



February 7, 2026

Yitro

20 Shevat, 5786

The Ten Commandments: The Inside Story

The Ten Commandments were engraved on two tablets. The five commandments etched on the first tablet deal with man's relationship with G-d; the second tablet contains five commandments which concern man's relationship with his fellow man.

Of the 613 biblical commandments, G-d selected these ten commandments for special attention. He directly communicated them to the Jews without using Moses as an intermediary, and inscribed them on the tablets which were placed in the Holy Ark within the Holy of Holies. It is evident that although all the mitzvot are vital, the five carved into the first tablet were chosen because they form the basis of our relationship with the Creator, while the latter five serve as the foundation of our relationship with fellow people. The following is an attempt to delve briefly into the deeper meaning of the Ten Commandments.



First Tablet:

1. *I am the L-rd your G-d, who took you out of the land of Egypt:* It isn't beneath G-d—the almighty omnipotent G-d, before whom "all is considered like naught"—to personally interfere in the workings of this world, to liberate a persecuted nation from the hand of their oppressors. We can always trust that He is watching over us attentively and controlling all the events which affect our lives.
2. *You shall not have other gods in My presence:* G-d is the only one who controls all events and occurrences. No other entity—not your government, not your boss, not your spouse—can benefit or harm you, unless G-d has so decreed. Every one of us shares a special relationship with G-d, and no power can interfere with or disturb this relationship.
3. *You shall not take the name of the L-rd, your G-d, in vain:* The above-described relationship may indeed be intimate and personal, but you must never lose perspective—He's your Creator, not your buddy.
4. *Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it:* Maintaining this relationship with G-d requires effort on our part. All too often, we are so immersed in our daily routine that we forget that in actuality it is our connection with G-d which matters most. Therefore, G-d commanded us to allocate one day every week for "relationship maintenance." This is the Sabbath, a day to focus on the real priorities in life, and to draw inspiration for the following week.
5. *Honor your father and your mother:* Why is this commandment included in the "between man and Creator" tablet? Doesn't this command belong on the second tablet? Perhaps the lesson is that although we owe everything to G-d, we must not forget to express gratitude to those people whom G-d has empowered to help us in our journey through life. As the Talmud says: "The wine belongs to the host, but thanks is [also] said to the waiter."

Second Tablet:

Although most of the following prohibitions are admonitions against egregious sins which most of us wouldn't even consider committing, these prohibitions have subtle undertones which are applicable to every person.

1. *Do not murder:* Murder is a result of one person's deeming another person totally insignificant. In truth, every human was created by G-d in His holy image, and therefore has an innate right to exist. The first message we must internalize is the importance of respecting every individual. G-d thinks this person is important; so should you.
2. *Do not commit adultery:* Misguided love. Yes, we must be loving, kind and respectful to everyone, but love isn't a carte blanche which justifies all. There are guidelines which we must follow. Sometimes, faithful love—to a child, student, member of the opposite gender, etc.—entails being severe and abstaining from exhibiting love.
3. *Do not kidnap¹:* The essence of kidnapping is utilizing another for personal gain. Focus on being a real friend; don't be in the relationship only for your own benefit. Be there for your friend even when it is uncomfortable or inconvenient for you.

(continued on the other side)

4. *Do not bear false witness against your neighbor:* Every person is a judge. We are constantly observing our acquaintances and friends, judging their every word and action. We must be wary of a tendency to "bear false witness" in the process of issuing our personal verdict. We must always give the benefit of the doubt, taking into consideration various factors of which we may be unaware, ensuring that we don't reach an erroneous judgment.
5. *Do not covet your neighbor's possessions:* Be happy for your neighbor's good fortune! All the abovementioned exercises pale in comparison with this final message imparted by the Ten Commandments. After you've trained yourself to intellectually respect your fellows and consistently view them in a positive light, now it's time to get your heart involved. Love them. Be happy with their accomplishments. Share their sorrow during their difficult moments. Don't be afraid of getting emotionally involved—that's what family is all about!

1. Popularly translated as "Thou shall not steal," the sages explain that this prohibition is actually against kidnapping—as opposed to the prohibition against stealing, which is mentioned in Leviticus 19:11.

(by Rabbi Naftali Silberberg from www.chabad.org)



'The Rav's Friday Night Hashkafa Q&A Shiur for Men'

will take place **Friday night – February 20th**

at 8:30 p.m. and will be held at
the home of **Mr. Eli and Mrs. Yaffa Atias,**
at 2401 Hal Circle.

You are encouraged to attend, and to submit questions in advance to
rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com.

Kol Hanaarim – Tonight is the last Friday evening session of this winter season, and it will start at **7:45 p.m. in The Shul.** Cholent and pastries are served. This session will be 'topped off' at the end with a fascinating story by Rabbi Eli Itzkowitz. For any questions, please see Rabbi Itzkowitz.

Yahrzeits This Week:

Rabbi Gavriel Newman 25 Shevat - Wednesday night / Thursday for father Harav Yaakov Yisrael ben Zeev Yehuda

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 2/6 — 19 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Shabbat Candles — 5:15 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.

Shabbat, 2/7 — 20 Shevat

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:42 a.m.
Minchah — 5:05 p.m.
Shiur — after Minchah
Shkiah — 5:34 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 6:16 p.m.

Sunday, 2/8 — 21 Shevat

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:20 p.m.

Monday, 2/9 — 22 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:20 p.m.

Tuesday, 2/10 — 23 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:20 p.m.

Wednesday, 2/11 — 24 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:20 p.m.
Tanya Shiur: 2nd part of Tanya Shaar HaYichud
V'Emunah which deals w/the nature of creation
and the unity of Hashem — Cancelled this week.

Thursday, 2/12 — 25 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:20 p.m.

Friday, 2/13 — 26 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Shabbat Candles — 5:23 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:25 p.m.