

# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

## “For God So Loved...”

### Part I

Ex 20:15 “You shall not steal.” (NIV)

*What does it mean to steal? To take something that does not belong to you. It is a simple concept, yet deep in the Word of God. The Bible gives us many narrative examples of stealing and its consequences.*

#### **Jacob and Rachel-**

Gen 31:19-20 (NIV)

19 When Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole her father's household gods.  
20 Moreover, Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him he was running away.

Gen 31:20

And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. (KJV)

*The term the NIV translates as “deceived” in Genesis 31:20 is the same word translated “steal” in Exodus 20:15. Rachel stole the household gods and then Jacob stole away with the household!*

*The entire account is one of cross and double-cross. Jacob deceptively flees. Laban accuses him of carrying off his daughters (never mind he worked 14 years for them, as far as Laban was concerned, they were stolen!) and the family idols are missing. Rachel has stolen the idols and then deceives her father by covering them with her menstrual flow. (Her duplicity and Jacob's rashness leads ultimately to Rachel's death as a fulfillment of Jacob's curse.) Jacob berates Laban for being harsh and deceptive employer. He maintains his innocence and even states that when livestock did get stolen, Jacob made restitution. And on it goes.*

*From Jacob we learn that deception leads to a hard life. From Rachel we learn that hidden stolen goods will eventually find us out.*

#### **Absalom-**

2 Sam 15:6

Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. (NIV)

*The idiom above is the same as when Jacob deceived Laban. Absalom is a type of satan. As Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel by his deception at the gate, so satan deceived the heavenly host. He was killed after his own beauty entrapped in a tree between heaven and earth and he was pierced through with javelins.*

*What if Absalom hadn't killed his brother? What if he had remained loyal to his father? Could he have been the next king? We'll never know. But this we do know, the throne he gained through deceit he didn't keep. Instead of being in the genealogical list of Messiah, Absalom*

wound up as a byword in Israel. Breach of God's commands does not aid in the progression of God's program.

### **Joseph-**

Gen 40:15

For I was forcibly carried off [*stolen away – NKJ*] from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon." (NIV)

Ex 21:16

Anyone who kidnaps another and either sells him or still has him when he is caught must be put to death. (NIV)

*Kidnapping for the purpose of slave trading is denounced by God. It is a death sentence to kidnap. [Egypt lost their firstborn, the US suffered the Civil War.]*

*Joseph's sojourn in Egypt can be read in Genesis 39-50. Multiple lessons can be derived from the record of his life. But for now, let us turn our attention to his brothers.*

*The brothers' guilty conscience-*

Gen 42:21-24 (NIV)

21 They said to one another, "Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that's why this distress has come upon us."

22 Reuben replied, "Didn't I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn't listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood."

23 They did not realize that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter.

24 He turned away from them and began to weep, but then turned back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes.

Gen 42:27-28 (NIV)

27 At the place where they stopped for the night one of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey, and he saw his silver in the mouth of his sack.

28 "My silver has been returned," he said to his brothers. "Here it is in my sack." Their hearts sank and they turned to each other trembling and said, "What is this that God has done to us?"

Gen 44:8-9

8 We even brought back to you from the land of Canaan the silver we found inside the mouths of our sacks. So why would we steal silver or gold from your master's house?

9 If any of your servants is found to have it, he will die; and the rest of us will become my lord's slaves." (NIV)

*From Joseph's brothers we learn that sins we hide haunt us and will eventually find us out. The best thing we can do with sin is confess it and repent and be rid of it.*

## **Achan-**

Josh 7:11-13, 19-26

- 11 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.
- 12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.
- 13 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.
- 19 And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.
- 20 And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done:
- 21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.
- 22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.
- 23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.
- 24 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 that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.
- 25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.
- 26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day. KJV

*The Achan narrative teaches us that when we steal, the Lord does no stand with us when we face our enemies.*

## **Stealing in the Church-**

*In the American church, there is much concern about finances. Finances are a huge subject in the Word of God. Jesus made financial references and taught on the use of money to a great extent. Financial concerns are a concern of life. One of the reasons why being financially free is such a hot topic in the American church is because as a culture, we are in debt. Other places of the world, where simple survival is a concern, other subjects take precedent.*

*There are many reasons why we may be experiencing financial trouble; why the rust would be corroding and the moth eating at our at our treasures. But one area of our life that makes a way for the thief to steal from us is if we ourselves are involved in stealing, in breaking the eighth*

*commandment. We need to examine our own hearts to see if there are any areas in our life where we are taking or keeping things that are not ours so that we may repent and be free of this sin and God may bless us.*

*God's program for the thief is restitution.*

Ex 22:1

If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he must pay back five head of cattle for the ox and four sheep for the sheep. (NIV)

*Restitution requires that we pay back more than we took. Thievery costs more than the lost item. If we are ever guilty or our children are ever guilty of stealing, we need to pay back more than was stolen (from twice as much to seven times as much) to make restitution.*

Ex 22:3b

A thief must certainly make **restitution**, but if he has nothing, he must be sold to pay for his theft. (NIV)

*The Hebrew word translated restitution is shalom [Strong's #7999], from which the familiar word shalom is derived. A couple of interesting usages follow.*

Ps 61:8 "Then will I ever sing praise to your name and fulfill my vows day after day." (NIV)

Ps 66:13-15 (NIV)

13 I will come to your temple with burnt offerings and fulfill my vows to you —

14 vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble.

