

The sight of the glory of the LORD

The Lord told Moses to worship him on Mount Sinai together with Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel (1). At the mountain, *they saw the God of Israel* and under his feet a beautiful sapphire-paved stone, awesome in its beauty (9-10; cp. Ezekiel 1:26; Revelation 4:6). No mortal man can see God and live (33:20; cp. 1 Timothy 6:16) but they saw his glory.

The Lord called Moses to go up the mountain, saying, *‘I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them’* (12). When Moses ascended the mountain he was accompanied by Joshua (13). Aaron and Hur were delegated to judge the people in his absence (14). Moses went up Sinai which was covered by the glory of the Lord and a cloud covered the mountain for six days. On the seventh day God called to Moses from the cloud. *The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel* (15-17). Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights (18; 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9,11,18; 10:10).

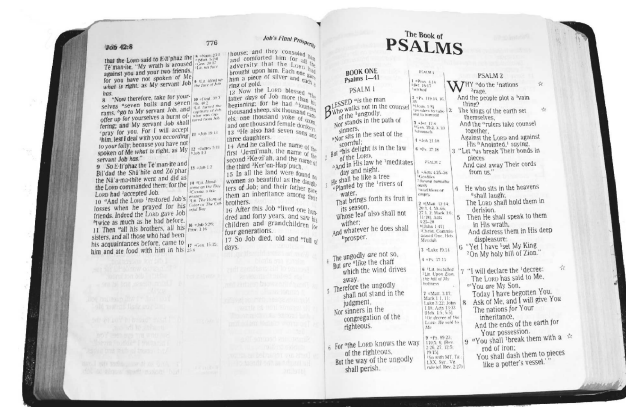
The sight of the glory of the LORD is awesome, majestic and beautiful. Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and he was overwhelmed by his majesty and dazzling splendour. (Isaiah 6:1-5; cp. John 12:41; Hebrews 1:3,8) When the Lord Jesus comes again with great power and majesty, we will admire him and adore him (2 Thessalonians 1:10). We will see his face in heaven (Revelation 22:4). We will see the scars of the crown of thorns that tore his brow; these will be a perpetual reminder of his wondrous love and grace, and the cost of our salvation. We will worship and adore him who loved us and gave himself for us. **Will you be there?**

*How wonderful, how beautiful,
The sight of thee must be,
Thine endless wisdom, boundless power
And awesome purity!*

(F.W. Faber)

PILGRIM BIBLE NOTES

God's holy Word simply explained and applied



September 2021

Exodus chapters 14 to 24

The Book of the covenant ... The blood of the covenant

The Lord called Moses to worship him on Mount Sinai together with Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1–2), representing the priesthood, and seventy elders who represented the people of Israel (1). God made a covenant with the Israelites. A covenant is a binding agreement between two or more people, bringing them into a special relationship and commitment to each other. The covenant brought great responsibilities as well as great privileges to the people. The Ten Commandments and the laws recorded in chapters 21 to 23 were written in *the Book of the Covenant* (4,7). The people twice repeated the promise they had made earlier (19:8), ‘*All the words which the Lord has said, we will do*’ (3,7). They soon broke this promise (32:1–6).

After Moses had written the words of Yahweh, *he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel* (4). Sacrifices were made and the blood was put into basins; half of the blood was sprinkled on the altar, the other half was sprinkled on the people (5–6,8). *The blood of the covenant* (8) was vital to the people. It was through blood sacrifice that atonement was made for sin (Leviticus 17:11). *Without shedding of blood there is no remission* (or ‘forgiveness of sin’ – Hebrews 9:22).

The covenant which God made with Israel is known as the old covenant. The Lord Jesus came to give us a new and better covenant (Hebrews 8:6–13). **The blood sacrifices of the Old Testament pointed forward to the great sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross (Hebrews 9:6–15).** Only the blood of Christ can atone for sin. He alone is the way to God the Father (John 14:6). When he instituted the Lord’s Supper, Jesus took the cup of wine as a symbol of his blood shed to save sinners and said, ‘*This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for you*’ (Luke 22:20).

Covenant people are also people of the Book (the Bible). We need to know the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:15–16; 1 Peter 2:2) and obey them (John 14:15).

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Little by little

God promised to send his Angel ahead of the Israelites to protect them and to lead them to the promised land (20,23). He had been with them since they left Egypt (14:19) and he would continue to be with them. ‘*The Angel of the LORD*’ is frequently identified with God (3:2,4; Judges 6:22). God gave his people wonderful promises, but they were conditional (22).

The Israelites were again warned against falling into idolatry in Canaan, They were to destroy the idols and the sacred pillars where the Canaanites worshipped (24). God promised them that as long as they served him alone, he would keep them from sickness and their women would not miscarry or be barren (25–26). The expression ‘*I will fulfil the number of your days*’ is a promise that God will give a fulfilled and contented life.

Many people accuse God of injustice because he drove the heathen out of Canaan to make way for his people (23–24, 28–30). These nations were under God’s judgment because of their vile practices (Leviticus 18:25; Deuteronomy 9:4–5). Israel was the instrument of divine judgment. We must never presume to dispute with God about his actions (Romans 9:18–21). He is far, far wiser than the wisest human and he is not accountable to anyone.

The Lord promised to drive out the heathen *little by little* (29–30). He was sensitive to the Israelites’ limited capacity to take full advantage of a quick and complete victory. There is a lesson for us here. We are often impatient for greater success in our work for the Lord, but would we be able to cope with a huge influx of new Christians coming into our churches? God knows our limitations. **Steady, gradual growth is far better than a spectacular increase which is often very shallow and fails to last.** The same principle applies in the Christian life. We come to spiritual maturity through growth in grace rather than by sensational experiences (2 Peter 3:18). Can you trace any spiritual growth in your own life in recent months, even though it be *little by little*?

The LORD fights for them

The Angel of God moved behind the Israelites to protect them from the pursuing Egyptians. The pillar of cloud by which God led them also moved behind them, giving them light. The other side of the cloud brought darkness upon the Egyptians which kept them from closing in on the Israelites (19–20).

