

Sunday, October 8, 2023

## Scripture Reading: Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

*Obedience is the fruit of faith. —Christina Rossetti*

Today's Bible reading is about the Ten Commandments. How many of the commandments do you know without looking? Most people can recite less than half of them before beginning to stumble.

These commandments are the most concise, yet comprehensive, moral and ethical code ever recorded in the annals of human history. They say so much in so few words, causing President Ronald Reagan to remark on one occasion, "I have wondered at times, what the Ten Commandments would have looked like if Moses had had to run them through the United States Congress."

The Ten Commandments have about 180 words, depending upon the version you are reading. In contrast, the Nicene Creed: 224 words.

The Gettysburg Address: 286 words.

The Declaration of Independence: 1,300 words.

The Heidelberg Catechism: 8,683 words.

U.S. government regulations on cabbage sales: 26,911 words.

Jesus' summary of the Ten Commandments: 40 words.

We can admire the Ten Commandments for their brevity, but we should also adhere to them. Consider this story: A businessman known for his ruthlessness was talking with Mark Twain and announced, "Before I die, I mean to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. There I will climb Mount Sinai and read the Ten Commandments aloud from the top of the mountain."

"I have a better idea," replied Mark Twain. "You could stay in Boston and keep them."

So, what is the Decalogue all about — in a nutshell? As Jesus noted in his chat with a lawyer recorded in Matthew 22:37-40, the Ten Commandments explain *how we mortals relate to both God and neighbor*. This is God's amazing code of conduct, the adherence to which will save humans a ton of grief, a fact that the psalmist repeatedly notes: "Happy are those whose ways are blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD" (Psalm 119:1).

—Timothy Merrill

*Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the Ten Commandments and all of the spiritual and ethical guidance you provide in your word. My heart's desire is to be faithful to it every day. Amen.*

*Blessings,  
Lara Paslov Ben Motz*

**Daily Bible Readings**

**Sunday:** 1 Corinthians 9-12

**Monday:** Daniel 7-9

**Tuesday:** Daniel 10-12

**Wednesday:** Esther 1-3

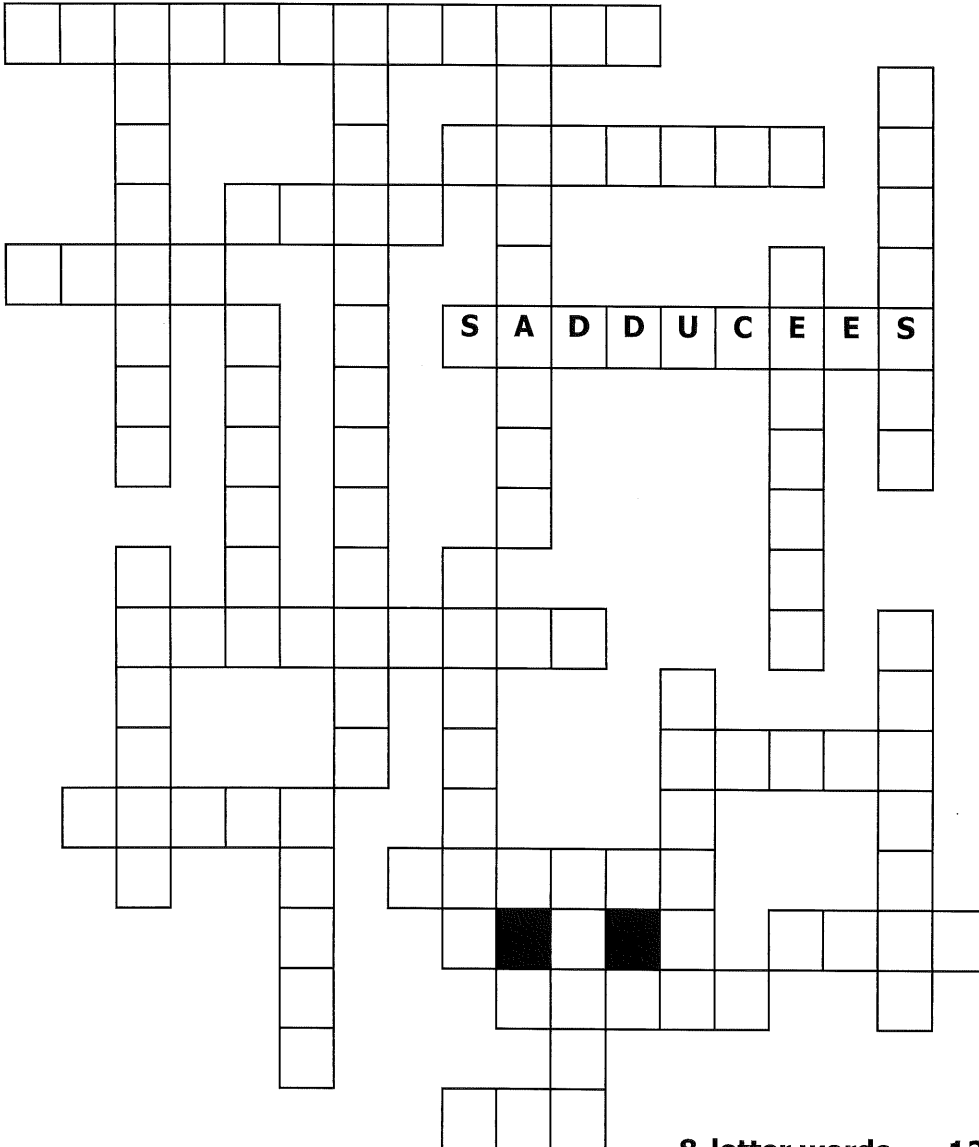
**Thursday:** Esther 4-7

**Friday:** Esther 8-10

**Saturday:** Psalm 119

# CLUELESS CROSSWORD

This crossword has no clues! Fill in the squares according to the length of the words. We've filled in one word to get you started.



**3-letter words**

God

**4-letter words**

holy

John

plot

**5-letter words**

faith

guard

Jesus

Peter

Satan

**6-letter words**

beggar

Israel

nation

Spirit

**7-letter words**

Ananias

miracle

priests

prophet

servant

**8-letter words**

Sapphira

**12-letter words**

resurrection

**9-letter words**

ignorance

Sanhedrin

**13-letter words**

encouragement

**"Autumn is a second spring  
when every leaf is a flower."  
—Albert Camus**