

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE MOSAIC LEGISLATION

Before Noah

The creation account

The biblical record in Genesis relates that God created the heavens and the earth, and upon seeing all that He had done, 'God saw that it was good' (Gen. 1:25). In a later verse where it talks about the creation of man, the record says, 'And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good' (Gen. 1:31). Although it is difficult to insist upon a moral implication in the word *good*, which really means that it was agreeable and pleasing to God,¹ it is possible to see in all creation that God reached His final goal in the ideals that He had for man in the world. Later the author of Genesis shows how the universe developed stage by stage. In reading this account, it is impressive to note the order, beauty, and tranquility that characterize the universe. The God of creation is moral and acting, has moral goals for man, and wants to have perfect harmony between Himself and His creation.

The fall of man

But soon the temptation by Satan appears in the form of a serpent. Man succumbs to the temptation and disobeys God, and his fellowship with God is consequently interrupted. The rest of the Bible is a record of the efforts of God to rescue fallen and depraved man and to bring him into a right relationship with Him.

Although the word *fall* does not appear in the Bible, theologians have used the word to refer to a fact that is illustrated in the Bible and in human experience. That fact is man's universal tendency towards that which is evil.

A discussion of the way sin is transmitted is not necessary in a treatment of ethics, but perhaps it should be said that man cannot cast the blame for his sin upon his ancestors or upon Adam. Each man falls because of his own sins. Although it is true that we may inherit the moral weakness which inclines us towards sin, it is necessary to recognize the personal responsibility that each man has for his own sins. This fact is taught by Ezekiel (18:1-20). Even though many passages in the Bible speak about the family, the tribe, and the nation, God ultimately looks at each individual.

Sin from Adam to Noah

Genesis paints a dark picture of the abysmal depths of sin in the lives of many characters in the early history of the Old Testament. Hatred between human beings became evident when Cain killed his brother Abel. At the same time Cain did not want to recognize his responsibility before God, even when the blood of his brother was crying out from the ground. In the course of history, man has shed the blood of his brother

¹*Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, trans. Samuel P. Tregelles (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), p. 319.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The creation account reveals the following facts about God:

1. He is m and He a.
2. He has moral goals for m.
3. He wants perfect harmony between Himself and His c.

(1. moral, acts; 2. man; 3. creation)

UNDERLINE THE BETTER INTERPRETATION OF 'it was good'.

1. Good means moral.
2. God reached His final goal in the ideal He had for man in the world.

(2.)

DEFINE *fall* AS USED BY THEOLOGIAN.

(*man's universal tendency towards that which is evil*)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

Ezekiel 18:1-20 teaches that each man is responsible personally for his own _____. He cannot blame his sins on _____.

(sins, Adam)

LIST TWO SINS WHICH CAIN COMMITTED.

1. _____
2. _____

(1. hatred, 2. failure to recognize he was responsible to God)

in many different ways. The practice of killing all members of an enemy tribe when it was defeated (*cherem*), as illustrated in the pages of the Old Testament, is still a grave problem in the world today. The six million Jews who were barbarously killed during World War II, the 200,000 who were killed during the years of civil violence in Colombia during that dark period of history from 1948 to 1956, the massacres in Mai Lai in Vietnam, and many other illustrations testify that man's heart is still as corrupt as it was in Old Testament times.

Later, in Genesis 6:5, 'God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.' This passage illustrates that man came to abuse all the good things that God had provided for him and prostituted them for the satisfaction of his own egoistic purposes. Thus corruption reigned throughout the earth, and God was disappointed with man for what he had done with His good creation.

God decided that the only course of action open to Him was to judge the evil upon the earth. This He chose to do by means of the flood (Gen. 6—8). Only Noah and his family were saved from among all mankind. With Noah's family, God began anew His purpose of establishing His kingdom upon the earth with those who would search for God and follow His teachings (Gen. 9:1-17).

