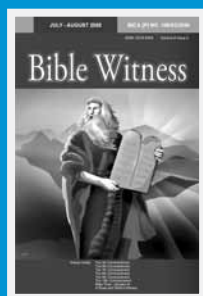


Bible Witness



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**Editor**

Prabhudas Koshy

Publishing & Circulation**Co-ordinator**

Lok Kwok Wah

Technical Editors

Adrienne Foo, Carolyn Koshy, Jenny Lok,
Lok Kwok Wah, Ruth Low, Mah Lean Choo
& Richard Tiu

Cover Design

Melissa Neo

Layout

Kenneth Wong

Illustrations

Sharon Ng

Publisher

Bible Witness Media Ministry of
Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church,
Singapore

Printer

Chung Printing

Contact Information

By mail:

Bible Witness Media Ministry
510 Geylang Road, #02-06
Singapore 389466

Tel: (65) 6741-1910 **Fax:** (65) 6741-1016

Web-site: www.biblewitness.com

E-mail: editor@biblewitness.com

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The 5th Commandment

Ephrem Chiracho Onchula

**Honour thy father
and thy mother:
that thy days may be long
upon the land which the
LORD thy God giveth thee.**

Exodus 20:12

The Ten Commandments are the catalogue of the eternal moral principles that God has given to His people in order to guide the covenant relationship He has established with them. These spiritual laws spring up from the righteous, holy and unchangeable attributes of the living and true God. Hence, they are applicable to all ages and across all cultures. This article attempts to explain briefly the fifth commandment and point out its practical implications in our daily lives.

The meaning of honouring our parents

The statement of this command reads: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12; cf. Deuteronomy 5:16). The New Testament parallel of this law is found in Ephesians 6:1-3: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right..." To honour one's parents means acknowledging their authority, respecting their person, obeying their commands and joyfully discharging all filial duties towards them. Our parents are the agents God uses to give us our very being. Therefore, they deserve affectionate respect and wholesome reverence from us at

all times and under all situations. Whatever the age of their offspring, both father and mother equally deserve such honour from them (cf. Proverbs 23:22). Honouring one's parents involves several things that are vital to our relationship with God and with one another:

First, it involves avoiding hurtful, irreverent and unkind speech, and all injurious actions towards them. "For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death" (Leviticus 20:9a). The Hebrew word for "curse" (*yekallel*) denotes speaking contemptuously and disrespectfully, or making light of a person. So all speech which has a tendency to degrade our parents in the eyes of others, or to render them suspicious or contemptible, is prohibited here. Treating parents with injurious or opprobrious language





is particularly included in this prohibition. Therefore, it is against divine principles to say or to do anything that harms the person, dignity, possessions and feelings of our parents. We know that parents are imperfect beings who are liable to make wrong judgments and say or do hurtful things. Yet, we must esteem them highly by virtue of their position and forgive their wrongs. Far from despising them, we are not allowed even to speak lightly of them.

Second, honouring parents involves giving due attention to their parental instructions and guidance. Naturally, parents have great love and concern for their children. They happily do all in their power to ensure the welfare and prosperity of their children. Moreover, godly parents have a solemn moral responsibility to impart scriptural truths to their sons and daughters, and nurture them in the knowledge and fear of the LORD (cf. Deuteronomy 6:7; Ephesians 6:4). On the other hand, it is God's will for children to receive parental instructions heartily, lead their lives according to biblical counsels given and follow the godly example of their parents to attain a joyful and successful life. The holy Scriptures exhort us: "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (Proverbs 1:8).

Third, honouring one's parents involves obeying their instructions and commands. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1). We are morally bound to obey diligently our parents' commands that are consistent with the Word of God. The Bible says such obedience is right, i.e., it is one manifestation of practical righteousness God expects of all His children (cf. Luke 2:51). Disobedience is the highest form of dishonour to our godly parents. Yet, the key phrase "in the

Lord" must be carefully noted. No parent has the right to command his child to do anything that is sinful and dishonouring to the LORD. Parents should not ask their children to lie under any circumstances, steal in any form, abuse their friends or relatives, or use their body and mind for sinful pleasures. Parents do not have the right to forbid their children from going to church and serving God, or bearing witness to their faith in Jesus Christ. When the command of men violates the clear teaching of God's Word, we have to remain loyal to God (cf. Exodus 1:15-21; Daniel 3:18; Acts 4:18-20; 5:27-29). Yet, we must explain gently and respectfully our reasons for refusing to obey the commands that are contrary to biblical instructions.

Fourth, honouring our parents involves submitting to their rebukes, welcoming their parental discipline and correction. We are not perfect people! At times, we make mistakes and do the wrong things. Therefore, we naturally need spiritual discipline and correction. The Scriptures confirm this: "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15; cf. Ephesians 2:1-3). Loving parents will never leave their beloved ones alone when they go astray from godly paths. "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die" (Proverbs 23:13). True love rebukes and corrects the errant to avert the danger that comes with rebellion and ungodly conduct and actions (cf. Proverbs 29:15). "My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction" (Proverbs 3:11). Our parents are agents of divine providence to correct us. Therefore, we have to submit to their godly discipline and correction for our own good (cf. Hebrews 12:11-13).



Fifth, honouring parents involves supporting them in their necessities and giving them relief in their infirmities. God uses our parents to nourish, nurture, protect and provide for us since our infancy so that we are able to be what we are today. Similarly, it is God's design that children care for and support their parents when they stand in need of them (cf. 1 Timothy 5:4; Matthew 15:3-6). Neglecting the spiritual and moral duty of supporting our needy parents is tantamount to denial of our Christian profession. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Timothy 5:8). According to Jesus Christ, refusing relief to needy parents is transgressing God's commandment (cf. Matthew 15:3-6). Yet, it is sad to observe that some children despise or discard their aged, sick or poor parents. Let it be known that such attitude calls for divine displeasure against children. The Bible says, "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" (Proverbs 30:17; cf. 20:20; 23:22; Leviticus 20:9). Our parents are God's representatives who oftentimes "stand as they were in the place of God" to us. Therefore, any form of disrespect or rebellion against their lawful commands is sin committed against the LORD.