When Moses stretched out his hand over the sea as God had commanded him, the Lord sent a strong east wind which made a path through the sea with a high wall of water on either side. The sea bed dried up enough for the Israelites to cross by foot (21–22). The Egyptians sent their chariots and cavalry in hot pursuit, expecting to overtake and overcome the Israelites without difficulty, but the Lord troubled them (23–24). Their chariots became bogged down on the bed of the sea and they said, ‘*Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them*’ (25). They learned too late that God fights for his people. Once the Israelites were safe on the other side of the seas, the horsemen and those in the chariots were destroyed as God brought the walls of water crashing down upon them (26–28; 15:19). *Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and his servant Moses* (31).

Are you feeling discouraged? Remember God’s promises, rejoice in the Lord and take heart! *If God is for us, who can be against us? — In all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us* (Romans 8:31,37).

*Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,
Who makes your cause his own;
The hope that’s built upon his word
Can ne’er be overthrown.*

*Though many foes beset your road
And feeble is your arm,
Your life is hid with Christ in God
Beyond the reach of harm.*

(John Newton)

I will sing to the LORD

The song of Moses is the first song recorded in the Bible. John Currid describes it as ‘a symphony of adoration’ (STUDY COMMENTARY ON EXODUS, Volume 1, page 309). The Israelites had seen the mighty hand of God at work in their deliverance and in the destruction of the Egyptians.

Moses and the Israelites sang of:

- The victory of God over their enemies (1–12). One puff of God’s wind destroyed the Egyptians (10). Who is this God who fights for us? He is described as a mighty warrior: *The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name* (3). God is invincible in his majesty and power.
- God’s mercy, redemption and guidance (13).
- A confidence that the dread of God would seize those nations seeking to obstruct their pilgrimage to the promised land (14–16).
- God’s purpose to bring them to Canaan and settle them there (17).
- The everlasting sovereignty of God (18).

This great song of adoration and praise came from Moses, who had complained to the Lord that he was not an eloquent man (4:10). He could not remain silent following this marvellous deliverance of God and he exclaimed, *‘I will sing to the LORD’* (1). When God works in the lives of his people, the silent lips burst into praise. God’s victory over the Egyptians foreshadows his final victory over Satan, for the song of Moses and of the Lamb are linked (Revelation 15:1–4). Moses’ elder sister Miriam led the women in victory dances, saying, *‘Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously’* (20–21).

Do you love the psalms and hymns that we sing? Do you know them and use them in your devotions? **When did you last sing to the LORD with all your heart?** Meditate on the words of Moses in this song and worship God with gladness. *Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?* (11).

In all that I have said to you, be circumspect

The Lord commanded that justice should be administered with integrity in Israel (1–9). Like the Israelites, we must not violate the ninth commandment by circulating false reports (1,7). We must not follow the crowd in doing evil but have the courage to make a stand for righteousness (2). Justice must be without partiality (3,6) and bribery and oppression are forbidden (8,9).

The Israelite was to show love to his enemy. If he found a straying or fallen animal belonging to an enemy, he was to return that animal to him (4–5). We must show compassion to those who are our enemies (Proverbs 25:21). The Lord Jesus said, *‘Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you’* (Matthew 5:44).

The land was to enjoy a Sabbath rest every seventh year (10–11). This rest saved the soil from exhaustion. The land was not to be cultivated and any crops happening to grow on it during that sabbath year were to be left for everyone to gather (cp. Leviticus 25:1–7). It appears that this command was not widely observed in Israel (2 Chronicles 36:21). The Sabbath day was a merciful provision for servants and for working animals (11–12).

The Lord said, *‘In all that I have said to you, be circumspect* (‘watchful’, 13). This was another warning against following other gods, breaking the first and second commandments. We must only worship Yahweh. **Do we take God’s Word to heart and are we on our guard so that we do not fall into disobedience?**

Three national feasts were to be observed by Israel during which leavened bread was not to be eaten (14–19):

- The Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread,
- Harvest, also known as the Feast of Weeks (34:22; Numbers 28:26); it was later called Pentecost because it was celebrated on the fiftieth day from the sabbath beginning the Passover.
- The Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles).

I will hear, for I am gracious

The verb translated ‘entices’ (16) indicates that the woman in question is a willing partner and not the victim of rape. John Currid comments, ‘We live in an age when sex before marriage is not only commonplace, but appears to be the norm. God is not pleased with such activity. He is not honoured by it. The message of abstention must be proclaimed to a world that is sleeping the sleep of death’ (STUDY COMMENTARY ON EXODUS, Volume 2, page 99).

The use of the death penalty in Israel for witchcraft (18), perverted sexual acts (19) or idolatry (20) may appear to be harsh. but we are not wiser than God. Dare we quarrel with God who hates the occult (cp. Deuteronomy 18:9–14) and sexual perversion (Romans 1:26–32)? The increase of these vile practices in today’s society has had terrible consequences. The gospel is the only answer to the mess in which we find ourselves. The blood of Jesus can cleanse the vilest sinner.

The Lord gave Moses laws to ensure a just, well-ordered and stable society. He is concerned for those among us who are vulnerable, especially the foreigner, widows, orphans and the poor (21–25). The legislation for interest-free loans for Israel’s poor was a merciful provision (25). Christians must show a practical concern for the poor and for those who are vulnerable, especially for believers in such a situation (cp. Acts 4:35; 6:1; 2 Corinthians 9:1–15).

The grace of God is evident in the laws he gave for Israel. If a person who had been wronged cried out to God, he promised, ‘*I will hear, for I am gracious*’ (27). David wrote some of his psalms after he had been oppressed by the wicked (eg. Psalms 3, 7, 55). He often began his prayers in a state of distress and ended them praising God. When we pour out our hearts to God, it makes all the difference to the way we view adverse circumstances. **Have you been wronged or mistreated? Have you prayed about it? Have you committed your cause to God (cp. 1 Peter 4:19)? The Lord will hear you, for he is gracious.**

I am the LORD who heals you

The Israelites discovered that the pilgrim life was not easy and they soon became discouraged. After travelling three days through the wilderness without finding fresh supplies of water, they arrived at Marah where there was water, but it was too bitter to drink and they murmured against Moses (22–24). They were ungrateful grumblers (see chapters 16 and 17 and Numbers chapters 14,16,17) who did not trust in the Lord who had done such wonderful things for them.