From Noah to Moses

A complete record of all that is of moral and social significance in this section of the Bible cannot be given. Note the generosity of Abraham and his desire to maintain good relations with Lot when he permitted him to choose the area that he wanted, leaving the other part for Abraham (Gen. 13:1-18). Later God had to destroy the 'cities of the plains' because of the evil that existed in them (Gen. 19). The negative consequences of not obeying God's ideal of monogamy in marriage are seen in the difficulties that came to Abraham and his home after he took Hagar and had relations with her in order to have descendants (Gen. 16; 21). The results of favouritism within the family circle are seen in some of the conflicts between Isaac, Esau, and Jacob (Gen. 25:19-34; 27:1—28:9). Jacob, who was very astute, had to learn the hard way that he could not manipulate God (Gen. 28:10-22; 35:1-29).

The lack of love among blood brothers and the jealousy that resulted from giving special privileges to some are illustrated in the interchanges between Joseph and his brothers (Gen. 37). The lack of vengeance on the part of Joseph is a virtue that few Christians possess even today. After Joseph ascended to a status of prominence in Egypt because of his ability and character, he was in a position to be able to help his family when they came to Egypt in search of food during the time of famine.

It should be noted that during this period the maintenance of respect for the moral and spiritual laws of God brought peace and harmony to the people, but the disregard of these laws brought trouble and disrupted their relations with God and their neighbours. Although the descendants of Abraham were slowly developing into what eventually became a nation, they had to learn the basic laws of God with reference to justice, equality, and mutual respect.

What sin was man guilty of according to Genesis 6:5?

(He abused everything that God had provided and prostituted them for the satisfaction of his own selfish purposes.)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

God saved Noah and his family so He could begin anew His purpose of establishing His kingdom upon the earth with those who would search for _____ and follow His _____.

(God, teachings)

READ THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES IN GENESIS AND WRITE THE MORAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF EACH:

1. 13:1-18— _____
2. Chapter 19— _____
3. Chapter 16; 21:1-21— _____
4. 25:19-34— _____
5. 28:10-22— _____
6. Chapter 37— _____

(1. Abraham exemplified a right relationship with Lot by treating Lot the way he would have liked for Lot to treat him. 2. Sin and evil are punished. 3. Failure to follow God's ideal of monogamy—marriage to only one person—brings difficulties. 4. Favouritism creates conflict. 5. Man cannot manipulate God. 6. Jealousy and lack of love lead to shameful acts. Joseph returned good for evil.)

The Ten Commandments

Introduction

There are several terms which are used in referring to the Ten Commandments. *Words of the Covenant*, *Two Tables*, and *Decalogue* are some of these terms. *Words of the Covenant* is used in Exodus 34:28. *Two Tables* refers to the tablets on which the commandments were written by God for Moses (Deut. 4:13; 10:4). *Decalogue* was first used by Clement of Alexandria.

Scholars have used different ways to divide the Ten Commandments.² The Jews divided them into two groups of five and five. Augustine divided them into two groups of three and seven. He also combined the first two and divided the tenth in order to give ten. Calvin and others made a division of four and six. Although there are different opinions about the different ways of dividing them, it is commonly agreed that they speak of two themes: the relationship of man with God, and the relationship of man with his neighbour.

Seven of the Ten Commandments contain prohibitions that already formed a part of the moral life of man. The Egyptians and the Babylonians considered it a crime to kill, to commit adultery, to steal, and to bear false witness. The laws of the ancient code of Hammurabi had made reference to these problems 400 years before Moses.³

Some believe that the Ten Commandments were based upon Hammurabi's ancient code and that they were not revealed by supernatural means to Moses as described in Exodus. (*Hammurabi* was a great king of Babylon c. 1792-1750 B. C. who is most famous for the code of laws which bears his name and is the oldest collection of laws known.) Others say that they are simply a product of the influences of other nations. But the fact that some of these laws had existed before does not discredit the manner in which God revealed them as a unit to Moses.

