



A N
E X P O S I T I O N
O F T H E
Ten Commandments,
DELIVERED IN SEVERAL
L E C T U R E S.

EXODUS XX. 1, 2.

(And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.)

B E I N G (through God's strength) resolved to essay the opening of the ten commandments, all that we shall say, by way of preface, shall be to give you an account of the motives which have engaged us in this work.

The first is, the excellency of this scripture, it being by the Lord himself intended as a comprehensive sum of his peoples duty, and commended to us from this, that though all the scripture be his word, yet this in a singular manner is so; for he spake all these words himself, and by a voice immediately formed by himself he pronounced them first to his people, and afterward twice by his finger (that is, immediately by himself, without making use of any pen-man, as in other scriptures) he wrote them for his peoples behoof upon two tables of stone, which were afterwards commanded in a singular manner to be kept in the ark, Deut. 10. v. 2, 5. and to be learned, Deut. v. 1. as also to be written on the posts of their doors, and diligently pressed on their children, Deut. vi. 7, 8, 9, 10. In opening of which commandments, not only the prophets and apostles, but our blessed

bleſſed Lord in that ſermon of his upon the mount, Matth. v. 6, 7. doth much inſiſt.

The ſecond is, the uſefulneſs of this ſcripture, and of the knowledge of it to all that would know what is pleaſing to God, that they may be fitted for duty to him, and may know what is diſpleaſing to him; that they may know ſin, and how to eſchew it, and may be ſtirred up to repentance when they have fallen into it: this being the laws property, that thereby is the knowledge of ſin, Rom. vii. 7. and ſo likewiſe the knowledge of duty; therefore it is ſummed in ſo few words, that it may be the more eaſily brought into, and retained in the memories and hearts of his people: For which cauſe alſo of old and late, has it always been recommended, both in the word, Deut. v. 1. and in all catechiſms to be learned, as a rule of mens walking; and yet ſo comprehensive is it, that without pains and diligence to come to the underſtanding thereof, men cannot but come ſhort of the great ſcope thereof.

The third is the great ignorance, that is amongſt not a few, of the meaning of this uſeful and excellent ſcripture, and eſpecially in this ſecure time, many not knowing they break the commandments when they break them, at leaſt in many material things, and this draweth with it theſe ſad effects. 1. That there are few convictions of ſin. 2. Little repentance for ſin. 3. Much ſecurity, preſumption, confidence in ſelf-righteouſneſs, and the like; upon which the ignorance of this ſcripture hath great influence, even as amongſt the Jews, the ignorance of its ſpirituality made many neglect the chief part of holineſs, and proudly ſettle on ſelf-righteouſneſs, and ſlight Chriſt the Mediator; as we may ſee in Paul's example, Rom. vii. 9. and this was one reaſon why our Lord expounded it, that by it ſinners might ſee more the neceſſity of a Mediator, who is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to all that believe, Rom. x. 4. And as theſe effects are palpable at this time, ſo we conceive it uſeful to follow the ſame remedy; this evil being not only againſt the prophane, but amongſt the moſt formal and civil, who ſtumble at this ſtone; yea, many believers are often ſo much taken with caſes and light in doctrinal truths, that they heed not ſufficiently the meaning of the law, whereby their convictions of ſin, tenderneſs in practice, conſtant exerciſe of repentance, and daily freſh applications to the blood of ſprinkling are much impeded.

And although it may ſeem not ſo to ſuite the nature of this exerciſe (for it would be noticed, that the author delivered this doctrine of the law in ſeveral lectures on the Sabbath morning before ſermon, in which time he formerly

used to read and expound a chapter of the holy scriptures, or a considerable portion thereof; which lectures are not now distinguished, because of the close connection of the purposes) yet considering the foresaid reasons, and the nature of this excellent scripture, which cannot hastily be passed through (it having much in few words, and therefore requiring some convenient time for explication) and considering the weight of it, and its usefulness for all sorts of hearers, we are confident it will agree well with the end of this exercise, (which is the end of opening all scripture) to wit, peoples instruction and edification, to insist a little thereon.

