

# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Rabbi Daniel Fine

## Commandment 1:



# Faith



### THE SOURCE:



*"I am the Lord, your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."*

אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹהֵי-יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר  
הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ  
מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים :

### IN A NUTSHELL:

The mitzvah to believe in Hashem's existence

### WHAT IS INCLUDED:

Deepening your belief in Hashem, that He made the world and took us out of Egypt.

This includes proving that Hashem exists too – whether the complexity of the biological world, or the miracles He has done to make the Jewish People survive

### SOMETHING TO DISCUSS (OR TO ASK THE RABBI ABOUT!):

- ☞ What difference does it make to my day-to-day life if I believe in Hashem?
- ☞ How can a person make their belief in Hashem better?
- ☞ What mini-miracles has Hashem done for me and my family?

Commandment 2:



# No Idolatry



THE SOURCE:

3. You shall not have the gods of others in My presence.

ג לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים  
על פני:

4. You shall not make for yourself a graven image or any likeness which is in the heavens above, which is on the earth below, or which is in the water beneath the earth.

ד לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה אשר בשמים ומעל ואשר בארץ מתחת ואשר במים ומתחת לארץ:

5. You shall neither prostrate yourself before them nor worship them, for I, the Lord, your God, am a zealous God, Who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me,

ה לא תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם כי אנכי ה' אלהיך קל קנא פקד עון אבות על בנים על שלשים ועל רבעים לשנאי:

6. and [I] perform loving kindness to thousands [of generations], to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments.

ו ועשה חסד לאלפים ולשמיני מצותי:

IN A NUTSHELL:

We are not allowed to own, make, or serve idols.

WHAT IS INCLUDED:

Any serving idols or their forms – even things similar to idols are included. The Gemara writes that anything that we are hugely drawn to, that takes us away from serving Hashem, is a small form of idolatry.

SOMETHING TO DISCUSS (OR TO ASK THE RABBI ABOUT!):

- ∞ If idolatry does not exist massively today, what is the idea behind this command?
- ∞ Name something in life that often distracts us from achieving what we need to achieve
- ∞ Why does the Torah refer to idols as *Elohim*?

**Commandment 3:**



# No Taking Hashem's Name in Vein



**THE SOURCE:**



7. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain, for the Lord will not hold blameless anyone who takes His name in vain.

א לא תשא את שם ה' אלהיך לשוא כי לא ינקה ה' את אשר ישא את שמו לשוא:

**IN A NUTSHELL:**



We are not allowed to use Hashem's Name when we make meaningless promises.

**WHAT IS INCLUDED:**



The Gemara writes that four types of oaths are included: making an oath on something obviously true or untrue (e.g. *I promise that this is a piece of paper, or I promise that this is not a piece of paper*), promising to do something impossible (e.g. *I promise not to sleep for three whole days*), or promising to sin.

Any time we mention Hashem's Name, we must do so with the appropriate respect and seriousness.

**SOMETHING TO DISCUSS (OR TO ASK THE RABBI ABOUT!):**



- ☞ When we say Hashem's Name in davening, what should we think about?
- ☞ When was the last time we genuinely paused to think before we said something?
- ☞ Can you name a time you said something you wished you had not said; how can you go about stopping that happening again?



Commandment 4:

# Remembering and Keeping the Shabbat



**THE SOURCE:**



8. Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it.

ח זְכוֹר אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ:

9. Six days may you work and perform all your labour,

ט שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל-מְלַאכְתֶּךָ:

10. but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord, your God; you shall perform no labour, neither you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your beast, nor your stranger who is in your cities.

י וַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַ-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי-לְאֵךְ תַּעֲשֶׂה כָּל-מְלַאכְתְּךָ אַתָּה | וּבִנְךָ וּבִתְּךָ עֲבָדְךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וּבְהֵמָתֶךָ וּגְרֶם אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

11. For [in] six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

יא כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת-יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֶת-הַיָּם וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-בָּם וַיִּנַּח בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עַל-כֵּן בֵּרַךְ ה' אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְּשֵׁהוּ:

**IN A NUTSHELL:**



This mitzvah is to make kiddush on Friday night, and also to observe the Shabbat.

**WHAT IS INCLUDED:**



We make kiddush on Friday night over a cup of wine/grape juice. The Kiddush makes the day extra holy and separates Shabbos from the week. The Rambam writes that making Havdalah also separates Shabbos from the week, and is the sister-mitzvah of kiddush.