Moses cried out to the Lord who showed him a tree that he cast into the waters which were made sweet (25). God promised his people that if they obeyed him, he would not bring upon them the plagues which he had put upon the Egyptians. He said, ‘*I am the LORD who heals you*’ (26). The Israelites then came to Elim where there was an abundance of fresh water (27).

A grievous trial arising from bereavement, sorrow, disappointment, misunderstanding, loneliness, persecution or some baffling circumstance may be our ‘Marah’. There is a tree where we find healing. Our blessed Saviour died on that tree at Calvary to save us from our sins and to heal the sinful and broken heart. **He makes the bitter sweet for his people. Hallelujah!**

*Bitter, indeed, the waters are
Which in this desert flow;
Though to the eye they promise fair,
They taste of sin and woe.*

*But there’s a wonder-working wood,
I’ve heard believers say,
Can make these bitter waters good,
And take the curse away.*

*The cross on which the Saviour died,
And conquered for his saints;
This is the tree by faith applied,
Which sweetens all complaints.*

(John Newton)

The LORD hears your murmurings

The complaints of the people at Marah (15:24) were followed by a history of grumbling against Moses and against God. The Israelites now complain that they will die of hunger in the wilderness and that it would have been better to die at the hand of the Lord in Egypt (3). This was a terrible thing to say! The hand of God had destroyed the Egyptians and had delivered them from slavery and bitter suffering (15:6). The words *murmured* and *murmurings* ('*grumbled*' and '*grumbling*', ESV) are found in verses 2,7,8,9 and 12). This complaining would have been very hurtful to Moses (2–3). A lesser man would have gone back to the peace and tranquillity of Midian in his old age, rather than lead such ungrateful moaners.

God graciously promised that he would rain bread from heaven each morning, except on the Sabbath. They were to gather sufficient bread for each day, but on the sixth day also gather enough for the Sabbath. The faithless Israelites would then know that it was Yahweh who had brought them out of Egypt. Moreover, they would *see the glory of the LORD* the next morning (4–7). This prophecy was fulfilled when *the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud* (10). Moses told the people that the Lord would also send them meat each evening (8).

Moses warned the people that their murmuring was against Yahweh (8). He warned them, '*The LORD hears your murmurings*' (8,12; cp. 1 Corinthians 10:10). When we complain, we forget that the Lord is listening to our grumbling. We also forget the priceless blessings that God has so freely given to us — The Lord Jesus to save us from our sins, bringing forgiveness and cleansing, freedom from the dominion of Satan, peace with God and knowing him as our heavenly Father, the privilege of prayer, the presence of God with us, and eternal life. **When we complain, the Christian life becomes a drudge rather than a delight. Away with moaning!** *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits* (Psalm 103:2).

Restitution

The eighth commandment teaches us that theft is forbidden. Our reading today concerns compensation for the victims of theft or carelessness. Notice the number of times that the word '*restitution*' is used. The victims of crime often get a raw deal today but God expects them to be adequately compensated. If an ox were stolen in Israel, the owner received fivefold compensation from the thief because it was a working animal used in the gaining of a livelihood. There was a fourfold compensation in the case of a sheep (1). If the animal was recovered unharmed, the thief still had to repay double to his victim (4). There was also double restitution for ordinary theft (7).

A man had every right to defend his property from thieves. If he killed an intruder in a night-time burglary, he was not to be punished (2). Criminals who had disposed of their ill-gotten gains could not avoid paying restitution by pleading poverty. They were sold into a period of slavery so that their victims could be compensated (3). If a person was careless in lighting a fire which spread and destroyed the crops in another's field, he had to make restitution. (6). Finders were not keepers when another could prove the property to be his (9). Other laws concerning problems arising from the care of a neighbour's animal are covered in verses 10 to 15.

When we come to Christ, we are freely forgiven but if we have stolen from anyone before our conversion, we must pay restitution to the victims of our theft, however painful and embarrassing that may be (cp. Luke 19:8). This is not only the right thing to do, but it also provides an opportunity to testify of Christ's saving power.

We can never compensate God for the wrong that we have done against him through our sin. He gave his beloved Son to be punished in our place, to pay our debt (1 Peter 1:18–19; 3:18). Let us think about the wonderful love of God and give him our grateful and joyful thanks. He is worthy of our wholehearted devotion and service!

Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth

Guidelines for the administration of justice in Israel are found in verse 12 to 36. Verse 12 deals with the punishment to be applied to those who violate the sixth commandment, ‘*You shall not murder*’ (20:13). We are made in the image of God and human life is sacred; premeditated murder brought the death penalty (12,14; Genesis 9:6). The person guilty of manslaughter (13) could escape to a city of refuge (Numbers 35:11–15). Children who were guilty of violence to their parents, or of cursing them, and kidnappers were also to be executed (15–17). Slaves who suffered injury inflicted by cruel masters were to be compensated with their freedom (26–27). Laws are also given concerning the control of animals (28–36).

The Lord Jesus taught that we must not seek for personal revenge (Matthew 5:38–41; cp. Romans 12:19–20). Evil-doers must be punished through the judicial system (Romans 13:1–5). The ‘*life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth*’ sanction (23–25) is not as harsh as some would make it appear. Punishment was to be fair and appropriate to the crime but not excessive. In any well-governed society justice must be seen to be done but it is very sad that this is not so in Britain today. Many murderers claim that they did not intend to kill their victim and are allowed to plead manslaughter; many murderers serve very short prison sentences. The punishment of violent criminals hardly matches the enormity of the crimes that they commit. We ignore at our peril the principles of justice set forth in the Bible!

