

Mosaic Covenant: Be Holy for I Am Holy

The Mosaic Covenant, also known as the Mosaic Law, can be viewed as having three sections: a) commandments that refer to moral laws (personal holiness), b) judgments that refer to social laws, and c) ordinances that refer to the Tabernacle and worship laws.

It is important to note that the Law of Moses is singular and refers to all 613 laws as one unit. Breaking just one of 613 laws was the same as breaking the **whole** Law.

The Mosaic Covenant was conditional - it promised blessing for obedience and curse for disobedience. All 613 commands (365 negative and 248 positive), elaborated on the Ten Commandments and directed how the Israelites were to live for the purpose of being holy, pleasing, and enjoying God's favor.

Exodus focuses on building the Tabernacle, a sanctuary where God may dwell among His people.

Leviticus focuses on the first 4 Commandments:

- 1) You shall have no other gods before me.
- 2) You shall not make yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God.
- 3) You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.
- 4) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Deuteronomy focuses on the other 6 Commandments:

- 5) Honor your father and your mother.
- 6) You shall not murder.
- 7) You shall not commit adultery.
- 8) You shall not steal.
- 9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- 10) You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

1. What does the apostle Paul teach us about the Mosaic Law?

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." (Rom 7:7, NASB)

2. Sin is often understood as evil behavior; however, it is more than that and it begins with one's personal desires. Examine the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, and identify the desire behind each command.

Decalogue	Desire
1) You shall have no other gods before me.	
2) You shall not make yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God.	
3) You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.	
4) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.	
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9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.	
10) You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or anything that belongs to your neighbor.	

3. Through moral and social laws, God taught what sin was and how to atone for it. With this legal framework, what does this reveal about God?

4. Another way of understanding God's statement, "be holy for I am holy," is "be set apart for I am set apart." Set apart for what?

Mosaic Covenant: Be Holy for I Am Holy Teacher Notes

The Mosaic Covenant is perhaps the most misunderstood divine covenant and is often dismissed. Take the time to inform the student and have the student open his Bible to the books mentioned to help him remember how the Ten Commandments are explained in the Pentateuch.

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Ask the student: what would happen if your parents did not teach you what to do or not do? How would you know how to behave in society?

The apostle Paul informs us that the Mosaic Covenant teaches what right behavior is before God. We learn what sin is and how to apologize and seek forgiveness for it when we misbehave.

2. Sin is often understood as evil behavior; however, it is more than that and it begins with one's personal desires. Examine the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, and identify the desire behind each command.

Help the student explore and discuss human desires and motives that God is trying to encourage or discourage. By gaining a sense of desire, the student may gain a glimpse into how one is a "slave to sin." With more thought over time, one may see the real benefit / blessing of God's commands and the meaning of "renewing your mind" (Rom 12:2)

Decalogue	Desire / Motive
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3. Through moral and social laws, God taught what sin was and how to atone for it. With this legal framework, what does this reveal about God?

By establishing a legal framework, the God of Israel reveals that He is not like capricious pagan gods; God defined sin and what constituted just punishment.

In defining how they could atone for their sins and reconcile with Him (Lev 17:11), the Israelites learned how to seek forgiveness (expiation), and appease God's wrath (propitiation) so that they may continue to receive the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant.

4. Another way of understanding God's statement, "be holy for I am holy," is "be set apart for I am set apart." Set apart for what?

The Mosaic Covenant's instruction on atonement revealed that sin could not come into God's presence. With this understanding, the apostle Peter indicates that all Believers are God's own royal priesthood.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:9-10)

Believers are set apart for God - as God's own possession, a chosen race, and a royal priesthood. As the people of God, Believers are also set apart, because they have received God's mercy and can proclaim the excellencies of salvation.