

October 16, 2016 God's Eternal Purpose - Exodus 20:1-17

No Other Gods Primary theological challenge for God's people is idolatry. Cultures surrounding Israel were full of gods. The uniqueness of Israel required fidelity to only Yahweh. There's no room for syncretism (worship of YHWH blended w/worship of other gods). Syncretism always erodes spiritual vitality.

Do Not Make Idols The command against making images of Yahweh is likely rooted in two realities: 1) The character & nature of God is associated with His activity & self-revelation. Words have the ability to convey God's relatedness in ways that wood or stone images don't. 2) God has already formed images of Himself—in His people.

Do Not Misuse the LORD's Name This prohibition is not primarily about using the name of Yahweh in trivial or even profane ways. This command is concerned with protecting the divine reputation. (Ezek 36:22)

Sabbath "God resting is a divine act built into the created order of things—working/resting rhythm. Only when that rhythm is honored by all—is creation as God intended it to be. Sabbath is a divinely given means for all creatures to be in tune with the created order." – Terence Fretheim

Honor Father & Mother Not so much a command of obedience as a command of care. Traditions in the ancient world would rid the community of those who could no longer contribute to its economy. God's people will be a people of honor. This command later extended to those who for various reasons struggled to make tangible contribution to the *oikonomia* (household).

Care for Neighbor The commands to not kill, not commit adultery, not steal, and not testify falsely against a neighbor form a community of care & protection. For God's people, relationship to God is always connected to relationship with one's neighbors. "'Holy solitaries' is a phrase no more consistent with the Gospel than holy adulterers. The Gospel of Christ knows no religion but social; no holiness, but social holiness." – John Wesley

Do Not Desire Your Neighbor's _____ Obedience involves not only learning certain actions, but also embodying certain attitudes. God is teaching His people to be a people of contentment and gratitude.

Next week: *The STORY series continues. Moses, Part 3*

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THE STORY

FINDING YOUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY

10 plagues—life apart from God destroys

10 commands—life in relationship with God.

Trust God alone for your livelihood, health and wisdom.

Statues do not represent or replace our real God.

Don't use God's Name for anything apart from Him.

Sabbath: Give yourself, the earth, and world a break.

Honor parents: God's people value people.

Do not take the life of a person.

Care for people. No adulterous affairs.

Care for people. Do not steal.

Care for people. Don't misrepresent them.

Be content. Do the best you can with what you have.

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