Our purpose is not to aim at any great accuracy, nor to multiply questions and digressions, nor to insist in application and use, but plainly and shortly (as we are able) to give you the meaning of the law of God: 1. By holding forth the native duties required in every commandment. 2. The sins which properly oppose and contradict each commandment, that by these we may have some direction and help in duty, and some spur to repentance, at least a furtherance in the work of conviction, that so by it we may be led to Jesus Christ, *who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes*, Rom. x. 4. which is the principal intent of this law, as it was given to Israel.

To make way for the exposition, we shall, 1. Lay down some conclusions which arise from the preface. 2. Give you some ordinary distinctions. 3. Clear and confirm some rules or observations useful for understanding of the whole law.

The first conclusion that we take for granted is, that this law (as it is moral) doth tie even Christians and believers now, as well as of old; which appears from this, that he who is God the law-giver here, Acts vii 38. is the angel Christ, and it is his word, as is clear, ver. 30, 31. as also the matter of it being co-natural to Adam, it did bind before the law was given, and that obligatory force cannot be separated from its nature, (though the exercise of right reason in nature be much obliterate since the fall) therefore Christ was so far from destroying this law in its authority, and Paul so far from making it void by the doctrine of faith, that our Lord tells, he came to fulfill it, Matth. v. 17. and Paul shews, that his preaching of faith was to establish it, Rom. iii 31. which truth being confirmed by them both in their practice and doctrine, sheweth that the breach of the holy law of God, is no less sinful to us now, than it was to them before us.

The second conclusion is, that though this law, and obedience

obedience thereto, lie on Christians, and be called for from them, yet it is not laid on them as a covenant of works, or that by which they are to seek or expect justification; no, but on the contrary, to overturn self-righteousness, by this doctrine which manifesteth sin, and of itself worketh wrath; which is also clear, in that he is here called, *Our God*, which he cannot be to sinners but by grace: And also it appears from the Lord's owning of this sinful people as his, and his adjoining to this law so many ceremonies and sacrifices which point out and lead to Christ; and from his adding the law on mount Sinai, as a help to the covenant made with Abraham, Gen. xvii. (which was a covenant of grace, and was never altered, as to its substance) in which the people of Israel, as his seed, was comprehended; therefore it appears that this was never the Lord's intent in covenanting thus with his people, that they should expect righteousness and life by the adjoined law, but only that it should be useful in the hand of grace to make the former covenant with Abraham effectual: So then, though we be bound to obey the law, we are not to seek righteousness or life by the duties therein enjoined.

The third conclusion is, that both ministers in preaching, and people in practising of this law, would carry with subordination to Christ; and that the duties called for here are to be performed as a part of the covenant of grace, and of the obligation that lieth upon us thereby, and so all our obedience to God ought still to run in that channel.

If we ask how these two differ, to wit, the performing the duties of the law, as running in the channel of the covenant of grace, and the performing of them as running in the channel of the covenant of works, or how we are to go about the duties of the law with subordination to Christ and his grace? I answer, they differ in these four things, which shew, that these duties are not only to be done, but to be done in a way consistent with, and flowing from grace: which also follows from this, that in the preface to the commandments, he stileth and holdeth himself forth, as Redeemer, to be the object of our duty, and the motive of it.

1. They differ, I say first, in the end or account upon which they are performed; we are not to perform duties, that life, pardon, or enjoying of God may be meritoriously obtained by them, but to testify our respect to him who hath provided these freely for us, that we should not rest in duties which are engraven on these covenant blessings.

