

DO YOU REALLY KNOW

TRUE LOVE

A SERIES ON 10 COMMANDMENTS

STUDY GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

The Ten Commandments have been the greatest positive influence for good in terms of the laws of the nations than anything else in human history.

What are the Ten Commandments?

Introduction: a look at the Ten Commandments	The Laws of the True Lover
First Have no other gods before me	True Love is Pure
Second Do not make a carved image	True Love is Loyal
Third Do not take the name of the Lord in vain	True Love Shows
Fourth Keep the Sabbath day holy	True Love Rests
Fifth Honour your father and mother	True Love Respects
Sixth Do not murder	True Love Values Life
Seventh Do not commit adultery	True Love, Not Lust
Eight Do not steal	True Love is Contented
Ninth Do not bear false witness against your neighbour	True Love is Honest
Tenth Do not covet anything belonging to your neighbour	True Love Satisfies

Historical Context

God first made His covenant agreement with Abraham (Genesis 12: 1-3). Then God took the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt (Exodus 1-14). Because they saw God's great power displayed against the Egyptians, the Israelites feared the Lord and put their trust in Him (Exodus 14: 31).

God brought the Israelites out into the desert and three months later they arrive at Mount Sinai. Exodus 19 tells us how God re-affirmed them as His chosen people and told them to prepare themselves - for God would descend upon the mountain and speak with them, renew His covenant and give them new instructions. This happened in about 1450 BC.

The Ten Commandments were given in the context of God's pre-existing relationship with the Israelites - having rescued them from slavery in Egypt (as promised) and about to lead them into the Promised Land.

Literary Context

The Ten Commandments are recorded twice in the Old Testament:

- when the Israelites came out of Egypt (Exodus 20)
- 40 years later when Moses recounted and reminded the Israelites what God had said to them immediately before they entered the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 5).

Both books are part of the Pentateuch, attributed to Moses. Exodus records God's rescue of the Israelites from slavery and the formalising of God's covenant with them (Exodus 19: 5). Deuteronomy is a sermon given by Moses to the Israelites as they were about to enter the

Promised Land. It recounts God's dealings with them and calls for commitment and obedience.

The Ten Commandments have a literary form similar to ancient Near Eastern treaty texts. In a preamble, the suzerain lord gives his name and claims the loyalty of his vassal. He cites the benefits he has bestowed and states the treaty terms and stipulations. One demand is central - the vassal must be exclusively committed to the suzerain ruler. It is a document that describes the relationship between the ruler and the (often newly-conquered) people.

Note that the Ten Commandments are called the Ten Words (Exodus 34: 28; Deuteronomy 4: 13 and 10: 4) rather than laws or commandments.

"To classify this revelation as law is not adequate; it belongs to the broader category of covenant"¹

While the word "Torah" in Hebrew can mean Law, the Ten Commandments could be better described as instructions (i.e. designed to teach us the truth about God). Torah can also mean direction, teaching or doctrine.

What is the relevance of the Ten Commandments today?

When we look at the Ten Commandments, we must look at them in the context of the overarching storyline of the bible (i.e. creation - fall - redemption - new creation). The law plays a vital role in making people aware of their own sinfulness and their need of a saviour.

When Jesus was asked to summarise the law, He said "to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbour as yourself" (i.e. the two great commandments) (Matthew 22: 37-40).

The Ten Commandments can be split up under the two great commandments:

- Commandments 1-4: to love God
- Commandments 5-10: to love your neighbour.

What is the purpose of the Ten Commandments?

The purpose of the Ten Commandments and the law is to reveal God's character to us (Psalm 19: 7-11). The Ten Commandments teach us something of the perfection and holiness of God's character. They have been given to restrain human from committing evil (Romans 13). The Ten Commandments - through the law - also bring conviction of sin. We know and understand our sin through having the law of God (Romans 7: 7-14).

Although knowledge of the law brings conviction of sin, it doesn't give the power to do what is right. So the Ten Commandments were not given to solve our sin problem, but rather to reveal our sin and point us to our need of a saviour (Romans 8: 3; Galatians 2: 15-16, 3: 24).

Jesus did not come to abolish the Ten Commandments or the Old Testament law. He said in Matthew 5: 17-18 that He came to fulfil the law and the prophets. We tend to see the law as

rules to be obeyed, but Jesus sees the law as something to fulfil. He fulfils the law by completely obeying it.

