+ So Manoah said to his wife (SAMSON'S PARENTS), **'We will surely die, for we have seen God.'**

**You said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness- You is all the heads of your tribes and your elders.** (Dt 5:23) And this **glory** and **greatness** is only what God had allowed them to witness! So great is His glory that one day (soon) "the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea." (Hab 2:14+, cf similar prophecies in Nu 14:21+ Ps 72:19± Isa 6:3+ Isa 11:9+).

**And we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives-** God Himself had declared to Moses "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" (Ex 33:20+, cf Ex 3:2-6+). See [notes on related passage](#) Dt 5:4-5.

**Deuteronomy 5:25 'Now then why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, then we will die.**

- **this great fire will consume us;** De 18:16 Dt 33:2 2Co 3:7-9 Ga 3:10,21,22 Heb 12:29
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

**Now then why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, then we will die** - Were they correct? Would they have died if they continued to hear Yahweh's voice? No. But they had a fear of God, not just a reverential fear, but a "shaking" fear.

**Deuteronomy 5:26 'For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?'**

- **who is there:** De 4:33
- **who is there of all flesh** Ge 6:12 Isa 40:6 Ro 3:20
- **the living God:** Jos 3:10 Ps 42:2 84:2 Jer 10:10 Da 6:26 Mt 26:63 Ac 14:15 2Co 6:16 1Th 1:9
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 9:10+ "The LORD gave me the two tablets of stone written by the finger of God; and on them were **all the words which the LORD had spoken with you at the mountain** from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly.

Exodus 19:18-19+ Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. 19 When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and **God answered him with thunder.**

Exodus 20:18-19+ All the people perceived the 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. 19 Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; **but let not God speak to us, or we will die.**"

**For** - Term of explanation. They explain why they want Moses to mediate.

**Who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?** - The truth is that they were a number of people who had heard the voice of the living God and lived. The first of course was Adam who heard God's voice both before and after He sinned. So while Adam was spiritually dead, God in mercy and grace allowed him to hear His voice and not die physically. In Ge 3:9+ God asked Adam who was now a sinner "Where are you?" (Play Don Francisco's "[Adam Where are You?](#)" (cf Ge 3:8-22)

**Treasury of Scripture Knowledge** - It seems to have been a general opinion, that if God appeared to men, it was for the purpose of destroying them. And indeed most of the extraordinary manifestations of God were in the way of judgment; but here it was different. God did appear in a sovereign and extraordinary manner; but it was for the instruction, direction, deliverance, and support of His people. (1) They heard this voice speaking with them in a distinct, articulate manner. (2) They saw the fire, the symbol of his presence, the appearances of which demonstrated it to be supernatural. (3) Notwithstanding God appeared so terrible, yet no person was destroyed; for he came not to destroy but to save.

Phrase **living God** - 28v - Deut. 5:26; Jos. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26; 1 Sam. 17:36; 2 Ki. 19:4; 2 Ki. 19:16; Ps. 42:2; Ps. 84:2; Isa. 37:4; Isa. 37:17; Jer. 10:10; Jer. 23:36; Dan. 6:20; Dan. 6:26; Hos. 1:10; Matt. 16:16; Matt. 26:63; Acts 14:15; Rom. 9:26; 2 Co. 3:3; 2 Co. 6:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Tim. 4:10; Heb. 3:12; Heb. 9:14; Heb. 10:31; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 7:2

**Deuteronomy 5:27 'Go near and hear all that the LORD our God says; then speak to us all that the LORD our God speaks to you, and we will hear and do it.'**

- Ex 20:19 Heb 12:19
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passage: WHY ISRAEL WANTED MOSES TO GO NEAR AND HEAR

Exodus 20:18-21 All the people perceived the 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** (FEAR OF GOD)A. 19 Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but **let not God speak to us, or**

**we will die** (FEAR OF GOD)." 20 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 may remain with you,so that you may not sin."** 21 So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God was.

