

#9 Exodus 20 Wright 7 **The Ten Commandments**

I Introductions and announcements.

II Prayer.

III Review: We left Israel, escaped from Egypt and encamped at the base of Mt. Sinai, with a great sense of excitement and expectation. Moses has been going up and down the mountain with preliminary instructions to the people. YHWH, through Moses, has offered the people a covenant or agreement. The terms: If Israel will obey God and keep the covenant, the LORD God will make them, a, a treasured possession; b, a kingdom of priests, and, c, a holy nation. Israel has agreed.

IV Overview: Now, after the fire and smoke, thunder and lightning, trumpet blasts and loud noises, the message from God becomes specific. We come now to one of the best known passages of the Bible, the Ten Commandments, hereafter in this study guide, referred to as Ten C.

The book of Deuteronomy, written as a series of final addresses by Moses to review the covenant, has a parallel, almost identical version in C 5.

V EX 20:3-17. Wright, c. 7, p 55-58 paraphrases each of the Ten C in modern language with a brief comment on each. Prepare your own questions for class

VI There are various ways to organize the Ten C for easier memorization.

The one that has been most helpful to me is:

I-IV Respect for God.

V,VII Respect for family.

VI,VIII-X Respect for the community.

VII Which commandment(s) has been a special source of grace or insight for you?

VIII Some people say the Ten C is all the law we need. See Wright 59,60.

IX Did the Ten C borrow from other ethical codes of that time, such as Egypt or Babylon. Use a commentary to answer this.

X Are Christians expected or required to obey the Ten C?

XI Which commandment was Jesus repeatedly accused of violating? Mt 12:1-8,9-14. What was his defense? Mk 2:27,28. What did he mean? Was his view accepted?

XII The tenth C, prohibiting coveting, "builds a fence" as the Rabbis say, around the VII and VIII. That is, if you don't think about wanting the spouse or property of others, you are unlikely to commit adultery or steal.

Review how Jesus expanded this principle in the Sermon on the Mount: Mt 5:21-26 regarding the VI C, 27-30 regarding the VII C.

XIII Should the Ten C be posted in public schools, court rooms, etc? Principle: Is it a specifically religious document or a statement of universal standards?

XIV What is the attitude toward the Ten Commandments in Islam?

XV Optional: Prepare a copy of the Ten C suitable for matting or framing.

XVI Next time: Ex 21,22,23:1-9 is an early Jewish legal document, a constitution, which applies the principles of the Ten C to specific situations.