

# The Ten Commandments



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Unit B

# The Ten Commandments

Bill and Shelley Houser

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Ready Answers, William and Rochelle Houser, P.O. Box 535,  
Newburgh, IN 47629, United States of America,

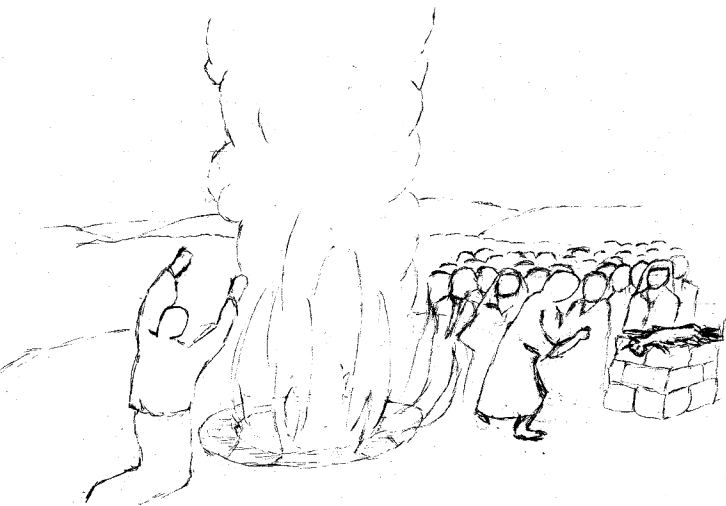
Phone: (011) 812-858-9241.



## God writes the commandments—Exodus 31:18

### Introduction to the Ten Commandments<sup>1</sup>

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Exodus 20:1-2

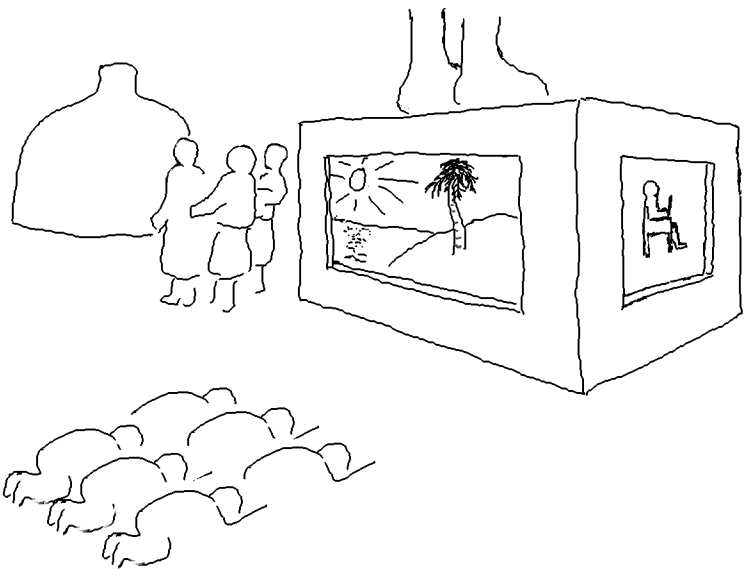


## God answers Elijah on Mt. Carmel—1 Kings 18

The First Commandment

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.<sup>2</sup> Exodus 20:3



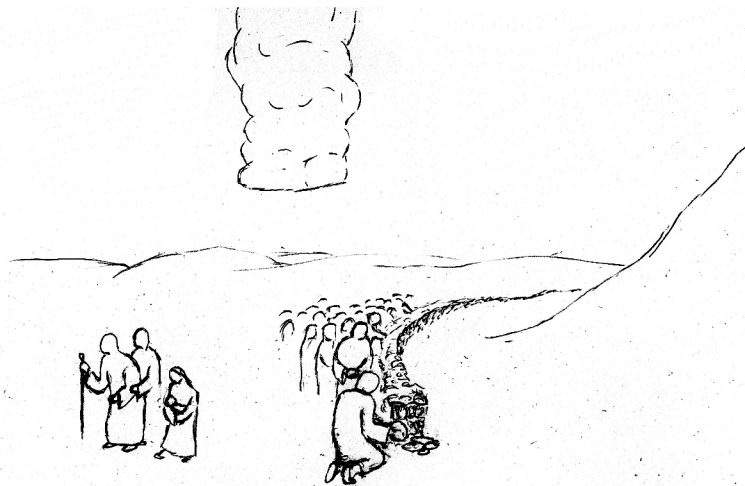


### God's people don't bow to idol—Daniel 3

The Second Commandment<sup>3 4</sup>

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them:

