

from
THE BOOK OF EXODUS IN THE BIBLE
about 900s B.C.

The Hebrews, a semi-nomadic people, were liberated from slavery in Egypt in about the 13th century B.C. When they settled at Mt. Sinai, the Hebrews set up a new code of law, based on their religion. This code was based on the Ten Commandments, which the Hebrews believed had been revealed by God to their leader Moses. The following passage, Chapter 20 from the Book of Exodus, includes the Ten Commandments.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY: Summarizing

What are some of the main laws of the Hebrews of Moses' time?

Chapter 20

- 1 And God spake all these words, saying,
- 2 I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
- 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;
- 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
- 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
- 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- 9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:
- 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates;

- 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.
- 12 ¶Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
- 13 Thou shalt not kill.
- 14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- 15 Thou shalt not steal.
- 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
- 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.
- 18 ¶And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.
- 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.
- 20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.
- 21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.
- 22 ¶And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.
- 23 Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.
- 24 ¶An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

Source: Excerpt from the King James version of the Bible.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY: ANSWER

Answers may include any of the following: Worship God only and no other gods; do not worship images of false idols; do not take God's name in vain; keep the Sabbath day holy; honor your parents; do not kill; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not lie; do not covet.