

Class for Sivan – Lesson 4 In this lesson, we'll look at the 7 Noahide Laws and the 10 Commandments in order to understand our mission in a new way.

7 Noahide Laws & 10 Commandments

The sages of the Talmud and the Rambam (1135 – 1204) explained and delineated the laws that were given to Noah and humanity after the Flood. Thus, these laws are supposed to be for all non-Jews. The 10 Commandments then, were given to the Jews. According to my teacher, Shifra Hendrie, this reveals the difference between the mission of the Jews and the mission of the non-Jew. This does not discount one group of people over the other nor does it mean that one mission is better than the other. It also does not mean that all Jews are able to fulfill their mission, nor are all non-Jews able to fulfill theirs perfectly. It also doesn't mean that each can't fulfill the other one's mission.

Below, on the 7 Noahide laws and the 10 Commandments, you will see that there are only a few differences between them. I have asterisked the differences. Of the 7 Noahide Laws, only the requirement to establish courts of law is not included in the 10 Commandments. Of the 10 Commandments, the command for Shabbat, Honoring mother and father, Coveting others & Bearing false witness against others, falls under the Jewish mission. It follows then that the mission of the non-Jew is to prepare this world to be habitable & comfortable for godliness to exist here. While the mission of the Jew is to be holy and to bring godliness to a place that welcomes it.

7 Noahide Laws

1. Worship the One G-d; no idolatry
2. Respect the Creator; bless, don't curse
3. Respect human life; Do not murder
4. Respect the sanctity of marriage; don't sexually transgress
5. Respect the property of others; don't steal
6. Respect G-d's creatures; don't eat from a live animal *
7. Maintain justice; Establish a court system *

http://www.chabadbythesea.com/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/62221/jewish/Universal-Morality.htm

These laws are found in the Talmud and in the writings of the Rambam (1135 – 1204)

10 Commandments

1. I am the Lord your G-d Who took you out of Egypt.
2. Have no other gods; no idolatry.
3. Respect G-d; bless, don't curse.
4. Remember the Sabbath. *
5. Honor your father & mother. *
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal. Do not kidnap and sell someone into slavery.
9. Do not bear false witness against your fellow. *
10. Do not covet anything that is your fellow's. *

http://www.chabadbythesea.com/library/article_cdo/aid/519422/jewish/Inside-the-10-Commandments.htm

Found in the 5 Books of Moses: Exodus 20:1-14

* these asterisked are the differences between the commandments given to the Jews and the commandments given to everyone else.

Kabbalah says that with the giving of the 10 Commandments, there was a barrier that was breached between Heaven and earth that previously could not be breached. Before the Torah as revealed on Mt. Sinai, there was no ability to build a bridge between Heaven and earth. But once the Torah was given, the ability to spiritualize the physical was born. Now we could use material objects and spiritualize them through their use and our intention. Thus, when we pray, when we eat with a blessing, when we use a ritual object for a spiritual purpose, we build a bridge between heaven and earth by actually spiritualizing the material.

Deeper Meaning of the Commandments

The Midrash explains that the commandments can be not only read from top to bottom but from side to side.

http://www.chabadbythesea.com/library/article_cdo/aid/519298/jewish/Ten-Commandments-or-Five.htm

When we look at the two tablets, the first one seems to be all about our relationship with G-d while the second is about our relation to others. This begs the question, why is honoring mother and father on the “G-d side”? In the Midrash, we learn that understanding the associations between the commandments, we learn more about the commandments.

The one association that I want to look at more deeply is between honoring mother and father and coveting. This association helps me to understand why the one about honoring is on the “G-d side”. How many of us have coveted other people’s parents? When I was little, I did this all the time, wishing other people’s parents were my parents. Bringing G-d into the equation, I have to see that my parents were chosen for me just like my possessions and everything else that is in my life that is not in someone else’s. I have to accept and be grateful for my lot and know that my circumstances were handpicked for me by G-d. Then coveting disappears and honoring parents, even if they didn’t do right by me and even if I disagree with them, they still deserve my respect because they are mine, given to me.

Judah, Ruth, David, Baal Shem Tov & Moshiach/Geulah

The birthday of morality – when the Torah was brought to earth through the Jewish nation – was the beginning of the blending of heaven and earth. The story started with Judah the one who made the worst choice and sold his brother into slavery. It continues through a convert to the Jewish people, Ruth, and with her great grandson, King David who contained both Light and Dark in his soul such that his son, Solomon had to be the one to build the Temple. Then, the deeper secrets of what our mission really is, came out into the world through the Baal Shem Tov and it is through his teachings that a descendant of David will come to bring the completion of the blending of Heaven and earth.