2. They differ in the principle by which we act them, it is not in our own strength, as the works of the first covenant were to be performed, but in the strength of grace, and by

virtue of the promises of sanctification, comprehended in the second covenant, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

3 They differ as to the manner of their acceptance, duties by the first covenant are to abide their trial upon the account of their own worth, and the inherent perfection that is in them, and accordingly will be accepted or rejected, as they are conform or disconform to the perfect rule of God's law; but by the second covenant, the acceptance of our performances, prayers, praises, are founded on Christ's righteousness, and God's mercy in him, in whom only they are sweet-smelling sacrifices, and accepted as our persons are; for he hath made us to be accepted as to both, only in the beloved, Eph. 1. 4

4. They differ in respect of the motive from which they proceed; for the great motive of our obedience in the covenant of grace, is not fear of threatnings, and wrath in case of disobedience, which by the covenant of works is the main thing swayes men to duties; nor is it a purchase of heaven to themselves by their holiness, which also by that covenant is a predominant motive of mens obedience; but it is love and gratitude, and that not simply to God as Creator, but as Redeemer, as the text here sheweth, *I have brought thee out of the house of bondage*: it is that we may set forth *the praises of him who called us*, and that we may glorify him that has bought us: where duties have these qualifications, they are consistent with grace, and subservient to it; but when those are wanting or excluded, Christ is wronged, and men turn legal, and in so far, fall from and overturn grace.

These conclusions, as necessary caveats, being laid down, we shall propose these distinctions for clearing of them.

1. We would distinguish betwixt a law and a covenant, or betwixt this law, considered as a law, and as a covenant. A law doth necessarily imply no more than, 1. To direct. 2. To command, enforcing that obedience by authority; a covenant doth further necessarily imply, promises made upon some condition, or threatnings added, if such a condition be not performed. Now this law may be considered without the consideration of a covenant; for it was free to God to have added, or not to have added promises, and the threatnings (upon supposition the law had been kept) might never have taken effect; but the first two are essential to the law, the last two, to believers, are made void through Christ; in which sense it is said, That by him we are freed the law as a covenant, so the believers life depends not on the promises annexed to the law, nor are they in danger by the threatnings adjoined to it: Hence we are to advert, when

when the covenant of works is spoken of, that by it is not meant this law simply, but the law propounded as the condition of obtaining life by the obedience of it; in which respect it was only so formally given to Adam: This then is the first distinction betwixt the law, and the covenant of works.

2. Distinguish betwixt these ten commandments simply, and strictly taken in the matter of them, and more complexly in their full administration, with preface, promises, sacrifices, &c. In the first sense they are a law having the matter, but not the form of the covenant of works: so Moses by it is said to describe such righteousness as the covenant of works doth require, yet he doth not prodound it as the righteousness they were to rely on, but his scope is put to them to a Mediator, by revealing sin through the law, Rom. x. 3. In the second sense, it is a covenant of grace, that same in substance with the covenant made with Abraham, and with the covenant made with believers now, but differing in its administration.

3. Distinguish betwixt God's intention in giving, and the believers in Israel their making use of this law; and the carnal multitude among that people their way of receiving it, and abusing it contrary to the Lord's mind: In the first sense, it was a covenant of grace: in the second, it turned to be a covenant of works to them; and therefore it is that the Lord rejects, (as we may see, Isaiah i. 13. lxvi. 2, 3. Jer. vii. 22.) their sacrifices and services as not commanded, because rested on by them, to the prejudice of grace, and contrary to the strain and scope of this law complexly considered.

4. Distinguish betwixt the moral, and ceremonial, and judicial law; the first concerns manners, and the right ordering of a godly conversation: and because these things are of perpetual equity and rectitude, the obligation of this law, as to that, is perpetual; and therefore in the expounding of it, these two terms, moral, and of perpetual authority, are all one, and to be taken so. 2. The judicial law is for regulating outward society, and for government, and doth generally (excepting what was peculiar to the people of Israel) agree with the moral law; this, as given to them, is not perpetual, their policy being at an end. 3. The ceremonial law is in ceremonies, types, and shadows pointing at a Saviour to come; this is also abrogate, the substance being come: But there is this difference, that the judicial law is but *mortua*, dead; and may where it is thought fit, with the foregoing caution, be used under the New-Testament; but the ceremonial law is *mortifera*, dead-
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ly, and cannot without falling from grace, Gal. v. 2, 4. be revived.