The extent of the command to honour parents

As noted earlier, parents are God's representatives and hence they rule over us by the authority God has vested in them. By the same analogy, the designation "parent" is extended to all who have authority over us by God's appointment. In the holy Scriptures, spiritual leaders and teachers of God's truth are often called by the term "father" (Genesis

45:8; 2 Kings 2:12; 13:14; 1 Corinthians 4:15, 17; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11) and their disciples are described as sons and daughters (2 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 34:11; Proverbs 1:8, 10, 15; 3 John 4). The implication of such biblical usage is that the honour given to biological parents is extended rightfully to step-parents, guardians, civil authorities as well as spiritual leaders and teachers of divine truth. Since these authorities are God's appointed guides, the people under their care must give due regard to their instruction, obey their lawful commands, honour their persons, submit to their rebukes and discipline which God has designed for their welfare and prosperity.

The blessings of honouring our parents

There are several blessings that come with a joyful performance of this filial duty. **First**, obedience to this command prolongs our days: "that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12). Long life is measured not only by the number of years one lives but more significantly by the joy, peace, comfort and fruitfulness that attend our days. Honouring parents delivers children from many bad and harmful practices that could destroy their health and relationships, and hinder them from performing their calling in life. When children obey the instructions of godly parents, they develop virtuous habits and disciplined minds that enable them to escape the enticement of wicked friends and overcome peer pressure that could potentially ruin their lives (Proverbs 1:8-15). On the contrary, children who rebel against godly instruction and discipline, either die an untimely death or live with enslaving habits that will shatter their prospects for a bright future (1 Kings 1:6; 2:23-25; cf. Proverbs 5:1-14).



Second, the stability of the family, the community and the nation depends on the honour children give to parents in submitting to their righteous instruction and discipline. Love and harmony in the family unit provide the foundation for the stability of the society at large. Rebellious children in families will make rebellious church members, unruly members of the society and injurious citizens of the nation. Today, we see a sharp increase in broken homes, juvenile delinquency, constant quarrelling and unhappiness in many families because many children are not submissive to their parents and spiritual guides. Nonetheless, parents are ready to share their knowledge and life experiences guided by God's Word so as to give their children the best counsel they ever need. Children's submission to such compassionate instruction and godly guidance fosters a harmonious family life, produces a godly church life, and a healthy and productive social life.

Third, it is right in the eyes of the infinitely wise and good God who gives us this command. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1). Our God is the giver of this command. Thus, when we obey our parents, God is greatly pleased because His will is accomplished. This places us under divine favour because God has promised to pour down covenant blessings upon those who gladly obey His commandments (cf. Deuteronomy 28:1-14).



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therefore we his servants will arise and build'*

Nehemiah 2:20



The 6th Commandment

Reggor Barazon Galarpe

Thou shalt not kill.

Exodus 20:13

We are living in a time wherein man's life is fast losing its true worth or real value. Here in my country, it is not uncommon to hear or read of news reports of someone's untimely death due to theft, violence or other criminal acts. It is sad to note that one could lose his or her life in the least expected way. For example, a student was shot dead by robbers when she refused to give up her cellphone; a man was shot at point blank while waiting for a ride home; and an old lady was stabbed to death when she struggled with her attacker for her handbag. Considering all these, it seems as if man's life has indeed become a cheap bargain.

As with the rest of the Ten Commandments, the sixth commandment has been more frequently violated today than it was when God first gave it to Moses. Thus, there is a great need for people to be instructed by God's holy Law as the Scriptures says: "for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). People need to come to such a knowledge, be convicted of their sins, be convinced that they are guilty before God and eventually be constrained to come to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24).

Among the Ten Commandments, it is the sixth commandment that deals with our duty and

responsibility to uphold and preserve life. It underscores the fact that life is precious and sacred and thus must be held in high regard. Obviously, it also prohibits the taking away of life. The Westminster Shorter Catechism explains it in Question 68: What is required in the sixth commandment? Answer: The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life, and the life of others. Question 69 then asks: What is forbidden in the sixth commandment? Answer: The sixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbour unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.

Basis for the commandment

At the very root of this commandment is the fact that man was created in the image or likeness of God. Unlike all other living things





that God created, human life is sacred and precious, distinct from the rest as it is the only creation that is made in the image of God.

Looking back at the Creation account in Genesis chapter one, you will notice that in every act of creation, God merely spoke: "Let there be...light...firmament...waters...dry land...plants...animals and every living creature" and they were so. But it was different in the case of man as we read in Genesis 1:26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." We read further in Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

God did not just speak for man to come into existence, but He made man. He "formed man" and "breathed into his nostrils" the breath of life. It is by these acts of God that we see the clear distinction between man and the rest of God's creation. In addition to the fact that it is only in man whom God breathed the "breath of life" making him the only living creature to possess an immortal soul – that part of man which relates to God and bears the spiritual resemblance to God's image in man.

Therefore, breaking the sixth commandment is not simply an act of violence against humanity, but more seriously, it is a direct attack against the image or likeness of God in which man was created. It is for this reason that God meted out a stiff penalty for its violation which we read in Genesis 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

The sixth commandment is also based on the attributes of God as the Creator and Giver of

life, and the subsequent truth that the power of life and death belongs to Him alone. So when one takes away human life, he is actually taking into his own hands the prerogative of determining the moment of death, which rightfully belongs only to the Sovereign and Almighty God.

Misinterpretation of the commandment

Much has been said about the sixth commandment which more often than not, is inconsistent with its original and true intent. It is interesting to note how people can misquote and abuse this commandment in their personal advocacy for life, healthy lifestyle, environment, nature, etc.

There are people who use the sixth commandment to support their belief that "all living things (plants or animals) must be held in reverence and therefore must not be destroyed". To these people, the simple act of cutting trees or the slaughter of animals is considered a violation of the sixth commandment. It is quite obvious from the Scriptures that the sixth commandment does not include plants and animals. It is because, in the Old Testament, animal sacrifices and the eating of meat were clearly permitted. Thus, the sixth commandment cannot be used to support these people's belief. (This is not to say that maltreatment and cruelty to animals are to be tolerated.)

Then there are those who believe that capital punishment, killing during wartime and that of self-defence are acts of murder and a clear violation of the sixth commandment. While all murder is killing, not all killing is murder. A careful study of the Scriptures would tell us that there are instances whereby killing is



deemed necessary and even commanded by the Lord Himself.

