

MOSES COMMANDED US THE TORAH

by Rabbi Yaakov Menken

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In the middle of the Ten Commandments, after the first two, the text changes from first to third person -- from "I am the L-rd your G-d" to "Do not take the name of the L-rd your G-d in vain." Why this shift in the text?

Furthermore, Judaism teaches that there are 613 Commandments in the Torah. The numerical value of Torah, however, is 611. It's as if two of them are missing! Why?

At Sinai, the entire nation heard the voice of G-d. There was a mass revelation – but for everyone except Moshe, it was too much for the human mind to absorb. The Medrash says that "their souls left their bodies," that everyone died and needed to be revived. This happened when G-d said "I am the L-rd your G-d," and again when he began the second Commandment.

The Torah says that "Moshe Commanded us the Torah" [Deut 33:4]. Moshe commanded us 611 Commandments. The first two, however, we heard from G-d Himself!



A Unique Encounter

The Torah teaches that at Sinai, God did not reveal Himself to a single individual. Rather, He spoke to the entire Jewish nation.

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Moses Commanded Us the Torah

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