Meditate on God's Word

Over these 11 studies, let us spend time each week reading and meditating on one commandment. Focus on what the commandment means, what it forbids, what it requires of you and what conditions it has. Also look at how Jesus interpreted that commandment in the New Testament and how He applied it in His life.

We hope you enjoy this study with your Life Group.

[1] New Bible Dictionary – 3rd Edition 1996 - See Ten Commandments - Edited by I. Howard Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, and Donald J. Wiseman

STUDY 1: INTRODUCTION

The Laws of the True Lover

The Ten Commandments were spoken by God and written on stone tablets given to the Israelites whom He had freed from slavery in Egypt. God - in His glory - revealed Himself through the Ten Commandments as an expression of His covenant relationship with the Israelites.

This act of God's grace was timed to remind them of their need for God in the Promised Land where many pagan nations lived. Their obedience to the laws would result in God's blessing upon them; their disobedience to the laws would result in God's curse upon them.

Context

1. Read Deuteronomy 5: 6-21.
 - a) Why did God give the Ten Commandments to the Israelites?

 - b) Describe the Israelites' knowledge of God before and after the giving of the Ten Commandments.

 - c) Why was it important for the Ten Commandments to be restated to the Israelites just before their entry to the Promised Land?

Observation

2. How do the Ten Commandments reveal:
 - a) the attributes of God?
 - b) the nature of sin?

3. Discuss and compare the structure of the Ten Commandments. Three were written in the positive; the rest in the negative. Why?

4. Read Psalm 19: 7-14. These verses describe God's law, statutes, precepts and commands as "good" for us. How does the "fear of the Lord" enable one to obey God's commands? This is also the overriding theme in Proverbs.

Meaning

5. Why did Jesus say that “all the law and the prophets” depend on the two great commandments to love (Matthew 22: 34-40 and 5: 17-20, Jeremiah 31: 33 and John 15: 26)?

6. How does Jesus fulfil the Ten Commandments by:
 - a) His life?
 - b) His death?
 - c) His resurrection?

7. Compare and contrast the roles of Jesus and Moses in mediating between God and man (Mark 9: 2-8).

Application

8. The Ten Commandments were God’s revelation of Himself to the Israelites. God also entrusted His laws to Israel - commanding them to be careful and to teach the laws to their children (Deuteronomy 5: 9).

Similarly, we are told that those who have been entrusted with the “secret things of God” must prove faithful (1 Corinthians 4: 2).

- a) How has the study of God’s Word helped you personally and collectively as a life group?

 - b) How have you been faithful to God’s Word?
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9. Jesus summarised the Ten Commandments by teaching us that we firstly ought to love God and secondly our neighbours as ourselves (Matthew 22: 37-40). How have you shown your love:
 - a) for God by your deeds?
 - b) to fellow believers?
 - c) to your neighbours?

STUDY 2: THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

True Love is Pure

Context

The Ten Commandments do not begin with a "Thou shalt not..." - they actually begin with a reminder of God's love for the Israelites.

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20: 2-3)

The Israelites were never forgotten. The Lord heard their prayers and their cries for help; He rescued them from the hands of the Egyptians. After all, the Lord had established an everlasting covenant with Abraham - making him the father of a multitude of nations and promising them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession and that the Lord would be their God for all generations (Genesis 17: 1-8). As a sign of the covenant, Abraham and all his descendants would be circumcised (Genesis 17: 9-14).

The Lord God is the God of Israel, whose faithful loving kindness never fails. His love now extends to all nations through the new covenant in Jesus Christ through His death and resurrection. We can now be reconciled to the Lord God, our creator and redeemer.

"To all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become the children of God." (John 1: 12)

It is in light of this that the first commandment takes on new meaning. For the Lord God brought us out of sin and death, we shall have no other gods before Him.

Observation

1. What is the essence of the first commandment (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9; Luke 10: 27)?
2. What does the first commandment require (1 Chronicles 28: 9; Deuteronomy 26: 17; Isaiah 43: 10; Jeremiah 14: 22)?
3. Why did the Lord allow the Israelites to wander in the desert for 40 years before bringing them into the Promised Land (Joshua 5: 6)?

4. What did the Lord God require of His people before they entered the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 6: 10)?

