

STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

OF THE

TEN COMMANDMENTS.

FOR THE YOUNG.

BY REV. JONATHAN CROSS.



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STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE
TEN COMMANDMENTS.



DEAR CHILDREN—When you see a very dark cloud in the sky, and hear the

thunder so loud that the house shakes, and just before you hear the noise of the thunder you see the forked lightnings flashing in every direction, you are filled with awe. Now suppose that, instead of this loud rumbling noise, the thunder should utter words which you could understand, would you not listen attentively to hear what they were? And suppose you knew it was the voice of the great God that made the world and the sun, moon, and stars, would you not be very much alarmed? I know you would be. Yes, I have no doubt you would try to run away and hide, for fear of him.

But suppose these words that he spoke were rules to direct you in every thing you had to do, and that by following their directions you could become good and happy, would you not listen to them, and try to remember them? Well, we have just such rules *in the Bible, given*

very much in that way. But for fear you have not thought as much about the way this law was given to us as you should have done, I will tell you about it; and I want you to open your Bibles and read the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Exodus, where Moses tells us all about it, by God's direction.

The children of Israel, like all other men, had very bad memories for that which is good; and God saw that he must write his law so that they could see it with their eyes, as well as hear it with their ears. You know they seem to have forgotten how God brought them through the Red sea, and drowned the Egyptians when they tried to follow them. And when they murmured about having no water or meat, he made a rock pour out water for them to drink, and rained on their camp a shower of quails to feed them: and still they had

forgotten all, and would not trust God. So, to prevent them from forgetting his law, he delivered it in the midst of an awful tempest of thunder and lightning, from mount Sinai, that they might not forget it. No one but Moses was allowed to go up on the mountain; and to prevent the people from coming nigh, God told Moses to set bounds and guards at a certain distance around the mountain, which they could not pass.

Oh, what a wonderful sight it was to see the whole top of the mountain in a fiery cloud, with the lightnings flashing in every direction and the thunder shaking the ground! In reading the Bible account of it, I can almost see the thousands of men, women, and children standing, pale and trembling with fear, when all at once the voice of God proclaims, "I AM THE LORD THY GOD, WHICH HAVE BROUGHT THEE OUT OF THE LAND OF

EGYPT, OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE.” Surely a law that has been so solemnly given will claim your attention; for God has said, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them.”

I want to tell you all I can about this law of God. These rules God has given to guide you. They are called God's **TEN COMMANDMENTS**. The first four teach us our duty to God, and the other six our duty to each other.

When Adam and Eve were made and placed in the garden of Eden, they were solemnly charged not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree in the midst of the garden, which was called the “tree of knowledge of good and evil.” But they broke that plain and easy command; they ate the forbidden fruit, and were driven out of the garden for doing it; and it was by breaking this one command that sick-

ness, sorrow, and death were brought on us and all the children of men. All this shows us what a dreadful thing it is to break any commandment of God.

When God came down on mount Sinai, it was wrapped in a cloud, from which the lightnings were flashing and the thunders roaring, and a trumpet sounding long and loud. He told Moses to come up with two flat stones, which he had hewed out and made smooth. And God not only uttered this law with a loud voice, but he wrote it on those stones with his own finger. He wrote it not only for Moses and the children of Israel, but for you and me; and in the day of judgment, when this world is on fire and burnt up, you and I shall be judged by this very law. Surely, if we are to be judged by this law, we ought to try to understand it now, and do all that God requires us to do.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

THOU shalt have no other gods before me.

Now, my dear children, I hardly know how to help you to understand this short commandment; but let us try.

Two little boys were sitting one day beside their mother, talking with her and asking her questions. One of them asked her, "How many gods are there?" The other replied, "Why, brother, there is only one; for God fills every place, and there is no room for any more." This was a very good answer. The great God that gave Moses this Commandment, was not only on mount Sinai when he wrote and spoke it, but he was in every place, all over this world and all other worlds, as well as in heaven.

A little girl was once told by her

mother that God saw every thing and every body at the same time. "Why," said the little girl, "God must be all eyes."

These two little anecdotes tell you a great deal about God. God is in every place, and sees you and me and every body else at the same time. There is one thing I want you always to remember about God, and it is this: he is so great that he fills the heavens and the earth, and yet he can dwell in your little heart. This is the God who tells us we must have no other gods before him; and I suppose you all agree with me that this is the only God we ought to worship. In other passages of Scripture we read, "Thou shalt know no God but me." "Thou art the God, even thou alone." "This God is our God for ever and ever." "I will extol thee my God, O King, and I will bless thy name for ever and ever."

But a great many people set other gods before this great and only true God, who is everywhere, and made the world and all that is in it. And I am very much afraid that some of you have set other gods before this great and good God that made you. What do you love most? Stop and think. Whatever you love most is your god. Some little boys love kites, marbles, dogs, or horses, and even tobacco more than any thing else in the universe; and some little girls love pretty clothes best, or dolls, or kittens, or other playthings. All such break this First Commandment; for God has told us we must worship the Lord our God, and him only we must serve. All who love father or mother, sister or brother, money or pleasure, more than God, break this Commandment.

Suppose you were to see a little boy or girl that had very kind, good par-

ents, run away from them and take up with some other man and woman not half so good ; do n't you think it would both grieve and offend those parents? I know you would say such parents would do right to punish their runaway child, and never give him any thing more unless he returned. Well, God is your Father ; and will it not be just for God to punish you for running after other things, instead of loving and obeying him?

Whenever you see any person or thing you love very much, or get any thing you wish for, stop and think, Do I love this more than God? If so, then I set it before God, or it comes between me and God, and I am a breaker of this First Commandment.

Now this great God, whom we are commanded to love above every thing else, says he is "a jealous God," and is very much displeased with us for

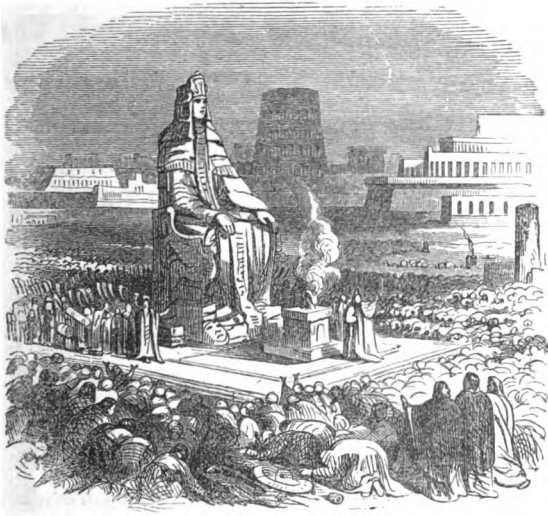
having any other god. Do n't you want God for your friend? I know you do. Then remember this law; beg him for Christ's sake to forgive you for breaking it, as you have always done, and to help you love him with all your heart. They that love God will dwell with him in heaven. But if you neglect to obey this Commandment, and set your heart's best love on other things, God will disown you and drive you away from his presence in the day of judgment. All those other things that you have loved and served more than God, will then be gone for ever.

Those that will not love and serve God here, will not have any thing to love in the world to come. In hell all is hatred. Devils hate God and each other. Bad boys and girls that break this law and go to hell, will likewise hate God and each other. In heaven

all is love. God is love. Holy angels love God and each other; and all the good people that have loved God and kept these commandments, will for ever love God and each other. I want you to make this promise to yourself:

Resolved, that I will from this very hour try to set my heart on God above every thing else, and that I will daily pray to God for grace to enable me to do it.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.



THOU shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or

that is in the water under the earth : thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them : for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me ; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

LET us now try, dear children, and see what lessons of instruction we can learn from this long Commandment. I think I hear some little boy or girl saying, "There is nothing in this Commandment that hits me, any how. I do n't worship idol gods, made of wood or stone." But stop and let us look at it, before you plead innocence. You know the First Commandment forbids you to worship false gods, the sun, or moon, or stars, or any other

creature, in the place of God. This Second Commandment forbids you to worship the true God *in a false manner*. He is a pure Spirit whom men cannot see; and hence we cannot make any thing like him, and we must not attempt it.

Suppose some boy or girl should try to make a picture or image of you, and instead of being like you, it should be an ugly deformed object that you could not bear to look at, would you not be very much displeased? And is not this great and infinite God, that made the heavens and the earth, offended when any one tries to make an image of him out of gold or silver, wood or stone, or to paint any thing like him on paper or canvas? No person living has ever seen God, and any attempt to make any thing like him can only produce an ugly caricature, that is an open insult to him.

But you may ask me, How shall I

pray to or worship One whom I cannot see ?

Suppose you were shut up in a room so dark that you could not see your hand; would that prevent you from loving your father and mother, and crying out for them ? If it was in their power to help you, the darkness would not prevent them from doing it. And if you had their picture beside you, and could see it, would that relieve your wants, or enable you to cry out to any better advantage ? Certainly not.

Why then should we attempt to make any likeness of God to enable us to worship him ? God is a Spirit, all around us and everywhere ; we never speak a word but God hears it, and we never do any thing but God sees it ; and every attempt to make any thing like God is as vain as it would be to paint the likeness of the universe. So every thing made out of gold,

silver, brass, wood, or stone, and every painting made to represent God, and used to excite devotional feeling, is a violation of this Commandment, and a direct insult to God.

You have read in the Bible about the Israelites, in one of their battles with the Philistines, taking the ark of God out into the battle-field. You know this ark was holy, and the two tables of stone containing the Ten Commandments were put into it. The Israelites were defeated, and the Philistines took the ark and put it in a temple where they had a great image called Dagon. But when they went in the next morning, poor Dagon had fallen down before the ark, and his hands were broken off on the floor. Thus God showed his displeasure with them for placing the ark before an idol god.

It seems very strange, after all God has said in this Commandment, as well

as in many other places in the Bible, that any body can be found so ignorant as to worship idols.

But let us examine and see if there are not a great many who in other ways break this Commandment.

All that use images and pictures to aid them in the worship of God break this Commandment; for God has said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath." You see, the making of any thing of the kind, for purposes of worship, is sin; and we cannot bow down to it without in some way making God like it in our own minds. In making or worshipping such idols, we should be guilty of idolatry.

You will see, by reading the thirty-second chapter of Exodus, how God punished the Israelites for this very sin.

Even while Moses was up on the mount, receiving this law from God, the people made a golden calf, and worshipped it. And as Moses was coming down the mount, he heard them singing and shouting, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt;" and God was so angry with them that he commanded the Levites to slay them, and three thousand were slain in one day. Was it not enough to make God angry with them to see them worship him in the form of a golden calf? To represent Him who fills heaven and earth by the image of a poor dumb brute! what greater insult could they have offered him?

Another way in which some become idolaters is by imagining or having in their minds some likeness of God while they are praying to him. When I was a little boy saying my prayers, I used to

do this; but this Commandment forbids even this. I do not mean that you are not to adore the incarnate Son of God as he appeared after his resurrection, and think of all He did and suffered as God-man to save your soul. He was God, and you may and must adore him when you see him with his pierced side and wounded hands, as Thomas did.

The Scriptures alone are to be your guide in the manner of worshipping God, and not the silly inventions of men. God is your Creator, and he alone has the right to direct you how to worship him. He has given you the Bible, containing rules to guide you in every duty you owe to him, as well as to men. How easy it is to worship God wherever you may be, knowing that if you pray in Christ's name to Him who seeth in secret, He will hear you and answer you openly.

An Irishman was once asked by a

priest why he did not come to confession. The poor man said to the priest, "Does your reverence ever go to confession?" "Yes," said the priest, "I do." "And do you pay any thing?" "Yes, I confess to the rector, and pay him." "And whom does the rector confess to?" "To the bishop." "And where does the bishop go to confess?" "To the vicar-general." "And whom does he confess to?" "Why, of course to the pope." "And whom does the pope confess to?" "Why, to Jesus Christ." "And does he charge any thing?" "No." "Well, please your reverence, as I am very poor, I think I had better go to Jesus Christ at once." This is the only way for every sinner to do: go right to Christ, without images, pictures, or priests, for he is both able and willing to save.