Killer animals were to be destroyed and there were severe penalties for those who refused to heed warnings concerning their dangerous animals (28–32). The Bible teaches us that we are responsible for our behaviour. If we are careless or thoughtless and others suffer as a result, we must pay compensation (33–36). **It is not enough to say, ‘I just didn’t think.’ The Christian must be thoughtful and considerate at all times (Philippians 2:4).** Attitudes and actions speak louder than words. Do you have a good testimony in this respect? Are you thoughtful and considerate?

According to each one’s need

The Lord was very gracious to his murmuring people. The miraculous way in which he provided the manna was intended to make them know that Yahweh is God (12). He sent them bread (‘*manna*’) in the morning and quails in the evening to provide their meat (13–15). He gave specific directions through Moses for the gathering of the manna. They were to gather *according to each one’s need* (16).

God said that he would not send manna on the Sabbath and he directed that they should gather double the amount of manna needed on the day before. God gave us the Sabbath at creation (Genesis 2:2–3) and it was to be observed. The Lord was showing the Israelites the importance of the Sabbath in a practical way. The extra manna gathered for the Sabbath did not rot (23–25). Some gathered according to their greed and this angered Moses, but they found that by the next day the extra manna had bred worms and it stank (20). Others, as perverse as ever, went out to gather manna on the Sabbath, but they found nothing (27). The Lord had shown here the importance of observing the Sabbath before he gave the Ten Commandments (28–30;).

God commanded Moses to put an omer of manna in a pot which was to be kept before the Testimony (the ark of the covenant) once the tabernacle was built (32–34; Hebrews 9:4). God provided manna for forty years until they reached the borders of the promised land (35).

Jesus taught us to pray, ‘*Give us this day our daily bread*’ (Matthew 6:11). **Our Heavenly Father wants us to depend upon him with childlike trust** (Matthew 6:25–34). He will never fail us; *my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus* (Philippians 4:19).

*Though troubles assail and dangers affright,
Though friends should all fail and foes all unite,
Yet one thing secures us, whatever betide,
The Scripture assures us, The Lord will provide.*

(John Newton)

The LORD is my banner

God commanded the Israelites to leave the Wilderness of Sin and they camped at Rephidim but they found no water. They quarrelled with Moses and asked, ‘*Is the LORD among us or not?*’ (7). They had already experienced abundant evidence of God’s goodness to them yet they still grumbled, complaining that Moses had brought them out of Egypt to kill them by thirst (1–3). He *cried out to the Lord, saying, ‘What shall I do with this people? They are ready to stone me’* (4). God told Moses to take some of the elders with him to Horeb (Mount Sinai); this is where he had appeared to Moses at the burning bush. Moses was to strike the rock with the rod with which he had struck the Nile and water would come out of it for the people to drink. The elders saw water flowing out of the rock (5–6).

The rock at Horeb speaks of Christ, smitten and wounded for us. Let us not test him by lusting after evil or by complaining (1 Corinthians 10:4–12). Moses called the name of the place *Massah* and *Meribah* which mean ‘testing’ and ‘quarrelling’.

The Amalekites attacked the most weak and vulnerable Israelites at Rephidim (8; Deuteronomy 25:17–19). Moses told Joshua to assemble some men to fight the attackers while he would stand at the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand. He held up his hand, being supported by Aaron and Hur. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. They held Moses’ hand steady until sunset and Joshua led the Israelites to a great victory (9–13).

The Lord commanded Moses to record in the book that he would utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven and to repeat this in the hearing of Joshua (14, 16; cp. 1 Samuel 15:33). Moses built an altar to the Lord and called it ‘*Yahweh Nissi*’ meaning, ‘*The LORD is my banner*’ (15). **Let us trust in God in all our spiritual warfare and persevere in prayer. He is our ‘banner’ and he will never fail us!**

I love my master ... I will not go out free

The Lord gave Moses a number of laws (20:22 to 23:33) which with the Ten Commandments were committed to writing and called ‘*the Book of the Covenant*’ (24:4,7). The laws in chapter 21 uphold the basic rights of each individual. Though there was slavery, a slave had the right to humane treatment, something unknown in the ancient world.

When an Israelite fell into a debt which he was unable to repay, he could be sold into slavery to repay that debt. He had to be freed from his servitude after six years (2) and the rights of female slaves were particularly safeguarded (7–11). If a slave loved his master, he could renounce his right to emancipation after his six years’ service, and remain with his master. Such a slave would say, ‘*I love my master ... I will not go out free*’ (5). His master brought him before the judges (‘*to God*’, ESV) and his ear was pierced. He then served his master for the rest of his life (6).

In New Testament times Christian slave-owners had to treat their slaves well (Ephesians 6:9). It was through the efforts of William Wilberforce and other Christians that slavery was abolished in Britain and its colonies. The apostle Paul often referred to himself as ‘*a servant*’ (Greek ‘*doulos*’ = ‘a slave’) of *Jesus Christ* (eg. Romans 1:1). **The Lord Jesus took the form of a slave (‘*doulos*’ – **Philippians 2:7**) and died in order to save us. Do you really love him and deny yourself to follow him?** Can you say and really mean the words, ‘*I love my Master ... I will not go out free*’?

*I love, I love my Master,
I will not go out free,
For he is my Redeemer;
He paid the price for me.
I would not leave his service,
It is so sweet and blest;
And in the weariest moments
He gives the truest rest.*

(F.R. Havergal)

That his fear may be before you

Mount Sinai was an awesome sight when God spoke to Moses and the Israelites. They had earlier stood at the foot of the mount (19:17), but they now stood at a distance and again trembled when they witnessed the thundering, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet and the smoke (18). They were aware of the awesome power and holiness of God and of their own sinfulness and guilt before him. They were filled with fear and said to Moses, ‘*You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us lest we die*’ (19).

Moses said to the people, ‘*Do not fear, for God has come to test you, and that his fear may be before you, so that you may not sin*’ (20). Godly fear keeps us from sinning against the Lord and leads us worship him with awe, adoration and love. The fear of God also has an effect on the way we worship him. Yahweh told Moses to tell the people that they were not make gods of silver or gold to worship them in addition to him (23); this emphasised the importance of the first two commandments (3–4).

