

Jacob's Ten Woes and the Ten Commandments

Key Scripture 2 Nephi 9

Explanation In 2 Nephi 9, Jacob pronounces a “wo” or curse upon the people of Nephi who do not keep the commandments. This chart shows that the specific sins he denounces are similar to several of the sins committed when the Ten Commandments are broken. The two lists are not identical, but it is evident that they are related at several levels. Both give ten warnings, woes, commands, or prohibitions. The fourth commandment (addressing the Sabbath day) and the eighth commandment (prohibiting stealing) are not on Jacob’s list, possibly because they were not a problem for Jacob’s isolated audience to keep. (Note that each item in the chart is numbered according to its order in the scriptural passage it appears in.)

Source John W. Welch, “Jacob’s Ten Commandments,” in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 69–72.

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2 Nephi 9:27, 30–38

Compare Exodus 20:3–17

1. Wo unto them who knowingly transgress God's commandments	1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Wo unto the rich who despise the poor and make their treasure their god	10. Thou shalt not covet
3. Wo unto the deaf who will not hear	5. Honor (hear) thy father and thy mother
4. Wo unto the blind who will not see	
5. Wo unto the uncircumcised of heart	3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
6. Wo unto the liar	9. Thou shalt not bear false witness
7. Wo unto the murderer who deliberately kills	6. Thou shalt not kill
8. Wo unto them who commit whoredoms	7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
9. Wo unto those who worship idols	2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
10. Wo unto all those who die and remain in their sins	