But there is one thing said in this Commandment that troubles some children

very much. The writer knew a little boy who had a very bad father; and when he was learning this Commandment at school, he said, "It is of no use for me to be good; for every body says my father is a very bad man, and this Commandment says God will visit his sins on me." This boy did not read his Bible right. God says he will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation *of them that hate him*; that is, when the children hate him as their fathers did. But not on the children if they serve God; as he says in the last clause, "showing mercy unto thousands" of those very children who have bad fathers, if the children love God and keep his commandments. The troubles their wicked parents bring on good children, God will overrule for the children's good.

But to a certain extent, dear children,

this part of the Commandment is true in the very way this little boy understood it. If you have a drunken father, and he becomes very poor by his drunkenness, you will suffer by it; and if you live to become a man, and a poor drunken, useless man, your children will be poor too; and just as long as the sons follow the bad example of their father, so long will the sins of the father follow all their generations. Now, children, what stronger motive do you need to be good than this? It teaches you the danger of a bad example to those you leave behind you; and children follow a bad example more readily than a good one.

I suppose you understand now what this part of this Commandment means, and I do hope you will never forget it. If any of you have bad fathers or mothers, be sure not to follow their evil example, and the threatening contained in

this Commandment will never affect your standing in God's sight.

The lesson we are to learn from this Commandment is, that God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. That we must not substitute any thing in God's place. That he is "jealous" of having any rival in the hearts of any of his creatures. That it is dishonoring God to attempt to make any thing like him, or to use any of our own or other people's inventions in worshipping him. Idolatrous worship degrades all that engage in it; but worshipping God in spirit and in truth raises up our poor fallen humanity into union with him.

Resolve now to become worshippers of this pure and holy God; and may he help you to do it, is my earnest prayer.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.



THOU shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the

Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

You see the first half of this Commandment tells you what you shall not do, and the other half the certainty of God's punishing those who break it. This is one of the most heaven-daring sins you can commit. Those who can trifle with the name of the great God of heaven and earth are ready to commit almost any other crime.

Suppose you should hear some boy calling over your father's name in a light and trifling way, that would lead other boys and girls to do the same thing, would you not be very much offended? And suppose he should still go on doing it, notwithstanding all your expostulations; and that when he told a lie, he should bring in your father's name to prove it, how indignant you would be at

this abuse of your dear father's name. You would feel that the boy ought to be severely punished. Well, this is what God means when he says he will not hold them guiltless who take his name in vain.

There are few sins that harden a boy's heart more than the sin of swearing. I think boys cannot practise swearing for any length of time without showing it in their faces. Their faces become hard and rough looking; their eyes become wicked and fiery in their appearance; and they soon begin to seem, to those who see and hear them blaspheming, like children of the Evil One. And this sin is generally associated with another, and that is lying: boys that talk profanely will lie; and most of those that are great liars are profane.

Swearing is the most unprofitable sin you can be guilty of; it is really working for the devil and finding yourself.

So far as this world is concerned it is a dead loss. Very few good men will have a boy about their houses that will swear, and certainly nobody would have a girl that was profane. Children that fall into this habit of using God's name in vain are despised by all respectable people, not only because it is so horrid a sin itself, but because it is so linked in with other sins and vices; and no honest men will have children about them on whom they cannot depend. If any of my little readers are guilty of this awful sin against God, I beseech them to stop it at once, and never swear another oath.

But, my dear children, swearing is not the only way of taking God's name in vain. All that use God's name in a thoughtless manner break this Third Commandment. When little boys or girls kneel down to say the Lord's prayer, without thinking what they are saying,

they are taking the Lord's name in vain. Suppose one of your playmates was to pay you a visit, and begin to tell you how much he loved you, and to ask you for some favor, and you knew all the time he was thinking of something else, and did not love you at all; would you not be displeased, and send him away? Remember, then, that every time you pray in a thoughtless manner you take God's name in vain, and break this Commandment.

So every time you read the Bible in a heedless way, you take God's name in vain. Suppose some kind friend should send you a letter, in which he promised you a great many good things, and that friend should learn that you read his letter in a careless manner, without thinking about him or caring for the good things he promised you, would he not be offended? He certainly would, and

would be very apt not to give you what he had promised. Or suppose you were shut up for some crime in a dungeon, from which it was impossible for you to escape, and some kind friend should write to you about a plan he had devised by which you might be released, and you should read it over without ever thinking of that friend or caring for his kind offers, would he not be justly offended at you? You are here in a world that is full of sins and dangers, and God has written very plain directions how you may escape them all at last; and whenever you sit down to read God's directions and hear him speak with you about your soul without thanking him, or laying his great kindness to heart, you are wickedly trifling with God and taking his name in vain.

Another way in which many take the name of the Lord in vain, is by repeating the profane words of others. They

have heard some one tell a story in which the name of the holy God is thus used ; and when they repeat the story they use the same profane words they heard when it was told to them. This is taking God's name in vain. Some boys think it makes them look big to tell these profane stories. The only way it makes them look big is, by making them big sinners for trifling with the holy name of God. Too many men, even good men, sin in this way.

But I am afraid that many of my little readers break this Commandment in singing those beautiful hymns in which the name of God and Jesus Christ his Son are so often used, while they do not feel what they sing, and are perhaps looking about and laughing. Now all such are guilty of taking God's name in vain ; and unless they cease to do it and repent of their sins, God will not permit them to enter his holy place.

This Commandment, dear children, requires "a holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works." Give unto the Lord the glory due to his name. Never use his name in the same way you would the name of a man or woman, but always think how sinful it is to trifle with this great God who made you, and could crush you in a moment.

This Commandment also forbids the profaning or abusing of any thing whereby God makes himself known. It forbids all perversion of Scripture, or using it in conversation to make diversion. This is as sinful as to use it in oaths. No one can rightly honor God's word who attaches ridiculous associations to any portion of it, or suggests them to the minds of others.

Another way in which many break this Commandment is when they solemnly

call upon him to take notice that they speak the truth as witnesses before courts and magistrates. Multitudes sin by making this appeal to God heedlessly and irreverently. And many add to this the sin of *perjury*, or lying when thus under oath. This is one of the most awful ways of taking God's name in vain, and we fear that few that do it ever repent and are saved.

Perhaps no other sin has been so uniformly condemned by all good men as profane swearing. The good and great Washington said in his public orders to his army, "The General hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it; and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have but little hope of the blessing of heaven on our arms, if we insult God by our impiety and folly. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, that

every man of sense and character despises it." All that wish to avoid being classed with the low and vulgar, must avoid this God-insulting practice.

The breaking of this Commandment is often followed by some punishment inflicted in this world by God himself. He said to his chosen people, "If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD, then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful." Deut. 28 : 58, 59. Human laws may take no notice of this sin, but God takes notice, and will punish those who are guilty of it.

I knew a boy who became very profane, and all cautions and reproofs only made him worse ; and because I forbade a little nephew of mine to go in his company, he threatened that when he be-

came a man he would whip me for it. But when he was nineteen years old he died ; and for three weeks before his death, he lay cursing his pains and the good Being that sent them on him. His oaths and blasphemies were so awful that few could enter his room ; and the evening he died, he said the devils were tearing his heart out. So dreadful was the scene, that every one had to leave the room, and he died alone.

Another boy whom I had to turn out of school for swearing, one Sabbath morning swore he would catch a squirrel that he saw on a tree. He climbed up the tree after it, fell and broke his neck, and never spoke again. Was not this an awful way to die?

You may be a profane swearer, and not die the way either of these boys did. But you may die as bad a death, or worse ; and if you die a swearer, you will certainly

be punished as a blasphemer in the other world. Never take God's name in vain ; if you do he will not hold you guiltless.

Now, my dear children, promise God that you will never take his name in vain by swearing ; that you will never read his word in a thoughtless manner ; that you will never offer the Lord's prayer or any other prayer, nor sing those beautiful hymns in which his name is used, except in a reverent manner ; that you will never use the holy names of God in any light, trifling conversation, nor in any other way be guilty of breaking this Commandment.

If you do not take this advice, it will only add to your guilt in that dreadful day when you must stand before his awful bar. May God save you from this awful sin, is my earnest prayer.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.



REMEMBER the Sabbath-day to
keep it holy. Six days shalt thou

labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, 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.

MY DEAR CHILDREN—This is another long Commandment, and very hard for some folks to keep. The first clause of it says, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," or as a day set apart to the honor of the holy God, and to be spent in holy exercises. God, by bless-

ing the day, has made it holy; and we, by solemnly serving him, must keep it holy, and not use any part of the day for our own sinful pleasures, or for doing those secular things that would be lawful on other days of the week.

Now I know by experience that this is very hard for little boys and girls to do. To spend a day reading God's word, thinking about God, and worshipping him, is no easy matter for most children; and why is it so hard for us to do it? Simply because we have very bad hearts, and don't love God. If there are any child-angels in heaven, I have no doubt that they are able to keep not only one day in seven holy to the Lord, but every day in the year, if time were measured by years there; and the reason is they have holy hearts, and all their enjoyments are in serving God. But our hearts are very wicked, and

do n't love this pure and holy God: and for this reason we do n't love to keep his day holy.

A little boy once said to his mother, "Mother, is it all the time Sunday in heaven?" "Yes, my son, it is a never-ending Sabbath." "Well, mother, I don't want to go to any place where it is all Sunday." I have no doubt this is just the way many children feel; they don't want the Sabbath to come often, nor last long. Suppose you were to die feeling in that way, do you think you would be happy in heaven, where it is all Sabbath? Oh no; you could not live in that holy place, with a holy God and holy angels.

God says in his word, "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord." "On the seventh day there shall be unto you a holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord." "Who-

soever doeth any work in the Sabbath-day, he shall surely be put to death."

God made it very clear to the Jews that he meant what he said. There was a man found gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day, and he was brought to Moses to know what should be done with him. Moses asked the Lord, and the Lord told him the children of Israel must stone him to death; and so they did. I have no doubt some of you may think this was a very hard sentence. Some may say, "He was doing very little harm. He had only forgot to gather sticks the night before to cook his manna. It seemed like a work of necessity, and he should have been forgiven for that time."

Suppose God had forgiven him for that time, what would have been the consequence? The next Sabbath somebody else would have been out gathering wood to cook his manna, and then many



more; and in a little time God's law would have been entirely disregarded. But by putting the first man to death that broke the law, all the rest were warned, and the law was observed.

I have no doubt, if Moses were here to inquire of the Lord now, and some boy was brought before him that had been caught playing marbles, or flying kites, or fishing, or playing in the street, that the Lord would say it was a greater sin to do these things I have named, and many other things that both boys and girls do now, than it then was to gather sticks for a fire. The man that was punished by stoning, it may be was a very bad man, who did not care for God nor his law, and was not afraid he should be punished. But you must remember he was a poor bondman, that had been emancipated only a little while before; while you, my dear children, have all

the light he had, and in addition, all the increased light of three thousand years since. To break the Sabbath is a far greater sin now than then, although our nation does not punish it as the Jews then did.

I believe this is one of the great sins of the age in which we live. Trifling with holy time leads to trifling with God's holy name, with his word, his ordinances, and every thing whereby God makes himself known; and I have no doubt many are cursed of God for this sin, as the Jews were in their going out and their coming in, in their basket and in their store.

The celebrated Judge Hale of England said he never laid any plan on the Sabbath-day to promote his worldly interest, but God blasted it. I read this saying of his when I was a little boy, and have never forgotten it; and so far as I have

been able to judge from my own experience, it has been true in my case as well as his. When I was a boy, I would steal away sometimes to fish or trap partridges on Sunday, but I never found the pleasure in it that I had anticipated. All the time I thought I could hear God calling from heaven, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy;" and I often wondered if God was not still standing on mount Sinai repeating the law.