Their animal sacrifices were to be offered on altars built from the earth or made with stones that were uncut. There were to be no steps leading up to the altar lest the priest’s nakedness be exposed (22–26). They were to be modest in their approach to God and we too must look for simplicity in worship without the trappings of decorative splendour in our meeting places. **The Lord is majestic and awesome in his power. Let us worship him with simplicity, awe and wonder.**

*O how I fear thee, living God,
With deepest tenderest fears,
And worship thee with trembling hope
And penitential tears!*

*Yet I may love thee, too, O Lord,
Almighty as thou art,
For thou hast stooped to ask of me
The love of my poor heart.*

(F.W. Faber)

Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods

We read in Proverbs 25:25, ‘*As cold water to a weary soul, so is good news from a far country.*’ When Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, heard of the great exploits that God had done for his people, he came to *the mountain of God* (Mount Sinai – referred to as ‘*Horeb*’ in chapter 3:1), He brought with him Moses’ wife and two sons (1–6). It is apparent from these verses that they were not with Moses in Egypt during the plagues or at the time of the Passover. Moses was God’s appointed leader of Israel but his humility is seen in the respect that he showed to Jethro. Moses told Jethro of the mighty works of God in bringing judgment upon the Egyptians. He also described the hardship that the Israelites had suffered in their wilderness journey and told *how the LORD had delivered them* (8).

The priest of Midian did not belong to the covenant people of God, but he recognised the surpassing greatness of the Lord (Yahweh). He rejoiced in the Lord’s goodness to Israel and said, ‘*Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods*’ (11). The proud gods of the Egyptians had been humbled (Pharaoh was also revered as a god by his people). Jethro then offered sacrifices to the Lord and had a meal with Moses, Aaron and the elders of Israel (12).

Had the people of Israel spent more time in proclaiming the mighty acts of God which they had seen, they would have been a more contented people. If we spent more time speaking to each other and to non-Christians about the Lord, we would encourage others and we would also know greater blessing in our own lives.

Our country has sunk into much superstition and religious confusion. The people need to know the message of the gospel and *that the LORD is greater than all the gods*. God has called us *out of darkness into his marvellous light* to proclaim his praises (1 Peter 2:9). The Lord says, *Whoever offers praise glorifies me* (Psalm 50:23). *Therefore by him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name* (Hebrews 13:15).

Able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness

There were no written Scriptures at this time to give direction, though the Lord was soon to give Moses the Ten Commandments and many other laws. Moses spent long hours judging the people, seeking to resolve their problems and their disputes (13–16). Jethro was able to see what his son-in-law failed to see – that if he continued doing this, he would break down under the burden of it all. He told Moses, *‘The thing that you do is not good. Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself’* (17–18).

Jethro advised him to *‘select from all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness’* to judge the people and to share the burden with him. He would judge the difficult cases, while most of the problems could be resolved by those appointed to assist him (19–23). The priest of Midian was a wise and discerning man and Moses, for all his greatness was not too proud to learn, and he heeded Jethro’s advice (24–26). We must always be ready and willing to listen to advice and to take correction if we are to grow in the Christian life and be useful in serving the Lord.

Many churches struggle for lack of workers. There are Christians who are sound in the faith and with abilities that they should be using for the Lord, but they are too preoccupied with other things, apart from their necessary responsibilities. Let us be sure that we are honouring God by serving him, to help and encourage those who are wearing themselves out in the work of the Lord.

What kind of men does God need in his service? **The men God requires to serve as elders and deacons in our churches must have more than natural leadership or administrative abilities. They must be ‘able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness’** (21; cp. Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:1–13). Pray that God will raise up many such men in the church today.

*You shall not covet***(Additional reading:– 1 Timothy 6:6–11)**

The tenth commandment, *‘You shall not covet’* is concerned with the motives and attitudes within our own hearts. Covetousness (or wrong and selfish desire) leads to transgressing the other commandments. Achan coveted gold, silver and a beautiful garment, and became a thief (Joshua 7:21). David coveted another man’s wife and became an adulterer and a murderer (2 Samuel 11:1–4,15–17; 12:9). Absalom coveted his father’s throne and thus dishonoured him, a sin that led to his rebellion and death (2 Samuel 15:1–10; 18:15). There are many warnings in Scripture against covetousness which is described as *‘idolatry’* (Colossians 3:5). This idolatry causes us to violate the first commandment.

Persuasive advertisements on television, in magazines and social media encourage us to covet things that we do not really need when what we have is quite sufficient for us. Covetousness brings discontent and restlessness into our lives because material things cannot give lasting satisfaction. God has made us for himself, to worship, love and obey him, and this brings real contentment.

Paul warned that a covetous man must not be appointed as an elder or a deacon in a local church (1 Timothy 3:3,8). The desire for riches has ensnared and ruined many professing Christians (1 Timothy 6:9–10). Beware of the false teachers of the so-called ‘prosperity’ or ‘health and wealth’ gospel. They promise that if you give generously to God (in other words, to their organisation), God who is no man’s debtor, will reward you tenfold or more. Such evil people, who appear to be evangelical, deliberately encourage covetousness. They become rich at the expense of those whom they deceive.

Let us search our hearts and repent of any lurking covetous spirit within us. *Let your conduct be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have* (Hebrews 13:5) because *godliness with contentment is great gain* (1 Timothy 6:6).

*You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour***(Additional reading: James 3:1–12)**

God is absolutely just and he expects us to be fair and just. The ninth commandment was given to prevent injustice and falsehood: *'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.'* Witnesses in a law court must speak the truth. False witnesses were used to pervert justice when Naboth was wickedly condemned (1 Kings 21:1–16), and they were also used against the Lord Jesus (Matthew 26:57–61). *Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are his delight* (Proverbs 12:22).

The tongue is a part of the body which is very difficult to keep under control. *It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison* (James 3:8). We may avoid telling outright lies, but how we need to beware of gossip. Half-truths and rumour have caused great damage in many churches. Gossip tends to exaggerate 'the facts' as they are passed on. **We must not spread gossip nor even listen to it.** Why do many professing Christians enjoy gossip? Is it that it makes us feel so much better than the person of whom we are speaking? The Lord Jesus warned that we will be judged by our words (Matthew 12:36–37). If we have anything to say about another, we should first ask ourselves, 'Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it helpful? Is it kind?' *Let all bitterness ... and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be kind to one another* (Ephesians 4:31–32).

