

Moses and the Exodus

One of the most famous movies of all time is the 1956 classic “The Ten Commandments” directed by Cecil B. DeMille, and starring Charlton Heston. The life of Moses is depicted using several historical sources as references for accuracy. However, much of the movie departs from the Bible story.

According to the Bible Moses was born to Amram and Jochebed while the Israelites were slaves in Egypt ([Exodus 6:20](#)). At about that time the pharaoh, no doubt inspired by Satan, ordered that all male babies be destroyed. In order to save her new baby boy Jochebed made a small ark of bull rushes and made it water proof with pitch. She placed her son in the little boat and commissioned her daughter, Miriam, to keep watch. So, technically she had obeyed Pharaoh’s order to put her son in the river ([Exodus 2:3](#)).



The little ark drifted down the river and was eventually discovered by Pharaoh’s daughter who decided to adopt the baby calling him Moses. At that point Miriam ran up to pharaoh’s daughter and asked if she would like a woman to nurse the baby for her, and so Jochebed received her son back into her arms until pharaoh’s daughter finally called for him to come to the palace. Thus, Moses grew up in the palace of Pharaoh, but God had other plans for Moses ([Exodus 2:5-10](#)).

When Moses became an adult he was filled with the conviction that he should do something to free his people, but unfortunately he resorted to violence killing an Egyptian. When his crime became known Moses knew he would have to either flee Egypt or be executed. So he fled to the land of Midian where he found refuge in the home of Reuel, or Jethro the priest of Midian. Eventually he married one of Jethro’s daughters, Zipporah ([Exodus 2:11-25](#)).

Moses spent nearly forty years in the wilderness raising his family and tending to the sheep of Jethro ([Exodus 7:7 & Deuteronomy 34:7](#)). After the pharaoh died that had ruled when Moses was in Egypt God called to Moses from a bush that was burning, but which did not burn up.

At that place and in that way God called upon Moses, now 80 years old, to accomplish one of the greatest feats of history—setting the approximately two million Israelites free from slavery in Egypt.

Each of the plagues that God used against Egypt was aimed directly at the gods they worshipped thus showing that the Nile, the sun, and the creatures of the earth have no power compared to the Creator God ([Exodus](#)



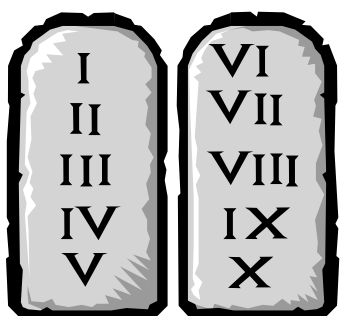
[12:12](#)). Finally with the death of the first-born pharaoh sent the Israelites away. After miraculously escaping pharaoh’s army through the Red Sea God brought His people to Mt. Sinai where He entrusted His laws to them and established His covenant with them ([Exodus 19:5-6](#)). Then God wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger and spoke them out loud to all the people ([Exodus 31:18 & Exodus 20:1](#)).

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. You shall not make a carved image.
3. You shall not take the Lord’s name in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
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 .
10. You shall not covet.

But God didn’t give the Ten Commandments to the Israelites alone. God gave His commandments to all of mankind, and the Ten Commandments are the standard by which all will be judged ([James 2:10-12](#)). Those ten commandments form the foundation for all true and just laws no matter where you may travel in this world. No other law can violate the principles of the ten commandments and be a blessing to humanity. “The law of the Lord is perfect.” [Psalm 19:7](#). Man cannot improve on God’s law. His laws were to guide and bless man forever. The Bible records the stories of real men and women who either obeyed or disobeyed the laws of God. Obedience brought life and true prosperity. Disobedience brought disaster and death.

The Bible predicted that the last days before Jesus returned would be filled with wickedness. “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come . . . But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” **2 Timothy 3:1, 13**. I suggest that the reason crime and immorality is so rampant in our country is that for most people right and wrong has become a matter of personal opinion.