This Commandment tells us very plainly what we may do on the Sabbath-day, and what we may not do. We are to spend the whole day in God's service; resting from our weekly business and amusements, reading his word and other good books, singing his praises, praying to him, going to church to hear the gospel preached, or to the Sunday-school to learn his will, and in all we do serving and honoring God. We may dress our-

selves in our best clothes, and eat our food as on other days; but we should never make it a feast-day. We are to do no work except what necessity and mercy require. Surely this gives us plenty to do for one seventh part of our time.

But the things we are forbidden to do are very numerous. We are not to spend the day in idleness; not to laugh and jest as on other days; not to read idle tales or story-books, or go to visit as on other days. You are not to associate with your playmates, to engage in the amusements that are lawful on other days; nor to gaze about in the church or Sabbath-school, and take more notice of what other people wear and do, than of what the preacher or your teacher says. Always try to remember the words of Hagar, "Thou God seest me."

A little boy was once playing marbles

before the door on the Sabbath; and his mother, who feared the remarks of her neighbors more than breaking God's law, told her son, if he must play marbles on Sunday, to go to the garden where no one could see him. Said he to his mother, "Is not God in the garden?" I know there are a great many boys and girls who, when they get out of sight of their parents and teachers, forget that God is in the garden, and in the lanes and alleys, and everywhere else.

I know a little girl that asked her mother once why God made Sunday so much longer than any other day of the week; and when she was told that it was no longer, she said it seemed as long as two days. Now that girl did not love God, or she would have thought the Lord's day was a very happy and a very short day. If we loved the house of God as David did when he said, "A day

in thy courts is better than a thousand," we should rejoice in it as the best of days.

What a delightful day the Sabbath is in a well-ordered Christian family! It is calm and still, and we can hear God speaking to us. The sun seems to shine more cheerily. We lay aside the cares and toils and vexations of the world, and think of heaven; like pilgrims who stop by a fountain in the desert, to rest and refresh themselves, and think of the home to which they are bound.

The parents and children are all together more on the Sabbath than on other days, and enjoy each other's society. The father and mother talk about God's goodness to the family, and encourage their children to follow Christ and do right. They read and study the Bible together, and confess their faults one to another and to God; and sing his praises in the sweet hymns and tunes for

children of which we now have so many. They go up to the house of God in company, to worship; and spend a happy hour in the Sabbath-school. Each member of the household, if a child of God or a seeker after Christ, finds a time to commune with him alone in his closet; and when at night they bow together around the family altar, and ask God's blessing on the new week, they are all happier and more loving to each other and the world, and better fitted to live to do good, or to die in Christ.

Our love for the holy duties of the Sabbath may show us how we are to be prepared for heaven. If you do n't love the Sabbath as a day of holy rest, to be spent in worshipping and praising God, how could you dwell in heaven, where they do nothing but serve God? Many people who do not love God, love to see the return of the Sabbath, so that they

may sleep and rest their tired bodies. But if we only rest from our labors and toils, we don't serve God any better than the ox and the ass, and may be classed with those that spend the day in idleness.

It is said that a President of the United States Bank dismissed a young man from his employment because he would not write for him on the Sabbath; and the young man was thus thrown out of business. But a few days afterwards, when the president of the bank was requested to recommend some man of honesty and integrity as a cashier of another bank, he named the young man he had dismissed, and said, "You can trust him, for, rather than work on Sunday, he suffered the loss of a good position with me." Those who have not respect enough for God to keep his law, are not very likely to pay much respect

to the laws of man, and I am always a little afraid of them.

Those who have carefully marked God's providence, believe that he still often punishes Sabbath-breakers in this life; and if we had an exact statement of all the facts in relation to the sailing of ships and moving of armies, as well as the plodding and planning of individuals, we should probably have strong evidence that God still vindicates his law. Many have marked the ill success of the Great Eastern, which was launched on the Sabbath, and otherwise dishonored the day. In many battles on the Sabbath, the party that made the attack on that day has been defeated. Those that fight on Sunday have a foe to fight whose batteries are out of sight, and cannot be taken at the point of the bayonet.

I knew a little boy that was sent to

Sunday-school one morning; but instead of going, he stole away to fish, and hid himself under a high bank for the purpose; but his foot slipped, and he fell in the water and was drowned, and was not found for a week.

Dear children, you cannot hide from God. If you had wings, and could fly away to the moon, God would see you. If you could hide in the bottom of the sea, still his hand would hold you and bring you to judgment. May God keep my little readers from breaking this Commandment.

Lord of the worlds above,
How pleasant and how fair
The dwellings of thy love,
Thine earthly temples are!
To thine abode
My heart aspires,
With warm desires
To see my God!

Oh happy souls, that pray
Where God appoints to hear !
Oh happy men, that pay
Their constant service there !
They praise thee still ;
And happy they
That love the way
To Zion's hill !

They go from strength to strength,
Through this dark vale of tears,
Till each arrives at length,
Till each in heaven appears :
O glorious seat,
When God our King
Shall thither bring
Our willing feet !

To spend one sacred day,
Where God and saints abide,
Affords diviner joy
Than thousand days beside :
Where God resorts,
I love it more
To keep the door,
Than shine in courts.

Watts.

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.

DEAR CHILDREN—I am very much
afraid that most of you break this Com-

mandment sometimes, or at least you stretch it very much. Perhaps you don't think how great a sin it is. In breaking this Commandment, you offend two parties. You not only offend your parents, but you offend God. He commands you to love and obey them, and by not doing so you dishonor them.

What does He say about the punishment of disobedient children? "He that curseth father or mother shall surely be put to death." "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." This is strong language, to show God's frown upon disobedience, and his determination to punish it.

By this law you are bound to obey not only your parents, but magistrates, and all the lawful rulers of our land. Oh, how wickedly has this part of the

Commandment been disobeyed in this happy land ; little boys and girls speaking evil of presidents, senators, and judges, and treating their characters and doings with ridicule ; whereas the Bible says, “Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought ;” and again, “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for the powers that be are ordained of God.”

In this Commandment there is a *promise* to the obedient which I want you to notice : it is long life. I know all my young friends wish to live a great while. True, many good and obedient children have died young. All such go right to heaven, where they are far happier than they could be here, and where they live for ever ; but I have no doubt that, as a general rule, obedient children do live longer in this world. I knew a little boy whose parents sent him to the Sabbath-school, but he stopped by the way

to fish, and was drowned; and another who stole away to swim on Sunday, and he was drowned too.

It was partly out of kindness to parents that God has given this Commandment; and when you think of all their labor and toil for you while you were unable to take care of yourself, clothing and feeding you when you were well, and nursing you and watching over you day and night when sick, how ungrateful it is for you to disobey them. But a great many little folks do it. When their mother tells them not to go into the garden and pull her flowers, or not to disturb things in the house, and they go and do it, they disobey her commands and God's law. When their parents tell them not to go in company with bad children, and they steal away and do it, they commit this awful sin of disobedience.

Sometimes children yield to the commands of their parents with a very unwilling mind, and stop to argue with such a bad temper, that it is almost as bad as not to yield at all. This Commandment forbids all such unwilling obedience; and there are few things that grieve the hearts of parents more than for children to do what they are told with an unwilling mind. It is your duty to obey instantly, as far as possible. You certainly desire the love of your parents; and how can you expect them to love you, if you are unwilling to do what they tell you. What sight is more hateful than that of a disobedient boy or girl? Indeed, a disobedient spirit is the spirit of hell; and I have no doubt, if we could trace out all the punishment that God inflicts on children for it in this world, and set it before you, it would alarm you all.

Near where I was born and reared up, there lived a man named K——. When he became old and feeble, he gave all he had to his only son, who soon became a drunkard. The old man saw him wasting his property, and remonstrated with him about it. The wicked son often caught him by his long white hair, and dragged him out of the house and beat him. My good mother often said to me, "Tom K——'s sons will pay him some day for that." And so it proved. Tom K—— lived to be an old man, and his son often beat him; and I want all disobedient children to remember that God will raise up some instrument to punish every one that violates this Commandment.

I will now give you a story, which I wish were read by every boy and girl in our land.

My father, (said a man in middle life,) after an absence of three years, returned home. He had made his last voyage on shipboard. During this voyage I had grown up from a babe into a rough, headstrong boy. My mother's voice no longer restrained me. I was wilful and disobedient, and would no longer be controlled by a woman's influence. My father's return was a fortunate circumstance for me. He saw my disregard of my mother's authority, and it displeased him, although for a few days he said nothing to me about it.

It was an afternoon in October, bright and golden, when my father told me to get my hat and take a walk with him. We turned down a narrow lane to a fine open field, a favorite playground for children. After talking cheerfully on different subjects for a while, my father asked me if I saw that huge shadow

thrown by a mass of rocks that stood in the middle of the field. I replied that I did.

“My father owned this land,” said he. “It was my playground when a boy. That rock stood there then. To me it is a beacon; and whenever I look at it, I recall a dark spot in my life—an event painful to dwell on, and if it were not to warn you, I would not speak of it. Listen, then, my dear boy, and learn wisdom from your father’s errors. My dear father died when I was a child. I was the only son. My mother was a gentle and loving woman, devoted to her children, and loved by every body that knew her. I remember her pale, beautiful face, her sweet, affectionate smile, her kind and tender voice. In my childhood I loved her intensely. I was never happy apart from her; and she, fearing I was becoming too much of a baby, sent

me to a high-school in the village. After associating for a time with rude boys, I lost in a measure my love of home and my reverence for my mother, and it became more and more difficult for her to restrain my impetuous nature. I thought it showed a lack of manliness to yield to her authority, or to appear penitent when I did wrong. The epithet I most dreaded was to be called *girl-boy*; and I could not bear to hear it said by my companions that I was tied to my mother's apron-strings.

“From a quiet, home-loving child, I soon became a wild, disobedient boy. My dear mother used every means in her power to induce me to seek my happiness at home, and my sister followed her self-sacrificing example. I saw all this, but did not heed it. It was on a pleasant afternoon, when I was about leaving the dining-table to spend the

recess of school in the street as usual, my mother laid her hand on my shoulder, and said mildly, but firmly, 'My son, I wish you to come with me.' I would have rebelled, but something in her manner awed me. I followed her in silence; and as I was passing the door I observed one of my rude companions skulking about the house, and knew he was waiting for me. He sneered as I went past him. My pride was wounded to the quick. He was a very bad boy; but being some years older than I, he exercised a great influence over me. I followed my mother sulkily till we reached the spot where we now stand, beneath the shadow of this huge rock. Oh, my boy, could that hour be blotted from my memory which has cast a dark shadow over my whole life, gladly would I exchange all that the world can offer me for the quiet peace of mind I should

enjoy. But no; this huge unsightly pile stands the monument of my guilt for ever.

“My mother, being feeble in health, sat down and beckoned me to sit beside her. Her look, so full of tender sorrow, is present to me now. I would not sit, but continued to stand sullenly beside her. ‘Alfred, my dear son,’ said she, ‘have you lost all love for your mother?’ I did not reply. ‘I fear you have,’ she continued, ‘and may God help you to see your own heart, and me to do my duty.’ She then talked to me of my misdeeds—of the ruinous consequences of the course I was pursuing. By tears, entreaties, and prayers she tried to make an impression on me. She placed before me the lives and examples of good men, and sought to stimulate my ambition. I was moved, but too proud to show it, and remained standing in dogged

silence beside her. I thought, What will my companions say if, after all my boasting, I yield at last to be led by a woman?