5. When we speak of things moral, we are to distinguish between things naturally moral, that is, such (as love to God and our neighbour, and such like) which have an innate rectitude and holiness in them, which cannot be separate from them, and things positively moral, that have their obligation by a special positive superadded sanction; so that their rectitude flows not from the nature of the things themselves, as in the former. As for instance, in the fourth commandment, it is naturally moral that God should be worshipped, nature teacheth it; but that he is to be worshipped on such a day particularly, that comes to pass by virtue of his positive command: The first cannot be altered, the second by the Lord may; but till he alter it, the authority lies still on all, and it is equally sin to sin against any of them, though without the positive sanction, there is no obligation naturally requiring obedience in some of them.

6. The sixth distinction is of the moral law in two tables, first and second; the first contains our immediate worship, service and obedience to God himself, and is comprehended in the first four commandments; the second contains our mediate obedience to God in all the duties we owe to others, in the last six; they were at first so divided by the Lord himself, for there are ten in all, Deut. iv. 13. From this distinction take notice. 1. That all the commandments of the second table are of like authority with the first, *God spake all these words*; yea, as it appears from Acts vii. 38. it was our Lord Jesus. 2. The sins immediatly against the first table, are greater than those against the second; for this cause, Matth. xxii. 38. the first is called the first and great commandment; therefore, 3. In morals (if they be things of the same nature) the duties of the second table cede and give place to the duties of the first table, when they cannot stand together; as in the case of love to God, and the exercise of love to our father and neighbour, Luke xiv. 26. Matth. x. 37. when obedience to God, and obedience to our superiors cannot consist, we are to obey God rather than man, Acts iv. 19. and we are to love the Lord, and hate father and mother, Luke xiv. 26. 4. Yet take notice, that ceremonies or positives of the first table, for a time cede and give place to morals in the second; as for relieving or preserving our neighbours life in hazard, we may travel on the Sabbath-day, according to that scripture, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice, and the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath, &c.*

7. The seventh distinction (which is ordinary) is of the commandments into affirmative and negative, as ye see all the commandments in the first table are negatively set down forbidding sin directly; *Thou shalt have no other gods*, &c. only the fourth is both negative and affirmative, forbidding sin, and commanding duty directly; as also the fifth only, which is the first of the second table is affirmative, all the rest are negative.

This distinction is not so to be understood, as if nothing were commanded or enjoined in negative precepts, or as if nothing were forbidden in affirmative precepts (for whatever be expressed as forbidden, the contrary is always implied as commanded; and whatsoever is expressly commanded, the contrary is always implied as forbidden) but the distinction is taken from the manner of setting them down; concerning which, take these rules or general observations for your better understanding, many whereof are in the larger catechism.

1. However the commandments be expressed, affirmatively or negatively, every one of them hath two parts; one affirmative, implied in negative precepts, requiring the duties that are contrary to the sins forbidden; another negative, implied in the affirmative precepts, forbidding the sins that are contrary to the duties commanded; as for example, the third commandment, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*; it implies a command reverently to use his name: So, *to remember to keep holy the Sabbath-day*, implies a prohibition of prophaning it; in which sense all the commandments may in some respect be called negative (and so a part of the fourth commandment is negatively expressed, *Thou shalt do no work*) or affirmative; in which respect Christ comprehendeth all the negatives under these two great affirmative commandments, *of love to God and our neighbour*; for every commandment doth both enjoin and forbid. The like may be said of promises and threatnings, there being in every promise a threatening and in every threatening a promise conditionally implied: And this may be a reason why some commandments are negatively expressed; some positively, to shew us that both are comprehended.

2. Though the positive commandment, or, (the positive part of the commandment) be of alike force and authority with the negative, as to the obligation it layeth on us to duty, yet it doth not tie us to all occasions and times, as negatives do: Hence is that common maxim, that affirmative commands tie and oblige *semper*, ever, that is they never want their authority, and we are never absolved from their