When God gave the commandment in Exodus 20, He also gave a clear command to mete out capital punishment to anyone guilty of violating the sixth commandment and other grave offences. We read in Exodus 21:12: "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death." Leviticus 24:17 likewise says: "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death." Then in Numbers 35:30-31: "Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die. Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death" (Also Exodus 21:13-17; Numbers 35:16-19).

In the New Testament, Romans 13:1-7 makes it clear that the authority of the government to punish wrongdoers comes from God. Speaking of civil authorities, the Apostle Paul wrote: "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Romans 13:4).

In the case of killing during wartime, there were many instances in the Scriptures wherein God commanded His people to go to war and fight even to the point of killing their enemies. Deuteronomy 20:10-13 says: "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will

make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword." The same principle applies today to nations and governments that are duty-bound to defend themselves against aggressors and enemies through their military and armed forces. Thus, serving the country in the armed forces to protect its boundaries and to promote peace (be it in the police, navy, air force or army) is not a violation of the sixth commandment.

The Law also has a clear provision for self-defence in order to preserve one's life and the life of others. We read in Exodus 22:2; "If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him." This means that one is not guilty of breaking the sixth commandment when in the course of struggle to protect himself and others from impending harm, he accidentally kills the thief. The same principle applies in cases like that of a policeman who shoots a gunman to prevent him from killing others.

Prohibitions and requirements of the commandment

The very aim of the commandment is the protection and preservation of human life. Thus, it forbids the unjust and wilful taking away of human life as in the case of: (a) murder; (b) suicide; (c) abortion; (d) euthanasia (mercy killing); (e) violence (as in gang wars that usually involve stabbing and shooting); (f) terrorist bombings (killing hundreds if not thousands of innocent people); and (g) other forms of senseless killings.

While the sixth commandment is primarily concerned with unjust and wilful killing,



it is important to stress that the sixth commandment also forbids any act that tends to endanger life. Yes, the commandment “requires all lawful endeavours to preserve” life, and forbids “whatsoever tends” to the destruction of life. In Deuteronomy 22:8, God urges His people to live in such a way that they will not be the cause of death of another person: “When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.” The way we build our house, construct a building or drive our car, can pose a great danger to the safety of others. Therefore, we must be careful to protect and preserve our lives and the lives of others in all that we do.

The sixth commandment also requires us to preserve life “by resisting all thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions, temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any...” (Westminster Larger Catechism, Answer 135). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire” (Matthew 5:21-22). Notice that the Lord Jesus mentioned unreasonable anger and verbal abuse as sins against the sixth commandment. Indeed, it is easy for one at the height of his anger to think evil against a

person (e.g., wishing him dead). Many acts of violence and killings have been borne out of a fit of temper.

Take note that the sixth commandment also includes in its requirements our relationship and duties to our fellowmen. It is a call to respect people and care about them. It is concerned with how we treat people. If at any time we treat people with contempt, allow our anger to get out of control, dismiss someone out of prejudice and discrimination; we are guilty of breaking the sixth commandment. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:12: “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

Conclusion

In short, the sixth commandment is more than just forbidding murder; it also demands utmost respect and a high regard for human life. It is a command, as with the rest of the Ten Commandments, to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind... and to love thy neighbour as thyself.”





The 7th Commandment

Tan Kian Sing

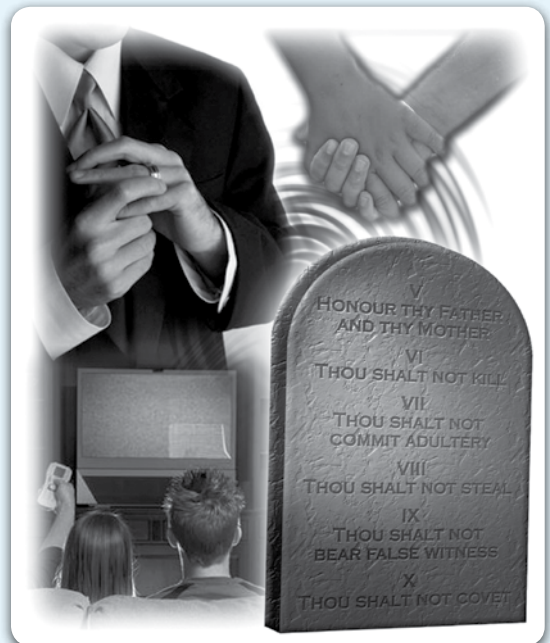
**Thou shalt not
commit adultery.**

Exodus 20:14

What constitutes committing adultery? When a married man or woman engages in sexual relationships outside his or her marriage, he or she is guilty of adultery. Adultery means unfaithfulness, for it is a sin of deceiving the spouse which results in a breach of trust between the husband and wife. It violates the vow and covenant of marriage which is meant to be for life; it breaks up families and attacks the sanctity of marriage. It is considered a heinous crime, a fire that consumes to destruction (Job 31:9-12), a great wickedness and sin against God (even among the heathen – Genesis 39:9; 20:9). It is evil in the sight of God (cf. Psalm 51:4). It is a sin that dishonours the holy estate of matrimony (cf. Hebrews 13:4), which God had instituted for one man and one woman as long as they are married and alive.

The seventh commandment is given by God to safeguard the sanctity of marriage. The thrice-holy God who instituted marriage in the Garden of Eden (cf. Genesis 2:18-25), also clearly stated that sexual relationships are to be confined only within marriage. “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). Adulterers will be judged, for they sin against God by not living a sanctified and holy life (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8).

The seventh commandment also has to do with upholding the virtue of purity. It concerns safeguarding the chastity of our neighbours. The word “adultery” is a generic term embracing all forms of unchastity. Thus, the seventh commandment also forbids single, unmarried individuals to engage in any sexual activity. And it covers not only the very act of fornication; its application extends to the very thoughts and intents of our hearts. Consider what the Lord Jesus said: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28). The root of the problem lies in the heart and mind of every man and woman – all sinners! The Lord Jesus says: “For out of the heart proceed evil





thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matthew 15:19). The interpretation of the Lord on the seventh commandment evidently implies that anyone who commits other sexual sins is guilty of breaking it, and hence breaks all other commandments of God (cf. James 2:10-11). So let no one who is redeemed by the blood of Christ be guilty of any such sexual sins like homosexuality, lesbianism, paedophilia, bestiality, masturbation and pornography. This includes indecent attire, viewing lewd scenes on the Internet, TV or in the cinema, listening to sexually suggestive jokes or stories, overt flirting with the opposite sex and the like. Actions such as these are condemned by God under the seventh commandment.