Over and over again I have heard talk show hosts ask a caller, “Why do you think that is wrong?” The caller will reply, “Well it just is.” Then proceeds a discussion back and forth over whether something is wrong or not, and too often the conversation ends with something like, “Well, it may be wrong for you, but its not wrong for me.”, as if morality was a matter of taste, personal opinion, or popular vote. “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool . . .” **Proverbs 28:26**.



The Bible teaches us that there are moral absolutes, and that you cannot violate those moral absolutes without serious consequences. (**Hosea 8:7**). What is needed in the world to stop evil is a return to the Bible, and the laws that God established as moral absolutes.

As in the stories of the Bible, we also will experience heartache by disobeying God’s laws, or blessing by obeying His laws. The choice is ours today just as with all of humanity before us. Satan tempted our first parents to disobey God, and the result of that disobedience is still being felt today. In fact, the very first two children born into this world experienced the horror of disobedience to God’s laws. Abel was obedient to God’s commandments and offered the sacrifice God required, while Cain was disobedient to God’s commandments and brought his own sacrifice. When God showed His acceptance of Abel’s sacrifice, but not of Cain’s then Cain killed his brother, Abel. God punished Cain and made him a fugitive in the earth (**Genesis 4:1-15**).

If Cain had done nothing wrong there would have been no punishment. Indeed, it would have been unfair to punish Cain. But the Bible says: “For where there is no law there is no transgression.” **Romans 4:15**. The biblical definition for sin is disobeying God’s law (**1 John 3:4**). The consequences for disobedience to God’s law is death (**Romans 6:23**). Not just physical death, but emotional death, and relationship death.

God’s people, such as Abraham, obeyed the commands of God in the Old Testament, and they were blessed. God blessed Abraham (**Genesis 26:5**). Jesus kept the law of God, and clearly said that He did not want anyone to think otherwise (**Matthew 5:17**). On another occasion He said it is impossible for God’s law to change (**Luke 16:17**). You may have heard people say that the law of God was done away with. If so, what need would there

be for forgiveness. If there were no law, there would be no sin, and if there were no sin there would be no need for a Saviour, for Jesus came into the world to save sinners (**1 Timothy 1:15**). Jesus kept His Father’s commandments and He says we should do the same (**John 15:10**). At the end of time everyone’s life record will be judged by the ten commandments (**James 2:10-12**).

In history there have been attempts to change God’s law, to minimize its requirements, or to avoid its responsibilities. But millions of Christians, using common sense, know that the ten commandments can never be done away with or you would unravel the moral fabric of society. A letter was sent to Billy Graham asking this question: “Which of the ten commandments still applies to us today? I know they were written thousands of years ago and times have changed, but are some of them still useful?”

Billy Graham responded: “The Ten Commandments are just as valid today as when God gave them to Moses over 3,000 years ago.”² In fact, they are the true expression of our love for God and man (**1 John 5:3**).

Once Jesus was asked which of the commandments were the greatest. His reply demonstrates that the ten commandments are based upon the principle of love for God and man (**Matthew 22:39-40**). To break the commandments, any of them, would be to violate the principle of love. No one who loves will break God’s commandments. To do so would be to sin, because sin is defined as breaking God’s law.

Because all have sinned we need a Saviour, for the wages of sin is death. So God sent His only Son into the world to pay the penalty for our sins (**Romans 6:23**). We cannot earn or deserve forgiveness and salvation (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). Forgiveness and eternal life are God’s gift to us because He loves us (**John 3:16**). When we experience that love we want to obey God’s laws from then on (**John 14:15**). In this way we honor God and His law (**Romans 3:19-20, 31 & 6:14-15**).

The Bible says that there will be a people in the last days of this earth who respect and obey God’s laws. They are His true people (**Revelation 12:17**), who keep His commandments (**Revelation 14:12**). You can be among them right now, today. Anyone who recognizes that they have broken God’s law can come to Jesus and receive love, acceptance and forgiveness. Then He will say to you as He said to the woman caught in adultery, “Go and sin no more.” **John 8:11**.

¹ http://www.billygraham.org/SpiritualHelp_Article_Index.asp?MajorTopicID=7&MinorTopicID=1