The Ten Commandments are more than a list of rules to be obeyed by the Hebrews who lived thousands of years ago. They are more than laws established by man; they are commandments given by God to man. One author has commented that the Ten Commandments have the same relation to the religion of Israel that the Sermon on the Mount has to Christianity.⁴ Another writer says that the laws of the Ten Commandments are eternal and universal values, which are indispensable for the fulfilment of the duties of the individual and society.⁵

The one God

'Thou shalt have no other gods before me' (Exod. 20:3). This commandment prohibits *polytheism* (the worship of more than one God) and emphasizes the unity of God. No creature nor any object made by man should receive the worship that belongs to God. The commandment also excludes *syncretism* (the mixing of elements of the worship of other



LIST THE TWO THEMES FOUND IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND INDICATE WHICH OF THE COMMANDMENTS RELATES TO EACH THEME

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

(Compare your answers with the text and the Scriptures.)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The first commandment prohibits p _____ and s _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

²James Orr, ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957), 5:2945.

³Henry H. Halley, *Bible Handbook* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1927), p. 50.

⁴Andrew R. Osborn, *Christian Ethics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 42.

⁵Henlee H. Barnette, *Introducing Christian Ethics* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1961), p. 19.

gods with the worship of Jehovah), which was a perpetual temptation for the Hebrews. Frequently they mixed elements of the worship of Baal, Molech, Chemosh, and others with their worship of Jehovah. In Judges 10:6, the various gods which the Hebrews worshipped during this period are mentioned. But the first commandment excludes polytheism because of the sovereignty of God over the world, over man, and over all that is in this universe.

Idolatry

'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth' (Exod. 20:4). This commandment prohibits the adoration of images or, in other words, demands purity in worship. God, a spiritual Being, cannot be reduced to something material. (See Deut. 4:15-19). There is always the danger of substituting, through the use of symbols and images, the objects created by God and fashioned by hands for God Himself, although religious leaders insist that these images are only aids to worship.

The emphasis of this commandment is that man should worship God in a spiritual manner. God is jealous of man's worship and is not pleased with his worshipping other gods. Although we live in a world in which there are many gods made by man's hands and many people bow in awe of these false gods, we should remember that God longs for man to come to know Him and to worship Him exclusively.

Reverence for the name of God

'Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain' (Exod. 20:7). This commandment emphasizes the importance of reverence for the name of God. It condemns insincerity in worship, the trite use of God's name in oaths in the courts, and profanity (Lev. 19:12). The name of God is important because it illustrates the personality and the nature of God. This commandment refers to an attitude as much as to the words which man speaks. The emphasis of this commandment is something needed by man in our contemporary age. In addition to the profanity, which is more common now than ever, there is a lot of flippant or frivolous use of God's name. In many places, the names for God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are used to refer to stores, taverns, and other buildings—a practice which detracts from the respect for God's name.

The day of rest

'Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy' (Exod. 20:8). The basic significance of the word *shabbath* in Hebrew is *rest*. God made man in six days and rested on the seventh day. The Sabbath was a symbol of the covenant between God and His people (Ezek. 20:12). It came to be a special day of gratitude for the deliverance from slavery in Egypt (Lev. 19:34; Deut. 5:15) and a means of remembering the Passover each week. For the Hebrews, the Sabbath was a day of rest and worship. In the course of time, a whole series of rules and practices developed with reference to activities that were illegal on the Sabbath. Jesus rejected these practices, saying that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-28). Jesus emphasized that it was legal to do good on the Sabbath, but He did not give specific rules or commandments with reference to this day.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The Israelites mixed elements of the worship of B _____, M _____, C _____, and others with their worship of God.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The second commandment demands p _____ in w _____. God is spirit and cannot be reduced to the m _____. The danger in using symbols, images, and objects in worship is that one begins to worship the o _____ instead of G _____.

(purity, worship, material, object, God)

The name of God represents the p _____ and n _____ of God, so the third commandment condemns insincerity in w _____, trite use of God's name in o _____, and p _____.

(personality, nature, worship, oaths, profanity)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The fourth commandment, to keep the Sabbath holy, involves _____ and _____. To the Hebrews, the Sabbath symbolized the covenant between _____ and His _____, was a day of gratitude for deliverance from Egyptian _____, and was a means of remembering the _____ each week.

(worship, rest, God, people, slavery, Passover)

Christians in the early years after the ascension of Christ changed the day of rest and worship from Saturday to Sunday, the first day of the week, because this was the day on which Christ arose from the grave. Sunday is now called *the Lord's day*. There are several references in the New Testament to the fact that the Christians gathered on the first day of the week for worship. (See Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Rev. 1:10; also Rom. 6:14-15; Gal. 3:23-25; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 10:1.)