“What agony was visible on my mother’s face, when she saw that all she said and suffered failed to move me! She rose to go home, and I followed at a distance. She spoke no more till we reached our own door. ‘It is school-time now,’ said she. ‘Go, my son; and once more let me beseech you to think upon what I have said.’ ‘I sha’n’t go to school,’ said I. She looked astonished at my boldness, but replied firmly, ‘Certainly you will go, Alfred; I command you.’ ‘I will not,’ said I, with a tone of defiance. ‘One of two things you must do, Alfred: either go to school this moment, or I will lock you in your room, and keep you there till you are ready to promise obedience in future.’ ‘I

dare you to do it,' said I. 'You can't get me up stairs.' 'Alfred, choose now,' said my mother as she laid her hand on my arm. She trembled violently, and was deadly pale. 'If you touch me, I will kick you,' said I, in a terrible rage. God knows I knew what I said. 'Will you go, Alfred?' 'No,' I replied, but quailed before her eyes. 'Then follow me,' she said, as she grasped my arm firmly. I raised my foot—Oh, my son, hear me—and kicked my sainted mother! How my head reels as the torrent of memory rushes over me. I kicked my mother, a feeble woman. She staggered back a few steps, and leaned against the wall. She did not look at me. I saw her heart beat against her breast. 'Oh, heavenly Father,' she cried, 'forgive him, for he knows not what he has done.'

"The gardener just then passed the door, and seeing my mother pale and

almost unable to support herself, he stopped. She beckoned him in. 'Take this boy up stairs, and lock him in his own room,' said she, and turned from me. Looking back as she was entering her room, she gave me such a look; it will for ever follow me. It was a look of agony mingled with the intensest love; it was the last unutterable pang from a heart that was broken. In a moment I found myself a prisoner in my own room. I thought for a moment I would fling myself from the window, and dash out my brains; but I was afraid to die. I was not penitent. At times my heart was subdued, but my pride rose in an instant, and bade me not yield. The pale face of my mother haunted me. I threw myself on the bed and fell asleep. I awoke at midnight, stiffened by the damp night air and terrified with frightful dreams. I would have sought my

mother at that moment, but my door was fast. With the daylight my terrors were dissipated. The servant brought me food, but I would not taste it. I thought the day would never end.

“Just at twilight I heard a light foot-step approach the door; it was my sister, who called me by name. ‘What may I tell mother from you?’ she asked. ‘Nothing,’ I replied. ‘Oh, Alfred, for my sake, for all our sakes, say you are sorry. She longs to forgive you.’ ‘I wont be driven to school against my will,’ I said. ‘But you will go if she wishes it, dear Alfred,’ said my sister in a pleading voice. ‘No, I wont,’ said I, ‘and you need not say a word more about it.’ ‘Oh, brother, you will kill her, you will kill her, and then you can never have a happy moment.’ I made no reply to this; my feelings were touched, but I still resisted their influence.

My sister called me, but I would not answer. I heard her footsteps slowly retreating, and again I flung myself on the bed to pass another wretched night—how wretched, how fearful I did not know. Another footstep, slower and feebler than my sister's, disturbed me. A voice called me. It was my mother's. 'Alfred, my son, shall I come in? Are you sorry for what you have done?' she asked. I cannot tell what made me speak adverse to my feelings, for the gentle voice of my mother thrilled through my hard heart, and I longed to throw myself on her bosom, but I did not. My words gave the lie to my heart when I said I was not sorry.

I heard her withdraw; I heard her groan, and longed to call her back, but did not. I was awakened soon after from an uneasy slumber by hearing my name called loudly, and my sister stood

by my bedside. 'Get up, Alfred. Oh, don't wait a moment. Get up and come with me; mother is dying!' I thought I was dreaming, but I got up and followed my sister. On the bed, pale and cold as marble, lay my mother. She had not undressed, but had thrown herself on the bed to rest. Rising to go again to me, she was seized with a palpitation of the heart, and borne senseless to her room. I cannot tell you my agony as I looked upon her. My remorse was tenfold more bitter from the thought that she would never know it. I believed myself to be her murderer. I fell on the bed beside her. I could not weep. My heart burned in my bosom, and my brain seemed to be on fire. My sister threw her arms around me and wept in silence. Suddenly we saw a slight motion of my mother's hand; her eyes unclosed. She had recovered consciousness, but not

speech. She looked at me and moved her lips; but I could not understand her words. 'Mother, mother,' I shrieked, 'say only that you forgive me.' She could not say it with her lips, but her hand pressed mine. She smiled upon me, and lifting her thin white hands, clasped mine within them, and cast her eyes upwards. She moved her lips in prayer; and thus she died.

"I remained on my knees by that dear form till my gentle sister removed me. She comforted me, for she knew my heart was loaded with sorrow, heavier than grief for the loss of a mother; it was a load of sorrow for sin. The joy of youth had left me for ever. My son, the suffering such memories awaken must continue as long as life."

My father ceased speaking, and buried his face in his hands. He saw the impression this narrative made on me, and

I have never forgotten it. Boys who spurn a mother's control, who are ashamed to own you are wrong, who think it manly to resist her authority or yield to her influence, beware! Lay not up for yourselves bitter memories in future years.

Dear children, let this awful tale of sin and remorse sink deep into your hearts, and whenever you find rebellious thoughts against parental authority arise, call this sad case to mind, and yield instantly.

While there may be but few cases that result like this in sudden death, no doubt thousands of parents die every year with hearts broken over disobedient children. Many a father's and mother's chamber is bedewed with tears over such, that the world knows nothing of. Remember, the time is coming when you will have

to account for every act of disobedience. If you ever feel inclined to disobey your parents, read again the narrative of this ungrateful son, and think of it till you feel all rebellious passions subdued within you.

Never stop to question any command of your parents, unless they command you to break God's law, and but few parents are so wicked as to do that. If you will resolve now to obey all the commands of your parents and magistrates, and keep the laws of the land as well as the law of God, you will, through the grace of God, live happy and die happy, and be happy to all eternity.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.



THOU shalt not kill.

DEAR CHILDREN—This whole Commandment is embraced in four little words; but they are very important words. There is nothing God has guard-

ed more sacredly than human life ; and the more effectually to impress its sacredness on the minds of men in the early ages of the world, God put a mark on Cain the first murderer, so that he might be spared as a walking advertisement, to warn all that saw him not to shed human blood. No doubt that "mark," whatever it may have been, had a salutary effect. If God had destroyed Cain, both he and his crime might soon have been forgotten ; but permitting him to live and bear some mark that showed to others his crime for five or six hundred years, was an effectual way to prevent murder. As men began to multiply and spread over the earth, God issued his law on the subject to Noah in these words : " Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." This law given to Noah was nearly one thousand years before the

Commandment was given to Moses on mount Sinai.

The first sin we have recorded in the Bible after the fall was murder, and the first punishment inflicted was for that awful crime. No other crime seems to be followed with such awful consequences. It destroys for ever the peace and happiness of those who commit it. If God does not set a mark on the murderer that can be seen by others, he sets a mark on their conscience that they can never wipe out. Hence we find, all the way down the history of the world, multitudes whose consciences have been so burdened that life became intolerable, and they have been constrained to come and confess their guilt. Even those who kill their antagonist in a duel, or what the world calls an affair of honor, seldom live in peace afterwards. The blood of their murdered victims follows them all

the way through life, crying for vengeance. "He that killeth a man shall surely be put to death;" and in the New Testament it is said, "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

There are only two situations in which we can be placed that justify taking life.

The first is self-defence. If another is about to take our life, and we have no way to prevent it but by taking his, we not only have the right to do it, but it is our duty. For you to stand still and let another murder you, when you could prevent it, would be a sort of suicide, or self-murder.

The other case is when life is taken in punishment for capital crimes, or in justifiable war. When the nation's rights are attacked, by insurrection at home or by foreign invasion, it is not only our right but our duty to defend them; and the guilt in that case rests on the heads

of those who invade those rights. But the great majority of all the wars that have deluged the world have been murders on a gigantic scale; and however the world may applaud the heroes that have waged them, they will go to the bar of God under a fearful load of guilt. Indeed I question if there ever has been a war in which one of the parties was not directly chargeable with wholesale murder. This shows how careful a nation should be to investigate its grievances, before it begins to shed blood.

But, my dear children, this Commandment goes much further, I fear, than many of you are aware. You may think it only forbids you to *kill* any one; but the divine exposition given of it in the New Testament is, that "he that hateth his brother is a murderer." I think I hear one and another of my little readers say, "Well, that hits me." We are

all "brethren" in the Bible sense; we all had one father and mother. The black men of Africa and the savage Indians are our brothers and sisters. It is true they do n't seem as near of kin, neither are they as near of kin as those that are raised in the same house with us; but they are certainly included in this Commandment among those whom we must not hate or kill. Hatred is the feeling of the heart that leads to the commission of murder; and whenever you hate any one, you have so far the feelings of a murderer. It may not be so intense as to lead you to go and kill him; but if you continue to hold those feelings of enmity, they may end in murder. It is not necessary for you actually to kill a person to become a murderer in God's sight. Whenever you have such a feeling of hatred as leads you to wish a man dead, then you are a murderer at

heart. I have often heard little boys and girls say, "I will kill you," or "I wish you was dead." That is the feeling of a murderer, and a direct breach of this Commandment. And suppose you were to see a little boy fallen into the water and drowning, and you had it in your power to pull him out, and yet refused to do it, you would be justly chargeable with his death. Or if you should see some one about to be murdered, and you could warn him to escape, but did not do it, you would be guilty of his death.

When the great book establishment of the Messrs. Harpers in the city of New York took fire in 1853, and one of the brothers was asked by the firemen, "What part of the property shall we save first?" he promptly and nobly replied, "Save the lives." About six hundred persons were employed at the time in the various buildings of the establish-

ment, all of whom were saved, by the most earnest exertions of the firemen, from an awful death. Had Mr. Harper said, "Rush into my office first, and save my books and money," as many a one would, and left men and women to perish, would he not have been guilty of murder?

A little boy was one day walking along the sidewalk of one of our large cities, where some very smooth ice was covered with a thin layer of snow, when he fell down very hard. As he was limping away from the place he met an old man, and said to him, "Take care, sir, when you get to that tree-box; there is very smooth ice there, and I got a bad fall." The old man thanked the boy, and said, "God bless you."

In another city, opposite to an alley where the water had run out and formed very smooth ice, some bad boys saw an

old woman coming along, when they said to one another, "Let us throw some snow on the ice, and we will have the fun of seeing the old woman fall." She did fall, and broke her leg.

Now look at the contrast: the first boy obeyed this Commandment to the letter, the others broke it; and if the old woman had died, they would have been accountable for her death.

Every thing you do to injure another, in person or character, is a breach of this Commandment; and the feeling that prompts you to do it is, just as far as it goes, the feeling of a murderer.

Some boys and girls are spiteful; they are unwilling to forgive those that offend them, and are all the time watching for an opportunity to take revenge. This, dear children, is the very spirit of the devil; and the more you harbor that spirit the more you are like the devil,

who was a murderer from the beginning. Indeed, I have no doubt that his malice against God for turning him out of heaven was one thing that led him to seek the destruction of our first parents. I beseech you to banish from your mind at once all revengeful feelings. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," saith the Lord. If any one does you harm unjustly, it is usually best to leave the matter with God. If you are obliged to defend yourself, do it by some lawful mode, and be careful not to show the same evil disposition that he did who wronged you. The only safe revenge is, to do your enemy a good turn for an evil one; "in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head," or melt him by your kindness as gold is melted by the fire.

A neighbor once shot some fine hogs of mine that broke into his field. This wanton mischief roused my indignation,

and I determined while I was in a passion to shoot as many belonging to him. Not many days after, his hogs got into my field. I took down my gun, and started to take revenge upon them; but on my way to the field the words of God came to mind, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." I instantly went home and laid by the gun. In a few months all his hogs took the sore throat and died. So did God visit him in his righteous providence.

In the eastern part of Pennsylvania there lived a good old Quaker, with a very bad neighbor who was in the habit of killing every stray animal that got into his fields. It happened one day that some sheep belonging to this good old man got into the neighbor's field, and as usual he killed them; and to show his evil disposition still more, he sent for the old man to come and take his sheep home.

