

**Torah Table Talk**  
**Learning the Big Ten:**  
**The Ten Commandments in our Lives Today**  
**Parshat Yitro Exodus**

**Exodus 20**

I am the Lord your God, who have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for you any engraved image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy to thousands of those who love me, and keep my commandments.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work; 10. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates; 11. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and made it holy.

Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is your neighbor's.

Here are ten questions to think about concerning the Ten Commandments. I hope they will inspire some serious discussion in your home:

- 1. I am the Lord Your God:** Must a person believe in God in order to be “a good Jew?” What are the most basic beliefs about God in Judaism beyond a belief in one God?

2. **You shall have no other gods before me:** Moses Maimonides suggested that anyone who attributed physical form or characteristics to God is guilty of idolatry. This would mean that we should not of God as a He or a She. How should we talk about God?
  3. **Do not take the name of the Lord in vain:** How do we misuse the name of God in contemporary society? Is this the same thing as making promises in the name of God that you can't keep?
  4. **Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy:** Come up with five things that you could do in your daily life to make the Sabbath feel special and holy.
  5. **Honor your father and mother:** Argue the following issue: The Simpsons is a subversive show and a bad influence on kids because it encourages them to treat their parents with disrespect.
  6. **You shall not kill:** What is the difference between murder and killing. Under what circumstances is killing justified.
  7. **You shall not commit adultery:** To what extent do you think television, movies and the media encourage sexual immorality. How should we respond to these issues when we see them on television and what should we say to our children about these issues.
  8. **You shall not steal:** How would you apply the prohibition against stealing to the following situations: cheating on your income tax, copying a DVD illegally for your own personal use, and lying about your age to get into a movie or a show for less expensive tickets
  9. **You shall not bear false witness:** Is it ever appropriate to lie? If not why not? And if so under what circumstances?
  10. **You shall not covet:** What is the difference between wanting something and coveting something? Do you think coveting should be included in the Ten Commandments?
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#### ***How to use Torah Table Talk***

1. *Read the sheet out loud to one another. Discuss what it has to say.*
2. *Focus on the text in the box. It is taken from Biblical, post-biblical and modern Jewish sources. What does it mean? How does it make you feel?*
3. *Try to answer the questions following the text.*
4. *This is not a test and there are many correct answers and interpretations to each question. Share your ideas with one another. Be open and honest in sharing your ideas.*

***“All it takes to study Torah is an open heart, a curious mind  
and a desire to grow a Jewish soul.”***