Honour for parents

'Honour thy father and thy mother . . .' (Exod. 20:12). This commandment is in the centre of the ten and forms the transition from the duties which are related to God to those which are related directly to man. Among the Hebrews, the parents were considered to be representatives of God; therefore, for them this commandment still formed a part of the first table. Since parents are given the opportunity to co-operate with God in the creation of life, it is the duty of children to honour and respect both the human and the divine sources of life. The teachings of the Law concerning the attitudes of children towards their parents were very severe on those who lacked honour and respect (Exod. 21:15).

Included in the honour due one's parents is the responsibility of caring for them in their old age. The practice was common among the Hebrews. Jesus criticized those in His day who tried to escape their responsibilities to their parents by declaring their possessions *corban*, which meant that possessions were dedicated exclusively to God and could not be used to support family members (Mark 7:8-13). But this attitude was criticized by sincere Jews even before the day of Jesus.

This is the only commandment with a promise. The promise is 'that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee' (Exod. 20:12b). This promise is related to the nation rather than to individuals. Nations whose citizens have observed this commandment have enjoyed stability, prosperity, and longevity. Their citizens have made great contributions in other spheres of activity in their nations and the world.

The sanctity of life

'Thou shalt not kill' (Exod. 20:13). The word that is translated *kill* means *to break into pieces*; thus it means *homicide* or *murder*. The purposes of this commandment are to declare the sacredness of human life and to protect it. Man is made in the image of God, and the act of killing man involves the destruction of that which is sacred in God's eyes.

The question is asked if this commandment includes any kind of act that deprives man of life. This law probably does not include deaths which result from accidents, self-defence, war, or capital punishment (Num. 35:23; Exod. 21:12ff.; 22:2). There are other passages that have to do with these special cases involving death. Today it is difficult to know just how many of these special circumstances are included in the prohibition that is involved in the commandment. Each nation has its own laws that regulate man's conduct and the punishment which is determined for the infraction of these laws. The Bible can be a guide by showing that God respects the sacredness of human life and wants man to protect the life of his fellow-man.

The two greatest problems that are related to this commandment today have to do with participation in war and capital punishment. To say that the commandment 'thou shalt

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The fifth commandment is a transition from man's relation to _____ to man's relation to his _____. There is an over-lapping of relation to both in this commandment

(*God, fellow-man*)

UNDERLINE THE WORD THAT WILL MAKE THIS A CORRECT STATEMENT.

The promise 'that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee' is for the (*nation, individual*).

(*Compare your answer with the text.*)

LIST THE TWO PURPOSES OF THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

1. _____
2. _____

(*Compare your answers with the text.*)

FINISH READING THIS PARAGRAPH ON THE NEXT PAGE AND DO THE EXERCISES THERE.

not kill' does not apply to participation in war is not to say that war is justified. War is a diabolical and ineffective way of solving the differences in our world. This is especially true today when the implements of war are so destructive that millions of people can be annihilated by means of nuclear warfare. (*Annihilate* means to destroy completely.) Also, it is evident from a study of history that problems are not solved by means of wars.

With reference to capital punishment, it is impossible to prove that there are fewer crimes in countries where capital punishment is practised than in the countries that have abolished it. In recent years more has been done in the area of crime prevention than on the punishment or rehabilitation of the criminal. However, we need to recognize that, in many parts of the world, human life is still very cheap and newspapers carry accounts of man's disrespect for the lives of others. Our task is to convince man of the value of human life, to find better ways to protect the lives of citizens, and to find ways to rehabilitate the criminal. Achieving these objectives will do more towards building wholesome relationships among humans than incarcerating criminals or executing them in an attitude of 'eye for eye and tooth for tooth'.

The sanctity of the home

'Thou shalt not commit adultery' (Exod. 20:14). This commandment affirms the sacredness of marriage. It presents an ideal for mankind in any epoch. The home is second in importance after affirming sacredness of life. Adultery is a sevenfold vice: it harms the individual, the family, the society, the nation, the race, the universe, and God. It invades the home and destroys the vows that have united two people. It causes destruction of the institution which has been the fundamental basis of society.