15 I will sacrifice fat animals to you and an offering of rams; I will offer bulls and goats. Selah

*When you promise it and speak it, you have made it the Lord's. When you don't offer it after making it the Lord's, you have then stolen it. This is why to pay the vow is to make restitution, is to complete, is to make peace.*

*The connection with offerings and robbery, thievery and the Lord's redemption and restitution being made is woven throughout Scripture.*

Mal 3:8-12

8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

9 You are under a curse-the whole nation of you-because you are robbing me.

10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty.

12 "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty. (NIV)

*Leaping logic: Thou shalt not steal (take that which does not belong to you). What is the difference between a thief and a robber? A robber does it out in the open. We have many verses about the thief in the night. A robber is a thief without a conscience, a thief gone really bad. Our culture (through movies or stories) tries to get us to think incorrectly by identifying with and commiserating with the thief as a protagonist. It's wrong. It's stealing.*

*God said that they had robbed Him by not giving the tithes and offerings. We'll get to that. He also said that He would prevent the pests from devouring the crops.*

### **The army of locusts-**

Joel 2:1-2, 8-11 (NIV)

- 1 Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming. It is close at hand-
- 2 a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was of old nor ever will be in ages to come.
- 8 They do not jostle each other; each marches straight ahead. They plunge through defenses without breaking ranks.
- 9 They rush upon the city; they run along the wall. They climb into the houses; like thieves they enter through the windows.
- 10 Before them the earth shakes, the sky trembles, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine.
- 11 The LORD thunders at the head of his army; his forces are beyond number, and mighty are those who obey his command. The day of the LORD is great; it is dreadful. Who can endure it?

*The devouring locust is one of the means by which the curse for disobedience is carried out. The common theme in all of this, though, is loss of fruit. The grain, the wine, the oil, and the children are all lost because of disobedience. This was the state of affairs when the prophet Joel was speaking for God. But the Lord is in the business of deliverance.*

Joel 2:22-25a (NKJ)

- 22 Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field; For the open pastures are springing up, And the tree bears its fruit; The fig tree and the vine yield their strength.
- 23 Be glad then, you children of Zion, And rejoice in the LORD your God; For He has given you the former rain faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you — The former rain, And the latter rain in the first month.
- 24 The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.
- 25 "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten,

*Have you ever heard this verse applied to what the devil has stolen from you? You can apply this verse this way. You can pray, "Lord, you have promised that you will restore the years that the locust has eaten."*

*Simply put, the wine is the blood, redemption. The wheat represents the Word (man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God). The oil is the anointing. They had lost the meat of the Word, the understanding of redemptive sacrifice and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.*

Joel 2:25-28 (NKJ)

25b The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you.

26 You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; And My people shall never be put to shame.

27 Then you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel: I am the LORD your God And there is no other. My people shall never be put to shame.

28 God's Spirit Poured Out "And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.

Deut 28:36-42

36 The LORD will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you or your fathers. There you will worship other gods, gods of wood and stone.

37 You will become a thing of horror and an object of scorn and ridicule to all the nations where the LORD will drive you.

38 You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it.

39 You will plant vineyards and cultivate them but you will not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them.

40 You will have olive trees throughout your country but you will not use the oil, because the olives will drop off.

41 You will have sons and daughters but you will not keep them, because they will go into captivity.

42 Swarms of locusts will take over all your trees and the crops of your land. (NIV)

*The Lord promised the restoration of the wine, the grain, and the oil and an outpouring of the Spirit of God on the sons and daughters that they might prophecy.*

***When you see the Holy Spirit poured out on your children, this should be a sign to you of the Lord's willingness to repay the years the locust has stolen.***

*How do we access this grace of God? We need to pray.*

1 Kings 8:37-40

37 "When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come,

38 and when a prayer or plea is made by any of your people Israel-each one aware of the afflictions of his own heart, and spreading out his hands toward this temple-

39 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you know his heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men),

40 so that they will fear you all the time they live in the land you gave our fathers. (NIV)

*When we recognize the sin that allowed the locust to come and steal and we confess it as the Lord is dealing with our heart, it allows Him to turn and forgive and act on our behalf.*

*With regard to the commandments (especially the "love thy neighbor as thyself" commandments), the breach involves the perpetrator and the victim. As Christians, it is not enough not to steal. We need to know how we are to behave when we are stolen from, when we have been victims of the crime, both in the natural and the spiritual.*

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (NIV)

*Satan is a thief and he has a program to steal your blessings. Ephesians says that we have been blessed with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ. Can we all look at our lives and see some missing blessings? Yes. Are there blessings you see mentioned in the Word that you don't see in your life? Yes. God says He's given it to us. If we don't have them, where are they? They were either stolen or forfeited; taken or given away.*

*We need to understand not only how to behave when we have been the victims of the crime, but how to behave towards those who have been victimized.*

Luke 10:25-37

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

27 He answered: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." (NIV)

*This parable is rich with truth and symbolism. This man was a victim of a terrible crime due to his own foolishness (traveling alone on a notorious road). The good Samaritan came and bandaged his wounds (Jesus was sent to bind up the broken hearted-Is. 61:1), poured wine on his wounds (a cleansing anesthetic – the blood of Jesus cleanses us of sin) and oil (anointing of the Holy Spirit) and then he put him into a house (church) to be cared for, giving the innkeeper two silver coins (redemption money) to pay for the man until such time as he should return (The Return) and make restitution for the total cost.*

*As we proceed, we need to see not only how we gain victory over stealing, but also how it is we are to behave when victimized; how we are to behave towards those who have been stolen from; and exactly what is this connection between robbers and Jesus.*