

Q. 100: What special things are we to consider in the ten commandments?

A: We are to consider, in the ten commandments, **the preface**, the **substance of** the commandments themselves, and **several reasons annexed** to some of them, the more to enforce them.

Q 101: What is the preface to the ten commandments?

A: The preface to the ten commandments is contained in these words, ***I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*** Wherein God manifests his **sovereignty**, as being **Jehovah**, the eternal, immutable, and almighty God; having his being in and of himself, and giving being to all his words and works: and that he is a **God in covenant**, as with Israel of old, so with all his people; who, as he brought them out of their bondage in Egypt, so he delivers us from our **spiritual thralldom**; and that therefore we are bound to take him for our God alone, and to keep all his commandments.¹

1. Why is the preface to the Ten Commandments important?

it lays the foundation for moral responsibility in the two facts of

- (a) God's **absolute sovereignty**;
- (b) God's **work of redemption**.²

2. What is meant by the sovereignty of God?

The **absolute, supreme, and unchallengeable** authority and dominion of God over the entire universe.

3. What is the origin of the name *Jehovah*?

This is based on the consonants **JHVH** or **YHWH**. The Jews considered the divine name too sacred even to be pronounced; so in reading, whenever they came to it they substituted another word, **Adonai**, meaning "Lord." Then when the vowel "points" were added to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the vowels of "Adonai" were inserted with the consonants JHVH, resulting in a hybrid word which is commonly pronounced "**Jehovah**" in English and European languages.³

4. What is the meaning of the name *Jehovah*?

¹ Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:6; Isa 44:6; Exod. 3:14; Exod. 6:3; Acts 17:24,28; Gen. 17:7 (cf. Rom 3:29); Luke 1:74-75; 1 Pet. 1:15-18; Lev. 18:30; 19:37.

² Johannes Geerhardus Vos. Westminster Larger Catechism: A Commentary (Kindle Locations 3418-3419). Kindle Edition.

³ Ibid., Kindle Locations 3436-3438. There is debate as to the correct pronunciation of this name. See, for instance, Dr. Thomas M. Strouse's work, "Who is this Deity named Yahweh." <http://www.geocentricity.com/bible/whoisyahweh.pdf> (October 2011.)

The key to its basic meaning is found in Exodus 3:14-15 and Exodus 33:15. God said to Moses, "**I AM THAT I AM**," and instructed Moses to tell the people of Israel, "**I AM** hath sent me unto you." In the next verse (Exod. 3:15) the verb "I AM" is changed to the third person, meaning "**HE IS**," written by the Hebrew letters JHVH, and translated "LORD" in the Authorized Version.⁴

This name states that God is **sovereign** and **self-determined**, not limited or influenced by anything outside of himself. Exodus 33:19 further explains the name as signifying God's sovereignty in bestowing salvation upon men.

5. Why does the preface to the ten commandments mention God's delivering Israel out of Egypt?

Salvation must come first.

6. Why did God refer to the land of Egypt as "the house of bondage"?

This statement causes us to realize that:

- a. As Christians, we have been **delivered** from bitter slavery
- b. That his deliverance was not our own achievement, but was accomplished by the sovereign, almighty **power of God**.

7. What two obligations does God's work of redemption place upon us?

- a. The obligation of **allegiance**
- b. The obligation of **obedience**

Q 102: What is the sum of the four commandments which contain our duty to God?

A: The sum of the four commandments containing our duty to God is, to love the Lord our God with all our **heart**, and with all our **soul**, and with all our **strength**, and with all our **mind**.

Q 103. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Q 104. What are the duties required in the first commandment?

A. The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and **acknowledging** of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to **worship** and **glorify** him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, desiring, rejoicing in him, being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with

⁴ Ibid., Kindle Locations 3440-3442.

the whole man; being careful in all things to **please** him, and **sorrowful** when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.⁵

1. What does it mean to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind?

All-inclusive practical **devotion** to God that leads us to honor and obey him in every element, sphere, and relationship of our life.

[H]e who loves God worships no rival, does not misrepresent and slander God with an idolatrous representation, does not resort to blasphemy or to word magic, thus taking His name in vain, and sanctifies time for the worship of God.⁶

The man who thinks he can carry on his business life, or his political life, or his social life, without God is to that extent an irreligious person. The teacher who thinks that his relation to God does not affect his teaching of chemistry, or his interpretation of European history, is to that extent an irreligious person. The consistent Christian will realize that his religion is the ruling principle of all his life, and that there is nothing in life which can be isolated from his relation to God.⁷

2. Why is the First Commandment placed first in the Ten Commandments?

This commandment is the **foundation** upon which the others depend.

