

Exodus: Redeemed for the Glory of God

The Law: Chapters 20 -24

Psalm 119:35 & 36 *“Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it. Incline my heart to your testimonies...”*

Exodus 20:2 – 17

1. *“I am the LORD your God...you shall have no other gods before me.*
2. *You shall not make for yourself a carved image....*
3. *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.*
4. *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your...servant...For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth...and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*
5. *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.*

6. *You shall not murder.*

7. *You shall not commit adultery.*

8. *You shall not steal.*

9. *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

10. *You shall not covet your neighbor’s house...wife...servant...donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”*

- A. Every commandment that forbids something also requires the opposite, each that contains a requirement also forbids the opposite. Looking at number 3, what would be the opposite of taking the LORD’s name in vain?

The Larger Catechism asks (Q124) *“Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment?”* The answer is *“By father and mother, in the fifth commandment are meant, not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God’s ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.”*

- B. Combining the commandment itself and the question from the Larger Catechism, how do you see the fuller meaning of the commandment? What is it saying?

Questions 77 and 78 in the Shorter Catechism address the ninth commandment with these statements: *“The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man,*

and of our own and our neighbor's good name, especially in witness bearing... <and> forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbor's good name."

- C. What is the essence of what is forbidden in the ninth commandment? What underlying truth does this reveal about God himself?

In a survey taken by George Barna in 2008, only one-third of all adults (34%) believe that moral truth is absolute and unaffected by the circumstances. Slightly less than half of the born again adults (46%) believe that absolute moral truth exists.

- D. In what ways can we "bear false witness" against others?

Philip Ryken in Exodus, Saved for God's Glory says this "Before we open our mouths and start talking about someone else, we need to ask ourselves some hard questions: Is what I am about to say true? If so, does it really need to be said to this person in this conversation? Would I put it this way if the person I'm talking about were here to listen? If our words fail these simple tests, then it would be better for us not to speak at all."

According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, "The tenth commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor, and all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his."

- E. What is the opposite of coveting and discontentment?

- F. Where in scripture do we find instructions regarding our contentment? When we are discontent, what does this say about the attitudes of our hearts toward God – his goodness, knowledge and provision?

Let's examine a couple of passages containing laws that follow the 10 commandments and see which specific commandments we can see reflected in these laws:

Ex 22:25 – 28 "If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him. If ever you take your neighbor's cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate. You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people."

Ex 23:1 – 9 "You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit. If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him. You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. Keep far from a false charge and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right."