

ARE GOD'S TEN COMMANDMENTS OUT OF DATE?

Two very intriguing texts of Scripture surfaced in our studies of the sanctuary and the judgment. One told us that the ten commandments were in the ark in the most holy place of Moses' tabernacle. (Hebrews 9:4), and were important on that annual day of judgment and atonement. The other tells us that we are all to be judged by the "law of liberty" (James 2:10-12). (Note also Psalm 119:44-47.)

What did James actually mean? Could we still be accountable to keep the ten commandments? Isn't such an idea Jewish, out of date, limited to Old Testament people? What about the ten commandments today? Aren't we free from them now? Didn't Christ do away with them when He died? Didn't He give a new commandment for New Testament Christians?

We need to study the Bible very carefully to see how it answers such questions. It is so important here to let the Bible speak.

1. We all know that God, on Mount Sinai, gave the ten commandments to Moses, written on stone by His own hand. Review Exodus 20:1-17.
2. Why did God give them to His people, and at that particular time in the mid-fifteenth century, BC? It is important here to note that they were given immediately following God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt, after 215 years of slavery under taskmasters, and after their relation to God had been eroded very severely under those conditions.

- (a) Deuteronomy 10:12,13 _____
- (b) Romans 5:20 _____

(Two points seem very clear: God wanted His people to clearly know and do His will, which meant that they must understand the awful nature of sin, and become free from it.)

3. A study from a good Bible concordance of words like "law," and "commandments," will lead us to the clear conclusion that God's ten commandment law was in effect from Moses' day to the time of Christ.

- (a) What was its function or purpose? Romans 3:20. _____
- (b) Did the law save people from sin? Matthew 1:21. _____

4. There were about 2,500 years before Moses, back to the time of Adam. Did the commandments exist then? If so, in what form? Were people before the time of Moses required to keep the commandments?

- (a) What can you conclude from these three texts? Romans 5:14; 6:23; 1 John 3:4,12?

- (b) What about Genesis 26:4,5? _____

A careful study of this early period (Genesis 1-Exodus 19) records the same acts of "right" or "wrong" as does the period from Moses to Christ. Stealing was wrong, immorality was wrong. Honesty was right, avoiding idols was right. When Adam and Eve accepted the suggestions of the one who became the "god of this world," and rejected the God of heaven, they were wrong--dead wrong!

5. During the years that Jesus lived on earth, how did He relate to the ten commandments? What do these Scriptures teach us?

- (a) John 15:10 _____
- (b) John 14:15 _____
- (c) Matthew 5:21-28 _____
- (d) What did Jesus mean in Matthew 5:17-19? _____
- (e) What is He teaching in Matthew 22:35-40 and John 13:34?

6. What about the ten commandments after Jesus returned to heaven? From this area come most of our original questions that we asked at the beginning of this study. Analyze these texts carefully.

- (a) Romans 7:7,12 _____
- (b) 1 John 2:1-7 _____
- (c) Revelation 14:12 _____

7. We are able to make some very clear conclusions. And there is a basic question that is most important to think through, in light of the fact that the commandments are the same in all time. It is this: Exactly why did God give mankind, in all ages, a knowledge of these commandments?

- (a) They simply **reveal His character**, what He is: Psalm 119:137-144. _____
- (b) They reveal that **true love and happiness are always found in serving and obeying Him**: Psalm 40:8.
- (c) They **point us, as sinners, to Christ** who **saves from transgression**, and Who **enables obedience and righteousness**: Romans 1:16,17; Phillipians 4:13.
- (d) In sharing with us the law, **God shared with us what he was like**, so that, **by His grace and power, we could be like Him**: 1 John 3:2.