obedience; but they do not oblige and tie *ad semper*, that is, in all differences of time we are not tied to the exercise of the duties enjoined. Negatives again oblige both, *semper* and *ad semper*, that is, always, and in all differences of time: For instance in the third commandment, the affirmative part is use the Lord's name and ordinances holily and reverently in prayer, reading and hearing, &c. So in the fourth commandment we are required to sanctify the Sabbath, by waiting on ordinances, &c. This makes these still duties, so as to pray, hear, &c. are still duties: but we are not to be, and should not be always exercised in these duties; for we must abound in other duties as also of necessity, and mercy, we must eat, and sleep, &c. and when we sleep, we can neither act love, nor fear. Again, the negative part is, not to prophane the Lord's name in his ordinances, this may not be done at any time: The reason of the difference is this, because in affirmatives, we are not always tied to the acts of duties and graces, but to the disposition and habit. Habits are a spiritual quality, a (*Vis*) or power fitting and enabling for bringing forth these acts, and for the bringing them forth in the due time and season when they shall be called for; but in sinful things we are prohibited, not only the habits, but the acts also; the one is always and ever a sin, but the other is not always called for as duty. If any desire rules to know when a duty is called for; as for instance, when we are to pray, hear, &c. it is hardly possible to be particular in in this, yet we may try it by these generals.

1. Any affirmative precept binds to present practice, when the duty required tends to God's glory, unto which every thing should be done (as 1 Cor. x. 31.) and when the omission of the duty may dishonour him.

2. When it tends to others edification; and omitting will some way stumble and offend.

3. When some special providences meet and concur, to give opportunity to such a duty; as for instance, the giving of alms when we have it, and some indigent person offers, whose necessity calls for it, Gal. vi. 10. So when secrecy of prayer is offered, (and no other more necessary duty at that time is called for) which we are to watch unto, Col. iv. 2. or when we meet with some special occasion or dispensation, pointing out to us this or that as a duty called for; such a providence invites us to the practice of that duty: For though providences will not make these things to become duties which are not duties, yet they will serve to time and circumstantiat duties that ly on us, by virtue of affirmative precepts.

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4. Some special occasions and times are set down in the word, as for praying morning and evening, for hearing the word on Sabbath-days ; and in these, and other the like duties, the examples of the saints so recorded for imitation in scripture, would be observed as a copy and pattern.

5. When they have not such inconveniencies with them, as cross and hinder other moral duties of edification, love, &c. for if they do that, they must yield and give place to these : But if no other duty be called for, then they ought to be done ; for we should be in some duty. And though such duties be in themselves moral, suppose praying, hearing, and such others, which might be instanced, yet the timing of them, or going about at such a time, and in such a manner, is not moral simply, but as these are by circumstances called for.

6. When without sin such a duty cannot be omitted ; and although there be not any inward exercise of mind, or frame of spirit suitable thereto, yet the conscience calls for it, or there is some one special occasion or other that puts us to it.

3. Observe, that this rule of negatives, tying *ad semper*, or obliging in all circumstances of time, is not to be understood, but where the matter is moral ; therefore we would distinguish again betwixt negative morals, and negative positives ; for positives, whether negative or affirmative, give still place to morals. As for instance, that part of the fourth commandment is negative, *In it* (that is on the seventh day) *thou shalt do no manner of work* ; yet sometimes, when necessity calls for it, some manner of works is lawful on that day, because it is only a negative positive, and not a negative moral : And so David's eating of shew-bread, was against a negative command, though not against a negative moral, but a negative positive.

4. Take this rule, that in all commands, jointly and severally, we would have special respect unto the scope God aims at by them all in general, or by such a command in particular. Now the general scope is (2 Cor. vii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 15. 16.) perfect and absolute holiness, even as he is holy ; and therefore whatever he requires, he requires that it be absolutely perfect in its kind, as that our love to him be with the whole heart, &c. and so our love to others be as to our selves : our chastity and purity, all must be absolute. -(see 1 Tim. i. 5.) This rule will teach us what we are to aim and level at : And whatever exposition of the commandments comes not up to this scope, is no doubt defective ; and by this rule only can we be helped to the right meaning of e-

very commandment; for each of them has its peculiar scope both as to the duties it requires and sins it condemns. And by this rule it is, that our Lord Christ (whose exposition with that of the prophet is best) draws in the least and smallest branches of filthiness to the seventh commandment, which dischargeth all things contrary to perfect and complete purity.