The punishment of adultery in the Old Testament was death (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22). Besides having an application for marriage, the commandment is also applicable to man in the expression of the sexual impulse. *Free love, open marriages*, or any other kind of relationship outside the bonds of marriage cannot be justified. Some have insisted that the commandment applies only to the wrong that is involved in taking the wife of another. These people try to justify, by implication, sexual relations with a person not committed to another through marriage. But the spirit of this commandment reaches out to apply to those not yet married as well as to the sacredness of the marital relation.

The sacredness of property

'Thou shalt not steal' (Exod. 20:15). This commandment defends the right to own private property. The social systems that do not recognize this right do not take into account a basic need and right of every person—to have something which he can call his own. Some men have abused this right by becoming covetous and by making the acquisition of property and money their god. This attitude is wrong, but, on the other hand, the Old Testament does speak of the right of man to possess material goods (Exod. 21:16; 22:1; Deut. 19:14; 1 Kings 21:14-19).

A person's possession of property gives him a certain dignity that helps him in his relationship with God and with his fellow-man. We must also recognize that man has a duty to

What two problems are related to the sixth commandment?

1. _____
2. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

Annihilate means to d_____ c_____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The seventh commandment affirms the sacredness of _____. Adultery destroys the institution of marriage which is the fundamental basis of _____.

(*marriage, society*)

The eighth Commandment defends the right _____

(*to own property*)

respect the property of others. This is an emphasis which is needed today, since so much time, energy, and money are needed to protect what belongs to us. This commandment also touches upon the wrongness of having businesses which are unfair or corrupt, the unjust use of position to one's own advantage, and the exploitation of people who cannot defend themselves. It is important to glorify God in the way possessions are acquired as well as in the use of them.

The sacredness of truth

'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour' (Exod. 20:16). This commandment refers to the obligation to give a good testimony with reference to one's neighbour. The principal teaching of the commandment has to do with the court systems and the duty of speaking the truth when one is under oath. But bearing false witness can have a more extensive meaning which covers the prohibition of calumny (malicious uttering of false charges calculated to damage another's reputation), gossip, and even silence when it may permit lies to be propagated. If a man's good name is taken from him, he has been hurt worse than if he had been hurt physically. If one takes property from a neighbour, it can be replaced. But if his good name is taken, then he has been robbed of something difficult to replace.

The sin of covetousness

'Thou shalt not covet . . .' (Exod. 20:17). Barnette says that this commandment has to do with one's duty towards himself.⁶ The word *covet* has the significance of *drooling* or *having an anxious desire for something*. It has more to do with attitudes and motives within man than with his actions. Covetousness, in its multiple forms, is the last sin of the noble souls as well as that of the ignoble ones.⁷ Covetousness is an attitude which can produce the act of killing, committing adultery, or robbing. Love is the quality which is opposite to covetousness, and love is what the Christian must cultivate.

The Ten Commandments reflect the highest ideals that God had for mankind from ancient days. They are eternal precepts which may be applied to any generation. Without these basic and universal principles, man cannot reach the level of life that God wants him to achieve.

The Mosaic Law and Social Relations

There are many other laws that God gave to Moses besides those in the Ten Commandments. Smith gives a good resume of the moral laws of the Hebrews.⁸ A brief summary of these laws is valuable. They have to do with relations to slaves, offences against others, and regulations of practices and attitudes towards animals and other forms of property. These laws were humanitarian, and their purpose was to develop a greater sense of mercy and respect on the part of man.

The Book of Deuteronomy, meaning the *Second Law*, has much content which is ethical in nature. Many scholars see this book as the most important of the Pentateuch, saying that

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

Not only does the eighth commandment defend the right to own property but it also recognizes the duty to _____ the property of _____ and it applies also to _____ and _____ business practices.

(*respect, others, unfair, corrupt*)

The ninth commandment has to do with the court system and the duty to speak the _____ under _____. However, it also prohibits _____, _____, and even _____ when it permits lies to be propagated.

(*Compare your answers with the text.*)

The tenth commandment deals with _____ and _____ more than _____. To covet is to have anxious _____ for something.

