

# END-TIMES ISSUES



**#40** The God of the Ten Commandments

1

## BACKGROUND TO THE 10 COMMANDMENTS.

There is *one and only one* God, who created all things, and is superior to all other gods.

... **our God** is greater than all **other gods**. ... Not even the highest heavens can contain him!

2 Chronicles 2:5b, 6b (NLT)

- All other gods are either *created* beings or human imaginations.
  - ✓ In some passages, the word "god" may refer to *any* heavenly being (good or bad); but usually, the focus is on *evil* spirit beings – enemies of God, of humans, and of all that is truly good.
  - ✓ In the **Old Testament**, they are normally called "gods."

Do not follow **other gods**, the **gods of the peoples around you**.

Deuteronomy 6:14 (BSB)

(The people might use an **idol** to *represent* their god.  
OR: They may consider it to be the *residence* of their god.)

2

- ✓ In the **New Testament**, these gods are called demons, powers of darkness, etc.
 

The **god** of this age ...

2 Corinthians 4:4a (BSB)

... the sacrifices of pagans are offered to **demons**, not to **God**.

1 Corinthians 10:20b (BSB)

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers**, against the **authorities**, against the **powers of this world's darkness**, and against the **spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:12 (BSB)
- ✓ Christ has had victory over all of them; and they will one day bow down before God!
 

And having disarmed the **powers and authorities**, **[Christ]** made a public spectacle of them, **triumphing over them by the cross**.

Colossians 2:15 (BSB)

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- ✓ All creation – good and evil, including all the heavenly beings – will someday bow in worship of the *one-and-only* God who created all things.
 

"Let all **God's angels** **worship** him."

Hebrews 1:6b (NIV)

You alone are **the LORD**. **You created** the heavens, the highest heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. **You give life** to all things, and the **host of heaven worships You**.

Nehemiah 9:6 (BSB)

"Who will not fear You, **O Lord**, and glorify **Your name**? For **You** alone are holy. **All nations** will come and **worship** before **You**, for **Your** righteous acts have been revealed."

Revelation 15:4 (BSB)

**The LORD** reigns, ... **Worship** Him, all you **gods**!

Psalms 97:1a, 7b (BSB)

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## THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD:

### WHAT IS THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THIS GOD WHO CREATED THEM?

⇒ A look at **HISTORY**: An ongoing theme of **rebellion**.

History repeats itself. Sinful humans, *by nature*, want to **unite in rebellion** against God. Each time, *this eventually results in an all-encompassing judgment* by God.

Nature of the rebellion.	Result of the rebellion.
<b>Adam and Eve</b> choose to follow the leading of the Serpent.	⇒ <b>Cast out</b> of the garden; spiritual <b>death</b> ; physical <b>death</b> later; etc.
The <b>offspring of Adam and Eve</b> became 100% wicked and violent, except for Noah (and perhaps some of his family).	⇒ All but Noah and his family are <b>destroyed by a global flood</b> .
(The <b>offspring of Noah</b> unite in rebellion ...)	⇒ <b>Languages confused</b> ; people <b>scattered</b> . (See next page.)

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⇒ A look at **TODAY**: *Continuing* an ongoing theme of rebellion.

The *human* desire is to *continue* this trend.

**God** has forced a restraint upon the human race; but this restraint is diminishing, as the world becomes more "globalized."

The **offspring of Noah** AT BABEL: united in rebellion against God; they choose to make their own "name" (significance).

① **Languages confused**; can't work together; **scattered** across the earth; ② **God will make himself a new nation**, through which he will accomplish his purposes (= Israel).

The **offspring of Noah** TODAY... ⇒ [Future judgment.]

This language barrier and scattering was the only alternative to completely destroying them (as God did during the Flood). So far, it has prevented another **united** worldwide rebellion. Today, there is much effort being put forth to overcome this barrier, and to reunite in another rebellion, that will result in another judgment.

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⇒ More details about the rebellion *after* Babel.

① Concerning the nations scattered around the world (NOT Israel): Scripture describes them as *all* following their own (created) gods.

- **Old Testament era:** They followed their gods. Some *individuals* chose to follow the God of Israel.
- **New Testament era:** They continue to follow their gods. But a greater number of *individuals* are saved.
- **Since then:** In general, they have continued to follow their own gods.
  - **Down through the centuries:** Because of saved *individuals*, many nations have been *influenced* by Christianity. Some have even claimed to be "Christian nations" – though none have ever been *fully consistent* with Scripture.
  - **Today:** Even those nations that have been "Christian" for the longest time are reverting to their old ways – and rejecting every vestige of God and his Word.

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② What about Israel?

God's intention was to create a new nation, through whom he would accomplish his purposes. He started this with one man who trusted him: Abraham.