Meaning

5. The Israelites celebrate the Passover in remembrance of their deliverance from slavery. We celebrate Easter in remembrance of our deliverance from sin and death. What do these two events reveal about the Lord God?
6. What particular sins does the first commandment forbid (Psalms 14: 1; Ephesians 2: 12; Jeremiah 2: 27-28; 1 Thessalonians 1: 9; 2 Timothy 3: 2; Philippians 2: 21)?
7. What do the words "before me" in Exodus 20: 3 teach us about Lord God (Ezekiel 8: 5-18; Psalms 44: 20-21; 1 Chronicles 28: 9)?

Application

8. What is the love of a father like?
9. Does love inspire loyalty and obedience? Discuss.
10. How are we to love the Lord God in return?
11. Provide some examples of things we sometimes place ahead of the Lord God (Psalms 73: 2-3,13-15, 22; Job 1: 22; Deuteronomy 8: 17)?

STUDY 3: THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

True Love is Loyal

Context

1. Why was this commandment so important for the Israelites when they were entering the Promised Land? What was the context (Deuteronomy 12: 1-4, 29-31)?
2. What was the nearer context that made it even more necessary (Exodus 31: 16 - 32: 8)?

Observation

3. What is God requiring us to do in this commandment?
4. What is God forbidding us from doing here?

Meaning

5. What is a carved image – what sorts of things does this cover?
6. *“It makes little difference whether they are pictures and statues outside the mind or imaginative constructions within it. My idea of God is not a divine idea. It has to be shattered time after time. He shatters it Himself. He is the great iconoclast.” (C.S. Lewis, A Grief Observed, pp.76-77)*

Reflect on the quote above. To what extent is our conception and understanding of God ‘carved’ to suit ourselves? What bits of God and His character are we tempted to cut off or modify?

7. Is it OK for God to be jealous (Exodus 20: 5)? Why? Why not?

8. How might our actions in this area impact succeeding generations (Exodus 20: 5-6)? How have you seen this work out in your own family history (positively and negatively)?

9. How did Jesus view this commandment (Matthew 6: 24-25)? How did He fulfil it?

Application

10. What idols of our own making we need to get rid of?

11. Is there any legitimate image of God that is rightly the object of our worship now and eternally (Colossians 1: 15-20; Revelation 5: 11-14)? Discuss how we can do this better.

STUDY 4: THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

True Love Shows

“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.” (Exodus 20: 7 and Deuteronomy 5: 11 – ESV)

Introduction

What’s in a name? When Moses saw God in the burning bush and God told him to go and lead the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses asked God, “who shall I say has sent me? What is His name?” - and God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”.

In Hebrew, this is written as YAHWEH (Exodus 3: 13-15) - the personal name of God. In our English bibles, this is translated as **LORD** (in all capitals).

Jesus took this third commandment and spoke about it in terms of not using God’s name in an oath (Matthew 5: 33-37). Do not use God’s name to give you more credibility. Do not use God’s name for your own purposes in developing your religious empire, making money or purporting false doctrine (as often done by televangelists and prosperity gospel preachers).^[1]

Do not misuse God’s name for false purposes. Christian hypocrisy can be seen under this commandment. We might call ourselves a Christian who follows Jesus - God Himself. But we might also do the very opposite of what a follower of God should do. We must take God and our relationship with Him seriously.

Do not use God’s name in a way that empties Him of His significance. We should obviously not use His name as a swear word. But we should not cheapen God’s name either. The positive way is to revere, love, know, delight in and fill up God with all that He is.

This sheer variety of infringements shows us that taking the Lord’s name in vain may involve speaking badly of Him and living our lives wrongly.

Context

1. What is so important about a person’s name (Proverbs 22: 1)? How important do you think God considers His name?
2. A person may say, “I do not want anyone to ruin my good name.” What do they mean by this? Why would you find it offensive if other people treated your name disrespectfully?

Observation

3. Can you disobey all the other commandments without breaking the third commandment? How do you break the third commandment by not obeying the other commandments (Proverbs 30: 7-9)?

Meaning

4. Jesus emphasised that we should “not take an oath at all”, but simply let our yes be yes and our no be no (Matthew 5: 33-37). How was Jephthah’s vow rash and thus took the Lord’s name in vain (Judges 11: 29-40)?
5. The third commandment has an additional emphasis “for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain”. What do you think this means (Ezekiel 36: 21-23)?

Application

6. Why is obedience to the third commandment vital to a positive personal relationship with God?
7. What is your reaction when you hear someone uses God's name thoughtlessly or without respect?
8. How do you think a person will treat Jesus’ name when they realise that salvation is only through Jesus’ name (John 20: 31 and Acts 4: 12)?
9. Think about how many times in the past week you have broken the third commandment. How should you respond to God for this?