Keeping Shabbat means making sure we do not do any creative acts like lighting a fire or cooking. There are many interesting details about all of these laws, and Rabbis love teaching them! Remember, it is not 'all or nothing' – the more of Shabbat you can keep, the better.

There is a Rabbinic mitzvah to personally help with the Shabbat preparations and to have three meals on Shabbat. Women light Shabbat candles before Shabbat comes in, to make the atmosphere in the home Shabbat-mode.

**SOMETHING TO DISCUSS (OR TO ASK THE RABBI ABOUT!):**



- ☞ What do you notice about Shabbat that makes it special?
- ☞ Is Shabbat the first day of the week or the last day of the week?
- ☞ What does it mean that 'Hashem rested' on the seventh day – what is that teaching us?
- ☞ How can I make Shabbat more special at home?



## Commandment 5:

# Honouring your Parents



## THE SOURCE:

12. Honour your father and your mother, in order that your days be lengthened on the land that the Lord, your God, is giving you.

יב כבוד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמְךָ לְמַעַן  
יִאָרְכוּן יְמֵיךָ עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר - ה'  
אֱלֹהֵיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ :

## IN A NUTSHELL:

This mitzvah is to honour your parents – since your parents brought you into this world and cared for you so much. Honouring your parents also honours Hashem, and shows that they are the link in the chain to your Jewish heritage going all the way back to Mount Sinai.

## WHAT IS INCLUDED:

This mitzvah is to honour your parents – make sure they have food, drink and clothing; and treat them with respect. A child has to ask their parents' permission before contradicting them, they shouldn't sit in their parents' seat, and they should never call their parent by their first name. A child is also not allowed to curse or hit a parent: even a doctor or dentist should try and avoid treating their parents!

It is more important to honour your parents than your grandparents!

## SOMETHING TO DISCUSS (OR TO ASK THE RABBI ABOUT!):

- ☞ Name something you could not do without your parents
- ☞ Is honouring parents a mitzvah between *you and people* or between *you and Hashem*?
- ☞ Is this mitzvah obvious – why do we need to be told it?
- ☞ How can I show my parents more respect?



Commandments 6–9:

# No Murder, Adultery, Kidnapping or Bearing False Witness



THE SOURCE:

13. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not kidnap. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

יג לא תרצח : לא תנאף : לא תגנב : לא תענה ברעך עד שקר :



IN A NUTSHELL:

These mitzvos are the central negative prohibitions. A person is not allowed to murder, or marry someone who is already married, or kidnap (stealing is mentioned later in the Torah). A person may also not come to court claiming to see something that they have not really seen.



WHAT IS INCLUDED:

Rabeinu Yonah writes that we must be extra careful to avoid embarrassing others – this is a mini-form of killing them. We also must be very careful to make sure we have lovely marriages and we protect them too.



SOMETHING TO DISCUSS (OR TO ASK THE RABBI ABOUT!):

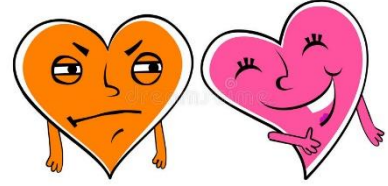
- ∞ Why are some mitzvos negative – why not have all of them positive?
- ∞ Why are these so important that they are part of the Ten Commandments?
- ∞ Are there any situations in which a person is allowed to kill?
- ∞ Why is marriage so important – what can I do to help my parents' marriage?





Commandment 10

# Jealousy



THE SOURCE:



14. You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbour."

יְד לא תַחְמֹד בַּיִת רֵעֶךָ לְאִתְחַמֵּד אִשְׁת רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדוֹ וְאִמָּתוֹ וְשׂוֹרְוֹ וְחֲמֹרוֹ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ :

IN A NUTSHELL:



A person may not be jealous of someone else's possessions.

WHAT IS INCLUDED:



You can't pressure someone into selling you something they do not want to sell, nor are you allowed to make concrete plans to obtain an object from someone else. A person should understand that everything they need in life is given to them by Hashem – you don't need others' possessions for your purpose in life. Also, you have your own challenges in life, and others have theirs – you don't know what else is going on in your friends' lives.

SOMETHING TO DISCUSS (OR TO ASK THE RABBI ABOUT!):



- ☞ Why does Hashem care about what I think?
- ☞ How can we make sure we are not jealous?
- ☞ It is not okay to be jealous of someone else's car, but it is okay to be jealous of the mitzvos they do - why?