God abhors adultery and no adulterers will be allowed in heaven. Paul wrote: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind (sodomy), nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Can an adulterer or an adulteress be forgiven and cleansed from the sin of adultery? Yes, but only by the blood of Christ alone. So Paul continues in verse 11: “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” One who has committed sexual sins can be made holy and declared righteous before the thrice-holy God by the precious blood of Christ, which cleanses us as we confess and repent from all sin and unrighteousness (1 John 1:7-9).

In the gospel of John, we see how the Lord Jesus demonstrated His grace and mercy in forgiving the woman who was caught in the sinful act of adultery. We read in John 8:10-11, “When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”

Nevertheless, we must flee from the sin of adultery. We should learn from the experiences of several people of God who had encounters with such a terrible sin. Learn from David’s mistake. He must have regretted gazing at Bathsheba, for by so doing he fanned the flames of sin. “And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king’s house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” (2 Samuel 11:2-3). He could have fled, but he did not. So even a man after God’s own heart could fall into the snare of the devil. He could not resist that moment of great temptation. All of us can face the same risk unless we heed the exhortation from God’s Word which warns us: “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body” (1 Corinthians 6:18). “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Timothy 2:22). Do not take the tempter’s snare lightly. Peter warns in 1 Peter 5:8: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the



devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

We need to shun adultery like Joseph did when he was tempted by Potiphar’s wife. Joseph simply refused to commit such a great wickedness. He fled in order to avoid sinning against God. “And it came to pass after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master’s wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out” (Genesis 39:7-12). Adultery can be avoided and there is great wisdom in the words of Job: “I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?” (Job 31:1).

In keeping the seventh commandment, we need to put to death all our lustful inclinations. Paul admonishes us in Colossians 3:5-7: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which

ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.” He reminds us that sexual immorality is a sin against God and against our body, the temple of the Holy Spirit. “Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:13b-20).

We need to yield ourselves to the promptings of the Holy Spirit to help us overcome the sin of sexual immorality. Here is another Pauline instruction in Galatians 5:16-18: “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

Are we obeying God’s Law which prohibits adultery and all other forms of sexual sins? Paul issues a grave warning in Ephesians 5:3-5: “But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among



you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

God, who is holy, requires His children to be holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). Therefore to fulfil the seventh commandment, we are to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members

as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:12-13). "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:12-14).



(continued from page 24)

ear filled with hearing" (Ecclesiastes 1:8). We must be suspicious of our own desires and thinking. Check whether we are being driven by some insatiable desire for material glory. Do not be deceived: happiness and contentment are fruits of true spirituality. Jesus warns us: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). God has not given material things the power to satisfy man's spiritual needs.

Secondly, we must seek to be rich towards God. Jesus' parable of the man who amassed great wealth without trusting God teaches the importance of this spiritual pursuit. In that story, the rich man told himself: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But God said unto him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall

those things be, which thou hast provided?" At the end of the parable, Jesus cautioned His hearers: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." A pursuit of material glory, at the expense of the pursuit of godliness, is vanity.

So Paul reminds us: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Timothy 6:6-9; cf. Philippians 4:11-12). So, let us learn to be content with whatever the Lord has blessed us with; and make the pursuit of God's glory and righteousness our singular passion.





The 8th Commandment

Errol Dale Stone

Thou shalt not steal.

Exodus 20:15

When there is a desire to take that which belongs to someone else, it constitutes theft. This article looks at various aspects of theft which are condemned by God. Such situations may include: shoplifting, robbery, burglary, tax evasion (in whatever form), to short-change someone, overcharging, unscrupulous business methods (false weights), to underpay an employee, borrowing with no intention or ability to repay, infringing copyrights (piracy) and plagiarism. Likewise, receiving stolen goods declares a person an accessory to theft (and the law makes him guilty), as does someone who purloins (embezzles or pilfers from the workplace) (cf. Titus 2:10). Heresy is also considered as stealing, as it is robbing men of truth, to the detriment of their souls (cf. 2 Peter 2:1).

The justice of God

As the holiness of God puts Him against the uncleanness of immorality, so does His justice put Him against theft. God's Word clearly forbids meddling with another man's property. In *The Ten Commandments* by Thomas Watson, he said, "The civil lawyers define...stealth or theft to be 'the laying hands unjustly on that which is another's; the invading of another's right.'"

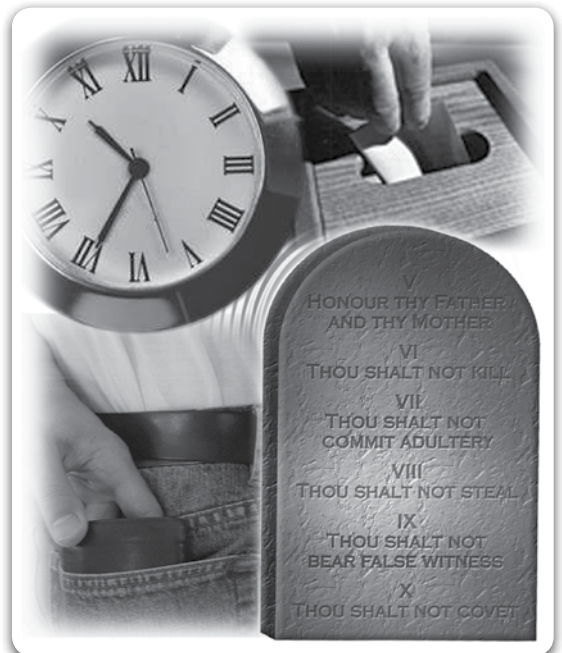
Speaking of theft in the legal system, Watson said, "The thief that shrouds himself under

law, as the unjust attorney or lawyer, who prevaricates and deals falsely with his client. This is to steal from the client. By deceit and prevarication, the lawyer robs the client of his land, and may be the means of ruining his family, and is no better than a thief in God's account." Such is a systemic failure to serve the cause of justice.

He described the internal causes of theft as being that of unbelief and covetousness. The external cause of theft is Satan's solicitation which began when Eve listened to the serpent's voice. He also noted that there is both stealing from God and stealing from others.

The injustice of man

Stealing from God: Watson included in stealing from God, the Sabbath day. He said:





“Therefore, after the morning sacrifice, to spend the other part of the Sabbath in vanity and pleasure, is spiritual theft. It robs God, of his due...”

The Word of God likewise condemns teachers who feed themselves and not the flock, for it is stealing. “...Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?” (Ezekiel 34:2).

Stealing from God also involves withholding tithes (one-tenth of an income) and offerings. The Word of God says: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings” (Malachi 3:8).

“It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry” (Proverbs 20:25). Nelson’s KJV Bible commentary says: “Men ought to practise great care in their dealings with Yahweh. Men cause themselves great harm when they thoughtlessly dedicate things to God without tallying their resources to see if they can honour such a commitment (cf. Ecclesiastes 5:4-7).”

Judas Iscariot was considered a thief who directly stole from the Lord’s money bag. “This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein” (John 12:6).

Stealing from man: The Word of God condemns defrauding others, saying: “Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning” (Leviticus 19:13). The Word of God condemns the use of false weights to sell or purchase:

“And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour’s hand, ye shall not oppress one another” (Leviticus 25:14). “...and falsifying the balances by deceit?” (Amos 8:5). “He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress” (Hosea 12:7).

An extortioner: Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector (publican) of Jericho who grew rich by extortion (overtax the people). When Zacchaeus became a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, he repented of his sins, and made restitution for his wrongdoing. He gave half of his goods to the poor and restored fourfold to those whom he had cheated (cf. Luke 19:8). Restitution of that which is ill-gotten must be restored by either the person or a proxy on his behalf.

An unfaithful trustee or guardian: An area of theft that may also occur is when guardians are given the responsibility of managing an estate. In such cases, instances of illegitimate financial or other personal gain by the guardian can go unnoticed. Yet, it is a high form of treachery and injustice. It constitutes qualified theft. Likewise, the seeking of a person on a death bed to change a will, which causes the loss of an inheritance, is the deceitful work of the adversary and is another case of theft.

Economic unfairness: Stealing has a close connection to lying and dealing falsely (cf. Leviticus 19:11). The Word of God warns people to live unto holiness in everyday life, promoting principles of economic fairness, having consideration for the poor (cf. Leviticus 19:9, 10), respect for the truth (cf. Leviticus 19:11, 12), and regard for the employee and the vulnerable (cf. Leviticus 19:13, 14). Justice should be administered equally to the poor



and the wealthy (cf. Leviticus 19:15), and true brotherly love towards all men (cf. Leviticus 19:16-18).

Not returning borrowed money: When money is borrowed with no intention of repaying, it is nothing but theft. “The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth” (Psalm 37:21). Elisha, the prophet, counselled the widow to pay her debts by selling the oil and living on the rest of the finances that were left over (cf. 2 Kings 4:7).

An unscrupulous moneylender: The moneylender who takes money by extortion is a robber; he is also a robber who lends money knowing the borrower has no ability to repay and then controlling his life. God’s Word says: “If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury” (Exodus 22:25; cf. Deuteronomy 23:19).

Shifting landmarks: The Word of God says: “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour’s landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen” (Deuteronomy 27:17). No one, whether poor and lowly or rich and powerful, is exempt from greed and covetousness as can be seen in the practice of shifting landmarks which is equivalent to stealing and was alluded to in Job 24:2, being also forbidden in Proverbs 22:28 and 23:10, 11. To allow the depreciation of a property or possession in order to devalue it for personal gain is also theft.

Mishandling designated offerings: Likewise, when money is given to a church or another institution as a designated offering, to use it for other purposes is tantamount to stealing. Matthew Henry said of Deuteronomy 19:14:

“It is the will of God that every one should know his own, and that all good means should be used to prevent encroachments and the doing and suffering of wrong. When right is settled, care must be taken that it be not afterwards unsettled...This, without doubt, is a moral precept, and still binding, and to us it forbids.”

Nocturnal scheming: King Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel’s night of angry plotting against Naboth was nothing but nocturnal scheming of theft (cf. 1 Kings 21:1-7). The Word of God says: “And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead” (1 Kings 21:15).

Afflicting the widows and orphans: God has a perpetual concern for the welfare of any widow or fatherless child. This is attested abundantly throughout the Scriptures as a constant theme (cf. James 1:27). “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child” (Exodus 22:22). Likewise, to hold back what is due to them is theft.

Sexual immorality: The Word of God says: “That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified” (1 Thessalonians 4:6). This reference is to sexual immorality. To defraud another man of his wife is theft, which the Lord will deal with.

The sin of the niggard: Chambers dictionary says the niggard is “a person who begrudges spending or giving away”. Thomas Watson



says: “The niggard is a thief; he steals from himself in not allowing himself what is needful” (cf. Ecclesiastes 6:2). Just as the prodigal son who robbed himself by the foolish wasting of his estate was a thief, so is the person who misspends his time by idleness and hours of pleasure (cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:12).

Conclusion

Stealing displays a mistrust in God, and a lack of faith. Stolen goods are not of God and those involved in obtaining such are enemies of society and of God. In the Old Testament, those who stole were put to death. They also invoked a curse upon themselves and displayed a lack of salvation as the sin of stealing originates from a deceitful heart (cf. Matthew 15:19; Mark 7:22).


A severe restitution was the punishment for theft. If a stolen item was either sold or eaten, the thief was required to pay back five times (cf. Exodus 22:1). If the stolen item was found in his possession, he was to pay back double the value (cf. Exodus 22:4). The person who stole through deception was to restore the principal plus twenty percent (cf. Leviticus 6:2-5).

In the early Church, Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, lied about what they received from the sale of their property (cf. Acts 5:1-11). What they did was embezzlement (stealing) and so they were killed by God.

There is no sin that can be considered an isolated event. The sin of Achan (whose name means trouble) reminds us of that (cf. Joshua 7:11). Sin had to be purged or else it would contaminate the whole “lump” (cf. Romans 12:21). “And Joshua, and all Israel with him,

took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent,...And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones” (Joshua 7:24-25).

During the Roman Empire, stealing was punishable by crucifixion. “And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left” (Mark 15:27). One willingly confessed Christ and that day he was present with Jesus in paradise. The other wilfully rejected Christ and consequently this unregenerate thief will not go to heaven but died in his sin in hell (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Paul rebukes the sin of stealing in Ephesians 4:28: “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” There is no place for stealing and dishonest communication in Christendom. Those who repent will bring forth fruits of salvation, that God be honoured. “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6). “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have” (Hebrews 13:5). 





The 9th Commandment

Dennis Kablingue

**Thou shalt not bear
false witness against
thy neighbour.**

Exodus 20:16

Even at a tender age, we all have started to tell lies. To avoid the rod, we lie. To get something forbidden, we lie. To cover up our wrongdoings, we lie. To besmirch the reputation of our siblings and gain the favour of our parents for ourselves, we also lie.

Is it not pathetic that even before we were weaned from our childhood, we have already been lying and, in some cases, have even mastered this “skill”? So as we grow up and take our roles in society, whether in politics, business, religion, or in whatever profession,

we pursue them with a lying tongue. Is it not true that we are bent on lying if its outcome will work towards our own advantage? Therefore, it is not surprising that this world is filled with lies.

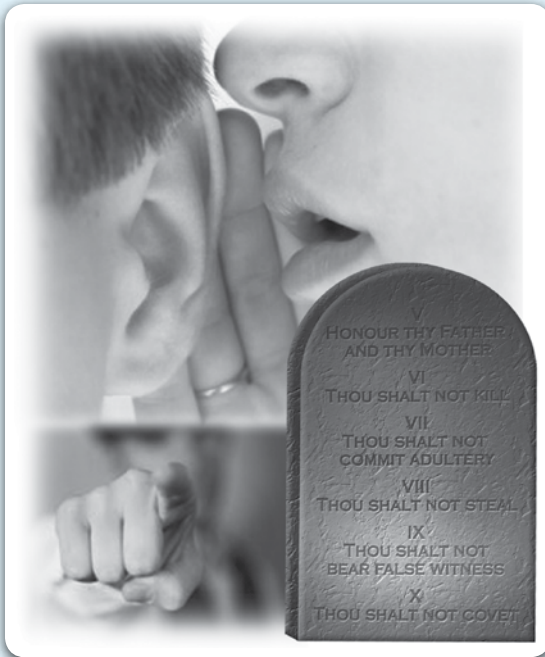
However, God’s commandment towards us is: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” (Exodus 20:16).

The nature and the need of the ninth commandment

The nature of the ninth commandment is moral, spiritual and legal. It was given to maintain righteousness, truth and justice, and for people to enjoy law and order.

In Biblical times, God allowed the victim to file a lawsuit in court to settle any legal dispute. The judge would evaluate the word and the evidence of the witnesses before he made his judgment. “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you” (Deuteronomy 17:6-7).

With the ninth commandment in place, the three main parties in a lawsuit – (1) the complainant, (2) the defendant, and (3) the witnesses, are all expected to avoid making false statements. The complainant’s lawsuit





must be genuine. The witnesses must affirm the truth. The defendant must plead guilty when he is wrong. This is what God wants – a society where justice and truth will reign, and law and order is enjoyed. Wherever this happens, that community will be conducive for living.

On the contrary, if lying and deceit are tolerated, injustice and falsehood will prevail and a chaotic society will emerge.

The severity of breaking the ninth commandment

Firstly, bearing false witness will bring about injustice in a land that is filled with liars and deceivers. Even if the judge is meticulous in following proper protocols in the investigation, the penalty of the law may fall upon the innocent and acquit the guilty if a trial is saddled with false witnesses. Such is the outcome of this sin. It hides the truth and promotes falsehood. God says: “Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life” (Ezekiel 13:22).

Secondly, bearing false witness can be as damaging as or even more damaging than breaking the other commandments. It may not appear as equally harmful as murder, adultery or stealing, but do not be misled. It can be more harmful because false accusation can lead to physical and mental hurt or even death as a punishment for the crime that someone is falsely charged with. Imagine what tragedy would come upon a young man if false witnesses, with their fabricated testimonies and evidence, were to accuse him of cursing

his parents. That person would have to be stoned to death!

Even in our time, the potential damage that lying can cause is very severe. It is hard to imagine the agony of a man whose reputation is destroyed by false witnesses. Such agony can even provoke a man to murder! Lying can destroy relationships; it can cause one to lose his job. The list of ugly and hurtful consequences caused by lying is endless.

Thirdly, a deliberate twisting of the law not only destroys an innocent person, but also let the guilty go unpunished. This will be like making God appear as One who tolerates sins at the expense of the just and innocent. Therefore, God showed His wrath against the Israelites who had been taking advantage of the poor and the weak through deceptive and violent means. “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity” (Isaiah 59:2-4).

The society that does not check the sin of lying or where lying is rampant will be a breeding ground for all sorts of sins. It will be a terrible place to live in.

The extent of the ninth commandment

Obedience to this commandment in all areas of life is expected from a born-again person. Colossians 3:9 says: “Lie not one to another,



seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.” In the light of this verse, it is not at all possible to be sure that a person who lives in violation of this commandment is truly born-again. In other words, the evidence to a person’s identity as a Christian is bound to his obedience to this commandment.

The ninth commandment is not limited to court-case scenarios. As Thomas Vincent explains: “The ninth commandment forbiddeth, as prejudicial to truth, all falsehood and lying whatsoever, whether it be lies to make mischief, as false accusation of others; or lies to make gain, as falsifying of our word, over-reaching our neighbours for advantage to ourselves; or lies to make wonder, as in the inventing of strange or false news; or lies to make sports, as in lying jests; or lies to make excuse, as in all lies for the covering of our own or others’ faults.”

This commandment also prohibits teaching wrong doctrines in the name of God. It is often observed that heretics like to claim that they are the true witnesses of God. However, God warns His people not to listen to them: “Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets... for they prophesy a lie unto you” (Jeremiah 27:9a, 10a). Christ also warns us of the same: “Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matthew 24:4-5).

The connection between lying and other sins

Intriguingly, in all the occurrences of lying in the Scriptures, this sin is associated with many other sins. It is like a servant to other sins; it has been an aid in committing other sins. “He that hateth dissembleth with his lips,

and layeth up deceit within him; When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart” (Proverbs 26:24-25). Cruel people hide their wicked plans by lying (cf. Psalm 27:12). The deceitful covers up their malice by lying (cf. Psalm 109:2). The businessman, who is covetous, will try to gain more money by falsehood (cf. Proverbs 11:1; 21:6). These are only a few examples of how lying is associated with other sins.

The Christian’s response to the ninth commandment

Christians must obey the ninth commandment. Lying is the mark of the children of the devil (cf. John 8:44). Since we are the children of God, we must manifest the character of our Father in heaven who does not and will never lie – “God is not a man, that he should lie” (Numbers 23:19a). Paul likewise gave the same emphasis: “God, that cannot lie” (Titus 1:2b). In fact, lying is an abomination to Him. “Lying lips are abomination to the LORD” (Proverbs 12:22). His judgment against unrepentant liars is eternal punishment in the lake of fire (cf. Revelation 22:15).

So as the household of God, we must hate lying and promote His words of truth like the Psalmist who said: “I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love” (Psalm 119:163).





The 10th Commandment

Prabhudas Koshy

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Exodus 20:17

What is coveting?

To covet is to desire that which is unlawful to obtain or possess. So, the desire for that which is forbidden is coveting. The desire for another's property to enjoy it as one's own is also coveting.

Coveting also includes inordinate or excessive desires. There is nothing wrong, however, in merely desiring something that is needful. Neither is it wrong to desire a better life. But when one wants something so badly that he would break every law to get it, or will be sick with unhappiness without it, or be so occupied with it that he pushes God out of his life, the desire becomes sinful. When we pursue our desires (whether it be for ourselves or our children) by neglecting spiritual and moral principles, we become covetous.

Likewise, covetousness characterises those who enter the race to “keep up with the Joneses”. Covetousness motivates men to accumulate material things to be like or even better than others around them.

Wanting our children to have it better than we did is natural; but even that becomes evil when we allow that desire to distort their values. Again, to love pretty things is normal. God loves beauty, for He has created all things as good and beautiful. So we can also appreciate beautiful things, but to desire them for showing off for self-glory and to arouse envy in others is evil.

Also, it is not wrong to desire the needs of life and even its simple luxuries, but a feverish passion for more that results in actions that usurp God's glory and violate His law is truly evil.

Coveting is not just about money and material things. The tenth commandment





also prohibits coveting the wives and servants of our neighbour.

Coveting is idolatry

Covetousness is described as idolatry by the Apostle Paul. When our hearts are filled with greed and lust, we tend to place self above God, and thus coveting becomes idolatry. In Ephesians 5:5, Paul warned: “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (cf. Colossians 3:5-6).

A covetous attitude often suppresses the far more important things of God, and may even cause one to forget them altogether. It also takes pleasure in self-gratifying and self-exalting pursuits; and in that process, it completely ignores and neglects God’s glory.

Why is coveting idolatry? Because it is desiring something more than God. Desiring God and His glory must be our ultimate passion. If desiring something is more in comparison to desiring God, then we have allowed something to be greater than God in our hearts. Such a desire that will lead us away from God, rather than being drawn closer to God, is covetousness. It is sin.

If you desire something more than God, then you have broken the very first of the Ten Commandments, which says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3).

Not coveting means not desiring anything in a way that reduces God as your supreme object of love and desire. And not having any gods before God means the same thing: don’t love anything or anyone in a way that competes with God’s supreme place in your life. If we

disobey the first and the last commandments, we are committing idolatry.

In the same vein, Jesus reminds us in Luke 16:13: “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Jesus was saying, we either cleave to God or to the riches of the world. We desire either God or the world. It is impossible to love God and the world equally. We must love God and not the things of this world (cf. 1 John 2:15).

While a God-fearing man says that “the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever”, the covetous person would say “the chief end of man is to glorify prosperity and enjoy it forever”.

Coveting breeds more sins and violence

The Scriptures say: “...he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent” (Proverbs 28:20). Covetousness leads people away from all moral laws. “Covetousness,” says Thomas Watson, “is a mother sin, a radical vice.”

An insatiable desire for power, pleasure and prosperity ignores all spiritual and moral principles and duties. Such a ferocious hunger coerces men to beg, borrow, exploit, steal, threaten, hurt and even murder to grab from others. Micah, the prophet, described the covetous: “... they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage” (Micah 2:2).

When the object desired is legitimately beyond the reach of the admirer, it compels the heart of the covetous person to break all the



commandments to achieve his heart's desire. When greed is unchecked, it will motivate men to lie, steal, dishonour parents, commit adultery and even murder to get what they lust after.

Coveting impedes spiritual growth

Covetousness poisons the minds of people and corrupts their thinking, desires, values and deeds. It pollutes the whole soul. As the Scriptures say: "The love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6:10).

Many do not realize how greed is impeding their spiritual growth. They who are given to covetousness overload themselves with worldly business because their hearts are set upon the world. They will have little time to read the Scriptures, or to pray, or to serve God. Anything that would demand more of their time and possessions will be viewed as a nuisance to their lives.

Covetousness will also hinder the efficacy of the Word preached. In His parable of the sower, Jesus illustrated how one's anxiety about the cares of life impeded the growth of the seed of God's Word that was sown through preaching. "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22). It is impossible for an earthly-minded person to be spiritually-minded. You may as well encourage an elephant to fly.

Moreover, the Scriptures tell us that covetousness is a subtle and deceitful sin.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:5, the Apostle Paul mentions "cloak of covetousness". It is put on by men who even appear to be religious. But the Apostle says: "For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness." It is a cloak that would deceive many to think of it as a virtue. For instance, it puts on an appearance of frugality and sound financial management. It would disguise itself under the cloak of providing for the family or saving up for 'rainy days', etc. However it may disguise itself as a virtue, it simply would not allow the person to deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Christ (cf. Luke 9:23). Ultimately, it will be a case like that of the rich young ruler who "went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions" (Matthew 19:22). Covetousness fills the hearts of men with many excuses and pleas for not fully surrendering their lives to God's will.

Coveting must be banished

The deadly and deceitful sin of covetousness must be completely banished from our hearts. "Thou shalt not covet" (Exodus 20:17). We must be always ready to combat covetousness before it gets a foothold on our souls.

Firstly, acknowledge the natural tendency of our hearts to be covetous. Solomon says: "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the

(continued on page 14)



BIBLE TRIVIA - GENESIS 41

Sarah Yong

MATCH EACH MAN TO THE DREAM HE HAD. DRAW ANOTHER LINE TO ITS CORRECT INTERPRETATION.

Joseph

Baker

Pharaoh

Butler

1



2



3



4



A There will be seven years of good harvest, followed by seven years of famine.

B He will be restored to his position.

C He will be exalted. His parents and eleven brothers will bow down to him.

D He will be hanged on a tree.

CODED MESSAGE

USING THE CODE GIVEN BELOW, WRITE THE CORRESPONDING LETTERS ON EACH BLANK TO REVEAL THE MESSAGE.

$\bar{6}$ \bar{O} $\bar{12}$ $\bar{11}$ $\bar{5}$ \bar{E} $\bar{6}$ \bar{O} $\bar{9}$ $\bar{2}$ $\bar{11}$ $\bar{5}$ $\bar{14}$ $\bar{4}$ \bar{O} $\bar{2}$ $\bar{13}$ \bar{I} $\bar{11}$ $\bar{5}$
 A $\bar{6}$ $\bar{6}$ $\bar{11}$ $\bar{5}$ $\bar{14}$ $\bar{5}$ \bar{E} A $\bar{9}$ $\bar{11}$, $\bar{10}$ \bar{O} \bar{U} $\bar{6}$, $\bar{7}$ \bar{I} $\bar{8}$ $\bar{2}$ A $\bar{8}$ $\bar{2}$
 $\bar{10}$ $\bar{11}$ $\bar{9}$ \bar{E} $\bar{8}$ $\bar{4}$ $\bar{11}$ $\bar{5}$; A $\bar{8}$ $\bar{2}$ $\bar{6}$ \bar{O} $\bar{12}$ $\bar{11}$ $\bar{5}$ $\bar{14}$
 $\bar{8}$ \bar{E} \bar{I} $\bar{4}$ $\bar{5}$ $\bar{1}$ \bar{O} \bar{U} $\bar{9}$ A $\bar{10}$ $\bar{11}$ $\bar{5}$ $\bar{14}$ $\bar{10}$ \bar{E} $\bar{6}$ $\bar{3}$

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| B | D | F | G | H | L | M | N | R | S | T | V | W | Y |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |

Answers to Vol. 8, Issue 3 - Bible Trivia - Genesis 39 & 40

p. 25 - Egyptian; Ishmeelites; prosper; overseer; goodly; wife; God; garment; prison; keeper; two; dream; butler; grapes; baker; baskets; interpretation; hanged; make; restored.

A Brave and Faithful Witness

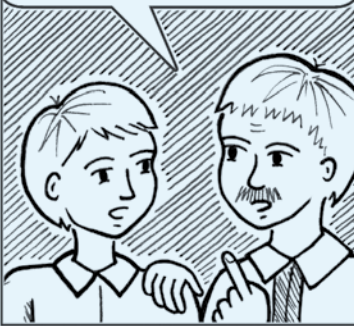
A real incident from the life of
Jonathan Goforth,
a Canadian missionary to China.

Bibliography: "Goforth of China" by Rosalind Goforth.
The stories are written by Sis Ruth Low.
Illustrations are done by Sis Sharon Ng.

Jonathan Goforth was a missionary to China. Just a few months after his arrival, an old, experienced missionary told him,



"Goforth, you must not share with the Chinese the name of Jesus Christ because they are against it. Just try to remove their false gods first. If you have an opportunity after that, you may tell them about Jesus."



Goforth was strongly against what the old missionary said. In response, he exclaimed to his wife,

"Never! Never! NEVER!
It is the Gospel that saves,
even Chinese sinners."



He would not listen to the advice of the missionary.

Although Goforth was not able to speak Chinese well but only in broken, imperfect sentences, he never failed to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified.



He would always preach from the Bible, and it was always open before him when he preached.



He called it "The written Word of the One True God".

People came to know the Lord through Goforth's preaching.



A few years later, a young missionary asked Goforth for his secret in bringing people to Christ.



Goforth said,

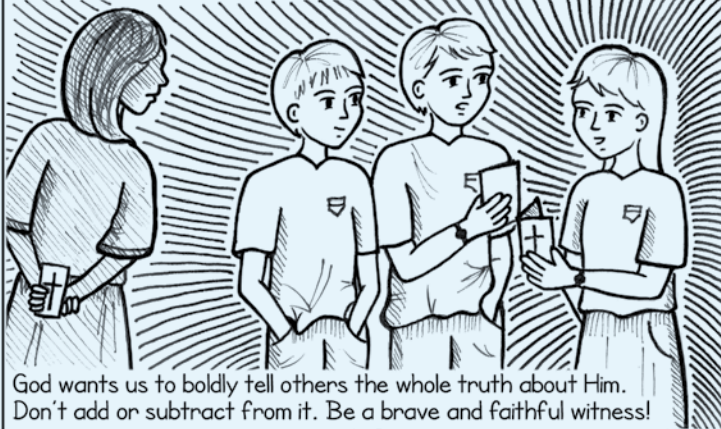
"I give God a chance to speak to souls through His written Word. My only secret is to show them their need and tell them of a Saviour who can save them."



Goforth always preached from God's Word. He also studied it daily so that he might know and preach it better.



Dear child of God, are you afraid of what non-Christians say about your faith and your God? Do you hide some truths from them so that they don't reject or laugh at you?



God wants us to boldly tell others the whole truth about Him. Don't add or subtract from it. Be a brave and faithful witness!

Romans 1:16 says,

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."



'SOLUS CHRISTUS'

REFORMATION LECTURE & CANTATA 2008

Sunday, 26th October 2008

Speaker:

Rev Dr Prabhudas Koshy

Choirs:

Children's Choir
Voices of Gethsemane (Church Choir)

Time:

5-6pm (Lecture),
6.15-7.15pm (Dinner Fellowship)
8-9.30pm (Cantata)

Venue:

SingPost Level 5 Auditorium,
10 Eunos Road 8
Singapore

Come and spend the Reformation Sunday evening with us.

If you would like to join us for dinner fellowship, please call 6741 1910 and let us know how many will be coming. Cost of dinner: S\$5/- each

New Mission Station **Bogo, The Philippines** Missionary: Dominino dela Cruz, Jr

Prison Ministry



**Gospel
Outreach
to School
Children**



**Inauguration Service and
Appointment of Missionary**



**Worship Service
(About 60 people attend regularly)**



**Bro Dominino
reaches out to
various parts
of Bogo on his
motorbike**



**Updates on
2010 Ethiopian
Assignment
(see page 6)**