

DAY BY DAY

Bible Texts and Topics, With Comments,
For Personal Study and Use at Family Worship.

2.10: THE COMMANDMENTS

1. THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:8-11.

“I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” Ezekiel 20:12.

“The importance of the Sabbath as a memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God,”-because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. “The Sabbath, therefore, lies at the very foundation of divine worship; for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.” J. N. Andrews, “History of the Sabbath,” chapter 27.

“It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden. And so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, “Him that made heaven; and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments, will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.” The Great Controversy, 438.

“The Sabbath is ever the sign that distinguishes the obedient from the disobedient. With masterly power Satan has worked to make null and void the fourth commandment, that the sign of God may be lost sight of. The Christian world have trodden underfoot the Sabbath of the Lord, and observe a Sabbath instituted by the enemy. But God has a people who are loyal to Him. His work is to be carried forward in right lines. The people who bear His sign are to establish churches and institutions as memorials to Him. These memorials, however humble in appearance, will constantly bear witness against the false Sabbath instituted by Satan, and in favor of the Sabbath instituted by the Lord in Eden, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Testimonies 7, 105.

2. THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

“Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exodus 20:12.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the

earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Ephesians 6:1-4.

"This is the first commandment with promise. It is binding upon childhood and youth, upon the middle aged and the aged. There is no period in life when children are excused from honoring their parents. This solemn obligation is binding upon every son and daughter, and is one of the conditions to their prolonging their lives upon the land which the Lord will give the faithful. This is not a subject unworthy of notice, but a matter of vital importance. The promise is upon condition of obedience. If you obey, you shall live long in the land which the Lord thy God gives you. If you disobey, you shall not prolong your life in that land." Testimonies 2, 80, 81.

"Fathers and mothers, speak kindly to your children, remember how sensitive you are, how little you can bear to be blamed; reflect, and know that your children are like you. That which you cannot bear, do not lay upon them. If you cannot bear censure and blame, neither can your children, who are weaker than you, and cannot endure as much. Let your pleasant, cheerful words ever be like sunbeams in your family. The fruits of self-control, thoughtfulness, and painstaking on your part, will be a hundred fold." Testimonies 1, 401.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou may live long on the [new] earth." "Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." Children who dishonor and disobey their parents, and disregard their advice and instructions, can have no part in the earth made new. The purified new earth will be no place for the rebellious, the disobedient, the ungrateful son or daughter. Unless such learn obedience and submission here, they will never learn it; the peace of the ransomed will not be marred by disobedient, unruly, unruly children. No commandment breaker can inherit the kingdom of heaven." Testimonies 1, 497, 498.

"Parents are entitled to a degree of love and respect which is due to no other person. God Himself, who has placed upon them a responsibility for the souls committed to their charge, has ordained that during the earlier years of life, parents shall stand in the place of God to their children. And he who rejects the rightful authority of his parents, is rejecting the authority of God. The fifth commandment requires children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age. It also enjoins respect for ministers and rulers, and for all others to whom God has delegated authority." Patriarchs and Prophets, 308.

3. THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

"Thou shall not kill." Exodus 20:13.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca [margin, vain fellow], shall be in danger of the council. But whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Matthew 5:21-24.

"The spirit of hatred and revenge originated with Satan; and it led him to put to death the Son of God. Whoever cherishes malice or unkindness is cherishing the same spirit; and its fruit will be unto death. In the revengeful thought the evil deed lies enfolded, as the plant in the seed. "Whosoever hates his

brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." I John 3:15." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 89, 90.

"One who becomes a party to the least injustice is breaking the law, and degrading his own moral nature. Murder first exists in the mind. He who gives hatred a place in his heart is setting his feet in the path of the murderer, and his offerings are abhorrent to God.

"The Jews cultivated a spirit of retaliation. In their hatred of the Romans they gave utterance to hard denunciations, and pleased the wicked one by manifesting his attributes. Thus they were training themselves to do the terrible deeds to which he led them on. In the religious life of the Pharisees there was nothing to recommend piety to the Gentiles. Jesus bade them not to deceive themselves with the thought that they could in heart rise up against their oppressors, and cherish the longing to avenge their wrongs.