4a. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____	3b. _____ 5a. _____ _____ 5b. _____ 5c. Focus: _____
4b. _____ _____	Why given? 2a. _____ 2b. _____ 3a. _____	6. _____ _____ _____

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Notes for the Instructor

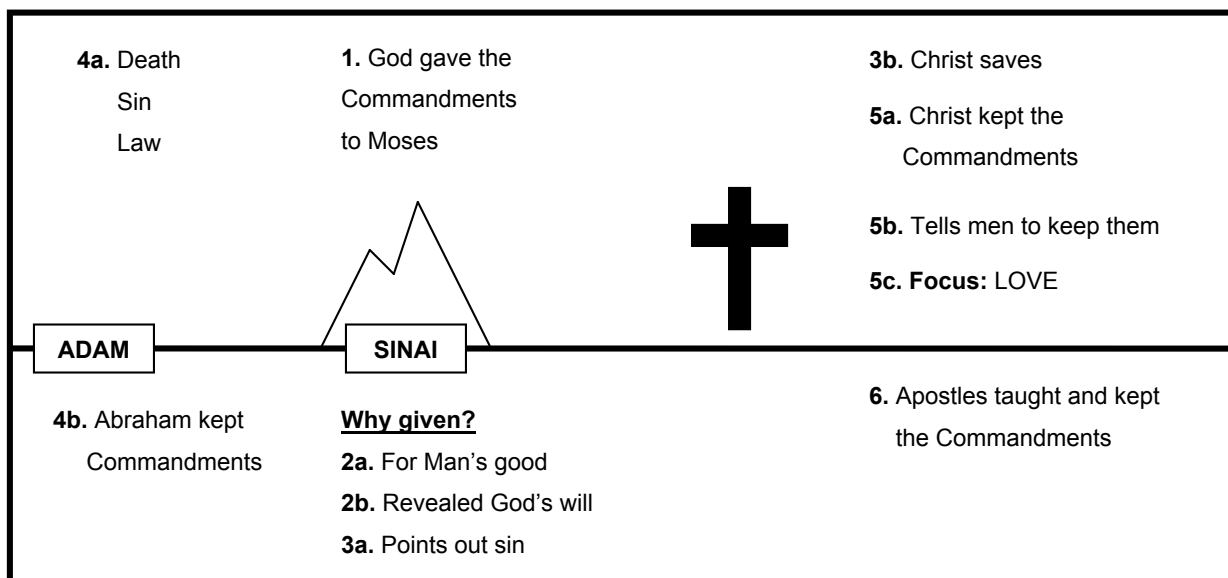
Purpose of lesson 19: The basic purpose is to show that the ten commandments are eternal as God is eternal, that they are a revelation of what He is, each commandment being a facet of His character, made clear to man in his fallen condition so that man can know what He is like, and by the indwelling grace of God, become like Him. This is what it means to be restored to God's image.

In following up a study of the judgment, it is vital to demonstrate the nature of the law which is the basis of judgment. This helps to establish the fact that the critical point of judgment is our relation to Christ, without Whom we could be neither obedient nor righteous. To determine the nature of the saved or lost as the result of judgment even more clearly, the only question that Christ, the appointed Judge, needs to ask is, Do you love Me? If we truly love Him, we are daily at the foot of the cross, we are thus in a position to learn to love, and we reflect His love to us in returning love to Him and to others, which is the basis of all the commandments. And the ability to love is the image of God. We must point out that the believing sinner, who reflects God's love, becomes an exhibit in the judgment, revealing to unfallen angels and unfallen worlds, that God can make of man all that He says He can. Thus, the reborn Christian, the grace-filled obedient Christian, is the one who delights to do God's will, with God's law written in his heart. (Psalm 40:8.)

During the study itself: In connection with question 5(e), re-study Mount of Blessing, 45-51. In 5(f), show that Jesus' love emphasis to law was a quotation of Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18. Also in connection with question 5(f), see note under section E, Unto a Perfect Man, page 121.

Appeal: Question 7(d) and the statement of purpose above, form a clear point of appeal. Help the student to see the law as a revelation of what God is like, so that to the degree we know God can we become like Him.

Illustration: The visual aid forms an easy memory device in looking at the commandments in four time periods, beginning with the common ground from Sinai to Christ, then pre-Sinai, then Christ's day, and last, after Christ's resurrection.



Introduction

Hebrews 9:2-5

²For a tabernacle was prepared: the first *part*, in which *was* the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; ³and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, ⁴which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which *were* the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; ⁵and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat.

James 2:10-12

¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. ¹¹For He who said, "*Do not commit adultery*," also said, "*Do not murder*." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.

