

The Ten Commandments: Do we need them in 2014?

Exodus 20:1-17

Before I decide what the Ten Commandments mean to me today, I need to have a good idea what they meant to the people of Israel when they were first given. Imagine a people that had a tradition, that their forefathers had received promises from God. These promises said that they would be a great nation that would bless the whole world and receive great protection from their God. Yet, all they experienced for hundreds of years was wandering in regions in which they were strangers, eventually becoming slaves in Egypt.

After a supernatural deliverance from Egypt's bondage, they found themselves in front of a mountain, covered with dark clouds and attended with tremendous thunder. Their new leader, Moses, comes walking down the mountain with two stone tablets that have ten imperative statements - statements that will completely dominate their lives as a nation. The God of their fathers has visited them, delivered them, and is now establishing a covenant, in which He will be their center of attention. They had lived hundreds of years in a country that not only treated them cruelly, but also surrounded them with religion and culture that God wanted erased (Egypt had at least 3000 gods). Someone has said that it took one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but it took 40 years to get Egypt out of Israel!

So, the Ten Commandments were not just a set of rules. They were an orientation, introducing the people to the one and only true God. Through these commandments, **they would learn about God** and **they would also learn about themselves**. Much could be said about the Ten Commandments, but for now we must focus on these two things.

What do the Ten Commandments teach about God?

- There is one and only one true God. See Psalm 19; 139; 145; Daniel 4:34-35.
- He is Holy – separate of all that is known in the created universe. He hates sin. See Psalm 96; 115; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 5:4-5; 97:9-12; Habakkuk 1:13 a; I Corinthians 6:9-10; Revelation 21:8
- He must be worshiped the way He wants to be worshipped, not the way we want. See Psalm 100; Isaiah 29:13; John 4:23-24.
- He lovingly cares very much that we know Him and trust Him. See Deuteronomy 33:1-3
- He lovingly cares very much what happens in our lives and how we treat our relationship with others. See Galatians 6:9-10; Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:17 – 6:9

What do the Ten Commandments teach about Man?

- Without God we would be in bondage.
See Isaiah 45:20-25; Jeremiah 9:23-24;13:23; 17:5-14 Jonah 2:9
- It is good for us to love, trust and serve God.
See Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Matthew 22:36-38
- We need to take care of our relationships with our fellow man.
See Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39-40.
- We are sinful and cannot please God with our natural wisdom or will-power.
See Romans 3:9-20; 8:5-8; I Corinthians 1:19-21; 2:14
- We need mercy. Someone innocent must pay for our guilt and sin.
See Isaiah 55:6-7; Galatians 3:21-26; Romans 3:21-26; 5:6-11; 6:23; 8:1-4, 9-11; 10:9-13;
II Corinthians 5:14-21; Hebrews 9:22-28.

Does the Law mean anything to us today?

What new wisdom or moral values could replace such fundamental truths as these?

What would the Gospel of Christ be like without the law pointing us to Christ?

See I Timothy 1:1-11.