"It is true there is an indignation that is justifiable, even in the followers of Christ. When they see that God is dishonored, and His service brought into disrepute; when they see the innocent oppressed, a righteous indignation stirs the soul. Such anger, born of sensitive morals, is not a sin. But those who at any supposed provocation feel at liberty to indulge anger or resentment, are opening the heart to Satan. Bitterness and animosity must be banished from the soul if we would be in harmony with heaven." The Desire of Ages, 310.

"A selfish neglect of caring for the needy or suffering; all self-indulgence or unnecessary deprivation or excessive labor that tends to injure health, all these are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment." Patriarchs and Prophets, 308.

4. THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

"Thou shall not commit adultery. Exodus 20:14.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matthew 5:27, 28.

"When the thought of evil is loved and cherished, however secretly, said Jesus, it shows that sin still reigns in the heart. The soul is still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. He who finds pleasure in dwelling upon scenes of impurity, who indulges the evil thought, the lustful look, may behold in the open sin, with its burden of shame and heartbreaking grief, the true nature of the evil which he has hidden in the chambers of the soul. The season of temptation, under which, it may be, one falls into grievous sin, does not create the evil that is revealed, but only develops or makes manifest that which was hidden and latent in the heart. As a man "thinks in his heart, so is he;" for out of the heart "are the issues of life." Proverbs 23:7; 4:23." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 94.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence," is the counsel of the wise man; "for out of it are the issues of life." As man "thinks in his heart, so is he." The heart must be renewed by divine grace, or it will be in vain to seek for purity of life. He who attempts to build up a noble, virtuous character independent of the grace of Christ, is building his house upon the shifting sand. In the fierce storms of temptation it will surely be overthrown. David's prayer should be the petition of every soul: "Create in me a dean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." And having become partakers of the heavenly gift, we are to go on unto perfection, being "kept by the power of God, through faith." . . .

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." Nature has affixed terrible penalties to these crimes, penalties which, sooner or later, will be inflicted upon every transgressor. It is these sins more than any other that have caused the fearful degeneracy of our race, and the weight of disease and

misery with which the world is cursed. Men may succeed in concealing their transgression from their fellow men, but they will no less surely reap the result, in suffering, disease, imbecility, or death. And beyond this life stands the tribunal of the judgment, with its award of eternal penalties. "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God, but with Satan and evil angels shall have their part in that "lake of fire" which "is the second death." - Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 460, 461.

"This commandment forbids not only acts of impurity, but sensual thoughts and desires, or any practice that tends to excite them. Purity is demanded not only in the outward life, but in the secret intents and emotions of the heart. Christ, who taught the far reaching obligation of the law of God, declared the evil thought or look to be as truly sin as is the unlawful deed." Patriarchs and Prophets 308,

5. THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

"Thou shall not steal." Exodus 20:15.

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Ephesians 4:28.

"The Lord sees all the dealings of brother with brother, which weaken faith, and which destroy their own confidence in themselves as men dealing with justice and equity. In the most positive language He expresses His displeasure at the iniquity practiced in trade. He says, "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" Testimonies to Ministers, 372.

"The custom of overreaching in trade, which exists in the world, is no example for Christians. They should not deviate from perfect integrity, even in small matters. To sell an article for more than it is worth taking advantage of the ignorance of purchasers, is fraud. Unlawful gains, petty tricks of trade, exaggeration, competition, underselling a brother who is seeking to pursue an honest business, these things are corrupting the purity of the church, and are ruinous to her spirituality....

"Satan has been the adviser of some. He tells them if they would prosper, they must hearken to his counsel. "Do not be over conscientious in regard to honor or honesty; look out sharply for your own interest, and do not be carried away with pity, softness, and generosity. You need not care for the widow and the fatherless. Do not encourage them to look to you and depend on you; leave them to look out for themselves. Do not inquire whether they have food, or if you can bless them with thoughtful, kindly attention. Take care of yourself. Get all into your hands that you can. Rob the widow and the fatherless, and turn away the stranger from his right, and you will have means to supply your various wants."