[1] New International Commentary of the Old Testament – Deuteronomy, Christopher J.H. Wright, 2001, p.74

STUDY 5: THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

True Love Rests

Context

The Ten Commandments were given to the Israelites by God to lead them out of slavery. The first three commandments concern the relationship between God and His people. The fourth commandment is God's care for His people.

In Jesus' time, there was no recognised "week-end" or weekly day off, though there were festivals around the year. Even from the earlier times, the practice was:

- for elites to work as little as possible
- for peasants and artisans to work as often as needed
- for slaves to always be at the call of their masters.

The commandments were given to Moses on Mount Sinai, after the Israelites had fled from Egypt. God also gave to Moses many more laws that would distinguish Israel from the other nations. While Moses was high up on the mountain, the Israelites could not see him due to the thick cloud of smoke (Exodus 19: 18) and made a golden calf to worship before Moses re-emerged from the smoke.

As a result, the Israelites were sent to wander the wilderness for 40 years for their sin. Immediately prior to the Israelites going in to occupy the Promised Land, Moses addressed and retold them of the Ten Commandments, as most of the original generation had died out. His rendition of the Ten Commandments is in Deuteronomy 5.

Read Genesis 2: 1-3; Exodus 20: 8-11, 31: 12-17 and Deuteronomy 5: 12-15.

1. How do the reasons for the Sabbath differ in Deuteronomy and Exodus?

Observation

2. How many days does God tell us to work (Exodus 20: 9)?
3. To whom is the instruction to rest given (Exodus 20: 10b)?
4. What extra reason is given for observing the Sabbath (Deuteronomy 5: 15)?

5. What are we commanded to do on the Sabbath (Deuteronomy 5: 12; Leviticus 23: 3; Exodus 31: 14a; 20: 8, 11b)?

Meaning

6. Exodus 20: 9 tells us to work six days. There is a relationship between unemployment and depression. Also, as a child, this author was often told by his church-going mother that “the devil finds work for idle hands”. Do you see work as being part of God’s blessing?
7. What does God caution His people against doing? What burdens might we be tempted to carry (Isaiah 58: 13-14; Jeremiah 17: 21-22)?
8. There was a debate between religious leaders as to what constituted “work” that would be prohibited on the Sabbath, with the Pharisees taking a very strict interpretation (Mark 2: 23-28). In this passage, Jesus did not debate their interpretation of work, but instead told them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

In 1940, when England faced the very real threat of invasion, factories elected to work seven days a week. Mistakes increased and production dropped. What does this tell us about the importance of the Sabbath?

9. Hebrews look forward to “the Sabbath rest for the people of God” that still remains (Hebrews 4: 1-10). How does the fourth commandment point forward to this ultimate rest?

Application

10. We often respond “busy” when asked how things are going. This is commonly followed by approval. Does the busyness of our current times threaten our observance of Sabbath for rest and worship?
11. God does not tell us which day of the week is to be His holy-day. Given that Sunday is our day of worship, and consequently, a very busy day for pastors, how do you think pastors and other God’s servants observe the Sabbath?

STUDY 6: THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

True Love Respects

Context

The fifth commandment includes a promise of blessing if obeyed - a long life in the land that the Lord was giving the Israelites. However, the converse is also true. Failing to honour your father and mother includes a promise of death (Matthew 15: 4).

1. What was the land that the commandment was referring to?
2. How would the Israelites have reacted to the commandment and its promise?

Observation

3. Are there any other commandments with a promise of blessing attached to it? Given that the fifth commandment has an attached blessing, what does it say about its importance?
4. "Corban" is when someone pledges a gift or offering to God (Mark 7: 9-13). How did the Pharisees twist this?

Meaning

5. What does honouring your father and mother mean? Does it mean obeying them no matter what they tell you to do?
6. Is the blessing of a long life in the Promised Land relevant to Christians in the 21st century (Ephesians 6: 1-3)?
7. How did Jesus fulfil the fifth commandment while still glorifying and worshipping God (Luke 2: 41-52)?

Application

8. Am I financially responsible for my parent's needs according to the fifth commandment (1 Timothy 5: 8)?

9. Should I honour a parent whom I feel not deserving? How would I do so?

10. Does the fifth commandment extend to other forms of authority (e.g. superiors at work, government, police, teachers, etc.)? If so, how can we honour them?