When he showed them to the old man dead, instead of being sorry for what he had done, he said, "I will kill every beast of yours that comes into my inclosure." "Well," said the Quaker, "I will make thee pay for that." Not long afterwards some of his sheep got into the Quaker's field. The good old man called his boys, and they drove the sheep into the stable and filled the rack with hay; he then sent for his troublesome neighbor to come and get his sheep. He came, expecting to find them dead; but what was his surprise when the Quaker took him to the stable where all his sheep were safe and sound, with plenty to eat. The effect of these "coals of fire on his head" was, that he paid the old man for all his sheep that he had ever killed, and was always afterwards a good neighbor.

Now if I had killed Mr. H——'s hogs, and the Quaker had killed his bad neigh-

bor's sheep, we should have been like those that injured us. Try this Christian way, dear children, to take revenge for injuries you receive, and you will find it affords you the very best kind of "satisfaction."

But there is another thing embraced in this Commandment which I must not omit, as it prepares the way for making murderers: that is, cruelty to insects, birds, and animals. Some children seem to delight in torturing little innocent creatures that cannot defend themselves. There are many creatures that God has made for our use for food; and so far as we need them it is right to kill them, but it should always be done in the least painful way possible. And then there are other animals, reptiles, and insects, which are dangerous, and which it is right for us to kill when they come in our way. But millions of insects, birds, and animals,

that injure no one, are killed every year for mere sport; all such killing violates the spirit of this Commandment.

When I see a little boy or girl catching butterflies, and clipping their wings, and then laughing at their helplessness, I say to myself, "There is a young murderer taking his or her first lesson."

When I see a boy running with his gun after the little innocent birds, killing them for mere sport, or robbing bird's nests, I think, "There is a boy taking his first lessons in the school of murder."

You would think, and very justly too, if I were to go about breaking the legs of little boys and girls, that I was no better than a murderer. But life is as sweet to those little creatures as to you, and why will you destroy them?

Many of them are very useful. One lark will probably destroy, during the spring and summer, as many insects as

would ruin one quarter of an acre of grain. Indeed, it is a wise arrangement of Providence to furnish such a large supply of innocent birds to destroy millions of insects that we can do nothing with. So while you are shooting these little creatures, you are increasing the price of bread to poor children. In many countries severe penalties are inflicted on those that kill birds.

Then consider the effect cruelty has on those that practise it. They get accustomed to seeing creatures suffering, till the fine sensibilities of the heart become hardened, and they are without feeling; and by degrees they are prepared to torture men with as little compunction as they now do little animals.

I have read somewhere of a boy that, when he was fifteen years old, could not look at blood without fainting; but who confessed, when condemned to be exe-

cuted for murder, that he had killed ten persons, all of whom he had bled to death; that he began his career by bleeding hares to death, and that his happiest moments were when he saw blood running. Nothing can be more contrary both to nature and religion than cruelty. An inhuman man is a monster in human form.

It is said of Commodus the Roman emperor, that when he was but a child he delighted in torturing every little animal he could find. When he was but twelve years old, finding the water prepared-by the servant for him to bathe in too warm, he commanded the servant to be thrown into the furnace. He caused another to be thrown to wild beasts, because he was born on the same day he was. He took pleasure in cutting off the feet and putting out the eyes of such as he met in his rambles through the city.

Some he murdered because they were very careless about their dress, and others because they were too nice. He assumed the name and dress of Hercules, and went about in a lion's skin with a huge club in his hand, ordering persons not guilty of any crime to be disguised as monsters, that by knocking out their brains he might have the better claim to the title of the great "destroyer of monsters."

All improper and cruel amusements, such as cock-fighting and dog-fighting, which many boys delight in, have a tendency to harden the heart, and prepare those that indulge in them to break this Commandment. They harden the heart, and infuse into it wicked, hellish feelings.

Another practice among some children, that is a violation of this Commandment, is harshness and cruelty to servants. Be-

cause they have been born under more favorable circumstances, they impose on those that are poor and have to serve them; they often do mischief themselves, and charge it on those who cannot defend themselves; they kick and cuff them about, as they ought not to treat a dog. I never see this done but it makes my heart ache. Why is it that you are not a poor orphan child, and that somebody is not kicking and cuffing you about? It is not because of any thing you have done, but only of God's mercy to you. If there is one sin above another that God will punish with severity, it will be the sin of oppressing those not able to defend themselves.

Now, my dear children, I must close my notice of this Commandment. I beseech you to ponder with care what I have said; and if you find you have been guilty in any of these ways I have

named, stop just now, and resolve that you will banish all such feelings out of your heart. As sure as the acorn grows into the oak, if you let these evil passions grow on they will destroy your own peace in this world, and will lead you down to eternal misery in the world to come. May God help you all to cultivate kind, tender, generous hearts, loving God and loving men.

BROTHERLY LOVE.

How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And so fulfil his word.

When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part :
When sorrows flow from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart :

When, free from envy, scorn, and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.

Let love, in one delightful stream,
Through every bosom flow ;
And union sweet, and dear esteem,
In every action glow.

Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above ;
And he's an heir of heaven who finds
His bosom glow with love.

Swain.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.



GENESIS 39.

THOU shalt not commit adultery.

MY DEAR CHILDREN—This is a very important Commandment, and you ought most faithfully to heed and obey the admonitions of your parents concerning it; for although we have reason to hope that the number is small that grossly break it during that period which we call childhood, yet no doubt habits are

formed in early life by many that cause them to end life in infamy. Solomon, who had experienced some of the awful consequences of violating this Commandment, has given us the most solemn warnings in relation to it. Listen to what he says.

“The lips of a strange woman drop as a honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell.” “Keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids: for by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread; and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one

go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So is he that goeth in to his neighbor's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent."

"But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul."

"For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths a young man void of understanding: and he went the way to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: and behold, there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart. So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let

us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.”

“ With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattery of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. Hearken unto me now therefore, ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thy heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.”

“ Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither.” “ She saith to him, Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the

dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell."

And when we come down to the New Testament, we find the same awful denunciations against those who violate this Commandment. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications; these are the things which defile a man." "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, shall inherit the kingdom of God." "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God; neither fornicators, nor adulterers?"

Moreover, there is no sin more generally punished in this life than this. According to the Jewish laws, which were based upon this Commandment, all that violated it were stoned to death.

David was severely punished for his sin with the wife of Uriah, and it has remained as a blot on his character, and will be handed down as such till the end of time.

But this, like the other commandments, is broken every day in thought and desire. The Saviour has taught us that it does not require the actual crime of adultery to make us guilty before God of breaking this Commandment; for he says, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." And here, my dear children, is where the crime begins. Indulging unholy and impure desires leads to the commission of unholy and impure actions.

We have one noble example recorded in the Bible, which the young should fix in their minds, and never forget. It is the case of Joseph. When he was tempt-

ed by that base woman Potiphar's wife, he said, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God!" And he fled from her, and left his garment in her hands. And although he seemed to suffer for his virtue for a time, yet God abundantly rewarded him in the end. If he had been in the habit of indulging vile thoughts previously, he might have committed this sin, and God would never have conferred on him the high honors he did. Base and licentious thoughts lead to the lowest and basest conduct, and prepare the way for the total destruction of both life and character. I have no doubt but there are thousands of our youth that are brought to an untimely grave, as well as an awful hell, every year, by indulging in unholy practices. The more you indulge in them, the stronger those habits become, till all power to resist evil desires is gone, and you are

driven before these base passions of your lower nature like chaff before the wind. I do beseech every child and youth to put all vile thoughts and desires out of their minds and hearts. Let them never be admitted there, or they will fast become so deep-rooted as to lead you into some outward violation of this Commandment.

And as evil communications corrupt good manners, avoid all contact with youth and children that indulge in low, corrupting language, for this is the way in which the poison is spread. If you were told that a troop of boys and girls that you saw in the street had the small-pox or yellow-fever, you would not go near them; and I tell you that neither is half so dangerous as a vulgar-tongued boy or girl. Those diseases might take you to the grave; and thus, if you were a Christian, they would take you to

heaven. But if you join the company and learn the vile language of vile persons, it will lead you to indulge in vile habits and practices, which, if they do not actually destroy life, will shorten it, and send your soul to hell, where no desires are gratified. One of the most beautiful women that I ever saw, though sunk to the very lowest depths of degradation, when she was making an earnest effort to reform her life, said the first fatal step she made towards ruin was in listening to the conversation of some low, vulgar children. Her curiosity was awakened to know what they were talking about; and the lesson she learned there had brought her into her present state of degradation. If the history of all the youth whose ruin has been brought about the same way were written out, the world itself could not contain the books.

My dear young friends, shun the company of all low, vulgar persons, let them be young or old, as you would a den of vipers. You cannot lie down in the dirt without its sticking to you; no more can you come in contact with a vile, filthy tongue without being polluted by it.

What makes this the more important, is the fact that you can never forget those vile things. You easily forget a hymn or a portion of Scripture, but the vulgar words that you hear will stick by you as long as you live. No doubt this is owing to the deep depravity of our nature, which naturally receives and retains the evil rather than the good. If all that have not as yet contracted these vile habits, or learned the use of vulgar language, would shun the company of those that have, shame would soon lessen the evil. I would earnestly com-

mend the example of a young lady in a town near lake Ontario, who, when asked by another young lady, "Why did you not take the arm of my brother last night?" replied, "Because I know him to be a licentious young man." "Oh, nonsense," was the answer of his sister. "If you refuse the attentions of all licentious young men, you will have few, I can assure you, to attend you." "Very well," replied the other, "I can dispense with them altogether; for my resolution on that point is unalterably fixed." A little time would revolutionize society, if all would follow her example.

If we could get a history of all the sufferings, murders, and suicides that have been committed in consequence of the violation of this Commandment, they would be the blackest pages in the world's history. Poverty, disgrace, and death

have been brought on men and women in their worst forms by this sin.

The Rev. John Owen, in a sermon to the young, after adverting to the peaceful death of a little girl, mentions, by way of contrast, the awful end of a youth who had been seduced from the paths of virtue by wicked associates. "Scarcely," says he, "had the turf been spread over the mortal remains of this young disciple, when the ground was opened to receive another of our youth, who—awful to relate—destroyed his life with his own hand. This deluded youth had received the benefit of a Christian education, and like the happy subject who preceded him into eternity, had been carefully instructed in the house of God on matters which concerned his salvation. But he fell into the snare of evil company, and became a licentious profligate. Disease and dis-

grace followed. Without any religious hope, he yielded to the temptations of the destroyer, and completed the measure of his sin and disgrace by taking his own life. Behold then this victim to his youthful lusts cruelly mangled by his own violence, and weltering in awful publicity in the stream of blood which his own suicidal hand had spilled."

This is an illustration of the fearful truth, "The wages of sin is death." The world is full of such awful occurrences, brought about by a violation of this law. If all the records of murder trials in our land were searched for the past fifty years, it would be appalling to find how many were in some way connected, either directly or indirectly, with the violation of this Commandment. Jealousy is one of the fiercest passions that ever found place in the human heart, and nothing but blood can satisfy it.

From false modesty or the refinement of the age, this awful sin is too seldom touched on either by the pulpit or the press, while it is piling up hecatombs on earth, and crowding hell with its degraded victims, perhaps to a greater extent than any other crime in our land.

Conscience will not let me conclude without hinting at another breach of this Commandment—the sin of seduction. I have known young men who have made a boast of their success in this soul-damning practice. I should respect a young man more to hear him boast how many horses he had stolen. That young man who can seduce and deceive a young female, and leave her in disgrace, has a heart black enough to become a pirate on the high seas; and if public sentiment was not at fault on this subject, he would be driven from all respectable society, and kept in confinement. I have

marked with care for nearly forty years all the seducers with whom I have been acquainted—and they have not been few—and I know of no case that has not been punished by the hand of God in some form or other : sometimes by severe diseases ; at other times by loss of property and disappointment in business ; but in more than half the cases they have been paid in their own coin—by the vices and ruin of their own children.

