



# Ten Words to Live By

Oct-Nov 2023

## 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment – Undivided Allegiance

(sermons: Oct 22)



### Introduction

There are two places in the Old Testament that have a list of the Ten Commandments.

Next week we shall look at the part of Exodus 19 & 20 when the commandments were given to Moses at Mount Sinai, soon after the Jews had been delivered from slavery in Egypt.

After rebelling against God, as they approached the border of their Promised Land, they had to spend 40 years in the desert. At the end of this time Moses, approaching his death, set out what the people should have learned through this experience and how they must now choose to follow God whole-heartedly: this teaching is the Book of Deuteronomy.

### Deuteronomy 4: 32-40 The Uniqueness of God

v.33 *the voice of God speaking out of fire – as at Mount Sinai, enveloped in fire and smoke, when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments and many more instructions for the people*

1. What is special about God and what he has done for *all* human beings that should make them seek to obey him?
2. How had God revealed himself in particular to the Jews, what had he done for them, and what was he about to do for them, at this point in their history?  
As Christians (whether Jews or Gentiles), how has God done similar, but even greater, things for us?
3. What reason, beyond his uniqueness, does God give his people for obeying his commandments? (v.40)

### Deuteronomy 5: 1-7 The Giving of the Ten Commandments

v.2 *covenant – a covenant is an agreement between God and a group of human beings, where God lays down the terms and its acceptance by human beings is often sealed by a sacrifice*

v.2 *at Horeb – another name for Mount Sinai*

v.3 *It was not with our ancestors that the Lord made this covenant – that is, not only with our ancestors*

v.7 *no other gods before me – or ‘beside’ me (see note in NIV margin)*

4. Moses describes the time when God gave the commandments in v.2 to v.5. How did the people react?  
Should we react in a similar way to God’s words today?
5. What does the 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment mean? ‘*You shall have no other gods before (or besides) me.*’  
With what other ‘gods’ might the Jews have been tempted to share their allegiance to the LORD?  
Are *we* ever tempted to worship any other deity, or take part in religious activities that are not solely Christian?
6. In what other ways do *we* fail to give God our undivided allegiance?  
What different priorities might we have in our lives? (*for example see Jesus’ words in Matthew 6:24*)  
Can things that are good, in the right place, become dominant in our lives to the exclusion of God?
7. How can we help each other to obey this 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment?