

# The Commandments

During World War II, I was a soldier in the 140th Infantry Regiment of Patton's Army in the European Theater. As a soldier, almost overnight your thinking becomes far more directed toward philosophy, religion and survival. You are no longer that lighthearted individual that didn't seem to have a care in the world. Some estimate that the number of people killed in World War II reached sixty million. My reasoning and understanding of religion led me to question how such inhumanity could exist among people who were basically grounded in one form or another in the Commandments of the Old Testament. All supposedly prayed to the same God. The more serious the conditions of the fighting, the more seriously I examined my own conscience. Were the Commandments to be taken literally, or not?

Although I was only a PFC, the Army had assigned me as bandleader, and I was in charge of a group of musicians, many of whom had been wounded and sent back from the front. If their records showed that they had once been musicians, they were sent to my band rather than redeployed to the front lines. It was our job to entertain the troops wherever they may be.

One day in early December, the Colonel in charge of the 17th Replacement Depot issued orders that I take the band "on a Cook's tour." After driving a few miles we found a clearing in the woods where there were many G.I.s lining up in a chow line, so I had the driver stop the truck and we began to set up our instruments to play for these soldiers. Suddenly, a plane flew low over us. Hardly anyone paid attention because at this time the German air force had almost stopped reconnaissance. Then, one of the G.I.s shouted "Hey! That's a German plane, and he'll be coming back!" Everyone scrambled away from the clearing to find a protected position. We hastily climbed back into our truck and drove out of there. As there were no maps of this section with us, we chose the road that seemed most traveled. Unfortunately it was now growing dark. Our truck was not allowed to turn on the lights. We came to a soldier directing traffic, who, using a dim hooded light, waved us through. As we passed him, I realized that he was wearing a German helmet. I told our driver to go over the hill, and when he reached a point where we could not be seen, to turn around and pass by the soldier again at full speed.

Within a few miles we were stopped at a checkpoint. Now we faced American soldiers who did not believe my story that we were a G.I. band. While they were deciding among themselves what to do with us, the questioner held hand grenades with the pins pulled. Finally, they asked me for the password and that got us through the line. They explained that many of their fellow soldiers had been killed right at this point by German soldiers who spoke perfect English, were in an American truck and wearing G.I. uniforms. This was the beginning of what became known as the Battle of the Bulge. We drove back to almost empty headquarters, and by listening to a German radio broadcast realized that we were surrounded, and according to Axis Sally, we had lost the war. I vowed that if I survived, someday I would write a composition examining the Commandments. I was not able to form my thoughts into a composition at that moment in time. It took me over sixty years to finally put into a composition what I felt all those years ago when it was clear that all sides of the war were breaking one or all of the Commandments.

When I was interviewed in the former Soviet Union in 1987, I talked about how the governments that were in conflict should start examining the basic tenets of their culture and that our government should spend a lot of effort in the study and application of the Commandments. When Paul Schwendener, producer from the Millken Foundation that funded the recording of my "Gates of Justice," heard that I was composing a piece about the Commandments, he thought that it should be performed at Lincoln Center when the Jewish Heritage Foundation produced a concert of "The Gates of Justice." I told him that I would like to know if the Commandments were part of the Islamic tradition, as well as the Jewish and Christian. Intrigued by the question, he read several books on the Koran but found no mention of the Commandments. One day he reported that he had finally found what I was looking for. In one of the books he studied, believers were told they must follow the laws of Moses. Realizing the three great monotheistic religions of the world held these basic tenets in common motivated me to complete "The Commandments," a composition that I had wanted to write so long ago.

Dave Brubeck  
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Dave Brubeck (1920-2012)

A jazz pianist who is noted for his improvisational skills, Dave Brubeck is also the composer of many fully-notated works, including choral, hymns, orchestral, chamber music, ballet suites, a string quartet, solo pieces for piano, violin & voice, and large-scale works for chorus and orchestra. He has been designated a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress and a "Jazz Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts.

For more information, please visit [alfred.com](http://alfred.com).

# The Commandments

SSAATTBB with Optional Piano\*

Music by  
DAVE BRUBECK

Based on Exodus 20:1-22

*mf*  $\bullet = 80$

SOPRANO  
And God spoke all these words: I am the Lord thy

ALTO  
*mf* And God spoke all I am the Lord thy

TENOR  
*mf* And God spoke all these words: I am the Lord thy

BASS  
*mf* And God spoke all I am the Lord thy

KEYBOARD (optional)  
*mf*  $\bullet = 80$

5 *mf*

S God who brought you out of E - gypt Out of the land of

A God who brought you out of E - gypt Out of the land of

T God who brought you out of E - gypt of E-gypt Out of the land of

B God who brought you out of E - gypt Out of the land of

5

\*Optional parts for brass (4-3-3-1) , timpani and percussion available from Alfred Publishing

9

♩ = 100

S  
slave - ry.

