



**Lecture # 3 Part 2**

# The Ten Commandments, The Laws Governing Man's Duty to God (Part 1):

## Commandment One Concerns God's Being—Never Believe in False Gods, Exodus 20:3

**Exodus 20:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>"You shall have no other gods before Me.

**Let us review the four points that we have discussed up to this point.**

1. There are some who deny God: they just do not believe that God is, that God exists.
2. There are some people who question God's existence: God may exist, but He may not exist.
3. There are other people who believe in many gods, believe that the destiny of man and his world are in the hands of many powers and authorities throughout the universe (**polytheism**).
4. There are many people—many, many people—who believe in one god and only in one god.

This is the first of the Ten Commandments: *Commandment One Concerns God's Being—Never Believe in False Gods, Exodus 20:3*.

1. **Who is to obey the commandment (v.3)?**
2. **How long was the commandment to be in force (v.3)?**
3. **What is forbidden by the commandment (v.3)?**
4. **What is the decision required by this commandment (v.3)?**

### **3. (Exodus 20:3) Obedience— Commandments, The Ten: What is forbidden by this first commandment, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3)?**

**Exodus 20:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>You shall have no other gods before Me.

We have a **question** that needs to be answered under this point.

**How is this commandment broken, violated?**

I have **three very specific points** to make under this question.

This commandment concerns God's being. God is declaring that He alone is the *Supreme Being*, the absolute authority of the universe. There is no other *supreme being*,



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no other god who created and who rules and reigns over the universe. He alone is the **LORD**, the only living and true God, the only living and true Creator.

**Note that God makes three stringent demands, three clear requirements in this commandment.**

1. Man is to have no other gods, none whatsoever (**Exodus 20:3**).

**Exodus 20:3 (NASB)**

**<sup>3</sup>You shall have no other gods before Me.**

**I have three subpoints to share with you.**

- a. Man is not to set himself up as a god. Man is not to believe that he himself nor any other being or energy in the universe is the ultimate source of the universe.
  1. Man is not to deny God, declaring there is no God (**atheism**).
  2. Man is not to question God, saying God may exist but He also may not exist (**agnosticism**).
  3. Man is not to declare that man himself is the **Supreme Being**, the ultimate authority of his world (**humanism**).
  4. Man is not to look to science and technology as the ultimate power in life (**secularism**).
  5. Man is not to hold that his own knowledge and reasoning ability are the ultimate control of the universe.
  6. Man is not to believe that the spirit of man (the combined spirit of all men) is the ultimate energy of the universe.
  7. Man is not to proclaim some impersonal mass, energy, or gas in the universe as *the force* behind all things.
- b. Man is not to believe that other **beings**, **animals**, or **material things** are God.

Man is not to look in the sky above nor in the earth below nor in the sea and its depths and declare that something therein is God.

1. Man is not to look at the sky and declare the heavenly bodies and beings to be the supreme force of the universe: not the **sun**, **moon**, **stars**, **angels**, **principalities**, **powers** nor any other **creature** of any **world** or any **dimension** of **being**.
2. Man is not to look at the earth nor at some material substance of the earth and declare it to be God.
3. Man is not to look upon animals as some god, no matter what the animal is.
4. Man is not to consider the physical mass nor energy nor gases that comprise the basic substance of things as a god: not the **atoms**, **protons**, **neutrons**, nor whatever the **most minute building-block** of existence may be.



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- c. Man is not to believe in many gods (**polytheism**). There is only one living and true God, only one true **Creator**, only one **LORD** and **Majesty** of the universe (**monotheism**).

Therefore, man is to have no other gods whatsoever.

**All other so-called gods are nothing more than.....**

1. things created by the imaginations and thoughts of people
2. things called gods by people
3. things that are lifeless and powerless
4. things that are only images made out of metal, wood, stone, chemicals, or dirt

2. God also makes a **second demand** of man: “**You shall have no other gods before me**” (**Exodus 20:3**). The words “**before me**” (*alpamaya*) means literally *before my face, against my face, in hostility toward me, in my presence, in my sight*.

**It means that man.....**

- a. is to set no god *before* the **LORD** God.
- b. is to set no god *beside* the **LORD** God.
- c. is to set no god *in the presence* of the **LORD** God.
- d. is to set no god *in the face* of the **LORD** God.

The great **nineteenth century commentator George Bush** makes several excellent statements that tell us exactly what the first commandment means:

- a. “[**Creating idols**] may be done mentally as well as manually. There may be idolatry without idols.”
- b. “[**This commandment**] forbids the making of any other objects [as gods] whether persons or things, real or imaginary.”
- c. “[**Our**] supreme regard, reverence, esteem, affection, and obedience [**is due**] God alone.”
- d. “God is the fountain of happiness, and no intelligent being can be happy but through him...[**consequently**] whoever seeks for supreme happiness in the creature instead of the Creator is guilty of a violation of this command.”

If we set up anything that is a **rival interest** in our **hearts** and **minds**, anything that **absorbs the love** and **service** which belong only to the true God, then that thing becomes another god.

**Whatever the heart clings to, that becomes our god.**

**Consequently.....**

- a. the **proud man** who **idolizes himself** makes himself a god.
- b. the **ambitious man** who pays homage to popular applause makes his ambition and the praise of men his god.
- c. the **covetous person** who craves money and things makes a god out of money and things.



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- d. the **greedy person** who hoards possessions makes possessions his god.
- e. the **immoral person** who craves sex makes sex his god.
- f. the **glutton** who craves food makes eating his god.
- g. the **doting lover**—whether husband, wife, mother or father—who sets his supreme affection on the person loved instead of upon God makes that person his god.

3. God also makes a **third demand** of us: man is to know and acknowledge the only true and living God. There is one true and living God—the **LORD God Himself**.

- a. God declares that people who think there is no God are wrong (**atheists**). **I AM the LORD God**, the true and living God. **Atheists** may deny God, and **agnostics** may question if God really exists, but God is forceful in His declaration.

**Exodus 20:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> **I am the Lord your God**, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

**Psalms 14:1 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> **The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."** They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.

- b. No other object and no other being are ever to be set up as a so-called 'god.' Taking ideas or objects and beings and calling them God is forbidden, absolutely forbidden.

1. The **LORD Himself (Jehovah, Yahweh)** emphatically declares:

**Isaiah 42:8 (NASB)**

<sup>8</sup> **I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.**

2. The great apostle Paul declared:

**1 Corinthians 8:5-6 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> **For even if there are so-called [many] gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,**  
<sup>6</sup> **yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.**

We make a god out of anything that we **esteem** or **love**, **fear** or **serve** more than God. Again, whatever the heart clings to, that is a person's god. It may be oneself.

Frankly, many people focus upon pleasing and satisfying themselves. They live by their **own values** and are **concerned primarily** with their **own feelings**, **comfort**, **desires**, and **pleasures**.

They simply live like **they want** and **do their own thing**. They have exalted themselves to be their own god.



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**Other people make gods out of.....**

- |                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. heavenly bodies | k. images                       |
| b. science         | l. property                     |
| c. force, energy   | m. position                     |
| d. animals         | n. the latest style of clothing |
| e. family          | o. cars, trucks                 |
| f. sex             | p. sports                       |
| g. food            | q. recreation                   |
| h. pleasure        | r. career                       |
| i. recognition     | s. power                        |
| j. fame            |                                 |

A god can be anything or any person. Man's **first allegiance, first loyalty, first devotion** is to be to the **LORD God**. The **LORD God** is to be first in a man's life; He is to be enthroned in the heart of man. Man is to know and acknowledge that there is one God and one God alone.

The **first commandment** of the **LORD** is to be obeyed:

**Exodus 20:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup> You shall have no other gods before Me.

**Thought 1. Note several points.**

1) The so called gods of heaven and earth are nothing more than the creation of man's imagination and hands.

**Psalms 115:4-8 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> Their idols are silver and gold, The work of man's hands.

<sup>5</sup> They have mouths, but they cannot speak; They have eyes, but they cannot see;

<sup>6</sup> They have ears, but they cannot hear; They have noses, but they cannot smell;

<sup>7</sup> They have hands, but they cannot feel; They have feet, but they cannot walk; They cannot make a sound with their throat.

<sup>8</sup> Those who make them will become like them, Everyone who trusts in them.

**Isaiah 40:18-20 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup> To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him?

<sup>19</sup> As for the idol, a craftsman casts it, A goldsmith plates it with gold, And a silversmith fashions chains of silver.

<sup>20</sup> He who is too impoverished for such an offering Selects a tree that does not rot; He seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman To prepare an idol that will not totter.

**Isaiah 45:20 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup> Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; They have no knowledge, Who carry about their wooden idol And pray to a god who cannot save.



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### **Jeremiah 10:2-5 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> Thus says the Lord, "Do not learn the way of the nations, And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens Although the nations are terrified by them;

<sup>3</sup> For the customs of the peoples are delusion; Because it is wood cut from the forest, The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool.

<sup>4</sup> "They decorate *it* with silver and with gold; They fasten it with nails and with hammers So that it will not totter.

<sup>5</sup> "Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, And they cannot speak; They must be carried, Because they cannot walk! Do not fear them, For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good."

### **Romans 1:22-23 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools,

<sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

### **1 Corinthians 12:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> You know that when you were pagans, *you were* led astray to the mute idols, however you were led.

2) There is only one true and living God, the LORD Himself (Jehovah, Yahweh).

### **Deuteronomy 4:35 (NASB)**

<sup>35</sup> To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God; there is no other besides Him.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!