*If you your lips
Would keep from slips,
Of five things please beware —
Of whom you speak,
To whom you speak,
And when, and why, and where!*

(Matthew Mercer)

Prayer: *Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth;
Keep watch over the door of my lips.* (Psalm 141:3).

You shall be a special treasure to me above all people

In the third month after they left Egypt, the Israelites arrived at the Sinai desert and camped in front of the mountain (1–2). The return of Moses to Mount Sinai fulfilled the promise which God made to him when he met him there at the burning bush (3:12). John Currid writes, 'Now that Israel has arrived at Mount Sinai, God calls Moses on to the mountain in order to establish a covenant with the Hebrews. A covenant ... is a binding contract between God and man, one that God has initiated and administered. The treaty involves promises on God's part and obligations on man's part' (COMMENTARY ON EXODUS, Volume 2, page 12).

The Lord told Moses to remind the Israelites of his care for them. He had borne them *on 'eagles' wings* and had delivered them from the Egyptians. The eagle is gentle in caring for its young, but will fiercely retaliate against any who threaten them (3–4). The Lord is awesome in his power, but so tender in his care for us.

God message to Israel was, *'If you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people, for all the earth is mine. And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation'* (5–6). Their promise to obey God was short-lived, however (7–8). They should have been a shining light to the nations of the earth but they failed. The end result of repeated rebellion was the crucifixion of the Son of God (cp. Luke 13:34–35).

Peter takes up the words of verses 5 and 6 to remind us that we are a special people (1 Peter 2:9). Christian, just stop and think for a moment! You are God's *'special treasure'* purchased at tremendous cost. God loves you so much that he gave his beloved Son to die a dreadful death to save you from your sin. The Lord will never let you go and you are never out of his sight as he lovingly watches over you. **As God's special treasure we not only have great privileges, but also awesome responsibilities.** We are to be holy people who proclaim the praises of God to a dark and needy world.

Be ready

The Lord told Moses to sanctify (‘set apart’) the people for the next two days because on the third day, he would come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people (10–11). He commanded Moses to set boundary stones all around the side of the mountain which the people must not cross. Moses to warn the people, ‘*Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death*’ (12); this warning was repeated (21). The people were to *be ready* to meet Yahweh (11,15) and were to wash their clothes as a symbol of cleansing and also abstain from marital sexual relationships as a sign of separation to God (14–15).

On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning and a thick cloud over Mount Sinai and the loud sound of a trumpet; *so that all the people who were in the camp trembled* (16). *Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.* The Lord descended in fire, and smoke covered the mountain which greatly quaked (17–18). Moses spoke with God who answered him by voice and called him to the top of the mountain. The Lord told him to go down and again warn the people not to go on to the mountain, but he was to go up with Aaron (20, 24).

We have been brought into the new covenant in which we have access to God the Father through the Lord Jesus (Ephesians 2:18). We do not come to Mount Sinai to worship God, but to Mount Zion. *the city of the living God* (Hebrews 12:22). We worship with heavenly Jerusalem, with angels, and with God’s people of past ages who are now glorified (Hebrews 12:18–24). **This does not mean that we are permitted to come to worship God ill-prepared. He wants our best.** We should *be ready* for worship and dress appropriately. If we come to worship in a tired frame of mind because of avoidable late nights, we do not give God our best. Let us all seek to *serve (or worship) him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire* (Hebrews 12:28–29).

*You shall not steal***(Additional reading: Malachi 3:8–10)**

God commands, ‘*You shall not steal*’ (15). The thief has no right to steal what belongs to others. The Bible teaches that we are entitled to own private property provided that it has been lawfully gained by our own work, by gift or by inheritance. We must never allow wealth (mammon) to become a god in our lives; it is far better to be poor than to be a slave to material things (cp. Matthew 6:24; 19:21–22). Christian standards are very different from those of the world. The words of C.H. Spurgeon are so true, ‘If faith does not make a man honest, it is not an honest faith’ (quoted in THE COMPLETE GATHERED GOLD, page 315, by John Blanchard, published by Evangelical Press).

Eve was guilty of the sin of theft when she took the forbidden fruit in Eden (Genesis 3:6). The first recorded sin after Israel entered the promised land was that of theft (Joshua 7:21). Judas Iscariot was a thief (John 12:6) and those crucified with the Lord Jesus were robbers (Matthew 27:38,44). Kidnapping is the worst kind of theft, depriving a person of their freedom. In Israel it attracted the death penalty (21:16). Hostage-taking is a heinous crime in the sight of God. The law required a thief to pay back double the amount that was stolen (22:7). Zacchaeus paid back double this after his conversion (Luke 19:8).

Stealing was rife in New Testament times just as it is today. Paul wrote, ‘*Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labour, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need*’ (Ephesians 4:28). We may shun the more obvious forms of theft, but do we steal our employer’s time by wasting hours at work? Do we use his phone, his stationery or his computer for our own personal use and without his permission? **Perhaps for Christians, a common form of theft is that described in the book of Malachi (3:8–10) – the sin of robbing God by withholding tithes and offerings.** Dare we rob God of our money or time? ‘*You shall not steal.*’

*You shall not commit adultery***(Additional reading: 1 Corinthians 6:9–11,18–20)**

The seventh commandment, '*You shall not commit adultery.*' was given to preserve the sanctity of marriage. In marriage a man and a woman become '*one flesh*' (Matthew 19:3–6). It is a covenant between them and adultery violates the marriage covenant (Malachi 2:14–15). Marriage is used in the Bible to illustrate the covenant between God and his people. If we are unfaithful to God, we are guilty of spiritual adultery (cp. Ezekiel 16:31–32). There are repeated warnings against adultery in the New Testament (eg. 1 Corinthians 10:8; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3). All forms of sexual sin will be punished by God (1 Corinthians 6:9–10; Hebrews 13:4; Revelation 21:8).