(*attitudes, motives, actions, desire*)

The additional laws which God gave Moses were humanitarian: They were given to develop a greater sense of _____ and _____.

(*mercy, respect*)

⁶Barnette, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, p. 24.

⁷D. Elton Trueblood, *Foundations for Reconstruction* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1946), p. 101.

⁸J. M. P. Smith, *The Moral Life of the Hebrews* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1923), pp. 49-72.

no other equals it. It contains a true expression of true religion. Driver declares that in Deuteronomy, as in no other book of the Old Testament, there breathes an atmosphere of genuine dedication to God and an ample heart towards man.⁹

The Mosaic Law includes other laws which might be considered amplifications of the Ten Commandments. Later the scribes and Pharisees gave their own interpretations to these laws, making them a burden to life and going beyond what God required for obedience to Him.

The civil law

The civil law had to do with relationships with servants and with the poor. It is interesting to note that in the Mosaic Law provision was made for the protection of the poor and the disinherited, while in the Hammurabi Code there was protection for the rich, indicating more interest in the rich than in the poor.

The Mosaic Law also describes the punishment for injuries which a man receives from his neighbour. This is called *lex talion*, ‘eye for eye, tooth for tooth’ (Exod. 21:22-25; Lev. 24:19-20; Deut. 19:16-19). In spite of the fact that many people follow this law today, Christians should have risen above it. Taking vengeance upon others is too common today, as is illustrated daily through the news media. *Lex talion* had the purpose of pushing civilization forward from an age that followed the law of the jungle, in which one might take the life of another for a minor injury inflicted upon himself. Moses tried to curb this tendency by equalizing the punishment in accord with the crime committed. This limitation upon the desire to retaliate brought the Hebrew people to a higher plane of morality.

But we must recognize that *lex talion* did not represent God’s final ideal for mankind. Later Jesus gave norms that go far beyond this point when he said ‘Ye have heard . . . but I say unto you’ (Matt. 5:17-48). The ideals that are presented by Jesus, which will be discussed at length in another chapter, represent some of the highest challenges in all history.

The customs related to marriage

The practices of the Hebrew people in the day of Moses were similar to those of the surrounding nations. Polygamy was generally practised, and there were cases in the Old Testament in which men of God followed the same custom. There were also concubines, practice of dowry, taking of women captured in wars, use of slaves as marital partners, and numerous divorce laws among other nations. The laws given by Moses tried to limit some of these practices. Exodus 21:7-11 speaks to the practice of having slaves as wives. Deuteronomy 20:10-14 refers to the use of women taken captive during wars. Deuteronomy 21:15-17 has to do with polygamy, and Exodus 20:14, 17 speaks about adultery. Deuteronomy 22:23-29 refers to fornication, and Deuteronomy 24:1-4 gives legislation concerning divorce. Deuteronomy 25:5-10 deals with the levirate marriage (compulsory marriage of a widow to her deceased husband’s brother), and Leviticus 18:6-18 condemns incest (sexual relations between relatives who are prohibited by law to marry). There were strict requirements regarding the marriage of priests (Lev.

⁹S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1892), p. 74.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The Mosaic Law also amplified the _____.

(Ten Commandments)

MATCH BY DRAWING LINES.

Mosaic law	protected the poor.
Hammurabi Code	protected the rich.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

GIVE SCRIPTURES SHOWING HOW MOSAIC LAW ATTEMPTED TO DEAL WITH THE PRACTICES LISTED BELOW. (BE SURE TO ACQUAINT YOURSELF WITH THEM IN LIGHT OF THE DISCUSSION IN THE TEXT.)

1. Slaves as wives _____
2. Women captured in war _____
3. Polygamy _____
4. Adultery _____
5. Fornication _____
6. Divorce _____
7. Levirate marriage _____
8. Incest _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

21:7, 13-14) as well as legislation about polygamy among the kings (Deut. 17:17).