- **Old Testament era :** Sometimes, the nation of Israel would follow the God of the Bible. But the greater tendency has always been to abandon the God who created all things, and to pursue the created gods of the nations.
- **New Testament era :** The majority of Jews had abandoned the God of the Bible, replacing *his* Word with *their own* opinions and traditions. So they quite naturally rejected the Messiah (Jesus) that God sent to heal the nation (and ultimately, to heal *all* nations). Still, *individuals* were saved.
- **Today:** In the first century, the nation was destroyed. In 1948, it came back into existence. The nation continues to live in rebellion against God; but many Jews (as *individuals*) are being saved.

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③ God's "final goal" will affect the nations *and* Israel.

THE GOAL: To bring all things under his rule; the final judgment; the new heaven and new earth; etc.

- **All will know him:** After everything has been fulfilled, and Jesus has returned, all the nations of the earth will recognize the God who created them.

For the earth will be filled with the **knowledge of the glory of the LORD** as the waters cover the sea.

Habakkuk 2:14 (BSB)

Remember the New Covenant focus:

The current emphasis is on saved *individuals* living in a corrupt world. Any reference to *nations* being fully devoted to the Creator God are "future tense" – prophetic in nature.

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- **All will worship him, and will reject all other gods:** They will abandon all their created gods, and will worship the God who created them.

Then **the nations** of every shore will bow in **worship** to Him, each in its own place.

Zephaniah 2:11b (BSB)

All **the nations** you have made will come and **worship** before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name.

Psalms 86:9 (NIV)

"Great and wonderful are Your works, O Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of **the nations**! Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy.

**All nations** will come and **worship** before You, for Your righteous acts have been revealed."

Revelation 15:3-4 (BSB)

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Some Scripture passages that focus on these issues.

- **ISRAEL – knowing the Creator God, and possessing his Word – the *only* means by which we can be saved.**

For great is **the LORD**, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above **all gods**. For **all the gods** of the nations are **idols**, but it is **the LORD** who made the heavens.

Psalms 96:4-5 (BSB); also in 1 Chronicles 16:25-26.

**He has revealed his word to Jacob,** his laws and decrees to Israel.

**He has done this for no other nation;** they do not know his laws.

Psalms 147:19-20a (NIV)

**JESUS SAID:** ... salvation is from the Jews. John 4:22b (BSB)

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- **ISRAEL – special, above all other nations.** What God did for Israel is unprecedented in all of human history.

Ask now about the former days, long before your time, from the day God created human beings on the earth; ask from one end of the heavens to the other.

Has anything so great as this ever happened, or has anything like it ever been heard of?

Has any other people heard the voice of God speaking out of fire, as you have, and lived?

Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

Deuteronomy 4:32-34 (NIV)

**CONTINUED**

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**You were shown these things so that you might know that the Lord is God; besides him there is no other.**

From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, and you heard his words from out of the fire.

Because he loved your ancestors and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt by his Presence and his great strength, to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you into their land to give it to you for your inheritance, as it is today.

**Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.**

Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the Lord your God gives you for all time.

Deuteronomy 4:35-40 (NIV)

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• ISRAEL – the "chosen nation."

**"You only have I chosen**  
of all the families of the earth ..."

Amos 3:2a (NIV)

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. **The LORD your God has chosen you** to be a people for His prized possession out of all peoples on the face of the earth.

... because the LORD loved you and kept the oath He swore to your fathers ...

Deuteronomy 7:6, 8a (BSB)

Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations **you will be my treasured possession**. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Exodus 19:5-6a (NIV)

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**[Today]** The Exodus 19 passage stated that "if" Israel obeyed, they would be God's treasured possession. As a *nation* under the **Old Covenant**, Israel failed to do this. Under the **New Covenant**, this promise remains, but only for saved individuals – Jews (Israelites), as well as Gentiles.

But you are a **chosen people**, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **God's special possession**, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

GENTILES INCLUDED!

... at that time you [Gentiles] were separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus **you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ**. For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has torn down the dividing wall of hostility ...

Ephesians 2:12b-14 (BSB)

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• **THE WORLD – God let them go their way.**

In past generations he allowed all the nations to **go their own way** ...

Acts 14:16 (CSB)

... all the peoples walk in the name of **their own gods**, ...

Micah 4:5a (CSB)

**[Today]** *In the past*, God let the nations go their way (i.e., there was no global judgment). But *now*, the day of global judgment has been set; and God is giving the people of the nations a *final opportunity* to get ready (i.e., to turn to Jesus for salvation).

"Therefore, although God has overlooked\* such times of ignorance, he now commands all people everywhere to repent, because **he has set a day on which he is going to judge the world** in righteousness, by a man whom he designated, having provided proof to everyone by raising him from the dead."

Acts 17:30-31 (NET)

\* [Or "has deliberately paid no attention to." (translator's note)]

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**[In the future]** The day is coming, when the nations will renounce their gods, and will come to the God who created all things!

[LORD], to you **the nations will come** from the ends of the earth and say,

"Our ancestors possessed nothing but **false gods, worthless idols** that did them no good.

Do people make **their own gods**?

Yes, but they are **not gods!**"

Jeremiah 16:19b-20 (NIV)

#### TRUE AND FALSE GODS

The term "false god" *doesn't* necessarily mean they *don't exist*. It means they are *not* the creator God, who we are to worship and serve.

In this sense, the creator God is "the **true God**"; and the others can be described as either "**false gods**" or "**not gods**."

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#### WHAT WE HAVE JUST SEEN IS THE CONTEXT THAT HELPS US TO UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FIRST WORDS GOD **SPOKE** TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.

• **YES, it was GOD who did the speaking.**

✓ The testimony of Exodus:

And **God spoke** all these words:

Exodus 20:1 (BSB)

✓ The testimony of Deuteronomy:

**The LORD spoke** with you face to face out of the fire on the mountain.

And He said: ...

Deuteronomy 5:4, 5b (BSB)

In Deuteronomy (written just as they were about to enter Canaan), Moses reminded the people about this event. Here, he includes details that were not mentioned in the Exodus account. →

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**The LORD spoke** these commandments **in a loud voice** to your whole assembly out of the fire, the cloud, and the deep darkness on the mountain; He added nothing more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

And when **you heard the voice** out of the darkness while the mountain was blazing with fire, all the heads of your tribes and your elders approached me, and you said, "Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and greatness, and we have **heard His voice** out of the fire. Today we have seen that a man can live even if **God speaks** with him. But now, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us, and we will die, if we hear **the voice of the LORD our God** any longer. For who of all flesh has heard **the voice of the living God speaking** out of the fire, as we have, and survived?"

Deuteronomy 5:22-26 (BSB)

The people were *terrified*, afraid that further interaction with God would cause them to die. So they asked Moses to be the one who would receive what God had to say, and then relay the information to them.

19

• **God's first words are the foundation for all of the Commandments.**

- ⇒ **They tell us who he is.** Without this foundation, the Ten Commandments are *meaningless*. They would have no authority, and would be no better than any supposed "good teachings" that a human (or a created god/demon) could invent.
- ⇒ **Because of this foundation**, these commandments are *binding* upon all people, everywhere and at all times. (People who do not have this law *still* have a form of it embedded within their hearts – Romans 2:14-15 – and that will be the basis of their judgment.)

★ **GOD'S FIRST WORDS – THE FOUNDATION.** ★

"I am **the LORD** your God, ..."

Exodus 20:2a; Deuteronomy 5:6a (BSB)

- ❖ This is the God who created all things on earth and in the heavens – not one of the created gods/demons that controls the nations.
- ❖ This God identifies himself by *name* (here, translated as "the LORD").

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**What is the *name* of God?**

- ⇒ Many translations use the word "LORD," based on how the Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek.
- ⇒ The actual Hebrew word is: יהוה – which, when transliterated into English, give us the four consonants: yhwh. (Old Testament Hebrew did not use vowels.)
- ⇒ Translations that use this Hebrew word (instead of the word "LORD") tend to use "Yahweh" (or sometimes "Jehovah").
- ⇒ The meaning of this name is a mystery. It seems to have something to do with God's *absolute self-existence and unchangeableness*. In this respect, he is totally unlike us, and beyond our comprehension (even though he has revealed himself, to a degree, in terms that we *can* understand).
- ⇒ Occasionally, the Old Testament uses a shortened form of the name: יה – pronounced as: *yāh*. This occurs in words, such as "Hallelujah," which means, "Praise Yah!" (or "Praise the LORD!").

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"I am the LORD  
your God, ..."  
Exodus 20:2a;  
Deuteronomy 5:6a  
(BSB)

"... who brought you out  
of the land of Egypt, out  
of the house of **slavery**."  
Exodus 20:2b; Deuteronomy  
5:6b (BSB)

In Israel's context,  
he could identify  
himself as the God...

As we examine Scripture further, we discover that this God has offered to bring us out of an *even greater slavery*:

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a **slave** to sin. ... if the Son sets you **free**, you will be **free** indeed.

John 8:34, 36 (NIV)

★ **BUT THERE IS ONE REQUIREMENT: THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.** ★

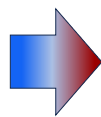
**Without this, we can *never* be free.**

**You shall have no other gods before Me.**

Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7 (BSB)

22

**OUR  
MISSION!**



**Get to know this  
UNCHANGING  
and  
SELF-EXISTING  
God!**

Based on the Bible – *his own self-description!*  
Not adding to it or subtracting from it.

**KNOWING + DOING!**

Be aware that truly "knowing" this God is *more than* just learning *facts* about him. It also includes *trusting* him, and learning to *live a life of trust*, based on those facts.

**Otherwise, you're  
no better off than  
the demons are!**

You believe that God is one. Good for you!  
Even **the demons believe** that—and shudder.

James 2:19 (BSB)

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**Credits**

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