We have seen a huge increase in sexual immorality in recent years. Propaganda put out on television, in newspapers and on social media would have us believe that extra-marital affairs are acceptable. **Christians must be different!** Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and we must honour God (1 Corinthians 6:18–20). Marriage vows are made before God and must be kept. The influence of the world has done much harm in the church. The sin of adultery has blighted the life of many Christians and destroyed their marriages. David's experience is a warning to us all (2 Samuel 11:1 to 12:15). We must not allow the world to influence us (Romans 12:1–2). When Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce Joseph, he said, '*How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*' (Genesis 39:9).

Sexual activity outside of marriage is called '*fornication*' in the Bible and is also forbidden (eg. 1 Corinthians 6:9). Let us be careful in our choice of reading matter and what we watch on television and social media. **Adultery begins in the heart and in the thoughts (Matthew 5:27–28).** We must beware of entertaining unholy fantasies in our hearts but think on things that are good and holy (Philippians 4:8). '*You shall not commit adultery..*'

The LORD your God, who brought you out of ... bondage

The Israelites were God's covenant people (19:5) and laws that they were to keep and the confirmation of the covenant are found in chapters 20 to 24. The Lord first gave the Ten Commandments (1–17). The first four of these commandments concern our relationship to God and the remaining six our relationship to other people. The Lord Jesus summed them up in the two greatest commandments: '*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength*' and '*You shall love your neighbour as yourself*' (Mark 12:29–31; cp. Deuteronomy 6:9, 10:12; Leviticus 19:18).

The Ten Commandments are binding on everyone and we should memorise them. How well do you know the Ten Commandments? You cannot keep them if you do not know them. Read through this chapter carefully and memorise these commandments as we think about them over the next few days.

The Lord Jesus did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it (Matthew 5:17–20). The law causes us to see our sinfulness and makes us realise that we fall short of God's holy standards (Romans 3:20,23). The law is vital in preparing a sinner to come to Christ (Galatians 3:24). Salvation is by grace and cannot be earned by law-keeping, but when a person becomes a Christian, the law of God is written in their heart (Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 10:16).

The Lord said to Israel, '*I am the LORD ('Yahweh') your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*' (2). **The Israelites owed it to God to love him and to obey him.** The Lord Jesus has brought us out of a bondage far worse than that of Egypt. We were once enslaved by sin and by Satan and we were released at great cost (John 8:34–36; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; Ephesians 2:1–3; 1 Peter 1:18–19). **We obey the Lord Jesus because we love him** (John 14:15). It is not legalism to obey God's law, it is not bondage to keep his commandments; it is life, liberty and peace!

*You shall have no other gods before me***(Additional reading: Joshua 24:13–28)**

The Lord Jesus said that the greatest commandment was, ‘*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength*’ (Mark 12:29–30). He was emphasising the importance of the first commandment, ‘*You shall have no other gods before me*’ (3). This does not mean that having additional gods is permitted as long as God is first. John Currid points out that the words ‘*before me*’ indicate ‘before my face/in front of me’ (STUDY COMMENTARY ON EXODUS, Volume 2, page 36).

The Israelites had seen the amazing power of Yahweh and the complete and utter worthlessness of the many Egyptian gods during the plagues visited upon Pharaoh and his people. They should have been convinced that Yahweh alone is worthy of our worship and love. They later solemnly promised that they would serve the Lord (Joshua 24:24), but they repeatedly broke this promise (eg. Judges 2:11–12; Jeremiah 2:11–13).

We tend to think of ‘*other gods*’ as pagan deities, idols of wood, stone or metal, but there are other gods for which we may live. In our materialistic society many people will go to great lengths to accumulate wealth and possessions. Jesus said, ‘*You cannot serve God and mammon*’ (‘riches’ – Matthew 6:24). God has made us for his own glory (cp. Romans 11:36; Revelation 4:11) and he expects us to glorify him in our lives (Matthew 5:16). If we keep the first commandment, it will follow that we will want to keep the other nine. We show our love for God by our obedience to him.

We may find ourselves building our lives around ‘gods’ of materialism and pleasure-seeking without realising just how much we are sinning. We often fail to keep the first commandment and need often to repent and seek God’s forgiveness. Let us be like Joshua who said, ‘*As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD*’ (Joshua 24:15).

*You shall not murder***Additional reading: 1 John 3:10–15)**

Human life is sacred because man is made in the image of God who commands ‘*You shall not murder*’ (13; Genesis 1:26–27; 9:6). Cain, the first murderer, asked God, ‘*Am I my brother’s keeper?*’ (Genesis 4:9). The sixth commandment shows that we are our brother’s keeper. Any person daring to murder another deserves to die. The death penalty is the only adequate punishment for murder (Genesis 9:6; Romans 13:4). Accidental killing (manslaughter) did not attract the death penalty but if deliberate carelessness caused loss of life, the crime was considered as murder (21:28–29). If this law were applied today, it would make killing through drunken or dangerous driving murder rather than manslaughter. We are our brother’s keeper!

The appalling effects of the teaching of evolution and secularism are only too apparent. If man is only an advanced animal, as many people would have us believe, his dignity is destroyed and life is considered a cheap thing – witness the increase in violence and murder in society and the practice of abortion. Those who claim that the death penalty for murder is a barbaric practice are often the very ones who vigorously support the killing of the unborn child through abortion. We live in a fallen world with topsy-turvy values.

The Lord Jesus took this commandment to a far deeper level. He taught that anger against a brother without cause will be counted as murder in the day of judgment (Matthew 5:22). Moreover, if we hate our brother, we are guilty of murder in our hearts (1 John 3:15; cp. Matthew 15:19). **We cannot be right with God if we hate our fellow-Christians and we must also have a practical love for other believers** (1 John 3:14–18; 4:20 to 5:1). Let us think seriously about the implications of this commandment. Are we harbouring hateful thoughts towards anyone, believer or unbeliever? — ‘*You shall not murder.*’

*Honour your father and your mother***(Additional reading: Ephesians 6:1–4)**

The fifth commandment teaches that we must honour our parents: *'Honour your Father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you'* (12). The Israelites were promised blessing in Canaan if they obeyed this commandment. Children are commanded, *'Obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord'* (Colossians 3:20). The emphasis today is on children's 'rights', and parental 'rights' are often overlooked. The breakdown of family life in so much of our society, and the failure to discipline children, has led to chaotic and tragic consequences. At the other extreme there is bad parenting resulting in the abuse of children.

