

# Temple Beth El Torah Study

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בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ  
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְעֲסוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה.

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav  
v'tzivanu laasok b'divrei Torah*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to engage with words of Torah.

## **Exodus 20:1-14**

(1) God spoke all these words, saying: (2) I the LORD am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage: (3) You shall have no other gods besides Me. (4) You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image, or any likeness of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. (5) You shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I the LORD your God am an impassioned God, visiting the guilt of the parents upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generations of those who reject Me, (6) but showing kindness to the thousandth generation of those who love Me and keep My commandments. (7) You shall not swear falsely by the name of the LORD your God; for the LORD will not clear one who swears falsely by His name. (8) Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. (9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work, (10) but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God: you shall not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, or your cattle, or the stranger who is within your settlements. (11) For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it. (12) Honor your father and your mother, that you may long endure on the land that the LORD your God is assigning to you. (13) You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (14) You shall not covet your neighbor's house: you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female slave, or his ox or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.

לֹא תִרְצַח

You shall not murder

לֹא תִנְאֵף

You shall not commit adultery

לֹא תִגְנוֹב

You shall not steal

לֹא תִעֲנֶה בְרֵעֲךָ עֵד שָׁקֵר

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor

לֹא תִחְמֹד

You shall not covet

אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ

I am Adonai your God

לֹא־יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל־פְּנֵי

You shall have no other gods before Me

לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוֹא

You shall not take Adonai's Name in vain

זְכוֹר אֶת־יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy

כְּבֹד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמְךָ

Honor your father and your mother

### **Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 20:14:1**

How were the Ten Commandments given? Five on one tablet and five on the other.

It is written:

"I am the Lord your God," and opposite it, "You shall not murder." [By this] Scripture indicates that anyone who spills blood is considered as if he diminished the image of the king. An analogy: A king of flesh and blood enters a city, sets up statues of himself, makes images of himself, and mints coins for himself [with his likeness]. After some time, they overturned his statues, smashed his images, annulled the value of his coins, and [thus] diminished the image of the king.

So too, anyone who spills blood is considered as if he diminished the image of the King, as it is stated, "One who spills the blood of man by man shall his blood be spilled, for He made man in the image of God" (Gen 9:6).

It is written:

"You shall not have [other gods besides Me]," and opposite it, "You shall not commit adultery." Scripture indicates that anyone who commits idolatry is considered as if he committed adultery in relation to the Present One....

לֹא תִרְצַח

You shall not murder

לֹא תִנְאַף

You shall not commit adultery

לֹא תִגְנוֹב

You shall not steal

לֹא תִעֲנֶה בְרַעַף עַד שֶׁקֶר

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor

לֹא תִחְמֹד

You shall not covet

אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ

I am Adonai your God

לֹא־יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל־פְּנֵי

You shall have no other gods before Me

לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוֹא

You shall not take Adonai's Name in vain

זְכוֹר אֶת־יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy

כְּבֹד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמְךָ

Honor your father and your mother

It is written:

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain," and opposite it, "You shall not steal." Scripture indicates that anyone who steals will end up swearing in vain [by denying on oath that he stole]....

It is written:

"Remember the Sabbath day to make it holy," and opposite it, "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor." Scripture indicates that anyone who desecrates Shabbat testifies against He Who Spoke and the World Came to Be that He did not create His world in six days and did not rest on the seventh, as it is stated, "You are My witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God."

לֹא תִרְצַח

You shall not murder

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You shall not covet

אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ

I am Adonai your God

לֹא־יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל־פְּנֵי

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Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy

כְּבֹד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמְךָ

Honor your father and your mother

## **Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 20:2:1**

"I am the Lord your God": Why were the Ten Commandments not stated at the beginning of the Torah? They [the Rabbis] made an analogy: what is this like? It's like someone who entered a city and said to them, "I will be your king!" They replied, "Have you done anything for us that you should be our king?" So what did he do? He built them a city wall; brought in water for them; fought their wars. Then he said to them, "I will be your king!" They replied, "Yes, yes!"

So too the Present One took Israel out of Egypt, split the sea for them, brought down manna for them, raised up the well for them, gathered in quail for them, fought the war against Amalek for them. Then He said to them: "I will be your King!" They replied, "Yes, yes!"

It is written:

"Honor your father and your mother" and, opposite it, "You shall not covet." Scripture indicates that anyone who covets [his neighbor's wife] will end up having a son who curses his father and his mother, and honors one who is not his father.