I beseech young men to consider this. God will not suffer the guilty to go unpunished. “Vengeance is mine ; I will repay,” saith the Lord. Sins committed against the rights of our fellow-men are usually punished in part in this life. The man that destroys the character of a female, and makes shipwreck of her happiness and shortens her life, is no better than a murderer, and becomes the haunted victim of his own sin.

Let every one obey the divine injunction, "Flee youthful lusts." Banish from your mind all unclean thoughts and desires ; let them have no place there ; for rest assured that every one you harbor will breed a thousand more, till the vile herd will drive you, like the swine possessed with devils, down into the raging sea of God's wrath, where the billows of fire will roll over you to all eternity. Shun all company and all places where you are likely to be exposed to temptation, as you would a den of midnight assassins. This is your only security :

"How shall the young preserve their way
From *all* pollution free ?
By making still their course of life
With thy commands agree."

My young friends, remember the word *all*. The pious McCheyne of Scotland remarks, "Eve, Achan, and David all

fell through the lust of the eye ;” and we need to be constantly using the prayer, “ Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.” Satan stops the ears of sinners against the gospel ; and it is only by earnest prayer to God for the Holy Spirit, that they can be opened to receive it. Heaven is a holy place, and all there are holy. Their work is holy work, their joy is holy joy ; and an unholy man or woman can never enter there. Let it ever be borne in mind that

“ Those holy gates for ever bar
Pollution, sin, and shame ;”

and always remember that the beginning of evil is like the letting out of water. Vile habits and practices once indulged are difficult to control.

The lesson we wish to impress on your minds, if possible, is that you must guard both body and mind from all things for-

bidden in this Commandment—from all immodest conduct and all vulgar thoughts and words. When any temptation arises, call to mind the noble reply of Joseph, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God!” The Saviour saith, “Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.” Would you be willing to die and pass into the presence of God with a mind polluted with unholy desires, and a body degraded by the effects of vice? How dare you then indulge either body or mind in such debasing sins, not knowing at what moment you may drop into eternity?

Who but a madman would risk an eternity of anguish for a moment of unholy gratification? Libertines and sensualists are the very madmen that do it. Their motto is, A moment of joy at the risk of an eternity of sorrow; please the

flesh, and lose the soul; gratify the basest desires, and crush the noblest aspirations. Oh shun the very entrance into the path of sin. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away;" otherwise you may at last have to say, in the language of a dying youth, "I have obtained my wicked desires, and lost my soul."

A YOUTH SEEKING HEAVENLY WISDOM.

I ASK not wealth, nor pomp, nor power,
Nor fleeting pleasures of an hour :
My soul aspires to nobler things
Than all the pride and state of kings.

One thing I ask :—Lord, wilt thou hear,
And grant my soul a gift so dear?—
Wisdom, descending from above,
The sweetest token of thy love :

Wisdom, betimes to know the Lord,
To fear his name, and keep his word ;
To lead my feet in paths of truth,
And guide and guard my wandering youth.

Then shouldst thou grant a length of days,
My life shall still proclaim thy praise ;
Or early death my soul convey
To realms of everlasting day.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT



THOU shalt not steal.

DEAR CHILDREN—Here is another of the short Commandments, which are like mighty rivers whose branches extend in many directions. I suppose very few of

us know how liable we are to break this Commandment, and most of us would feel very much insulted if any one should call us thieves. We are too apt to think that a thief is one who steals into houses and stores in the night, and takes the property of others and appropriates it to his own use. Very true, all such are shameless thieves, and condemned by this Commandment. But to go at night and take your neighbor's goods, is not the only way of breaking this Commandment. The apostle Paul bids us "provide things honest in the sight of all men." This clearly implies that to get any thing by dishonest means is a breach of this Commandment. We must not take away or retain what belongs to another without his consent.

Some little folks, and I am sorry to say some large ones too, appear to think there is no great harm in taking small

things, such as an apple, a needle, or a pin, without the consent of the owner. As no essential injury is done to the owner, it is true the loss is of little consequence. But if it is done without his knowledge and consent, it is stealing; and whoever does it, injures himself by breaking God's law. I have known children in school get into such a habit of picking pins out of the clothes of others, that they became real thieves.

I was told recently by a young lady who has gathered up a large number of poor children, and devotes a part of one day in each week to instructing them, that many of them will steal every thing they can from her while she is teaching them. Now all such are young thieves, and unless they stop will get the habit so confirmed that it will follow them all their lives, and end in disgrace and ruin.

Another way of stealing is to borrow

some little thing, and keep it till the owner forgets where it is. This is fraud and deception, as well as theft.

Another way is, when we find something another has lost, and keep it concealed. Multitudes break this Commandment in this way, and try to ease their conscience by saying to themselves, I may as well keep it; for somebody else would have got it and kept it. Others will hold on to the property secretly, and wait for the owner to advertise it, that they may get a reward for their pretended honesty. The Saviour's golden rule must be applied to this as well as all the other Commandments, which is, to do to others as we would have others do to us. You don't want others to borrow from you and never return what they get. You would not like it if you were to lose a purse of money, and some one should find it and keep it till you should adver-

tise it and offer a reward to the finder. The Bible requires us to act in relation to others as we should desire them to do to us—to respect their property and rights as we do our own. If this rule was acted on throughout the world, we should need neither locks nor bolts; all would be safe.

But the Eighth Commandment not only forbids the taking or concealing what belongs to others, but requires us to respect all their rights. Some children will take by force any thing they want from those that are weaker than themselves, especially from a little brother or sister. You would think it very hard for one that was stronger than you to take from you what belongs to you; why then will you do to another what you would not like to have him do to you?

This Commandment teaches us that whatever we get we must get in an hon-

est and fair manner. Some will tell a lie to make two or three cents; misrepresent the worth of what they sell in order to get more than its value, and try to depreciate the value of what they buy. All such dealing is a breach of this part of God's law, and may be denominated stealing. If a boy is selling a penknife that cost him fifty cents, and in order to make money on it and to deceive the purchaser he should say he paid seventy-five cents for it, you know he would be telling a lie, and at the same time practising a fraud. That, according to this divine rule, is stealing.

Children often go into their neighbors' orchards and take fruit without asking for it. It makes no difference by what soft names people call this; the Bible, the only rule God has given to guide us, calls it stealing. It is not the value of the thing stolen that constitutes the crime

in God's sight, but the intention to steal. God looks at the motives.

Many make thieves of themselves by giving light weight and short measure. Suppose I should employ a boy to gather me a bushel of chestnuts, and he should come with three pecks, and because I had no way to measure them he should cheat me out of one peck, how many sins do you think he would commit in that one bargain? At least three: fraud, falsehood, and theft. He cheated, lied, and stole.

A few days ago a boy was driving a cart-load of hay along the street for sale, and a neighbor of mine bought it. The boy said he had fourteen hundred pounds on his cart. It looked very small for that amount. The man that bought it said, "I fear it is light weight; drive it to the scales, and I will pay the expense of weighing it." The boy looked con-

fused, but drew it on the scales, and it was five hundred pounds short. It would have made you sorry to see how many lies that boy told to cover up the first one. He said somebody pulled hay out of his load as he came along; and then that the load had stood in the road all night, and the cattle had eaten it off. Here again you see not only stealing, but fraud and lying.

Another way of stealing is passing bad money. Sometimes parents send their children to the store with counterfeit notes that they dare not pass themselves, and in that way teach their children to steal. Whoever passes a base note or coin, knowing it to be such, is guilty of theft. It is to be feared that many are guilty of this kind of stealing. A gentleman of the highest integrity, who had been cashier of one of our large city banks for twenty years, said to me that

his position had almost destroyed his confidence in the honesty of mankind ; that there was hardly a day but some one would bring in a counterfeit note ; and as it was his duty to cross all such on their own bank, many of those who presented them would object to it violently, especially ladies. He would say to them, "Why, you would not pass this useless money on anybody else." "Oh, I came by it honestly," would be the reply, "and the loss ought not to fall on me more than on anybody else." The fact that another has wronged you don't justify you in wronging somebody else to make up your own loss. When you find some one has imposed on you a bad note or coin, it is your duty to return it to the one that gave it to you if you can ; and if not, you had better destroy it at once, for fear the love of gain may lead you to break this Commandment.

Another way in which this Commandment is sadly broken is by gambling. You may think that if you stake a ten cent piece with another boy on a game of cards or marbles, and gain it, the dime is lawfully yours. But it is not. You have no more actual right to it than if you had taken it out of his pocket. Whatever you get or take from another without rendering an equivalent for it, is stolen; and you have rendered no equivalent for the ten cents you get in this way. The commonness of gambling, and the fact that multitudes engage in it, do not lessen the crime one iota. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished."

Another way of breaking this part of God's law is, by taking advantage of the ignorant in business. Many, when they find what they call a greenhorn, will charge him all they dare to above the

regular price. This is stealing, under cover of your neighbor's ignorance.

This Commandment forbids all idleness, carelessness, wastefulness, imprudence, fraud, forgery, selling adulterated goods, refusing to pay debts when due, or contracting debts when we cannot see any way to pay them.

I think I hear some boy or girl saying, "I did not know there was so much required by those four words, and I must be careful hereafter not to violate them any more."

But we must not fail to notice the effect of dishonest practices on our own character. It is rare that any one becomes a shameless thief in a week or a month. It requires time to sear the conscience and harden the heart, till a man will rob stores, houses, and banks. Thieves generally begin with some little thing, and go on repeating their frauds

and thefts till they become hardened. Some never steal any thing of sufficient importance to be publicly tried for their crimes, but they become known so far that everybody distrusts and watches them.

When I was a little boy, a playmate of mine stole a French crown from me, the first piece of money I ever earned; and he got in the habit of taking little things whenever he could, till no store-keeper would trust him alone in his store one moment. He is now a gray-headed man, and I would not trust him with five cents.

A few years ago a boy borrowed twenty-five cents from me when he did not need it, because he thought I would never ask him for it. Though he belongs to a good family, I would not trust him with one cent. The boy that will do that, will be likely to steal whenever he can.

The conscience of dishonest people often tortures them to such an extent that they have no peace. Whatever frauds and dishonesties you are guilty of, you can never enter heaven till you repent of them all.

As a gentleman in London entered his house one day, he found a well-dressed female sitting in the room, who remarked that as she passed the door she saw an angry dog coming towards her, and ran in to avoid him. When he heard her story he gave her a glass of wine, as she manifested some fright; and as soon as she received it she passed on. In a little time a fine gold watch was missing. Fifteen years afterwards a coach-driver stopped at his door and handed him a small parcel, which on being opened proved to contain the watch and a note stating the circumstances of her stealing the watch, and that she had not had a

moment of peace since. But she had found peace in Christ as soon as she determined to restore it. I have no doubt thousands lead a miserable life in consequence of the various dishonest acts they have been guilty of. "A guilty conscience needs no accuser."

Robert Andrews, foreman to a respectable nurseryman at some distance from Philadelphia, had lived with his employer ten years, and had an excellent character. One Saturday night, after applying for his own wages, he claimed the pay of a certain young man up to that day, whom he had discharged some days before. His employer, looking him steadily in the face, said, "Robert, do you want to cheat me, by asking wages for a man you dismissed eight days ago?" He had no sooner said this than the conscience-stricken man turned pale. When his employer saw him so much affected,

he told him he might still labor on as he had done ; but that after such a manifest attempt at dishonesty, his confidence in him was gone for ever. On Monday Robert made his appearance, but was entirely an altered man. The agitation of his mind had reduced his body to the feebleness of a child. He took his spade and tried to use it, but in vain ; it was with difficulty that he reached home. He went to bed immediately, and medical aid was provided, but in vain. He sunk under a sense of his degradation, and died on Wednesday. A short time before he died, he declared that the agony arising from the loss of his character as an honest man was the cause of his death. This was perhaps the first dishonest act of his life, and hence he sunk under the load of his shame and disgrace. If he had seared his conscience by sin, his remorse will be no less terrible at last.

A beggar once asked Dr. Smollet for alms, and he gave him through mistake a guinea. The poor fellow perceiving it, hobbled after him to return it; whereupon Smollet gave it back to him, and added another guinea to it, exclaiming, "What a miserable lodging has honesty taken up with."

