

Bible Study – Deuteronomy Chapter 5 – The Ten Commandments

In our last study, we learned the word obedience. Moses wanted Israel to respond to God's love with willing obedience. His reminder that following God in obedience would make things go well for the Israelites in the land they were to possess, but disobedience would bring dire consequences for the nation.

In today's study, we will look at the statutes and rules as given to the Israelites at Horeb, as a general overview. These will be explored in more detail throughout the rest of the book of Deuteronomy.

Read Deuteronomy 4:44 – 5:21

Moses briefly summarizes the first four chapters of Deuteronomy and then reintroduces the law and statutes that God gave to them at Horeb, namely the Ten Commandments. The basis for the Ten Commandments was that "He is who He is" (cf. Exodus 3:14) and that He provided them a way to live, specifically when they enter into the land that God promised their forefathers. In brief, the commandments can be summarized into two categories: loving God (commandments 1-4) and loving others (commandments 5-10). This was taught by Christ in his ministry (cf. Matthew 22:36-40).

The remaining chapters (6-26) will go further into the Ten Commandments, which we will explore in future studies.

Q. Regarding the Lord's name, in what ways can it be taken in vain (cf. Matthew 5:33-37; 1 Timothy 6:1; James 5:12)? How are Christians to apply this commandment (cf. Matthew 6:9)? **Bonus** - What did the Israelites do to prevent themselves from taking the LORD's name in vain?

Q. Regarding the Sabbath, the telling of the commandment here is like Exodus 20:8-11. However, the focus is different. What is the focus of the commandment in Exodus? How does it differ here? Does the Sabbath commandment still apply to Christians today (cf. Romans 10:4; 14:5-6; Mark 2:23-28; Colossians 2:16-17)? Why or why not?

Q. The commandments to love our fellow man are given by “Do not ...” commands. Instead of “Do not”, what would the opposite be? For each command, fill in the blank and cite a practical example:

INSTEAD OF **MURDER**, IT SHOULD BE _____
(Romans 12:18)

INSTEAD OF **BEARING FALSE WITNESS**, IT SHOULD BE _____
(Ephesians 4:25)

INSTEAD OF **COMMITTING ADULTERY**, IT SHOULD BE _____
(Ephesians 5:25-28, Hebrews 13:4)

INSTEAD OF **STEALING**, IT SHOULD BE _____
(Ephesians 4:28)

INSTEAD OF **COVETING**, IT SHOULD BE _____
(1 Timothy 6:6-10; Hebrews 13:5)

Q. Why can covetousness be the most dangerous of the commandments listed above? How can one protect themselves against this sin?

Read Deuteronomy 5:22 – 33

Moses recounts that after giving the commandments to Israel, they respond with fear because they hear God speak and are allowed to live. They ask that Moses be their mediator rather than hear from God directly. The Lord affirms what the Israelites have said and will continue to instruct Moses with the laws and statutes that will eventually be given to Israel. He gives stern warning to Israel not to deviate from these instructions.

Q. What steps can we take to ensure we do not deviate from the Word of God? How do we cultivate a heart that always reveres His Word?

When the LORD says, “Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!” (v.29), this should be our goal as well. These commandments should not be viewed as restrictions on our lives, but rather a healthy way to love God and our fellow man. They also should be viewed as God’s grace upon Israel by giving them a way to live long in the land they are to possess and that it may go well with them and their sons. For the Christian, it helps us to live a life worthy of our calling and as a testimony of who God is.