Exodus Chapter 20 Verses 1 – 2

* The following ***revelatory statements*** of God are known commonly as *The Ten Commandments*…but God didn’t called them that. To me, when I hear *“ten”* I’m **distracted.** Like why not 9? What’s number 11? But that was never God’s title for these words. The phrase the *“Ten Commandments”* only appears three times in the entirety of scripture…and when that phrase is seen in scripture, it is *man’s referral.* This is not simply *“God’s big ten.”* ***This is the moral law given by God from which flows all correct definition of right and wrong.*** (Broken into two (sometimes referred to as) *“tables.”* The first 4 dealing with our obligations to God and the remainder dealing with our obligations towards our fellow man).
* These laws were firmly in place before they were codified onto tablets and they remain firmly in place after they were fulfilled at the cross. All of these commandments are repeated in the New Testament (save the Sabbath which we will get to in future studies). Jesus even revealed the *spiritual depth* to the commandments during the Sermon on the Mount. ***This was the mirror that God gave to man to hold up to his face and see the shrapnel left from that fall.*** And God begins with His own broken heart…

Exodus Chapter 20 Verse 3

* ***Perhaps the most important, central, critical verse to be found in all of God’s Word.***  Eight words that truly cause the condemnation or salvation of all people. The decline and cyclical repetitive collapse of a person’s character and life…or the growth and cyclical ***increasing*** of character and ***life-profitability*** of a person. *Have no other Gods before Me.* Place nothing before God in your life. In fact, this actually means ***no other gods at all.*** Herein is the central diagnosis of too many trials and sufferings of mankind. Really it’s not even these whole 8 words…it’s just one. **No.**
* The word every human ear has to learn early…in the first years of life…and the one word every human *hates* to learn. But the issue really is that one word. ***Will you obey YOU or will you obey GOD.*** Take the *“no”* out and you are left with **the problem**, *“You shall have other gods before Me.”* It’s just simply “No.” When your heart pulls you towards foolishness of the flesh…will you agree with God and obey Him…will you use that word…, **“No.”**
* Why is this the one? Is it because the flesh is so strong? Maybe…although in honesty, for the Christian, *the flesh is weak.* I think it could be because when a man or a woman lives with no other god but God…their life will probably look like Jesus’. And there will come a cross…and fear *lies* and tells you that’s all there is. But the life that looks like Jesus’ has more than a cross…***there’s also a resurrection.***
* And yet that wasn’t the end of the Gospel…turn with me to Luke 24 Verses 44-53. After the resurrection, Jesus went to be with the Father. I think that’s grand. Because for you and for me, **this is the ultimate goal of it all**, ***the ultimate profit…that where He is, I may be also.*** Fellowship and relationship and that relationship being close…Psalm 16:11 says, *“You make known to me the path of life; in Your presence there is fullness of joy…”* Saturation, satiation, satisfaction…abundance of joy and the word for pleasures is simply ***sweetness…***
* All of this after you have left the world behind man…said ***no*** to the flesh for the final time…you (the flesh) are not who I am, you are not who I will be, you are not what controls me…you are not my master. **I serve Another**…and then there at the end of Luke, those that were a part of the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus…were themselves **filled with great joy, praising and blessing God.** That is as much a part of the Gospel as any other…that folks around you…if you choose to have no other god but God…***folks around you will be served as well.***
* Also, this commandment would have been extremely important for the Jews to hear because this points to God be it. NO other gods. God could have just sent the tenth plague. None of the others needed…but what were the first nine? That was for the people…to get Egypt out of the people…and show them that all of the Egyptian gods were false.

Exodus Chapter 20 Verse 4

* Why? Well ***what*** first. Does this mean that *every sculpture* is an abomination unto the Lord? You can take it there if you want, and many have…but in context with verse 5, I would submit to you that if the image would carry with it the temptation of worship, that would be the line not to cross. Well why?
* We are not to need the ***sight*** part of it all…we are to be filled with faith, trusting God not because of sight but because of faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, *“We walk by faith, not by sight.”* Moses would later say to the nation of Israel in Deuteronomy 4:12, *“The Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; you only heard a voice.”* And so we have this ***principle*** established which is seen in this command that ***the worship of God, the coming to God, the trusting of God is to be word-based and not sight-based.***
* It’s kind-of like this…someone tells you they are going to do something, ***something important***…and if they don’t do it then the result is devastating…but in order to achieve the desired outcome, not only do they need to do their part but you have to trust them…because if you don’t trust them then you’re going to go and try and do it yourself…but that’s impossible. So what do they do? **They give you their word.** Just like God has given and the command is, *“Trust Me.”* Don’t set up carved images…don’t look for the images at all…***take Me at My Word…***
* Now, something entirely interesting, somewhat shocking and certainly surprising if you don’t know this…the Catholic Bible and the Catholic church actually *deleted* this commandment all together. I know! **Shocking!** Go look it up! I was so surprised to learn this myself! What they’ve done is split the tenth commandment into two and *wholesale deleted* the second commandment all together! Why? *Do we really have to go there?*  The bowing to sacraments and praying to statues and sarcophaguses of the dead are taught in the Catholic catechism/religion…which the Bible strictly forbids…
* This is some dangerous territory by the way…because Jesus even addressed this issue when dealing with the Pharisees in Mark 7:7-9.

Exodus Chapter 20 Verses 5 – 6

* Now if anyone tells you that God holds a father’s sin against that father’s children then they do not know God. The words of focus should squarely be, ***“Of those who hate Me.”*** The concept and correct understanding is simply stated this way…**generations of rejecting truth will lead to generations of compounding error.** What’s striking to me is the word God uses…, *“visiting.”* If your father is a drunkard and you grow up to be a drunkard, that’s not God’s fault, it’s not your father’s fault…**it’s your fault.** Own it. But God still *visits* you there…comes to you there…grieving over your condition…calling you out of the darkness!
* Why? Because it is as He has said, **He is a jealous God.** Not jealous of you…there is no sin or wrong with God…but jealous **FOR** you. People trip over this attribute of God but let me tell you, ***if everything is God’s then it’s simply right for Him to desire everything be for Himself.*** Covetousness is when you want something that belongs to someone else *for yourself.* That’s **impossible** with God! And in fact, ***if God was not a jealous God then He Himself would be violating the first commandment!***
* Nothing to trip over here at all folks…God is jealous FOR you. Wanting the best for you. For you to **know** life and life abundant. For you to have knowledge of the truth and salvation from the power and penalty of sin…I am jealous for my children as well…wanting them as **I want them to be** so that they would be safe, filled with life and joy and ***free from the unnecessary sufferings and problems that come along with sin!***