

Sermon Notes Deut. 5:1-21 The 10 Commandments 31/7/22

Introduction. On the eve of entering the promised land the people of Israel are instructed to renew their Covenant with God.

Vv. 1-6. 'The Lord God made a covenant with us at Horeb' – present and future generations included with the first. God declares, I brought 'you' (and your ancestors) out of Egypt.

V. 7. 1st commandment – 'no other gods'. The primary purpose to ensure the exclusive practical allegiance of the people to God. 4:35 and 39 affirm that the Lord is the only true God.

Vv. 8-10. 2nd Commandment – 'make no image (idol)' of God in the form of anything in creation. A personal God cannot be represented in a lifeless form. The image of God which God created is the living, speaking human being (Gen. 1:26-27). God cannot be seen in any form but reveals Himself in speaking (4:12, 15ff) – promises and commands. God cannot be compared to any other (4:32-39). God is a jealous God who has poured out His gracious love and requires total allegiance. 'Punishing the children for the sins of the parents' – note the clear biblical interpretation in Ezek. 18:1-21. Note the words 'those who hate me' (v. 3) and 'those who love me and keep my commandments' (v. 4).

V. 11. 3rd Commandment – misusing God's name. This is using God's name to defend our disobedience not honouring God.

Vv. 12-15. 4th Commandment – keeping the Sabbath. Our Creator has made us to balance work and rest and to develop patterns that allow for worshipping and honouring God.

Reflection/Response. How do we keep the Sabbath on our modern world? Why is this linked to their rescue from Egypt?

V.16. 5th Commandment – honouring parents – linked to successful future living in the promised land. Why this link?

V. 17. 6th Commandment – 'You shall not murder'. Any unlawful or unauthorised killing. Linked to the gift and importance of human life because all humans are created in God's image.

V. 18. 7th Commandment – 'you shall not commit adultery' – to protect the sexual integrity at the heart of the (extended) family.

V. 19. 8th Commandment – 'you shall not steal'. (be generous) In Israel, unlike other Near Eastern codes, stealing does not lead to the death penalty, but it is serious and includes any unjust gain at the expense of others. Human life was not to be measured alongside material property.

V. 20. 9th Commandment – 'not giving false testimony'. The right alternative is to tell the truth.

V. 21. 10th Commandment – 'not coveting' anything that belongs to our neighbour – our motives, desires, intentions and attitudes matter to God

Reflection/Response. How are the 10 Commandments and the cross linked? Reflect on Eph. 4:28; 1 Jn. 4:20.