

Exodus - Chapter 20 Study Questions

1. **Exodus 20:1-23:33** Of the two law codes that stipulate the terms of the Sinai covenant, what does the Decalogue express and what is the Covenant Code?

Footnote p. 42, 20:1-23:33 Two law codes

Footnote p. 42, 20:1-17 The Decalogue or Ten Commandments

CCC 2071 (See p. 2)

2. **Exodus 20:4** What does the first commandment prohibit?

What does the coming of Jesus as the true “image” of God introduce?

What justifies making images of Jesus and of angels and saints?

Footnote p. 42, 20:2-6 The first commandment

Footnote p. 42, 20:4 Likeness of anything

CCC 2129-30 (See p. 2)

3. **Exodus 20:5-6** What does it mean to say that God is “jealous”?

How is his divine jealousy similar to jealousy in human relationships?

How is it unlike human jealousy?

Jealously ... Who sinned? (See p. 3)

4. **Exodus 20:8–11** What does the third commandment require and why is the day set apart?

What two factors underlie the shift from Saturday to the Lord’s day for Christians?

How far back can Sunday worship be traced?

Footnote p. 43, 20:9-11 The third commandment

5. **Exodus 20:8–11** Why should Sunday be considered the Lord’s day and not simply a day off work?

What do you do to honor the Lord’s day?

CCC 2176 (See p. 2)

6. **Exodus 20:12** Why does the fourth commandment come with a promise “that your days may be long in the land”? What personal benefits result from honoring one’s parents?

How do those benefits affect the rest of society?

Footnote p. 43, 20:12 The fourth commandment

Eph 6:1-3 (p.353) and Footnote 6:2 Honor your father and mother

7. **Exodus 20:13** What does the fifth commandment forbid?

How is that distinct from death that results from war, self-defense, or capital punishment?

Footnote p. 43, 20:13 The fifth commandment

8. **Exodus 20:18–20** How does the attitude of the Israelites toward God contrast with the modern cultural attitude toward him? What does “fear of the Lord” mean to you?

How should it affect the way you live your life?

Fr. Hugh Barbour: (See p. 2)

Note: Most questions come from the Ignatius Catholic Study Bible Exodus by Scott Hahn and Curtis Mitch. Ignatius Press. Page numbers in (p. xx) are from the Exodus booklet and page numbers in (NT p. xx) are from the New Testament Bible

CCC 2071 The commandments of the Decalogue, although accessible to reason alone, have been revealed. To attain a complete and certain understanding of the requirements of the natural law, sinful humanity needed this revelation: A full explanation of the commandments of the Decalogue became necessary in the state of sin because the light of reason was obscured and the will had gone astray. We know God's commandments through the divine revelation proposed to us in the Church, and through the voice of moral conscience.

CCC 2129 The divine injunction included the prohibition of every representation of God by the hand of man. *Deuteronomy* explains: "Since you saw no form on the day that the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a graven image for yourselves, in the form of any figure. . . ." It is the absolutely transcendent God who revealed himself to Israel. "He is the all," but at the same time "he is greater than all his works." He is "the author of beauty."

CCC 2130 Nevertheless, already in the Old Testament, God ordained or permitted the making of images that pointed symbolically toward salvation by the incarnate Word: so it was with the bronze serpent, the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim.

CCC 2176 The celebration of Sunday observes the moral commandment inscribed by nature in the human heart to render to God an outward, visible, public, and regular worship "as a sign of his universal beneficence to all." Sunday worship fulfills the moral command of the Old Covenant, taking up its rhythm and spirit in the weekly celebration of the Creator and Redeemer of his people.

Fr. Hugh Barbour: The gift of the fear of the Lord perfects our hope of remaining in God's grace and someday being with him in the happiness of heaven. This means that this fear is a fear caused by love. We fear to lose God by sin, since we love him, and we have a reverent fear and awe of him because he is so beautiful and great and powerful. This fear is called "filial" fear, because it like the fear of a child who is afraid to hurt the feelings of his father because of their mutual love. It is different from what is called "servile" fear, which is based on punishment, like the fear of a slave for his master.

Jealously ... Who sinned?

Anthropomorphism: is the attribution of human characteristics or behavior to non-human entities, including animals. Some people are more inclined to anthropomorphize than others, but it is a common way of perceiving and interacting with the world. (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/>)

Exodus 20:4-6 (Recorded early in Moses' ministry)

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Deuteronomy 24:16 (Recorded within Moses' lifetime)

Parents shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their parents; only for their own crimes may persons be put to death.

Jeremiah 31:29-30 (Approximately 600 BC)

In those days they shall no longer say: "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of everyone who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge.

Ezekiel 18:1-4 (Approximately 580 BC)

The word of the LORD came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

John 9:1-3 A Man Born Blind Receives Sight (Approximately 30 AD)

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "**Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?**" **Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned;** he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him.

Romans 2:6, 11-16 (NRSV) The Righteous Judgement of God (Approximately 55 AD)

When God's righteous judgment will be revealed. For he will repay according to each one's deeds. ... All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

James 4:5b"God yearns jealously for the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? (Approximately 65 AD)

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