For this reason the Ten Commandments were given five on one tablet and five on the other. These are the words of Rabbi Hanina ben Gamliel. But the Sages say: Ten on one tablet and ten on the other, as it is stated, "The Lord spoke these words...and He wrote them on two tablets of stone" (Deut 5:19). And it says, "Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle" (Song of Songs 4:5)....

Rabbi [Yehudah HaNasi] says: To make known the praise of Israel: when they all stood at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, all their hearts were together as one to accept the kingdom of heaven with joy. And not only this, but they all made themselves responsible for one another [that everyone would keep the commandments]. And not only regarding things publicly known did the Holy One, who is blessed, reveal Himself to them in order to form a covenant with them, but even regarding things done in secret, as it is written, "The secret things are for the Lord our God [to punish], as well as what is known to us and to our children forever" (Deut 29:28). They replied to Him: Regarding what is publicly known we will form a covenant with you, but not regarding the secret things, so that one person not sin in secret and the whole community be held responsible.

## **Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 20:1:1**

"All [these words]":

In one utterance, something impossible for flesh and blood to do likewise, as it is stated, "And *God* spoke all these words, saying."

If so, why does the Torah [go on to] say, "I am the Lord your God...", "You shall not have...", etc.? It teaches that the Holy One, who is blessed, said the Ten Commandments in one utterance, then went back and specified each commandment by itself.

I might then conclude that so too the other commandments in the Torah were all stated in one utterance. The Torah says, "All of *these* words"-- these were said in one utterance, but all the other commandments [were given] each one by itself.

## **Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 20:1:2**

"Saying":

They would say "yes" to a positive commandment, and "no" to a negative commandment. These are the words of Rabbi Yishmael.

R. Akiva says: "yes" to a positive commandment, and "yes" to a negative commandment.

Another interpretation. "Saying":

Go and tell them [my commandments] and bring back to me their reply. And from where do we know that he brought back their reply to the Mighty One? As it is stated, "And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord" (Exod 19:8). And from where do we know that the Present One approved of their words? As it is stated, "They have spoken well" (Deut 18:17).

## **Makkot 23b:18**

Rabbi Simlai taught: 613 commandments were said to Moses, 365 negative commands corresponding to the number of days in the year, and 248 positive commands corresponding to the number of parts in a person's body.

Rav Hamnuna said: What verse [shows this]? "Moses charged us with a Torah, an inheritance [of the congregation of Jacob]" (Deut 33:4). The numerical value of "Torah" is 611! "I am" and "You shall not have"--we heard them from the mouth of the Mighty One.

## **Ramban on Exodus 25:1:1**

When Hashem ["the Name"] spoke the Ten Commandments face to face with Israel, and charged them, through Moses, with a few commandments which are like major categories for the Torah's commandments--just as our Rabbis [in the Talmud] acted with strangers who came to convert to Judaism--then Israel accepted upon themselves to do whatever [else] He would command them through Moses, and He formed a covenant with them on the basis of all this.



Ten Commandments for Pupils of Roxbury Hebrew School, 1923

From the collection of the National Library of Israel

## TEN COMMANDMENTS

For Pupils of Roxbury Hebrew School

Do not forget to come on time.

Report to the office when late.

Form a line upon entering the school.

Each should keep clothes and books clean.

In room put clothes on the hangers.

No eating or chewing allowed in school.

Bring no playtoys to school.

Every pupil must obey the teacher.

Remember, stop noise in school yard.

Go straight home after school.

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The New Ten Commandments

From the collection of The National Library of Israel

*Translation:*

**To Add to the Festival of the Giving of our Torah**

**Ronit's Dream**

You shall not murder/ Plan for reducing the deer population of deer

You shall not destroy/ Football fields, wild fans

You shall not throw/ Hot-blooded spectators, football referees

You shall not covet/ Nest thieves

You shall not annihilate/ Fishing with explosives

You shall not trample/ Trampling tourists

You shall not litter/ Park litterers

You shall not run over/ Dangerous drivers

# Proud Atheist



Reason not Superstition  
Ethics not Dogma  
Respect not Worship  
Courage not Fear  
Fact not Myth  
Morality not Doctrine  
Clarity not Delusion  
Skeptic not Cynic  
Pragmatism not Ideology  
Good not God