Exodus 20:4-5a

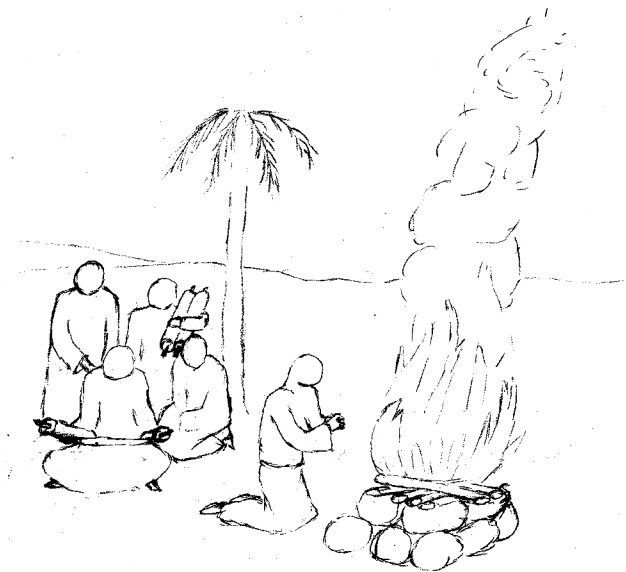


## Preparing to meet God

The Second Commandment<sup>5 6</sup>

for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Exodus 20 : 5b-6

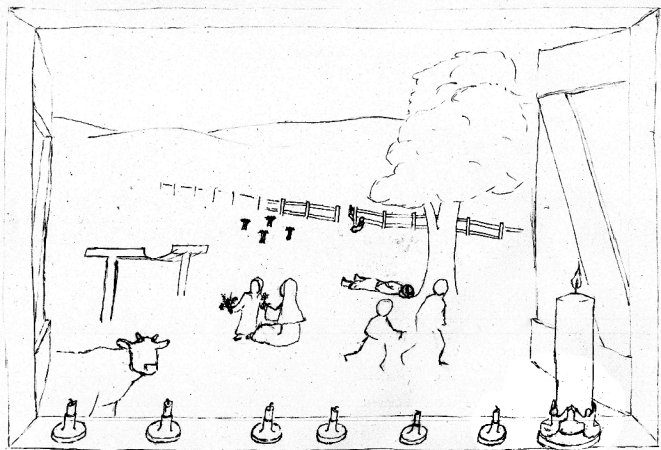


**Job upholds God's reputation—Job 42:7-8**

The Third Commandment<sup>7</sup>

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Exodus 20:7



## Keeping the sabbath.

The Fourth Commandment (First Part)<sup>8 9</sup>

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: Exodus 20:8-10



### **Glass Symbolizing Creation**

#### The Fourth Commandment (Continued)

For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Exodus 20 : 11

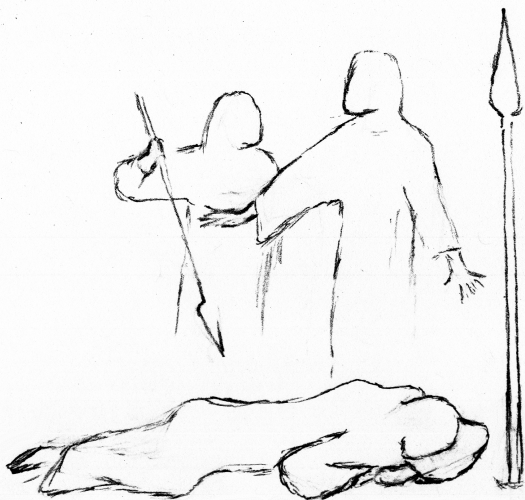


## Rahab rescues her parents—Joshua 2 : 13–21

The Fifth Commandment<sup>10</sup>

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Exodus 20 : 12

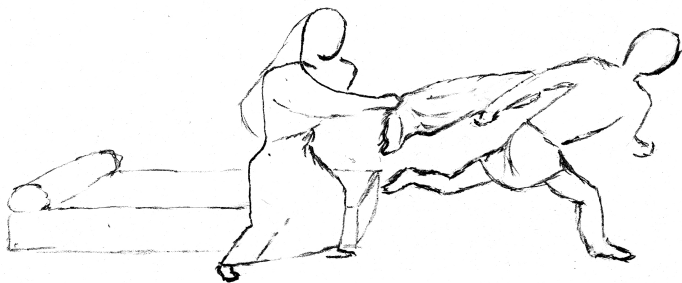


**David spares Saul's life—1 Samuel 26 : 9**

The Sixth Commandment<sup>11</sup>

Thou shalt not kill.

Exodus 20 : 13



**Joseph runs from Potipher's  
wife—Genesis 39:12-13**