STUDY 7: THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

True Love Values Life

Context

1. The Hebrew word used in this commandment is “ratsach” (to murder) - not the more general word “harag” (to kill). ^[1] How does this impact our interpretation of the commandment?

Observation

2. The consequence for murder is to be put to death by other people (Genesis 9: 6; Numbers 35: 30-31). How can we resolve the tension between these commands and Exodus 20: 13?
3. We should not murder others because they are made in the image of God (Genesis 9: 6). Why should we value that people are made in God’s image?

Meaning

4. Jesus equates insults and anger with murdering people (Matthew 5: 21-24). Why does the internal experience of anger matter so much to God?
5. Jealousy and envy can be the reason people want to murder others (James 4: 1-2; 1 John 3: 11-13). Why would jealousy and envy lead people to harm others?
6. When we understand that others are made in God’s image, how does this help us to love them more?

Application

7. Instead of murder, Jesus instructs us to seek reconciliation with people we have conflict with, even before dealing with other religious duties and responsibilities (Matthew 5: 21-

24). How can we overcome the fear we often have of confronting both those who have wronged us and those we have wronged?

8. When was the last time you wronged somebody else?

9. How does anger stemming from jealousy express itself in our modern context, particularly with social media?

10. Discuss how this commandment relates to the euthanasia and abortion debates.

^[1] A Doubter's Guide to the Ten Commandments, John Dickson, p. 121

STUDY 8: THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

True Love, Not Lust

Context

God was speaking to the Israelites from Mount Sinai three months after they left Egypt. God wanted them to relate to Him (Exodus 20: 2-11) and He also wanted them to relate to one another in their community (Exodus 20: 12-17). This study focuses on verse 14 “You shall not commit adultery”.

1. How does the framing of “You” and “shall not” impact you?

Observation

2. Apart from adultery, which other commandments did David break (2 Samuel 11: 2-9, 14-17)?
3. What were the consequences of David’s sin (2 Samuel 11: 5 and 17, and 12: 14)?
4. How did David’s sin affect his relationship with God (Psalm 51: 3, 11 and 14)?

Meaning

5. If the command “You shall not commit adultery” were to be reframed positively, what ideal would it aspire towards? How would this impact on family and community relationships (Matthew 19: 4-6; 1 Thessalonians 4: 3-8)?
6. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 27-28), Jesus extends this command to our thoughts. How might verse 28 unfold in our daily lives? How might our private thoughts shape our interaction with a person in mind? How might the person feel as a result?

Application

7. How can marital infidelity impact a spouse or a child in our modern context, in regards to:
 - a) time priorities?

- b) financial priorities?
- c) feelings of betrayal?

8. Share strategies you have found useful to manage your thoughts to counter lust (Colossians 3: 1-2, 5 and 16).

STUDY 9: THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

True Love is Contented

"You shall not steal" (Exodus 20: 15)

Context

For 400 years, Israelites lived as slaves in Egypt. Their status of slave would not allow them to amass possessions. They had to live with very little. Their time, dignity, properties and even their lives were under the control and mercy of the Egyptian king.

When they were delivered from Egypt; however, they were free. They went out from Egypt with their flocks and herds (Exodus 12: 32). They also managed to take from the Egyptians silver and gold jewellery and clothing as plunder (Exodus 12: 35-36).

For the first time in 400 years, the Israelites enjoyed the freedom to live outside of Egyptians' control and to possess and enjoy things they could call their own. The command not to steal; therefore, was important in light of their renewed freedom.

Observation

Read Exodus 21: 16, 22: 1-5; Deuteronomy 24: 7; Leviticus 19: 13; Malachi 3: 8-10 and Proverbs 30: 9.

1. What are some possible objects of stealing?
2. What consequences has God prescribed for the perpetrator?

Meaning

3. Looking at the consequences, what does this command imply about God's view of human's possessions?
4. How is this commandment an act of 'loving our neighbours as ourselves' (Roman 13: 9)?

5. How has Jesus provided an example and the motivation to obey this commandment (John 10: 7-10)?

Application

6. Read Malachi 3: 8-10. Have you been robbing or stealing from God? What should you do to stop it?
7. Read Ephesians 4: 28. Can any of your habits be considered 'stealing'? What should you do to stop it?
8. How can we show our respect for other people's time, relationships and reputations?