Psalms 119:44-47

⁴⁴ So shall I keep Your law continually,
Forever and ever.
⁴⁵ And I will walk at liberty,
For I seek Your precepts.
⁴⁶ I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings,
And will not be ashamed.
⁴⁷ And I will delight myself in Your commandments,
Which I love.

1. Exodus 20:1-17

¹And God spoke all these words, saying:

² "I *am* the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ "You shall have no other gods before Me.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; ⁵you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, ⁶but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

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.

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the Lord your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. ¹¹For *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

¹³ "You shall not murder.

¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ "You shall not steal.

¹⁶ "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's."

2a. Deuteronomy 10:12, 13

¹²“And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?”

Answer: The Children of Israel had forgotten how God would have them live and He gave them the 10 Commandments for their “good”, to keep them in safe paths.

2b. Romans 5:20

²⁰Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

Answer: The Law was given so we would know when we are off the track, not doing what is right, when we are in dangerous territory.

3a. Romans 3:20

²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Answer: The Law was given help us know when we have sinned, but it does not save us, there is no salvation found in the Law.

3b. Matthew 1:21

²¹And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

Answer: No, the Law cannot save a person, only Jesus can save people from sin.

4a. Romans 5:14

¹⁴Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

Romans 6:23

²³For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 3:4, 12

⁴You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

¹²No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

Answer: The Law only makes us aware of what is sin, but salvation is a gift given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4b. Genesis 26:4, 5:

⁴And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

Answer: Abraham, the Father of Israel, obeyed God's voice, charges, commandments, statutes, and laws.

5a. John 15:10

¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

Answer: Jesus kept the Father's commandments and He charges us to keep His commandments.

5b. John 14:15

¹⁵"If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Answer: If we love God, we will keep His commandments.

5c. Matthew 5:21-28

²¹"You have heard that it was said to those of old, '*You shall not murder*, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' ²²But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. ²³Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

²⁷"You have heard that it was said to those of old, '*You shall not commit adultery*.' ²⁸But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Answer: God wants us to refrain both from doing what is wrong, but also not to desire what is wrong.

5d. Matthew 5:17-19

¹⁷"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and

teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Answer: Jesus kept the Law and the Prophets during his life on earth, He did not come to destroy or do away with the Law.

5e. Matthew 22:35-40

³⁵Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶“Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?”

³⁷Jesus said to him, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” ³⁸This is *the first and great commandment.* ³⁹And *the second is* like it: “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

John 13:34

³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Answer: If we love God we will keep the commandments of God.

6a. Romans 7:7, 12

⁷What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “*You shall not covet.*”

¹²Therefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Answer: God's Law is holy and just and good and it was given to man to protect and guide him from the dangers of sin in his life.

6b. 1 John 2:1-7

¹My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ²And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

³Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ⁶He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

⁷ Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning.

Answer: Believers are admonished not to sin, but if we do fail or forget, Jesus Christ will forgive us our sins if and when we confess and leave our sin and walk as God has outlined in his commandments.

6c. Revelation 14:12

¹²Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Answer: In the end, those who are God's followers will be keeping God's commandments.

7a. Psalms 119:137-144

¹³⁷ Righteous *are* You, O Lord,
And upright *are* Your judgments.
¹³⁸ Your testimonies, *which* You have commanded,
Are righteous and very faithful.
¹³⁹ My zeal has consumed me,
Because my enemies have forgotten Your words.
¹⁴⁰ Your word *is* very pure;
Therefore Your servant loves it.
¹⁴¹ I *am* small and despised,
Yet I do not forget Your precepts.
¹⁴² Your righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness,
And Your law *is* truth.
¹⁴³ Trouble and anguish have overtaken me,
Yet Your commandments *are* my delights.
¹⁴⁴ The righteousness of Your testimonies *is* everlasting;
Give me understanding, and I shall live.

Answer: Everything God does is right and what He wants us to do is also right and it is the safe way to live.

7b. Psalm 40:8

⁸ I delight to do Your will, O my God,
And Your law *is* within my heart."

Answer: We do what is in our heart and we are happiest when we are going what God instructs us to do.

7c. Romans 1:16, 17

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Phillipians 4:13

¹³I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

7d. 1 John 3:2

²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.