The Seventh Commandment

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Exodus 20:14



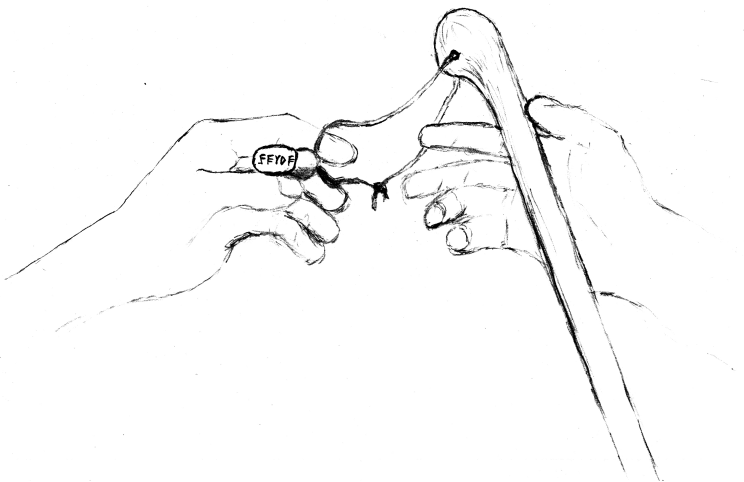


**Zacchaeus promised to repay what he had  
stolen—Luke 19:8**

The Eighth Commandment

Thou shalt not steal.

Exodus 20:15



**Judah acquits Tamar by acknowledging the truth—Genesis 39 : 26**

The Ninth Commandment<sup>12</sup>

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.  
Exodus 20 : 16



**John the Baptist doesn't covet Jesus'  
popularity—John 3:30**

**The Tenth Commandment**

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

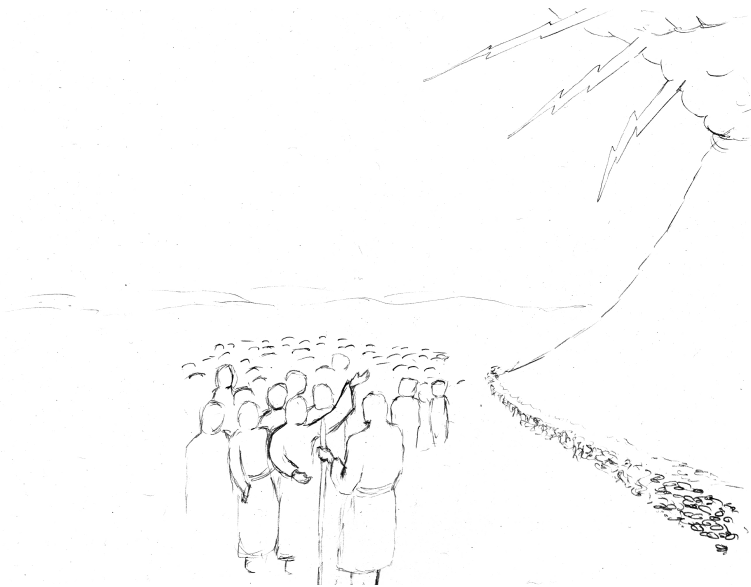
Exodus 20:17



**God's Presence on Mt. Sinai.**

And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings,  
and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking:  
and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar  
off.

Exodus 20 : 18



**Israelites ask Moses to speak for God.**

And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

Exodus 20:19

## End Notes

Page numbers are listed in parentheses to help you find where each end note is referenced.