## **LEADERS' REQUEST MOSES HEAR GOD THEN SPEAK TO US**

**Go near and hear all that the LORD our God says**- The people asked Moses to function as their mediator, so awesome was His greatness and glory.

**THOUGHT** - Like Israel we too need a Mediator between our sinful self and God's sinless presence. God the Father has provided His sinless Son to function as our Mediator. Have you (like the Israelites) recognized you need someone to stand between you and God lest you die? If not not, today is the day (2 Cor 6:2) to come to Jesus, Who Alone "is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them, for there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, the Mediator of a New Covenant." (Hebrews 7:25+, 1 Ti 2:5, Hebrews 9:15+).

**Then speak to us all that the LORD our God speaks to you, and we will hear and do it.'**- They ask for the Word from God! Then they pledge to obey the Word of God. This recounts the people's request of Moses in Exodus 20:19+ "Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die." The writer of Hebrews says the nation of Israel came "to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them." (Heb 12:19+).

**Deuteronomy 5:28 "The LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me, 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They have done well in all that they have spoken.**

- **They have done well in all that they have spoken:** De 18:17 Nu 27:7 Nu 36:5
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

**The LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me- Your words** refers of course to the words of their parents for those in the audience may not have yet even been born at the time of Mount Sinai.

**And the LORD said to me, 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They have done well in all that they have spoken** - What were they asking for? The Word of God which they pledged to obey which did not anger but pleased the LORD! And they were also asking for Moses to mediate.

**Deuteronomy 5:29 'Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!**

- **O that there:** De 32:29,30 Ps 81:13-15 Isa 48:18 Jer 44:4 Eze 33:31,32 Mt 23:37 Lu 19:42 2Co 5:20 6:1 Heb 12:25, keep all:
- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## **THE KEY TO THE GOOD/GOD LIFE**

God is responding to their declaration for Moses to **'speak to us all that the LORD our God speaks to you, and we will hear and do it."** In other words Israel says ALL Yahweh says they would **HEAR** and **DO!** Wonderful words which God affirms in what almost sounds like a prayer for Israel.

Exodus 20:19 Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die." 20 Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that (PURPOSE) **the fear of Him may remain with you**, so that (PURPOSE) **you may not sin."**

**Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!** - They had expressed fear of God and He affirms that holy fear is a good thing. Notice that

God zeroes in on their heart, not their head. Head knowledge is good, but heart fear is better. The progression in this passage presents a timeless principle. I love the description of Job "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, **fearing God** and **turning away from evil.**" (Job 1:1) Do you see the critical dynamic which caused Job to order his steps toward holiness? Because Job feared the Lord, Job turned away from the evil thoughts, words and deeds that would displease His God. May Job's tribe increase globally as we see the world growing morally darker and more aggressively aligned against God and His Son (Ps 2:1-3). In Jesus' Name. (One small example - On national prayer day in 2021 the president of the United States, the country whose paper currency says "In **God** We Trust," pointedly avoided even using the Name "**God**" in his (so-called) prayer! One has to wonder to which god he was praying if not to the only living **God**!)

#### **Fear of God**

motivates

#### **obedience to God**

which yields the

#### **blessing of God**

from one generation to the next.

**THOUGHT** - This passage begs the question of every believer - Do you have a healthy, holy **fear** of God? If not, you likely are experiencing difficulty in keeping His commandments, because you are likely grieving or quenching His Spirit. It is only by dependence on the power of His Spirit that you can keep God's commandments.