5. The fifth rule is, that the law is spiritual, Rom. vii. 14. and that not only outward obedience to such duties, or outward abstinence from such sinful acts is called for; but the law having a spiritual meaning, calls for spiritual service, and that in these three. 1. As it requires spiritual duties, such as faith, fear, love to God, and to others; right habits, as well as right affections, and outward actions; and therefore Paul, to prove the spirituality of the law, instanceth in the habit of lust, Rom. vii. as a thing thereby discharged. 2. The law is spiritual, in that the obligation thereof reaches to the spirit, and very inwards of the heart, affections and thoughts, as well as to the outward man: the love it requires, is love with all the soul, heart, and mind. Hence there is heart-idolatry, murder, and adultery, as well as outward, therein condemned. 3. It is spiritual, in respect of the manner; it requires as to all outward duties, that they be done to a spiritual end, from a spiritual principle, and in a spiritual way, opposite to the carnal way, to which the unrenewed heart of man is inclined; in which sense we are commanded to walk in the spirit, Gal. v. 16. and so praying and praising which this law calls for is praying and praising in the Spirit, 1 Cor. xiv. ver. 14. 15, 16.

6. A sixth rule is, that beside the duty expressed, there is more implied in the affirmative commands; and beside the sin pitched on, there is more forbidden in the negative precepts, even all duties and sins of these kinds, in whatsoever degree: As for example, in the affirmative commands; 1. Where the duty is commanded, all the means that may further it are commanded likewise: Hence under care to preserve our brother, Levit. xix. 17, 18. it is commanded that we should reprove him, &c. 2. Where any thing is commanded as a duty, all duties of that kind are commanded, as keeping holy of the Lord's day, is commanded in the fourth commandment; there hearing, praying, watchfulness all the week over, and all things belonging unto the worship of God that day, such as tithes, that is, maintenance for a ministry, calling of fit ministers, building churches, &c. are required, though they be not all duties of that day. 3. Where a duty is required, the owning and suitable a-

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vowing of that duty is required also : and so believing in God, and the profession of faith are required in the same commandment, Rom. x. 10. Where the duty of one relation is required (as of childrens subjection) there is required the duty of the other relation, (as of parents) yea, and also of all under that name.

Again, in negative precepts, observe : 1. Where great sins are forbidden, all the lesser of that sort are forbidden also ; as under adultery, murder, and idolatry, all light obscene, whorish words, wanton looks, unchaste thoughts, revenge, rash anger, worldly affections, &c. are forbidden ; and they are comprehended and prohibited under the grossest terms, to make them the more detestable, odious, and dreadful. 2. All means that may prevent these sins are commanded, and all snares, or occasions, or incitements to them are prohibited. 3. Where any sin is forbidden, there the least scandal about it, or the least appearance of the guilt of committing it, is forbidden also ; for God will have his people holy, and shining in holiness, unspotted, and without scandal, and abstaining not only from all evil ; but from all appearance of it, 1 Thess. v. 22. 4. We are not only forbidden the committing of such sins ourselves, delighting in them, and inclining to them, but accounting light or little of them in others ; yea, we are commanded and ought to mourn for them, when committed by them.

The seventh rule is, whatever duties lies upon others, we are commanded in our places to further them in it, as masters are to further their servants, husbands their wives, one neighbour another, by advice, direction, encouragement, prayer, and other helps, as in the fourth commandment is clear, where the servants duty, and the strangers, is imposed on the master ; and whatever sin is discharged in ourselves, we are discharged any manner of way to partake in the same with others, whether by advice, example, connivance, ministering occasion, or by sporting and laughing at it in them ; so the rule is, 1 Tim v. 22. *Keep thy self pure, partake not of other mens sins* : Men may be free themselves, as to their own personal breaches, and yet highly partake of the other breaches of the law.

8. The breach of one commandment virtually breaks all ; there is such a connexion and linking together of the commandments, that if the authority of God be slighted in one, it is so in all, Jam. ii. 10. 1 John i. 4, 20.