"Some have heeded this counselor, and despised Him who has said, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Testimonies 4, 494, 495.

"Both public and private sins are included in this prohibition. The eighth commandment condemns man-stealing and slave dealing, and forbids wars of conquest. It condemns theft and robbery. It demands strict integrity in the minutest details of the affairs of life. It forbids overreaching in trade, and requires the payment of just debts or wages. It declares, that every attempt to advantage one's self by the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another, is registered as fraud in the books of heaven." Patriarchs and Prophets, 309.

6. THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

"Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Exodus 20:16. "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape." Proverbs 19:5.

“Men may think to hide their evil deeds from human eyes; but they cannot deceive God. “All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” Hebrews 4:13. Gehazi thought to deceive Elisha, but God revealed to His prophet the words that Gehazi had spoken to Naaman, and every detail of the scene between the two men.

“Truth is of God; deception in all its myriad forms is of Satan; and whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth, is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one. Those who have learned of Christ will “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.” Ephesians 5:11. In speech, as in life, they will be simple, straightforward, and true; for they are preparing for the fellowship of those holy ones in whose mouth is found no guile. (See Revelation 14:5)” Prophets and Kings, 252.

“If matters of difficulty between brethren were not laid open before others, but frankly spoken of between themselves, in the spirit of Christian love, how much evil might be prevented! How many roots of bitterness whereby many are defiled would be destroyed, and how closely and tenderly might the followers of Christ be united in His love!”

“Is it worth while that we jostle a brother Bearing his load on the rough road of life?

Is it worth while that we jeer at each other In blackness of heart?

That we war to the knife? God pity us all in our pitiful strife.

“Were it not well, in this brief little journey, On over the isthmus, down into the tide,

We give him a fish instead of a serpent,

Ere folding the hands to be and abide Forever and aye in the dust by his side.”

“False speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectively as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression. even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead. is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment.” Patriarchs and Prophets, 309.

7. THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

“Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.” Exodus 20:17.

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.” Colossians 3:4-7.

“The words and law of God, written in the soul, and exhibited in a consecrated, holy life, have a powerful influence to convict the world. Covetousness, which is idolatry, and envy, and love of the world, will be rooted from the hearts of those who are obedient to Christ, and it will be their pleasure to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God! The law of God, if written in the heart, will bring the mind and will into subjection to the obedience of Christ.

“Our faith is peculiar. Many who profess to be living under the sound of the last message of mercy, are not separated in their affections from the world. They bow down before the friendship of the world, and sacrifice light and principle to secure its favor. The apostle describes the favored people of God in these

words: "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. That you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." Testimonies 3, 201.

"One marked feature in the teachings of Christ, is the frequency and earnestness with which He rebuked the sin of covetousness, and pointed out the danger of worldly acquisitions and inordinate love of gain. In the mansions of the rich, in the temple and in the streets, he warned those who inquired after salvation, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." "You cannot serve God and mammon."

"It is this increasing devotion to money getting, the selfishness which the desire for gain begets, that removes the favor of God from the church and deadens its spirituality. When the head and hands are constantly occupied with planning and toiling for the accumulation of riches, the claims of God and humanity are forgotten. If God has blessed us with prosperity, it is not that our time and attention should be diverted from Him and given to that which He has lent us. The giver is greater than the gift. We are not our own; we have been bought with a price. Have we forgotten that infinite price paid for our redemption? Is gratitude dead in the heart? Does not the cross of Christ put to shame a life of selfish case and indulgence?" Testimonies 4, 82.

"The tenth commandment strikes at the very root of all sins, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act. He who in obedience to God's law refrains from, indulging even a sinful desire for that which belongs to another, will not be guilty of an act of wrong toward his fellow creatures." Patriarchs and Prophets, 309.