**Fear** (Lxx in this verse = [phobeo](#) in present tense)([03372](#)) **yare** is a verb meaning to fear, to be afraid (Ge 3:10<sub>±</sub>), to respect, to reverence, to be terrified, to be awesome, to be feared, to make afraid, to frighten. The most common translations are to be afraid, to fear, to fear God. On one hand **yare** conveys the sense of threat to one's life, but on the other it can express the idea of reverence and deep respect (as in Ps 25:14). In the OT **fear of the Lord** involves a person's total response to the Lord. It is notable that more than 75% of the over 370 uses of yare are in the context of reverencing the Lord. In English our word **reverence** (Latin *reverentia* = "awe, respect," from *revereri* "to stand in awe of, respect, honor, fear, be afraid of; revere,") refers to a feeling of profound respect for someone or something, and with **yare** in the OT as noted this is most often to God. The classic use is Pr 1:7<sub>±</sub> "The **fear** (yare) of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." Notice that a genuine holy fear of the Lord is often equated with believers (e.g. Mal 3:16<sub>±</sub>, Mal 4:2<sub>±</sub>, Eccl 8:12-13, of the last worldwide proclamation of the Gospel which says "Fear God..." - Rev 14:6-7<sub>±</sub>)

**Yare** occurs in **36 verses in Deuteronomy** (out of a total of 306v in OT) - Deut. 1:19; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:29; Deut. 2:4; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:22; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 5:5; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 7:18; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 7:21; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:15; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:17; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 10:21; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:11; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 17:13; Deut. 17:19; Deut. 19:20; Deut. 20:1; Deut. 20:3; Deut. 20:8; Deut. 21:21; Deut. 25:18; Deut. 28:10; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 31:6; Deut. 31:8; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 31:13

**Deuteronomy 5:30 'Go, say to them, "Return to your tents."**

- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

**Go, say to them, "Return to your tents** - In response to the people's request, Yahweh told Moses to dismiss them to their tents. In the next verse He explains how He will transmit His Word to them.

**Deuteronomy 5:31 'But as for you, stand here by Me, that I may speak to you all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe them in the land which I give them to possess.'**

- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

## **YAHWEH GIVES THE LAW TO MOSES FOR THE PEOPLE**

**But as for you** - Term of contrast. Israel was to return to their tents.



**Stand** here by Me, that I may speak to you all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe them in the land which I give them to possess - Note the pattern - God speaks, Moses teaches, People observe (obey).

**Possess** (03423) **yarash** to take possession of, inherit, dispossess, to drive out. Yarash is an especially important word in contexts dealing with Israel's conquest of and possession of the land of Canaan. Yahweh first promised possession of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Ge 15:7-21+). Note also that "possessing" implies "dispossessing" another nation. In a legal sense, the right of possession passed from one generation to the next and so constituted "inheritance." Note that possession of the promised land and/or the "inheritance" was directly connected to Israel's trust relationship with the Lord, so that breaking trust, and thus breaking the covenantal relationship with Yahweh led to dispossession. But even in exile, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land (Jer. 30:3+ - May 14, 1948 is when Israel was given statehood but this is not the final fulfillment - that awaits the Millennial Reign of their Messiah).

**Yarash** is a key word in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:8; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:39; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:12; Deut. 3:18; Deut. 3:20; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 4:22; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 4:38; Deut. 4:47; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:17; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 9:1; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:10; Deut. 11:11; Deut. 11:23; Deut. 11:29; Deut. 11:31; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:2; Deut. 12:29; Deut. 15:4; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 17:14; Deut. 18:12; Deut. 18:14; Deut. 19:1; Deut. 19:2; Deut. 19:14; Deut. 21:1; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:1; Deut. 28:21; Deut. 28:42; Deut. 28:63; Deut. 30:5; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:18; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 32:47; Deut. 33:23;

**Deuteronomy 5:32 "So you shall observe to do just as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right or to the left.**

- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

#### Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 17:11 "According to the terms of the law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, **to the right or the left.**

Deuteronomy 17:20 that his (KING'S) heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he **may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left**, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.

Deuteronomy 28:14+ and **do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left**, to go after other gods to serve them.

**Comment:** To **go after** clearly indicates one must first turn away from the true God, a bit like "repentance in reverse" so to speak and exactly the opposite of the action Paul described among the pagans in 1 Th 1:9-10+ who "turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God."