9. One thing may in divers respects (as an end or means) be commanded or forbidden in many, yea in all the commandments, as ignorance and drunkenness are, because they disable for all duties, and dispose to all sins : Of this

kind is idleness also; and so knowledge, sobriety, watchfulness, &c. are commanded in all the commandments; for without these men are unfitted and incapacitated for performing any commanded duty.

10. The tenth and last rule is, The law is holy, just, and good, therefore the least motion against it, or discontentment with it, is sin, Rom vii. 12. In sum, take these few watch-words concerning the obligation of the law.

1. That it obligeth to all duties, and to all sorts of duties, public, private, to God, to others, and to ourselves; and that words, actions, gestures, yea thoughts, and the least motions of the heart, come under its obligation: His commandment is exceeding broad, so that there is nothing so little, but it ought to be ruled by this word, and that in all persons of all ranks, whether as to doing or suffering.

2. That it obligeth to the right manner of duties, as well as to the matter, and to every thing that belongeth to duties, and thus in its true extent it reacheth unto the forbidding of all the sins that are contrary to duties commanded.

3. That it obligeth the whole man, the outward, in deeds words, gestures, and appearances or shews; the inward, in the understanding, will, affections, memory, conscience; and so it requires that the mind, will, and whole nature be sanctified, and conform to all these commands.

4. That it obligeth to obedience in all these always, and in the highest degree, so that the least disconformity in habit or act is a transgression; the obedience it requires is perfect in all these respects, that not only there must be no breach, of any of these commands directly, much less a continuance in a breach, but that also, 1. There must be no appearance of breaking them, 1 Theff. v. 22. 2. There must be no consent to break them. tho' it come not forth to act, Matth. v. 28. There must be no casting ourselves in the way of any temptation or snare, whereby we may be enticed or occasioned (to speak so) to break them; as David was by his looking on a woman, 2 Sam. xi. 2. which Job guards against, Job xxxi. verse 1, 4. there must be no corrupt motion, affection, or inclination to evil, even where it gets not assent, there must be no tickling of delight in the thing, though the heart dare not consent to act it, nor any discontentment with the restraint that keepeth from such a thing were lawful; but on the contrary, we must account every commanded thing right, Psalm cxix. 128.

5. The involuntary motions of the mind which never get assent to any of these evils, nor are delighted in, yet even these are prohibited by this law; because they flow from a corrupt fountain, and are the evidences of disconformity to
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God's image in our nature, and they ought not so much as to be in us. Hence doth the apostle complain of lust, Rom. vii. though resisted by him.

6. It reacheth not only to streams of actual corruption, but to the fountain of original sin, whereby we entertain within us the seed and incentives unto actual evils that contradict this holy law. By all which we may see what holiness it calls for, and how often (if we were examined in all the commands by these rules) we would be found defective and faulty: and what matter of humiliation and repentance we may have for what is past, and what challenges we may have hereafter from this law; with what need of continual applications to the blood of sprinkling, and of washing in that open fountain, to the house of David, and inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness; and what need of endeavours to have our steps ordered more exactly according to it.

Before we close the preface, I shall first add two distinctions more, then two more rules: 3. Give you some scriptures for your memories cause. 4. Give some directions or helps to those who make conscience to study this law. 5. Answer and clear a special case.

1. Then, ye would distinguish betwixt this law, as given to Adam, and as given to Israel; for, as given to him, it was a covenant of works; but, as given to them, it is a covenant of grace; and so from us now it calls for gospel-duties, as faith in Christ, 1 Tim. i. 5. Repentance, hope in God, &c. And although it call for legal duties, yet in a gospel manner; therefore we are in the first commandment commanded to have God for our God, which cannot be by sinners obeyed, but in Christ Jesus; the covenant of works being broken, and tie of friendship thereby between God and man made void; so that now men, as to that covenant, are without God in the world, and without Christ and the promises, Ephes. ii. 12, 13. And so our having God for our God (which is pointed at in the preface to the commandments) and Christ for our Saviour, and closing with his righteousness, and the promises of the covenant (which are all yea and amen in him) must go together.