A  
slave - ry. *f* Thou shalt

T  
slave - ry.

B  
slave - ry. *f* Thou shalt have no oth - er gods *mf* be - fore me. Thou shalt

9

♩ = 100

Piano accompaniment for measures 9-11, featuring chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

12

S  
*f* Thou shalt have no oth - er

A  
have no oth - er gods *mf* be - fore me. Thou shalt have thou shalt have

T  
—

B  
have no gods, have no gods, have no oth - er gods. — Thou shalt have thou shalt have

12

Piano accompaniment for measures 12-14, continuing the harmonic support for the vocal parts.

15 *mf*

S gods be - fore me. Thou shalt have thou shalt have gods be - fore me

A gods be - fore me. Thou shalt have thou shalt have gods be - fore me

T *f* Thou shalt have no oth - er gods be - fore me

B gods be - fore me. Thou shalt have no gods be - fore me

18

S have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er gods be - fore me. Thou shalt

A have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er gods be - fore me. Thou shalt

T *mf* have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er gods be - fore me.

B have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er gods be - fore me.

21

S have no oth - er\_\_\_ have no oth - er\_\_\_ gods be - fore me.

A have no oth - er\_\_\_ have no oth - er\_\_\_ gods\_\_\_ be - fore me. *f* Thou shalt

T have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er gods\_\_\_

B have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er have no oth - er gods\_\_\_

21

24

S

A not bow down and wor - ship them, *mp* thou shalt not bow down not bow down

T

B *f* Thou shalt not bow down and

24

27

S *f* Thou shalt

A not bow down to them— Thou shalt not bow down not bow down not bow down to wor - ship them.

T *f* Thou shalt not bow down and wor - ship them. *mp* Thou shalt

B *mp* wor - ship them— not bow down not bow down not bow down to wor - ship them.

27

30

S not bow down and wor - ship them. *f* Thou shalt not steal thou shalt not lie thou

A not bow wor - ship them. *f* Thou shalt not steal thou shalt not lie thou

T not bow down not bow down wor - ship them. *f* Thou shalt not steal thou shalt not lie thou

B not bow wor - ship them. *f* Thou shalt not steal thou shalt not lie thou

30

33

S shalt not give false wit - ness. *mf* And then

A shalt not give false wit - ness. *mf* And then

T shalt not give false wit - ness. *mf* And then God spoke all these

B shalt not give false wit - ness. *mf* And then God spoke all these words to Mos - es.

36

S God spoke all these words to Mos - es: *f* Thou shalt not mur - der!

A God spoke all these words to Mos - es: *f* Thou shalt not mur - der!

T words to Mos - es: *f* words to Mos - es: Thou shalt not mur - der!

B words to Mos - es: *f* words to Mos - es: Thou shalt not mur - der!

39

S Thou shalt not mur - der! Thou shalt not kill! *ff*

A Thou shalt not mur - der! Thou shalt not kill! *ff*

T Thou shalt not mur - der! Thou shalt not kill! *ff*

B Thou shalt not mur - der! Thou shalt not kill! *ff*

42 *Slower* ♩ = 72

S *mf* Keep my com - mand - ments: Thou shalt hon - or thy fa - ther and thy moth - er. Thou shalt *mp*

A *mf* Keep my com - mand - ments: Thou shalt hon - or thy fa - ther and thy moth - er. Thou shalt *mp*

T *mf* Keep my com - mand - ments: Thou shalt hon - or thy fa - ther and thy moth - er. Thou shalt *mp*

B *mf* Keep my com - mand - ments: Thou shalt hon - or thy fa - ther and thy moth - er. Thou shalt *mp*



45

S not take the name of the Lord in vain. Re - mem - ber the Sab - bath

A not take the name of the Lord in vain. Re - mem - ber the Sab - bath

T not take the name of the Lord in vain. Re - mem - ber the Sab - bath

B not take the name of the Lord in vain. Re - mem - ber the Sab bath

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

45

*mf*

48

S day to keep it ho - ly. Thou *mf* >

A day to keep it ho - ly. Thou shalt not com - mit a - dul - te - ry. Thou *mf* >

T day to keep it ho - ly. Thou shalt not com - mit a - dul - te - ry. Thou *mf* >

B day to keep it ho - ly. Thou shalt not com - mit a - dul - te - ry. Thou

*a tempo* ♩ = 100

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

48

*a tempo* ♩ = 100

*mf*

*mf*

51

S shalt not steal, thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not give false wit-ness.