Joshua 23:5-7 (HIS LAST WORDS TO ISRAEL AS HE WAS DYING) "The LORD your God, He will thrust them out from before you and drive them from before you; and you will possess their land, just as the LORD your God promised you. 6 "Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, **so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left,** 7 so that you will not associate with these nations, these which remain among you, or mention the name of their gods, or make anyone swear by them, or serve them, or bow down to them.



Watch out for Forks in the Road!

## STAY ON THE "STRAIGHT AND NARROW"

The idiom [straight and narrow](#) is defined as the way of proper conduct and moral integrity.

**So you shall observe to do just as the LORD your God has commanded you-** NLT = "So Moses told the people, "You must obey all the commands of the LORD your God, following his instructions in every detail." Recall they have already said "**we will hear and do**" (Dt 5:29). Moses is simply affirming their

**You shall not turn aside to the right or to the left-** God's best is for those who walk His straight and narrow path of obedience. In Dt 28:14+ deviating **to the right or to the left** is associated with going after idols and then becoming enslaved to them (serving them). In Joshua 23:6-7 turning **to the right hand or to the left** was linked to associating the pagans and their idols. This is a clear call to unhesitating obedience to God's Word and to the God of the Word. As Samuel would say years later to disobedient King Saul ([Was Saul saved?](#)) "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, **to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.**" (1 Sa 15:22).

In Deuteronomy 11 Moses re-emphasizes the importance of this ["straight and narrow"](#) path on which they are to tread, warning that instead of a **blessing** they would experience a **curse** if they did not listen to the commandments of the LORD their God and instead turned aside from the way He was commanding. To turn aside was specifically linked with a personal choice to turn away from the true and living God and to follow false, dead gods which they had not previously heard about!

See, I am setting before you today a **blessing** and a **curse**: 27 the **blessing**, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today; 28 and the **curse**, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but (NOT LISTENING TO GOD INEVITABLY WOULD LEAD TO NOT LIVING FOR GOD AND TO) turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known. (Dt 11:26-28+)

God's instructions on watching where we walk reminds me of the last stanza in the Robert Frost poem "**Road Not Taken**"

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
two roads diverged in a wood, and I --  
I took the one less traveled by,  
**And that has made all the difference.**

**Deuteronomy 5:33 "You shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you will possess.**

- [Deuteronomy 5 Resources](#)

### Related Passages: WALKING IN GOD'S WAY (OR NOT)

Deuteronomy 8:6; "Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, **to walk in His ways and to fear Him.**

Deuteronomy 9:16 "And I saw that you had indeed sinned against the LORD your God. You had made for yourselves a molten calf; you had **turned aside quickly from the way which the LORD had commanded you.**

Deuteronomy 10:12 "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but **to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him**, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,

Deuteronomy 11:22 "For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you to do, to love the LORD your God, **to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him,**

Deuteronomy 19:9 if you carefully observe all this commandment which I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and **to walk in His ways always**—then you shall add three more cities for yourself, besides

these three.

Deuteronomy 26:17 "You have today declared the LORD to be your God, and **that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice.**

Deuteronomy 28:9 "The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, **if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.**

Deuteronomy 30:16 in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, **to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments,** that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

Deuteronomy 31:29 "For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and **turn from the way which I have commanded you;** and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands."

## **THE WAY THE GODLY WALK**

**You shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you-** The Word of Yahweh is to be like a road or highway of holiness (Isa 35:8+) on which they were to walk. One is reminded of the psalmist's words "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Ps 119:105+ - Play [Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet](#))

Earlier God said if they were to honor their father and mother that "it may go well with you on the land." (Dt 5:16).

**that** (TERM OF PURPOSE) **you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you will possess** ([yarash](#)) - .The point is that walking in the way of the LORD was the way Israel would experience prosperity and longevity in the Promised Land. One is reminded of the similar great truth in Psalm 1+ which describes the TWO WAYS on which all men ever born walk, either the way of the righteous or the way of the wicked...

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 **He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.** 4 The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. 6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish. (see also Mt 7:13-14+ and Mt 7:24-27+)