

8. God's Word

God's word is our window to God. For through it we learn about God and his relationship with us. This chapter begins with some basic concepts and then looks at a key aspect of God's word – God's covenant with Israel. This defined God's relationship with his people in the Old Testament and is critical to understanding the New Testament.

General

The Bible is God's word

Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. 2 TIMOTHY 3:16A CEV

The Scriptures are the writings contained in the Bible – God's word.

God's word is true

The words of the LORD are true ... PSALMS 33:4A GNT

God's word is active and powerful

God's word is alive and working and is sharper than a double-edged sword. It cuts all the way into us, where the soul and the spirit are joined, to the center of our joints and bones. And it judges the thoughts and feelings in our hearts. HEBREWS 4:12 NCV™

God's word can penetrate to the very depths of our inner-selves, exposing our thoughts and attitudes for what they really are.

God's word brings spiritual life

[JESUS:] *The Spirit is the one who gives life; human nature is of no help! The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*

JOHN 6:63 NET

God's word gives light

[A PSALMIST, TO GOD:] *Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.* PSALMS 119:105 GW

God's word gives "light" – guidance and spiritual insight.

God's Covenant with Israel

A covenant is a firm agreement made between two parties. God's covenants are a key aspect and expression of his word – as are his commands, prophecies and promises.

God made a covenant with Israel, based on the laws he gave through Moses

The LORD said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." ²⁸So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread, and he did not drink water. He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.

EXODUS 34:27–28 NET

If the Israelites obeyed God, then they would be his people and he would be their God

[GOD, TO THE ISRAELITES:] *Obey me and carry out the terms of the agreement exactly as I commanded you. If you do, you will be my people and I will be your God.* JEREMIAH 11:4B NET

Faithful obedience to the law would bring righteousness

[MOSES, TO THE ISRAELITES:] *It will be righteousness for us, if we're careful to obey all the law before the LORD our God, as he commanded.* DEUTERONOMY 6:25 ISV

The Ten Commandments

[GOD:] *Do not worship any god except me. ... ⁵Don't bow down and worship idols. ... ⁷Do not misuse my name. ... ⁸Remember that the Sabbath Day belongs to me. ... ¹⁰... No one is to work on that day... ¹²Respect your father and your mother... ¹³Do not murder. ¹⁴Be faithful in marriage. ¹⁵Do not steal. ¹⁶Do not tell lies about others. ¹⁷Do not want anything that belongs to someone else.* EXODUS 20:3, 5A, 7–8, 10B, 12–17A CEV

The Ten Commandments form the basis of the law that God gave through Moses. This law is sometimes referred to as the Mosaic Law.