<sup>5</sup> "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

### **2 Samuel 7:22 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup> For this reason You are great, O Lord GOD; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

### **1 Chronicles 17:20 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup> O Lord, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

### **Psalms 83:18 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup> That they may know that You alone, whose name is the Lord [JEHOVAH], Are the Most High over all the earth.

### **Psalms 86:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup> For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God.



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### **Isaiah 43:10-11 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup> “You are My witnesses,” declares the Lord, “And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me.”

<sup>11</sup> “I, even I, am the Lord, And there is no savior besides Me.”

### **Isaiah 44:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.

### **Isaiah 45:18 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup> For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it *and* did not create it a waste place, *but* formed it to be inhabited), "I am the Lord, and there is none else.

### **Isaiah 45:22 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup> Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.

### **Mark 12:29 (NASB)**

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE Lord OUR GOD IS ONE Lord”

### **Mark 12:32 (NASB)**

<sup>32</sup> The scribe said to Him, "Right, Teacher; You have truly stated that HE IS ONE, AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM;

### **1 Corinthians 8:4-6 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.

<sup>5</sup> For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,

<sup>6</sup> yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.

### **Ephesians 4:4-6 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

### **1 Timothy 2:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus,





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3) There is only one sovereign Creator who meets the needs of man.

**Genesis 1:1 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

**Nehemiah 9:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> You alone are the Lord. You have made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them And the heavenly host bows down before You.

**Job 26:7 (NASB)**

<sup>7</sup> He stretches out the north over empty space And hangs the earth on nothing.

**Psalms 33:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host.

**Psalms 102:25 (NASB)**

<sup>25</sup> Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.

**Acts 17:23-31 (NASB)**

<sup>23</sup> "For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

<sup>24</sup> "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;

<sup>25</sup> nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things;

<sup>26</sup> and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

<sup>27</sup> that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

<sup>28</sup> for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

<sup>29</sup> "Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

<sup>30</sup> "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent,

<sup>31</sup> because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

**Hebrews 11:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.





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**Thought 2.** The very first commandment says, “**You shall have no other gods before me**” ([Exodus 20:3](#)). **Note the words "before me."**

This suggests at **least two facts**:

- 1) If we set some so-called god “**before God,**” He knows it. We cannot hide the fact from Him.
- 2) If we set a god “**before Him,**” His anger is aroused.

[Psalms 44:20-21 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>20</sup> **If we had forgotten the name of our God Or extended our hands to a strange god,**

<sup>21</sup> **Would not God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart.**

[Isaiah 42:8 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> **I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.**

[Romans 1:18 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> **For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**

**Let us review the four points that we have discussed up to this point.**

1. There are some who deny God: they just do not believe that God is, that God exists.
2. There are some people who question God’s existence: God may exist, but He may not exist.
3. There are other people who believe in many gods, believe that the destiny of man and his world are in the hands of many powers and authorities throughout the universe (**polytheism**).
4. There are many people—many, many people—who believe in one god and only in one god.

This is the first of the Ten Commandments: *Commandment One Concerns God's Being—Never Believe in False Gods*, [Exodus 20:3](#).

1. **Who is to obey the commandment (v.3)?**
2. **How long was the commandment to be in force (v.3)?**
3. **What is forbidden by the commandment (v.3)?**
4. **What is the decision required by this commandment (v.3)?**

**4. ([Exodus 20:3](#)) Obedience; Commandments, The Ten: What is the decision required by this commandment?**

[Exodus 20:3 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> **You shall have no other gods before Me.**

I have **two very specific points** to make under this question.



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1. The decision can be stated positively:
  - a. We must acknowledge that there is only one living and true God and serve Him with our whole heart.

**1 Chronicles 28:9 (NASB)**  
<sup>9</sup> As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

**Deuteronomy 26:17 (NASB)**  
<sup>17</sup> You have today declared the Lord to be your God, and that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice.

**1 Corinthians 8:5-7 (NASB)**  
<sup>5</sup> For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,  
<sup>6</sup> yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.  
<sup>7</sup> However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat *food* as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.
  - b. We must turn to the **LORD** and be saved, for He alone is God.

**Isaiah 45:22 (NASB)**  
<sup>22</sup> "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.
  - c. We must love the **LORD** our God (**Jehovah, *Yahweh***) with all our hearts.

**Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NASB)**  
<sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!  
<sup>5</sup> "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
  - d. We must seek to walk before God and be blameless.

**Genesis 17:1 (NASB)**  
<sup>1</sup> Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

**Jeremiah 7:23 (NASB)**  
<sup>23</sup> But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.'



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e. We must sanctify the **LORD** in our hearts, set Him apart as holy and fear Him.

**Isaiah 8:13 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> **It is the Lord of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, And He shall be your dread.**

f. We must realize that we cannot serve two masters; we cannot serve God and money.

**Matthew 6:24 (NASB)**

<sup>24</sup> **No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.**