A shalt not steal, thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not give false wit-ness.

T shalt not steal, thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not give false wit-ness. And then

B shalt not steal, thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not give false wit-ness. And then God spoke all these

51

54

S And then God spoke all these words to Mos-es:

A And then God spoke all these words to Mos-es:

T God spoke all these words to Mos-es. words to Mos-es:

B words to Mos-es. words to Mos-es. words to Mos-es:

54

## With Anger

57 *f* *pp* *mf* = 80

S Thou shalt not mur - der, Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt

A Thou shalt not mur - der, Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt

T Thou shalt not mur - der, Thou shalt not kill.

B Thou shalt not mur - der, Thou shalt not kill.

*f* *pp* *mf*

60

S not co - vet thy neigh - bor's house nor make for your-self an

A not co - vet thy neigh bor's house nor make for your-self an

T *mf* not co - vet thy neigh - bor's house nor make for your-self an

B *mf* not co - vet thy neigh - bor's house nor make for your-self an

60

63

S i - dol. For I the Lord your God \_\_\_\_\_ am a

A i - dol. For I the Lord your God \_\_\_\_\_ am a

T i - dol. For I \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ your God \_\_\_\_\_ am a

B i - dol. \_\_\_\_\_ Lord \_\_\_\_\_ your God \_\_\_\_\_ am a

63

66

S *f* jeal - ous *f* God. *mf* When the peo - ple saw the thun - der \_\_\_\_\_ and

A *f* jeal - ous *f* God. *mf* When the peo - ple saw the thun - der \_\_\_\_\_ and

T *f* jeal ous *f* God. *mf* > peo - ple saw the thun - der When the

B *f* jeal - ous *f* rou. *mf* > peo - ple saw the thun - der When the

66

69

S light - ning, and heard the long blast of the horn and

A light - ning, and heard the long blast of the horn and

T peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the

B peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the

69

S heard the trum - pet and saw the moun - tain in

A heard the trum - pet and saw the moun - tain in

T peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the

B peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the peo - ple saw the thun - der When the

72

72

75 *Slower*

S smoke, they trem-bled in fear. And God spoke all these words:

A smoke, they trem-bled in fear. And God spoke all

T peo-ple saw the thun-der When the peo-ple saw the thun-der God spoke all these words:

B peo-ple saw the thun-der When the peo-ple saw the thun-der God spoke all

75 *Slower*

78 *f* = 100

S I am the Lord thy God.

A I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not bow down and wor-ship i-dols

T I am the Lord thy God.

B I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not bow down and wor-ship i-dols

78 = 100

82

S  
not bow down not bow down not bow down to i - dols not bow

A  
not bow down not bow down not bow down to i - dols not bow down not bow down not bow

T  
not bow down not bow down not bow

B  
not bow down not bow down not bow down to i - dols not bow down not bow down not bow

85

S  
down to i - dols. Then the Lord said: Tell the Is - rael - ites this: You have

A  
down to i - dols. Then the Lord said: Tell the Is - rael - ites this: You have

T  
down to i - dols. Then the Lord said: Tell the Is - rael - ites this: You have

B  
down to i - dols. Then the Lord said: Tell the Is - rael - ites this: You have

85

88

S  
seen for your - selves that I have spo - ken to you \_\_\_\_\_ from

A  
seen for your - selves that I have spo - ken to you \_\_\_\_\_ from

T  
seen for your - selves that I have spo - ken to you, spo-ken to you from

B  
seen for your - selves that I have spo - ken to you, spo-ken to you from

91  $\text{♩} = 100$

S  
hea - ven. \_\_\_\_\_ Thou shalt have no oth - er gods \_\_\_\_\_ be - fore me.

A  
hea - ven. \_\_\_\_\_ Thou shalt have no oth - er gods be - fore me. Thou shalt

T  
hea - ven. \_\_\_\_\_ Thou shalt have no oth - er gods be - fore me. Thou shalt

B  
hea - ven. \_\_\_\_\_ Thou shalt have no oth - er gods be - fore me. Thou shalt

91  $\text{♩} = 100$



94

S *mp* When the

A not bow down and wor - ship them. *mp* When the

T not bow down and wor - ship them.

B not bow down and wor - ship them.

94 *mp*

96

S peo - ple saw the

A peo - ple saw the

T *mp* peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled

B *mp* peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled

96

97

S thun - der and light - ning.

A thun - der and light - ning.

T peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled peo - ple trem - bled and they

B peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled peo - ple trem - bled

mf

97

98

S peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled, smoke they trem - bled, trem - bled in fear. They

A peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled, smoke they trem - bled, trem - bled in fear. They

T saw the moun - tain in smoke they trem - bled in fear. They

B peo - ple saw the smoke they trem - bled, smoke they trem - bled, trem - bled in fear. They

mp

98

101

S stayed at a dis - tance and said un - to Mos - es: Speak to us your -

A stayed at a dis - tance and said un - to Mos - es: Speak to us your -

T stayed at a dis - tance and said un - to Mos - es: Speak to us your -

B stayed at a dis - tance and said un - to Mos - es: Speak to us your -

*mf*

104

S self and we will lis - ten, speak to us but do not let God speak to

A self and we will lis - ten, speak to us but do not let God speak to

T self and we will lis - ten, speak to us but do not let God speak to

B self and we will lis - ten, speak to us but do not let God speak to

*mf*

104

107 *rall.* *ff* *G.P.* *mp*  $\bullet = 80$

S us, or we will die! Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es to the peo-ple.

A us, or we will die! Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es to the peo-ple.

T *rall.* *ff* *G.P.* *mf* Mos - es said to the peo - ple:

B *rall.* *ff* *G.P.* *mf* Mos - es said to the peo - ple:

107 *rall.* *ff* *G.P.* *mf*  $\bullet = 80$

111 *f* Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es be a - fraid. Do not be a - fraid. God has come to

A Mos - es Mos - es Mos - es be a - fraid. Do not be a - fraid. God has come to

T *f* Do not be a - fraid God has come to

B *f* Do not be a - fraid God has come to

111 *f*

114

S test you. The fear of God. with you to keep you from

A test you. The fear of God. with you to keep you from

T test you. So that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from

B test you. The fear of God. with you to keep you from

117

S sin - ning. The peo - ple re - mained at a dis - tance while

A sin - ning. The peo - ple re - mained at a dis - tance while

T sin - ning. The peo - ple re - mained at a dis - tance while

B sin - ning. The peo - ple re - mained at a dis - tance while

*mp*

120

S Mos - es ap - proached the thick dark - ness where God *pp*

A Mos - es ap - proached the thick dark - ness where Ah *pp* (Alto 1 sing Tenor text)

T Mos - es ap - proached the thick dark - ness where God *pp*

B Mos - es ap - proached the thick dark - ness where God *pp*

123

S was. Then the Lord said to Mos - es: *mf*

A Ah Ah Ah *mf*

T was. Lord said to Mos - es: *mf*

B was. Lord said to Mos - es: *mf*

123



126 *f*

S Tell the Is - rael-ites this: You have seen for your-selves that I have spo-ken to

A Tell the Is - rael-ites this: You have seen for your-selves that I have spo-ken to

T Tell the Is - rael-ites this: You have seen for your-selves that I have spo-ken to

B Tell the Is - rael-ites this: You have seen for your-selves that I have spo-ken to

130 *mf*

S you from hea - ven. And God spoke all these words:

A you from hea - ven. And God spoke all

T you, spo-ken to you from hea - ven. And God spoke all these words:

B you, spo-ken to you from hea - ven. And God spoke all

133 *f*

S I am the Lord thy God \_\_\_\_\_ who brought you out of

A I am the Lord thy \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_ who brought you out of

T I am the Lord thy God \_\_\_\_\_ who brought you out of

B I am the Lord thy \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_ who brought you out of

136

S E - gypt, out of the land of slave - ry.

A E - gypt, out of the land of slave - ry.

T E - gypt, of E - gypt, out of the land of slave - ry.

B E - gypt, out of the land of slave - ry.



139 *f*

S Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments.

A Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments,

T Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments,

B Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments, Keep my com-mand-ments,

139 *f*

142 *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*

S I am the Lord your God show-ing love to a thou-sand gen-er-a-tions of

A I am the Lord your God show-ing love to a thou-sand gen-er-a-tions of

T I am the Lord your God show-ing love to a thou-sand gen-er-a-tions of

B I am the Lord your God show-ing love to a thou-sand gen-er-a-tions of

142 *mf* *cresc. poco a poco*

145

S those who love me and keep my com - mand - ments.

A those who love me and keep my com - mand - ments.

T those who love me and keep my com - mand - ments.

B those who love me and keep my com - mand - ments.

*Deliberate*

147

S *ff* Keep my com - mand - ments. *ppp* Keep my com - mand - ments.

A *ff* Keep my com - mand - ments. *ppp* Keep my com - mand - ments.

T *ff* Keep my com - mand - ments. *ppp* Keep my com - mand - ments.

B *ff* Keep my com - mand - ments. *ppp* Keep my com - mand - ments.

*Deliberate*

147

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