I cannot help introducing a fact here that has already been widely published. Knud Iverson, a Norwegian lad ten years old, residing in Chicago, was ordered by some vicious boys to go into a neighbor's garden and steal some fruit for them. But his pious parents had taught him to keep the commandments of God, and nobly did he do it in this case. He refused to go and steal the fruit. The boys threatened to drown him if he did not obey their wicked command. He still refused, and they put him into the water and held him in as long as they dared,

and then raised him up and repeated their threat; but the boy preferred, even at the risk of losing his life, to obey God's command rather than theirs. He was plunged again and again into the water, and there held till he was dead! What a noble example of Christian firmness and piety does this Norwegian lad furnish; what strength of love for God's commandments, love stronger than death.

So much did some good people in Chicago and elsewhere admire the conduct of this young martyr to right, that they gave more than a thousand dollars for a marble monument, with an inscription declaring the fact that his life was sacrificed to duty: that he chose to be drowned, rather than by stealing to disobey God and his Christian parents. If all our boys and girls of this generation were as honest as Iverson, what a blessed world we should soon have.

Do you want God to love you, dear children? If so, you must be honest; for God cannot love a dishonest child, or one that breaks his commands. He has said he "will by no means clear the guilty." All your dishonesty will be exhibited on the day of judgment to the gaze of the congregated world. What a thought, to bear the mark of a thief before the whole world!

And who can calculate the injury it may do you in this world? No man will employ about his house a thieving boy or girl. Many a one has lost a good name and bright prospects, by putting his or her hands into an employer's drawer, or a mistress' wardrobe. If any boy or girl has begun to take things that belong to others, I do beseech you, my dear child, as you value your character and happiness in this life and the life to come, stop it at once; if you do not, it will grow

with your growth, and strengthen with your strength, till your passion for stealing will become irresistible, and may lead you on to the felon's cell.

When tempted to take any thing that is not your own, "resist the devil and he will flee from you." Every time you yield to temptation your moral powers will become weaker, till you are no longer able to resist. Never yield to temptation. Abhor the very thought of dishonesty, and maintain such a character as men will always trust and God will love.

“THOU GOD SEEST ME.”

AMONG the deepest shades of night,
Can there be one who sees my way?
Yes ; God is like a shining light,
That turns the darkness into day.

When every eye around me sleeps,
May I not sin without control?
No ; for a constant watch he keeps
On every thought of every soul.

If I could find some cave unknown,
Where human feet had never trod,
Yet there I could not be alone ;
On every side there would be God.

He smiles in heaven, he frowns to hell ;
He fills the air, the earth, the sea :
I *must* within his presence dwell ;
I *cannot* from his anger flee.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.



THOU shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

DEAR CHILDREN—Perhaps no command in the whole decalogue is oftener broken than this. God says we have all gone astray from the womb, “speaking lies;” and for us to point out the various ways of communicating falsehood would

be as difficult as to number the hairs of our head. And yet God has pronounced the most dreadful doom on those that are guilty of this sin: "All liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." We might suppose this awful declaration would be sufficient to prevent any one from telling lies. If our rulers were to pass a law that every boy and girl that told a lie should be cast into a great furnace of fire, would they not all stop lying at once? And why is it that they will not stop when the great God has declared that all liars shall be cast into a lake of fire? Nothing is here said as to great lies or small lies. All liars incur the penalty of death; yet lying, like every other sin, may be greatly aggravated by circumstances. We will now try to describe a few of the different classes of liars.

Some great liars are always boasting of something they have done or seen, that never took place, such as this: A boy or girl runs home in great haste, and tells about having seen a dozen men killed in the street; when the fact was that some one had got run over and a little hurt, and no one was killed. Another boy will say he has just seen Dr. — or Gen. — in the street, when they were perhaps a hundred miles away. Another boy tells how he has outrun and thrown all the boys in school. Another has been fishing, and says he caught some wonderfully large fish; but the line broke, and the fish got away. Another was sent to school, but played truant, and came home and told a lie. Others exaggerate in describing every thing they see. This class are well represented in the old anecdote of a boy that saw a hundred wolves. His father said

he was surely mistaken, that he doubted whether he had seen fifty wolves. After a time the boy admitted that there were not more than fifty. But his father went on reducing the number till he came down to one single wolf, and even that might have been a neighbor's dog.

Many children who are addicted to this kind of lying, quit it when they come to be fifteen or sixteen years old; but as a general rule, those that continue it thus long, get into such a confirmed habit of lying, that it will follow them all their days. The desire to tell marvellous stories is one of the hardest habits to cure. If you have acquired this habit, my dear boy or girl, break it off at once.

Another way in which multitudes of children utter falsehood, is by denying what they are guilty of doing. A boy has thrown a stone, and broken a window. He denies it, or lays the blame

on some one else, to clear himself. A little girl has broken a cup at the table. She denies it, and lays the blame on her brother or sister, or says they hit her arm and made her do it, when it was done by her own carelessness. This is a bad kind of lying.

Sometimes children tell lies against each other, by way of revenge, and to get each other punished. This is a desperately wicked kind of lying. Let all such remember the noble conduct of George Washington after he had cut into his father's choice cherry-tree. When all the servants were called up to see if any one knew who cut the tree, the noble George said, "Father, I cannot tell a lie. It was I that cut the tree." There was the man shadowed forth in the boy. No wonder the father forgave him. Who would not be proud of such a son?



Hardly any thing so much distresses the heart of a Christian father or mother as to see their children denying every thing they do that is wrong, and trying to lay the blame on some one else. It shows such a deep-seated depravity, that the heart sickens to behold it. I do want

every child to ponder this well, and never depart from truth.

Some tell lies for gain. The boy who goes along the street selling newspapers, and cries, "Another battle!" when there is none, tells a lie for very small profit, if any. The boy who says he paid five cents for a marble, when he paid but three, in order to induce another boy to pay him five, tells a lie for two cents. You may call this cheap lying, but it will be very dear in the end. These petty lies, unless repented of and forsaken, will as certainly destroy the soul as if you made a thousand dollars by each one of them.

The habit of lying destroys character; and what are boys or girls worth without character? They are like a counterfeit note or a pewter coin. They may pass for a little while, but it will not be long before they will be so thoroughly marked

that no one will trust in any thing they say. Who would employ such a boy in his store, or trust him to do any business for him? No one of any respectability. You had better die in honest poverty than live with such a name.

This Commandment teaches you not only to put a high value on a good reputation, and to maintain and promote truth between man and man in the common concerns of life, but especially when called to bear witness under oath before a magistrate or in a court of justice. It is enough to make us blush for our race to see a person called to testify before a court, when a number of respectable men will follow and say they would not believe him if under oath.

Another and a very common way of bearing false witness against our neighbors is, by expressing a rash, censorious judgment of their character or conduct.

Many take this way of seeking revenge for real or supposed injuries. Some people hardly speak a good word of others in their absence, without implying by some significant wink or nod that they know a great deal not favorable to them. This is the very spirit of the evil one, and all such characters should be driven out of respectable society.

You may tell a lie to another's injury without speaking a word. I will illustrate this by an anecdote. A number of boys had assembled one beautiful summer morning at the school-house, to play an hour before school began. Two roads crossed each other at the place. The physician of the neighborhood passed along one of the roads soon after they had assembled, and the boys saw which way he went. In a little time a man came riding in great haste, and asked the boys if they had seen the doctor go along. A boy

said, "Yes." "Which way did he go?" The boy pointed his finger to the wrong road, as a trick. The man started at full speed and rode several miles, but found no doctor. When he reached home again, his little son, one of their schoolmates, was dead. He had got a fish-bone in his throat while eating his breakfast. The physician arrived at last, and took out the bone; but it was too late. He said if he had been there thirty minutes sooner, he could have saved the boy's life. The next day the minister stated, at his funeral, that he was killed by a lie which another boy told with his finger.

On another occasion, an old man came to a creek that was frozen over, and asked a boy who was skating along the shore if the ice was strong enough to bear him over. The boy nodded his head. The old man went on, broke

through, and was drowned. That boy drowned that old man by the nod of his head. So you see, dear children, that you can lie with a motion of the hand or the head as well as with the tongue.

It is no uncommon thing to hear great liars calling for curses on their heads if what they say is not true. A few years ago, a woman who lived in a small town in England, purchased a bedstead for thirteen shillings. She handed the salesman a one pound note, and he gave her the change due her. A short time afterwards she returned to the shop, and asserted positively that he gave her eighteen pence too little change. This the shopkeeper denied, stating the exact coins he had given her. She, however, persisted in saying he had cheated her, and said she wished she might die before she left the house if she was not telling the truth. He handed her the money,

and while putting it in her purse she dropped dead.

A poor woman in the workhouse at Milborne Port, England, being once charged with stealing some article, wished God might strike her dumb, blind, and dead if she knew any thing about it. At six o'clock she ate her supper, as well as usual. Soon after her speech failed, her eyes closed, and in an hour she was dead.

The Rev. Mr. Todd, now a minister of the gospel, says, "I had one of the kindest and best of fathers. When I was six years old, he came home one day very sick. The next morning he was much worse. As I went into his room, he handed me a paper, and told me to run to Mr. Carter, a half mile distant, and get the medicine called for. I took the paper, and went to the apothecary's store, which was shut; and as Mr. Carter

lived. some distance away, I concluded not to go after him, and set about finding an excuse. I knew how wicked it was to tell a lie, but one sin leads to another. On going into my father's room, I saw he was in great pain, and I felt very sorry I had not gone after the man and got the medicine. As soon as he saw me, he said, 'My son has got the medicine, and I hope it will ease me.' I hung my head and muttered, for my conscience smote me, 'No, sir; Mr. Carter says he has got none.' 'Has got none! Is this possible?' He then cast a keen eye on me, and seeing my head hang down, suspected my falsehood, but said in a mild tone of voice, 'My little boy will see his father suffer great pain for the want of that medicine.' I went out of the room and cried, but was soon called back. My brothers were standing round his bed, and he was giving them his dying

advice. He called me to his side, and said, 'In a few hours you will have no father. You must now make God your father. Love and obey him, and *always speak the truth*, and he will take care of you.' Then he laid his hand on my head, and prayed for me. I dared not look at him. I rushed out of the room, feeling as if I should be glad to die to escape my shame. I snatched my hat, and ran to the apothecary's store, got the medicine, and ran home with all the speed I could, and into the room to his bedside, crying, 'Here, father;' but I was hushed. I saw he was pale and still. All in the room were weeping. My dear father was dead, and the last word I ever spoke to him was a lie. I thought my heart would break as I looked at his pale face; but it was too late, and I must live and die mourning that I ever uttered that falsehood."

If you were to see a man every day sticking sharp thorns in the bed he had to lay on at night, you would think that man a fool ; but, dear children, his folly is not so great as that little boy's or girl's who is telling lies every day. Each lie is a thorn that will goad you some day. The devil is called the father of lies, and if you obey him he will bring you to his own place.

It was a law among the Scythians that the man who told a lie in connection with an oath was to lose his head, because such an offence was adapted to take away all truth and mutual confidence among men.

The apostle James says, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity : it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature ; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in

the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed, of mankind ; but the tongue can no man tame ; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." This is an honest, truthful description of a lying tongue. This is God's description of it, and the place for the punishment of it is a lake of fire and brimstone.

I think I can almost hear some of my little readers saying, "O God, forgive me for the many lies I have told, and I will never tell any more. I will always speak the truth, let it cost me what it may. I will never slander any one behind his back, nor say any thing about others to injure them. When I relate any thing I have seen or heard, I will not add one iota to it, in word or manner ; and I will strive to form and maintain a character for truth and veracity, so that every body that knows me will have full confidence in all I say."

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.



Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

MY DEAR CHILDREN—We have now come to the last Commandment, which may be regarded as a supplement to

those that precede it. It refers entirely to the emotions of the heart—to our wishes and desires.