STUDY 10: THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

True Love is Honest

Context

God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites, so they could be a light to the Gentiles by showing God's way that was so much better than our sinful human nature when left to ourselves.

The third commandment instructs us how to relate to God our creator in a "vertical relationship", while the ninth commandment parallels this with how we relate to each other in a "horizontal relationship".

The ninth commandment tells us not to bear false witness against our neighbour. This is translated as "you shall not lie" in "easy English" versions of the Bible. While this interpretation is not wrong, it is not truly accurate.

According to the original Hebrew text, "not bearing false witness" has a legal context (as opposed to a general secular context). Prior to the development of advanced forensics, nearly all evidence for a legal enquiry was "witness" - the statements of one or multiple parties concerning the accused or alleged offence.

1. What is the context of "witness" (Deuteronomy 19: 15-21; Leviticus 19: 15; Isaiah 59: 4)?

Observation

2. Against whom shall we not bear false witness (Exodus 20: 16)?
3. Who is our neighbour (Leviticus 19: 9-18; Luke 10: 29-37)?

Meaning

The ninth commandment is framed in the negative. To put it into a positive instruction, read James 5: 12, Psalm 15: 2-4, Proverbs 17: 9, 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7 and Ephesians 4: 29-32.

4. How should we speak of others?

Application

In coaching football, I was taught to always emphasise the positive, to reinforce the desired behaviours and to starve undesired behaviours of attention. Sometimes I could not be honest, as I was taught to “build up others”.

5. Does the ninth commandment require us to be bluntly, destructively honest? For example, what would I have said if I had been a householder hiding Jews from the Nazi in 1940s Europe?

STUDY 11: THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

True Love Satisfies

Introduction

The hedonic treadmill, also known as hedonic adaptation, is the observed tendency of humans to quickly return to a relatively stable level of happiness despite major positive or negative events or life changes. ^[1]

According to this theory, as a person makes more money, expectations and desires rise in tandem, which results in no permanent gain in happiness. Brickman and Campbell coined the term in their essay "Hedonic Relativism and Planning the Good Society". ^[2]

During the late 1990s, British psychologist Michael Eysenck modified the concept to become the current "hedonic treadmill theory" which compares the pursuit of happiness to a person on a treadmill walking just to stay in the same place.

The concept dates back centuries to St. Augustine, cited in Robert Burton's 1621 *Anatomy of Melancholy*:

"A true saying it is, Desire hath no rest, is infinite in itself, endless, and as one calls it, a perpetual rack, or horse-mill."

Context

1. The Ten Commandments were given shortly after the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. What did God desire of them by unravelling the commandments (Exodus 19: 3-6)?

Observation

2. What was the tenth commandment discouraging or prohibiting (Exodus 20: 7; Deuteronomy 5: 2, 7: 25)?
3. Is there any observable difference between the tenth commandment and the earlier nine (Proverbs 16: 2; Jeremiah 17: 10)?

4. How significant is the result of failing to follow this commandment (Joshua 7)?

Meaning

5. Why were the Israelites commanded not to be covetous? What could be the outcome of a covetous heart in relation to the other commandments (2 Samuel 11: 2-5, 11: 14-15; Matthew 26: 14-16; Romans 13: 9; James 4: 2 and Ephesian 5: 3, 5)?
6. Being covetous is detestable in God's eyes (Romans 1: 29, 7: 7-8). What would a covetous heart be indicative of (Luke 12: 15-20)?

Application

The commandment against covetousness deals with the thoughts and intentions of the heart. It has been called "the mother of sin" because the desire to sin first arises in the heart, before it manifests in the act.

7. What is the cause of a covetous mindset? As followers of Jesus Christ who understand His deed on the cross, what should our mindset be contrary to being covetous (Psalm 23; Matthew 6: 25-33)?
8. What could we prescribe as an antidote to being covetous (Hebrew 13: 5; Acts 20: 33-35)?
9. Are you satisfied with your current life (e.g. work position, income, achievements, etc.)? Why?

[¹] Rosenbloom, Stephanie (August 7, 2010). *"But Will It Make You Happy?"*. *The New York Times*. Retrieved August 16, 2010.

[²] Brickman; Campbell (1971). Hedonic relativism and planning the good society. New York: Academic Press. pp. 287–302. in M. H. Apley, ed., *Adaptation Level Theory: A Symposium*, New York: Academic Press