

Deuteronomy 10:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.

Analysis

And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments. God personally inscribes the law with His own hand, emphasizing divine origin and absolute authority. This is not human wisdom but heaven's revelation.

The phrase according to the first writing stresses exact replication - not one jot or tittle differs from the original. God's moral law is unchanging and unchangeable, reflecting His eternal, immutable character. What He declared holy at Sinai remains holy throughout all generations.

The ten commandments (literally 'ten words' in Hebrew) summarize the entire moral law governing relationship with God and neighbor. These fundamental principles undergird all specific case laws and applications. Reformed theology affirms the perpetual validity of the Decalogue as expression of God's moral character.

That God writes these commands demonstrates they come with His full authority - they are not suggestions but sovereign decrees from the Creator to His creatures.

Historical Context

The Ten Commandments were originally spoken audibly by God from Mount Sinai (Exodus 20) then written by His finger on stone tablets. Their rewriting after the golden calf incident demonstrated God's commitment to covenant relationship despite human failure.

These commandments became the constitutional core of Israel's theocratic government and remain foundational moral teaching for believers.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does it mean that God wrote the law with His own hand rather than dictating it?
2. How does the exact replication of the original writing demonstrate God's unchanging standards?
3. Why are the Ten Commandments called the summary of God's moral law?
4. In what sense do Christians remain obligated to the moral law expressed in the Decalogue?
5. How does the permanence of God's written law reflect His immutable character?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּכְתֹּב ב	עַל	הַלְּחֵת	בַּמִּכְתָּב ב	הָרֹאשׁ וְ	אֵת
And he wrote	H5921	on the tables	writing	according to the first	H853
H3789		H3871	H4385	H7223	
עֲשֵׂת	הַדְּבָרִים	אֲשֶׁר	דִּבֶּר	יְהוָה	אֵלַיְכֶם
the ten	commandments	H834	spake	and the LORD	H413
H6235	H1697		H1696	H3068	
בָּהֶר	מִתּוֹךְ	הָאֵשׁ	בִּיּוֹם	הַקָּדָשׁ	
unto you in the mount	out of the midst	of the fire	in the day	of the assembly	
H2022	H8432	H784	H3117	H6951	
וַיִּתֵּן	יְהוָה	אֵלַי:			
gave	and the LORD	H413			
H5414	H3068				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 9:10 (Word): And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

Exodus 34:28 (Word): And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

Deuteronomy 18:16 (References Lord): According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.