The first lesson we are to learn from it is, to keep our desires within just bounds: that we are not to desire to have any thing that belongs to another without rendering him a full equivalent for it; and if we cannot obtain it in that way, we must instantly cease to wish for it. If we continue to desire any thing we cannot get by fair means, we may be tempted to try to gain it by foul means, and break the Eighth Commandment. King Ahab desired the vineyard of Naboth, after he had refused to sell it to him; and at last he and his wife plotted to kill Naboth, that he might obtain it. That awful crime called down the judgments of God on him and his house, and by it he lost the throne of Israel.

This Commandment teaches that we

should be pleased with whatever promotes the comfort or advantage of others, and be satisfied with our own condition in life; that we should rejoice at the prosperity of our neighbor and strive to promote it. To "*covet*" is to have an earnest desire for something which is in the lawful possession of another. When a little girl sees a pretty bonnet or dress on another little girl, and wishes it was hers, she breaks this Commandment. When a little boy sees another boy with a pretty kite or knife, and longs to have it, he breaks this part of God's law. The interpretation the apostle gives of this law is, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have." Christ said, "Beware of covetousness." Moses the lawgiver of Israel, in explaining this law, said, "Neither shalt thou desire any thing that is thy neighbor's;" which sim-

ply means that we must suppress and avoid all such uneasiness or discontent with our own circumstances as will lead us to envy others what they have.

The sins of covetousness and envy, which go hand in hand, destroy our peace of mind. The case of Ahab shows how wretched we may make ourselves by desiring what belongs to another. He even fell sick over it; and I have seen little boys and girls cry themselves sick because they could not get what belonged to a little brother or sister. The golden rule is to do to others as we ought to desire them to do to us if our circumstances were reversed. How do you like to see a boy crying after something you have, and wanting somebody to take it from you and give it to him? This is the true way to apply this divine rule.

I know it is very hard for a little boy or girl that is poorly clothed, to see other

children finely dressed, without desiring to be like them; and they think, "If I was only as nicely dressed as they are, O how happy I should be."

But I want you to remember that when Adam and Eve were in Eden, which God had beautified in the most charming manner, they were not contented; and by trying to better their condition, they lost all. Even some of the angels in heaven became covetous, and wanted something they had not, and were thrust down to hell for it; and the sooner you can learn to believe that the condition God's providence places you in is the best for you, the better. The less estate you have, the less you will have to render an account of at the last day. The less riches, the less reckoning. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."

The sooner you can learn to limit your

desires to your circumstances, the better ; for you never can bring up your circumstances to your desires. We are told that when Alexander the Great had conquered the whole world, he sat down and wept because there was no other world to conquer. I believe the happiest people are those in moderate circumstances. As riches increase, the desire for more increases with them.

A Russian merchant who was so immensely rich that on one occasion he lent the Empress Catharine the Second a million of rubles, used to live in a small obscure room in St. Petersburg, with scarcely any fire or furniture, though his house was larger than many palaces. He buried his money in casks in the cellar, and was so great a miser that he barely allowed himself the most common necessaries of life. He placed his principal security in a large dog of singular fierce-

ness, which protected his premises by barking nearly the whole night. At length the dog died ; when the master, either prevented by avarice from buying another, or fearing he might not get one he could depend on, adopted the singular expedient of going the rounds and barking all night himself, in imitation of the dog.

The New York Evangelist describes an occurrence in that state, which serves well to illustrate the evils of a covetous disposition. The writer of the account was an agent for some benevolent cause. He says, "I called on a gentleman, who made me a generous contribution. When I asked, 'How much do you think Mr. — will give me?' 'I do n't know,' said he; 'but could you hear that man pray, you would think he would give you all he had.' I called on him, and to my surprise he would not contribute. His cov-

etous desires after wealth had hardened his heart. While he had been in moderate circumstances he was liberal; now he was rich, but hated to give. As I was about to take my leave of him, I said to him, 'As I came to your house, I asked a man what he thought you would give. I do n't know, said he; but could you hear that man pray, you would think he would give you all he is worth.' The man's head dropped; tears gushed from his eyes. He took out his pocketbook, and gave me seventy-five dollars. His heart relented and his purse opened."

A similar circumstance occurred in my own experience. I called on a man for a donation, who told me he was hard run for money; but in view of the importance of the cause, if I would call the next morning he would give me twenty dollars. At the appointed time he met me with a smile, and said, "The Lord has

doubly paid me already. About ten years ago a man ran away from here, owing me forty dollars. Soon afterwards I heard of his death; and as I never expected any thing from him, in destroying useless papers I destroyed his bond. But to my surprise he called on me this morning and paid the debt and interest." "Well," said I, "as the Lord has provided the sacrifice, I think you can afford to give it all." Said he, "I will give you twenty more next year." In a year I visited the town again. A friend observed to me, "You will not get much from Mr. M—— this year." "Why?" said I. "Because he has just got a fortune of \$15,000, and he is very poor now." I soon called on him, when to my surprise he began to apologize about hard times, and wound up by handing me one dollar, which I refused to take, and reminded him of what had occurred

the year before, and of his own promise. After a struggle between duty and avarice, he gave me ten dollars. By the next year his fortune was nearly doubled again, and he could only give one dollar.

You, my dear children, may think this very strange ; but it is the general result of a covetous, avaricious spirit. There is nothing more dangerous than unsanctified prosperity. A covetous disposition will lead a man to violate every obligation to God and man. It has led to the murder of fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, yea, even to the robbery of God himself. There is no tie too sacred, no place too holy, for a covetous man to sunder or search. The following fact will abundantly prove this position.

Two young men of Virginia who had served in the American army during the revolutionary war, after being regularly discharged, returned home to their

friends. One had only a mother living when he left. When they were nearly home, they fell into a conversation about the length of time they had been absent, and concluded to try whether their parents would know them. With this purpose each took the nearest path home. The one who had only a mother went in, and finding his mother did not know him, asked for lodging. She replied she could not lodge him, and that there was a tavern not far distant to which he could go. He importuned, but she refused; till at last he told her he had a little money, and was afraid to lodge in a tavern, for fear he might be robbed. He took out his purse and offered it to her keeping. She, struck with the lust of gold, consented immediately to his staying. He ate his supper, but did not make himself known to his mother, and was directed to a bed once more in the chamber of

the mother who bore him. How safe a place, he thought, he had there found, compared with the battle-field. But she summoned a negro man, told him the scheme she had planned, hired him to aid her, and they went to his bed and murdered him. The next day his fellow-soldier came to see him; but on asking for the stranger, could hear nothing of him. He thought it was merely to banter him that the old woman denied it; till hearing her affirm that no stranger had come there last evening, nor any man, he asked her if she had not a son that had gone to the war. She said she had. "Well," said he, "I left him near by here last evening; and he told me he would not make himself known to you till he had full time to see if you had forgotten him, and he must be here." The cruel mother fainted at these words, confessed her wickedness, and showed her murdered

son crammed into a dark closet of the house. Oh the love of money, what has it not done, and what will it not yet do!

Some years ago a poor lad came to London in search of a situation as an errand-boy. At length he met a gentleman who was prepossessed with his appearance, and employed him. He so conducted himself as to gain the esteem of all who knew him; and after he had served the usual time, his master advanced him capital to commence business. He retired to his closet with a heart glowing with gratitude to his Maker for his goodness, and there vowed to give one tenth of his income to the service of God. The first year his donations amounted to ten pounds, which he gave cheerfully, and he continued to do so till they amounted to five hundred pounds. He then thought that was a great deal of money to give away, and that he need

not be so particular about the exact amount. That year he lost a ship and cargo worth fifteen thousand pounds sterling by a storm. This caused him to repent, and he again commenced his contributions, with a resolution never again to retract them. He was more successful every year, and at length retired from business. He then devoted a tenth part of his income for several years to benevolent objects, till he became acquainted with a company of worldly men, who by degrees drew him aside from God. He discontinued his donations, made large speculations, lost every thing, and became almost as poor as when he commenced life as an errand-boy.

“There is that scattereth,” saith Solomon, “and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty.” “I see in this world,” said the Rev. John Newton, “two

heaps, one of human happiness and one of misery. Now if I can take but the smallest bit from the second heap and add it to the first, I carry a point. If as I go home a child has dropped a penny, and if by giving it another I can wipe away its tears, I have done something; and if I cannot do great things, I will do all the little ones I can." But the covetous miser is all the time taking from the heap of human happiness and adding to the one of human misery. ●

DO AS YOU WOULD BE DONE BY. What a mighty revolution the observance of this rule would work in this world. Were it adopted by all, even for a single week, the effect would be astonishing. It would make even the angels rejoice with a hope that the millennium had come. Strange sights would be seen in every neighborhood: millions of property would change hands; many old

debts would be paid off ; many little corrections of light weight and short measure would be sent to and fro ; forged wills and bonds would be burnt by dozens. Mr. Rogue would convey to Mr. Honest many a town lot or strip of land unlawfully held. Many a widow and her orphaned children, that have no bread, would soon have plenty. Every lane and alley would witness borrowed books and umbrellas running home to their rightful owners ; the air would be filled with picked up veils, handkerchiefs, gloves, and stolen fruit. Rumsellers would tear down their signs and close their bars ; gamblers would be running from their dens. Swearing, lying, and cheating would cease, and few could look one another in the face without blushing. Family strifes would cease ; brothers and sisters would live in harmony. Children would obey their parents. Friends long

separated by trifling quarrels would be asking each other's pardon. I think I can see the little boys and girls running in every direction, begging each other's forgiveness. Well may it be called The Golden Rule; and if it were not so plainly implied in this and the other Commandments, it might well be added to them, and make eleven Commandments. Another fact will illustrate this.

Two merchants of the same city, being neighbors and jealous of each other, lived in constant enmity. After a time one embraced religion, which taught him the wickedness of hating his neighbor. He consulted a pious friend in whom he had great confidence, how he should manage to effect a reconciliation with this neighbor. His friend advised him, whenever any of his customers wanted an article that he had not, to send them to this man for it. He did so. The other mer-

chant, being informed by these persons that Mr. C—— his neighbor directed them to his store for such an article, was so much struck with the kind offices of one whom he had viewed as his enemy, that he went immediately to his house to thank him for his kindness, and begged his pardon with tears in his eyes for the hatred he had entertained against him, and besought him to admit him ever after as one of his intimate friends. His request was granted, and they soon became united in the bonds of Christian brotherhood.

My dear child, go thou and do likewise. If you know any little boys or girls that have wronged you, do them a good turn whenever you can, and they may soon become your best friends. Love your neighbor as yourself: this is the spirit of this whole law; this is the spirit of Jesus Christ. He coveted no

man's silver or gold or apparel ; although the world was his, with the fulness thereof, yet he had not where to lay his head. It was his meat and drink to do the will of his Father who sent him.

I want you all to bear in mind that it is by the law laid down in these Ten Commandments that you are to be judged at the last day. This law is recorded in God's book in heaven, and the name of every boy and girl that ever has lived, or ever will live, is written there too. Every violation of this law is recorded there by an unerring hand ; and when the books are opened these sins will be exposed to the world's gaze unless they are pardoned.

I think I hear some little boys and girls saying, " Oh, how shall I get this long list of sins blotted out ? " I will tell you the only way : Jesus Christ died to save you from your sins ; and if you pray

to him and trust in him, he will pass that bloody hand that was nailed to the cross over those dark pages, and blot out all the writing on that book against you. Will you not go to him at once? The long black list is increasing every day, and will continue to increase till you apply to him by faith.

Now, my dear children, I am about to close these hints on the Ten Commandments. I have prayed over them while writing them, that God may bless the reading of them to you; and if I shall be so happy as to meet one soul in heaven that has been saved by them, it will be an abundant reward for all the labor I have bestowed on them. I only ask every one into whose hands they may come, to read them carefully and prayerfully; and may the great God in his infinite mercy seal the truth they contain on many hearts.

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