

Second, God wrote the Ten Commandments on stone tablets for the people of Israel.

Read about God giving the Ten Commandments to Israel in **Exodus 20:1–17**; **Deuteronomy 5:6–21**; and **Exodus 34:1, 27–28**.

Note: There are different ways of numbering the Ten Commandments. The Bible does not give us numbers for individual commands.

There are other laws in the Old Testament that governed the affairs of state or pertained to the particular forms of religion and liturgy given specifically to Israel. Christians have often distinguished three types of laws in the Old Testament: the moral law, which tells all people their duty toward God and others; the ceremonial law, which regulated the religious practices of Israel; and the political law, which was the “state law” of the Israelites. Only the moral law was and is written on the human heart and continues to apply to all people. People are confused by the Bible and even misuse it when they fail to realize that the Old Testament ceremonies and ceremonial law (which applied to Israel and can be hard to comprehend) do *not* apply to Christians, or anyone else, since Christ’s death and resurrection.

Third, God also gave these instructions in various ways throughout the Bible (for example, **Exodus 22:21–28**; **Micah 6:8**; **Matthew 5:21–48**; **Romans 12–13**; **Galatians 5:16–25**).

18. How does God use the Ten Commandments in our lives and the lives of others in this world?

God uses His Commandments (the Law) in three ways. We call these the three uses of the Law.

First, for the good of His creation, God uses the Law to limit or prevent coarse outbursts of sin, thereby helping to keep order in the world (a *curb*).

- 41 **1 Timothy 1:9–10** The law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually

immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine.

Second, He uses the Law to reveal and condemn our sin (a *mirror*).

- 42 **Romans 3:20** For by works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

- 43 **Romans 7:7** What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

- 44 **1 John 1:10** If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

Third, He uses the Law to guide and direct our thoughts, words, and deeds as Christians in God-pleasing ways (a *guide*).

- 45 **Psalms 119:105** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

- 46 **Proverbs 6:23** For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life.

19. Why is the second use of the Law so important?

It shows that we all have sinned and cannot keep God’s commandments, and so it makes known our need for the Gospel of Christ, who is the fulfillment of the Law. The Law always accuses.

- 47 **Romans 3:21** But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it.

- 48 **Romans 10:4** For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- 49 **Galatians 3:13–14** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the

Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

20. *What is sin?*

Sin is humanity's fallen condition. We are turned away from God and are unable to look to Him for security, meaning, and righteousness. This inner sinful condition results in actual sins of thought, desire, word, or deed that are contrary to God's will as summarized in the Ten Commandments.

50 **1 John 3:4** Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.

Note: Other names for sin as condition or action are debt (**Matthew 6:12**), disobedience (**Romans 5:19**), fault (**Matthew 18:15**), iniquity (**Psalms 38:18**), lawlessness (**1 John 3:4**), rebellion (**Deuteronomy 13:5**), transgression (**Psalms 32:5**), trespass (**Romans 5:17**), unbelief (**John 3:18**), wickedness (**Genesis 39:9**), and wrongs (**Colossians 3:25**).

21. *How did sin enter God's good creation?*

The devil brought sin into the world by tempting Adam and Eve, who willingly yielded to the temptation.

Read **Genesis 3:1-6**, about the fall into sin of our first parents.

51 **1 John 3:8** Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

52 **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.

22. *How did Adam and Eve's disobedience affect us?*

In Adam and Eve's sin, the entire human race also fell into sin. We call this original or inherited sin.

53 **Psalms 51:5** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.