- <sup>1</sup> The Bible tells us these are the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:28, Deuteronomy 4:13, Deuteronomy 10:4), but it doesn't tell us the commandment number for any of them. As a result there are several ways to number them. For example, the traditional Jewish numbering counts this as the first commandment. Notice that those who worshipped the golden calf broke this commandment when they declared that the calf had brought them out of Egypt (Exodus 32:4). (p. 2)
- <sup>2</sup> The Hebrew words for "before me" literally means "before my face" making it clear that God wants us to have no other gods at all. Having another god of less importance than Him is still a violation of this commandment. (p. 3)
- <sup>3</sup> The Hebrew word for "graven image" is a single word used for both carved and molten images. Since the next phrase prohibits worshipping "any likeness", all who desire to please God will choose to avoid the creation of likenesses and images that are worshipped. (p. 4)
- <sup>4</sup> The traditional translation of verses 4 and 5 leads to

## End Notes (Continued)

a contradiction with Exodus 25 : 18, Exodus 26 : 1, Exodus 28 : 33–34, Numbers 21 : 8 and other verses in which God said that likenesses of things in heaven or on earth were to be constructed. However there is an alternative translation of verses 4 and 5 that removes this contradiction: “<sup>4</sup>Thou shalt not make unto you an idol. And all likenesses of things that are in heaven above, or that are in the earth beneath, or that are in the water under the earth, <sup>5</sup>thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them.” (p. 4)

<sup>5</sup> This commandment describes how God balances mercy and judgment. God will have mercy on thousands of people who do two things: (1) Love Him, (2) Obey his commandments. Both are required. But mercy would not be needed if this were describing people who have always been loving and obedient. Since this mercy is not guaranteed, His mercy remains a gift. (p. 5)

<sup>6</sup> This commandment states that God is jealous, working diligently to try to retain His followers, and their descendents down to their great-great-grand-children. (p. 5)

<sup>7</sup> The Hebrew word for *name* includes both the person’s label and reputation. We who are known as God’s followers have in effect taken His name, being called

## End Notes (Continued)

Christians (*little Christs*). Others in the world will see our behaviour. If we fail to act like His followers, we have taken His name in vain. Those who use God's name as a sware word dishonor Him and use His name falsely (in vain.) Note that this is not a command to avoid saying God's name completely. If it were, we would expect that Exodus 23:13 which says we must not say the names of any other gods, would also state that His name should also not be spoken. In contrast, we see that God's followers included His name in their own names: Judah, Abihu, Jehoshua, Jehoshaphat, Jehoiada, Adonijah, etc. (p. 6)

- <sup>8</sup> At a minimum, the sabbath rules seem to be: 1. Keep it holy (at least don't sin). 2. Work the other six days. 3. Rest from your work on the Sabbath. 4. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week. The type of things that I see described in this command that should not be done on the sabbath are the things that materially profit you (your labour and work) or that you would prefer someone else to do for you (indicated by the long list of other people that must rest). Many people choose to make more of a separation in their types of activities between the sabbath and other days of the week. (p. 7)



## End Notes (Continued)

- <sup>9</sup> This command shows that God is addressing both the husbands and their wives in the Ten Commandments, since neither is listed separately from “thou” in the list of people and animals that are to be given rest. (p. 7)
- <sup>10</sup> To honour one’s parents means more than to just do what they say. Proverbs 3: 9–10 shows that honouring includes giving wealth. Other passages in Proverbs show that a child who obeys God’s law is considered wise, and this obedience brings honour to the child’s parents (Consider Proverbs 27: 11, and 28: 7). In contrast, a child who curses his parents should be put to death (Exodus 21: 17). (p. 9)
- <sup>11</sup> The Hebrew word for *kill* in this command is רצח (pronounced *ratsach*) which is used only to describe killing people. The severity of the punishment is dependent on whether the killing was intentional or unintentional. Numbers 35: 6–31 describes the punishments in detail and helps to explain the meaning of this Hebrew word. (p. 10)
- <sup>12</sup> Although this command appears primarily to prohibit giving false testimony in court to cause harm to someone, other verses indicate God hates liars. (Jeremiah 50: 36, Revelation 21: 8) (p. 13)