3. Why are we obliged to acknowledge God as the true God, and our God?

He is the **Creator** and **Redeemer** of his people.

4. Shall we be dependent on God forever?

The relation between Creator and creature will remain forever. This distinction is the most **fundamental** distinction of the Bible.

5. How are we to express our dependence upon God?

⁵ Ibid., Kindle Locations 3459-3462. Luke 10:27; Exod. 20:3; Deut. 5:7; 1 Chron 28:9; Deut. 26:17; Isa 43:10; Jer. 14:22; Ps. 95:6-7; Matt 4:10; Ps 29:2; Mal 3:16; Eccl. 12:1; Ps 71:19; Mal. 1:6; Josh. 24:15,22; Deut. 6:5; Ps. 73:25; Isa. 8:13; Exod 14:3; Isa. 26:4; Ps 130:7; 37:4; 32:11; Phil. 4:6; Jer. 7:23; James 4:7; 1 John 3:22; Jer 31:18; Ps. 119:136; Mic 6:8.

⁶ "The New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31–37." *Reformation and Revival* 6 (1997): 83-84.

⁷ Vos. *WLC: A Commentary*. Kindle Locations 3475-3478.

- a. by a right **attitude** toward him;
- b. by right **thoughts** about him;
- c. by right **responses** to his revealed will, the Holy Bible.

6. What is a right attitude toward God?

A right attitude toward God is a **reverent** attitude, which realizes and acknowledges the relation between Creator and creature and the infinite **difference** and **distance** between the two, and which recognizes that God is an infinite being whom we will never comprehend, but who will always remain mysterious and wonderful to us.⁸

7. What do we mean by right thoughts concerning God?

Thoughts that are according to the **truth of his revelation** of himself in his Word. Thoughts about God which arise from the opinions, speculations, or philosophy of sin-darkened human minds cannot be right thoughts about God.

8. What do we mean by right responses to God's revealed will?

Conscientious and **whole-hearted** willing obedience to God's commands.

9. How may the duties required in the first commandment be summarized?

This commandment requires a devotion to God which shall be supreme, total, and all-inclusive; our relation to God is the **supreme** and **all-important** fact of our lives.

⁸ Vos. WLC: A Commentary. Kindle Locations 3486-3487.

Q. 101 Scripture References

- Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:6. The preface to the Ten Commandments.
- Isa. 44:6. The absolute sovereignty of God.
- Exod. 3:14. The self-existence of God.
- Exod. 6:3. The revelation of the name *Jehovah*.
- Acts 17:24,28. God the Creator and sustainer of all things.
- Gen. 17:7 compared with Rom. 3:29. God in covenant not only with Israel of old, but with believers from the Gentiles also.
- Luke 1:74-75. God redeems his people from spiritual bondage, as well as from human tyranny.
- 1 Peter 1:15-18; Lev. 18:30; 19:37. God's sovereignty and his work of redemption require us to render him total allegiance and absolute obedience.

Q. 104 Scripture References

- Luke 10:27. Christ's summary of the moral law, showing that love to God is the sum of the first four commandments.
- Exod. 20:3; Deut. 5:7. The first commandment.
- 1 Chron 28:9; Deut. 26:17; Isa 43:10; Jer. 14:22. Knowing and acknowledging God to be the only true God, and our God.
- Ps. 95:6-7; Matt. 4:10; Ps 29:2. Worshiping and glorifying God as the only true God, and our God.
- Mal. 3:16; Eccl. 12:1. We must think about God, and remember him.
- Isa 45:23. The Obligation to adore God.
- Josh. 24:15,22. The duty of choosing God as our God.
- Deut. 6:5; Ps 73:25; Isa. 8:13. We must love, desire, and fear God.
- Exod. 14:31. The duty of believing God.
- Isa 26:4; Ps. 130:7; 32:11. We must trust, hope, delight, and rejoice in God.
- Rom. 12:11 compared with Num. 25:11. The duty of being zealous for God.
- Phil. 4:6. We are to call upon God with thanksgiving.
- Jer. 7:23. The obligation of total obedience to God.
- James 4:7. The duty of submission to God.
- 1 John 3:22. We are to be careful to please God.
- Jer. 31:18; Ps 119:136. We are to be sad when we have offended God.
- Mic. 6:8. The duty of walking humble with God.