The ceremonial laws

Some of the ceremonial laws had social as well as moral objectives. The laws regarding the observance of the Sabbath had the purpose of giving man a day of rest in order to recuperate his physical and his spiritual resources (Exod. 23:12; Deut. 5:14-15; Exod. 31:12-17). The sacrificial system was based upon the concept that man had sinned against God, and this sin made him unworthy to enter into the presence of God without first experiencing a cleansing. Through the sacrifice, a man was made clean and worthy once more to enter into God's presence (Lev. 4:1-5; 13:12-15; 16:1-34).

The origin of the sacrificial system is obscure. It may have begun with a spontaneous act by man, who, inspired by God, wanted to maintain a right relationship with Him. An urge to sacrifice something to God may illustrate man's inner recognition that he has done something wrong and needs to do something to make restitution for his deeds. The Old Testament recognizes the validity of one's need to make amends for his wrongs, and the sacrificial system is a clear picture of man's attempt in this area.

Conclusion

We have seen that the Mosaic legislation was advanced beyond the laws and practices of other contemporary nations. The norms of the Old Testament appear to be on the cutting edge of man's ability to understand his duty to God and his fellow-man. The Mosaic legislation was incomplete, and it had to give way to subsequent revelation. In the study of the prophetic message and moral emphasis, it will be evident how the prophets built upon the base that had been given to them through Moses.

TRUE OR FALSE.

1. The ceremonial laws had no social objectives. _____
2. The Sabbath was only given for religious reasons. _____
3. Man has no need to regain his physical resources on the Sabbath. _____
4. Through sacrifice man was cleansed and made worthy to enter once more into God's presence. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

UNDERLINE THE CORRECT WORDING.

The Mosaic Law was (*complete, incomplete*), and it had to (*give way to, supersede*) subsequent revelation.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Home Study Exercise

Basic assignment (*Levels 1, 2, and 3*). Read Exodus 20:1-17 and do the following exercise.

1. What is the implication of the word *good* in Genesis 1:25, 31?

2. List the characteristics of God revealed in the creation account.

3. How has the word *fall* been used by theologians?

4. State the emphasis of Ezekiel 18:1-20.

5. What was God's purpose in saving Noah's family (Gen. 9:1-17)?

6. What are the moral teachings of the following biblical passages?

Genesis 13:1-18—

Genesis 16; 21:1-21—

Genesis 37—

7. What are the two themes found in the Ten Commandments?

8. List the commandments that relate to God and give the Bible reference for each.

9. List the commandments that relate to man and give the Bible reference for each.

10. What is the emphasis of the first commandment?

11. What is the danger of using symbols, objects, and images in worship?

12. Why is the name of God important?

13. Name three things that Sabbath observance emphasized for the Hebrews.

14. Which commandment forms the transition from duties related to God to those duties directly related to man?

15. What is the purpose of the sixth commandment?

16. What effect does adultery have on the home?

17. What is the emphasis of the eighth commandment?

18. How does the ninth commandment help to maintain a person's good name?

19. What is the meaning of the word *covet*?

20. What was the purpose of the other laws that God gave Moses?

Supplementary assignment (*Levels 2 and 3*). Read pages 19-25 in *Introducing Christian Ethics* by Barnette, and do the following exercise.

1. Describe the Decalogue.
2. How does Barnette divide the Commandments? Explain what he means by classifying the tenth commandment as 'duty to self'.
3. What is meant by the promise given in the fifth commandment?

Advanced assignment (*Level 3*). Using this study guide and *Introducing Christian Ethics*, do one of the following exercises.

1. Write a sermon on the Ten Commandments. Your sermon may cover the whole Decalogue, or you may choose to base your sermon on one of the commandments. (This exercise is to be done by all pastors, preachers, and laypersons interested in preaching.)
2. Sunday School teachers and other church leaders are to prepare a plan to involve the entire congregation in studying the moral lessons of the Ten Commandments.

Seminar Discussion

1. Are the Ten Commandments useful to us today? If so, why?
2. Discuss the fourth commandment (Exod. 20:8), giving special emphasis to its meaning, to Jesus' attitude towards it, and to the correct day for Christian worship. (The seminar leader should be alert to assist pupils in confronting doctrines contrary to the practice of Sunday worship.)
3. Share sermon ideas composed by advanced level students. (If there are no students on that level, the leader should share and discuss some ideas.)
4. Share plans for involving congregations in studying the Ten Commandments.