

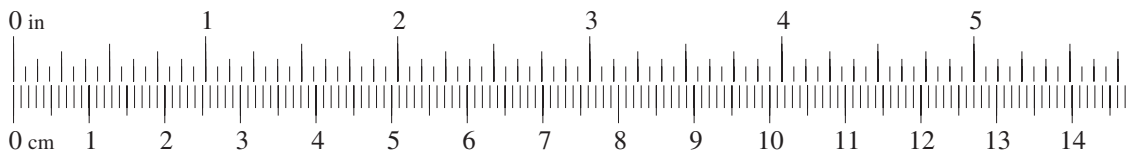
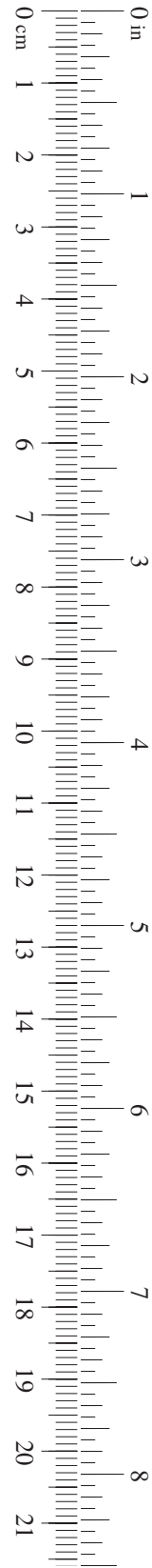
10 hand it on to thy sons, and thy sons' sons, the memory of that day when thou didst stand in the Lord's presence at mount Horeb. Summon the whole people, the Lord said to me, so that they may hear these words of mine, and learn, and teach their children after them, to fear me all their life long. And you, as you came close to the spurs of the mountain, found it sending up flames high as heaven, all wreathed in darkness and cloud and mist. From the heart of those flames the Lord spoke to you, so that you could hear his voice, but had no vision of his form. He told you of his covenant, that you were to keep; uttered ten warnings, which he wrote down on two stone tablets; bade me, at that same time, hand on to you the observances and decrees you were to follow in the land that should one day be your home.

15 Be watchful, then, at the peril of your lives. When the Lord spoke to you from the heart of the flame on mount Horeb, there was no outward shape you saw. And will you be deluded into carving some outward image or likeness, of man or woman, of beasts that roam on the earth or birds that fly in the air, of creeping things on land or fish that dwell in the waters, down at the roots of earth? Wilt thou be led astray as thou lookest up at the sky, at sun and moon and all the host of stars, into making gods of them, worshipping those creatures which the Lord thy God has made, to be the common drudges of every nation under heaven?¹ Why else did the Lord choose you out, deliver you from Egypt's furnace of iron, but to make you a people all his own, as you are this day?

21 What though I, through your fault, have incurred the Lord's anger, so that he has sworn never to let me cross Jordan, and see the fair land he means to give you? What though I must die here, still on Jordan's further bank? You will cross over it; that fair land will be yours. Never forget, then, the covenant the Lord thy God has made with thee; never fashion thyself those images the Lord has forbidden thee to fashion; the Lord thy God is a fire that burns all before it, loves thee with a jealous love. Sons will spring from you, and beget sons in their turn; what if you should go astray, when you have been long settled in the land, fashion yourselves some idol, and rouse the Lord your God to indignation at the sight of your evil-doing? I call heaven and earth to witness this day; the land which now lies within your grasp, beyond Jordan, will soon be yours no longer. Your enjoyment of it will be cut short, and the Lord will make an end of you, scattering you over the world and leaving but a few of you to live in a land of exile, where you must needs worship the gods which men's hands have made, things of wood and stone that cannot see or hear, cannot taste or smell. There, if thou wilt have recourse to the Lord thy God, if thou wilt but have recourse to him with all thy heart, in the bitterness of thy tribulation, thou wilt find him again. Yes, when all these threats have come home to thee, thou wilt turn back to the Lord thy God at last, and listen to his voice. The Lord thy God is a God of mercy; he will not forsake thee, will not utterly destroy thee, and will not forget the sworn covenant he made with thy fathers.

32 Search the history of the days that went before thee, far back as the time when God made man on the earth, wide as earth's end from earth's end; is there any other record of such happenings? That a people should hear the voice of God speaking out of the heart of the flames, as thou didst, and live to tell of it? That God should

¹ 'The common drudges'; this is the sense of the Latin, but the Hebrew text has 'which the Lord thy God has assigned to all the nations under heaven'. Some would interpret this as a paradoxical expression, the sense of which is only made clear if we add the words 'for their worship'.



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