Parents must bring up their children *in the training and admonition of the Lord* (Ephesians 6:4; cp. Proverbs 1:8–9; 6:20–22). Fathers must seek to understand their children and not provoke them by making unreasonable demands upon them (Colossians 3:21).

How should young people behave after they become Christians when ungodly parents make demands which would cause them to disobey God? They must place obedience to God first and gently explain why they cannot obey such a demand. They should be thoughtful and kind; practical Christianity will do much to convince parents that their child is far better for becoming a Christian.

Though adults are under no obligation to obey their parents and have their own lives to lead, they must continue to honour them. Joseph became great in Egypt, but he bowed down and honoured his aged father (Genesis 48:12). The sinless Son of God obeyed his earthly parents and was practically concerned for his mother even as he hung on the cross (Luke 2:51; John 19:25–27). We are to care for the needs of our parents as far as we are able (1 Timothy 5:16). *'Honour your father and your mother'* (16). **If your parents are living, how are you honouring them?**

*You shall not make for yourself any carved image***(Additional reading: Psalm 115:1–11)**

The second commandment *'You shall not make for yourself any carved image'* (4), forbids the making and the worship of images. Pagan worshippers believe that the god represented by an image was brought nearer to them as they bowed down and performed their ritual before it. Israel soon fell into idolatry (cp. 32:1–8) and God is scathing in his condemnation of idol worship (Psalm 115:1–8; Isaiah 44:9–20). Idols are useless blocks of wood or stone which have speechless mouths, sightless eyes, deaf ears, unsmelling noses and unfeeling hands. The Lord is a jealous God who will not share his glory with images (4; Isaiah 40:18–20; Romans 1:21–23). He will surely punish idolaters, but will show mercy to those who keep his commandments (5–6).

This commandment condemns the veneration of statues, crucifixes and religious pictures. It is interesting to observe that Roman Catholic catechisms include this commandment with the first so that it loses its distinctiveness. They divide the tenth commandment into two separate commandments to make up the number. **God requires us to worship him with simplicity, and without man-made ritual or so-called 'aids to worship'**. *'God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth'* (John 4:24).

We must beware of using pictures of Christ in our books. Children are impressionable and will think of Christ as some well-meaning artist has imagined him to appear. All such attempts fall far short of his majesty and splendour. The Bible paints many 'word pictures' of the Lord Jesus which show his perfection and greatness; these are sufficient for us. When we see him in heaven, he will be far more wonderful than we could ever have imagined!

*The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne
And worship only thee.*

(William Cowper)

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain

(Additional reading: Malachi 1:6–14)

'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', The third commandment teaches us that we must always be careful to reverence the name of God, which reveals his holy character (cp. 3:13–15). The first petition of the Lord's Prayer is '*Hallowed be your name*' (Matthew 6:9). The third commandment can be broken in a number of ways:

- Many people use the name of God when they swear or curse. Such blasphemy violates this commandment and will not go unpunished. It is permissible to use God's name to confirm an oath (Deuteronomy 6:13; Matthew 26:63–64; 2 Corinthians 1:23; 11:31; Galatians 1:20). If we are not being truthful when we make such oaths, we take God's name in vain (Leviticus 19:12; Isaiah 48:1).
- The priests who offered blind and lame animal sacrifices and worshippers who brought such animals to be sacrificed broke this commandment by profaning God's name (Malachi 1:6–14).
- If we behave in a sinful manner, we blaspheme God's name (Amos 2:6–7; 1 Timothy 6:1).
- **It is all too easy to take God's name in vain when we worship or when we pray. We do this if we use his name thoughtlessly or lightly.** Some people keep repeating, 'Hallelujah' (which means 'Praise Jehovah') giving little thought to what they are saying. When we use God's name in speech or song, let us think before we open our mouths. Let us reverence his holy name and be thoughtful in our worship.

Does all this sound too restrictive? Let us remember the third commandment and take it seriously!

*My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread though all the earth abroad
The honours of thy Name.* (Charles Wesley)

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy

(Additional reading: Isaiah 58:13–14)

The fourth commandment beginning, '*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy*' is the longest of the Ten Commandments (8–11). There has been much controversy about this commandment to keep the Sabbath. Some believe that Christians are not bound by it and that observing Sunday as a Christian Sabbath is legalism. Is it any more legalistic than keeping the other commandments? The Lord Jesus never said that he had done away with the Sabbath. He said that '*the Sabbath was made for man*' (Mark 2:27), not only for the Jew. God blessed and sanctified (set apart) the seventh day at creation (11; Genesis 2:3). He expected the people to keep the Sabbath before he gave the law at Sinai (16:23–29).

The Sabbath was given for man's well-being and it prevented the exploitation of servants; even working animals were to have their day of rest (10; Deuteronomy 5:14). The scribes and Pharisees imposed many man-made rules for Sabbath observance and were in constant conflict with the Lord Jesus on this issue (eg. Mark 2:23 to 3:4). The early church kept the Sabbath on the first day of the week, when they met for worship and called it '*the Lord's Day*' (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Rev. 1:10). There were additional sabbaths under the old covenant for the various feast days which are not binding on Christians (Galatians 4:9–11; Colossians 2:16).

This commandment also legislated for six days of work each week. Many of us are not required to work a six-day week and we enjoy more free time than believers of past ages. Are we using this time wisely? Do we keep the Sabbath as God's '*holy day*' and call it '*a delight*' so that we will delight ourselves in the Lord (Isaiah 58:13–14)? **Let us use the Lord's Day to give ourselves to worship, praise, meditation and works of mercy?** Is the Lord's Day special to you? '*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*'