2. Distinguish betwixt the divers administrations of the covenant of grace, and of the law. in respect of positives, falling under the second commandment; for that commandment tied the Israelites before Christ to circumcision, sacrifices, the seventh day of the week, and other ceremonies agreeable to the administration of the law, and covenant of grace then; but now it forbiddeth them to us, and requireth other duties; for the priesthood being changed, there

there is of necessity a change also of the laws belonging thereto; yet that commandment, as a part of the moral law, doth perpetually oblige and tie to worship God, and none other, and that according to the manner which he prescribes.

Next unto the rules already laid down, for the better understanding of the commandments, we add two more.

The first is, that the commandments are to be expounded, as that none of them may contradict another; that is, there is nothing commanded in one that is forbidden in another, or contrary; one duty doth justle not with, nor thrust out another, but they differ only; and then two duties coming together, in that case one of them ceaseth to be a duty for that time, as is said in that distinction of affirmative and negative commands.

The second rule is, that all these commandments bind and call for obedience from men, according to their places, and other qualifications and circumstances: The fifth commandment calleth for one thing from a magistrate, another from a subject; a magistrate is to edify one way, a minister another, a private Christian another; a servant is one way to reprove his fellow-servant, a master another way; The law requires more from a man of parts, power and riches, than from another, as to exercise and improvement of these gifts: The law being just, has in it a proportionableness to places, parts, &c. and sets bounds to stations, but alters them not, nor confounds them.

3. For the help of your memories, and that ye may have these rules more obvious, ye may draw them all under these five scriptures.

The first scripture is, Psal. cxix. 96. *Thy commandment is exceeding broad*; which though it be more extensive in its meaning, yet it doth certainly include this law, which in an especial way is *the commandment*, and in the sense and comprehensive meaning thereof is *exceeding broad*; for it takes in the fulness and extent of the whole law, in its obligation, as to all things, persons and duties of all sorts.

The second scripture is, Rom. vii. 14. which speaks to the spirituality of the law in the obedience which it calleth for, *the law is spiritual*.

The third scripture is, Rom. vii. 12. which speaks the perfection of its nature, *the law is just*; therefore fretting against what it commandeth, or wishing it were otherwise, is a breach thereof; *It is holy*; therefore to be disconformable unto it, is to be unholy; it is good, and therefore it ought to be loved and delighted in.

The fourth scripture is, 1 Tim. 5. and it speaketh the great end of the law; *The end of the commandment is charity*
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out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; which threefold end speaketh out the absolute purity and holiness called for in our love to God and others, so as to have a good conscience in this before God; all which must flow from unfeigned faith without presumption, resting on Jesus Christ, who is in this sense the end of the law.

The fifth scripture is, 1 Tim. i. 8. *The law is good, if a man use it lawfully*: and this guards against abusing of the law, and putteth us to the lawful use of it: There are extreams in abusing the law: as 1. When it is used to seek righteousness by it. Again, 2. When the authority of it is pretended for something it warrants not, such as the traditions of the fathers, Matth. xv. seeking of salvation by the observation of circumcision, &c. 3. When its authority in practice is denied. 4. When it is turned from practice to vain speculations and questions. 5. When it is so used as it deters and scares from Christ. 6. When it is so made use of, as it oppresses and discourages a believer, for whose sake (1 Tim. i. 19.) it was never made or appointed, as to its threatnings and condemning power: And lastly, in a word, when it is not used to the ends, and in the manner expressed in the former scriptures.

Fourthly, Because the study of this law is so singularly useful, we not only press and commend it, but add further some few directions, whereby we may be helped rightly to use it, and to guard against the abuse of it in our hearing and reading of it.

1. The first direction is, Ye would look on it as God's word, and take it as if ye heard himself from Sinai pronounce it, that so ye may tremble, and be more affected with holy fear whenever ye read, hear it, or meditate upon it; for so was the people affected when it was first promulgate.

2. Be much in prayer for grace to take up its meaning; David (Psal cxix. 18. &c) prayed often for this, and thought it not unbecoming a king, yea a believing king, and a prophet to study this law; and pray much for opened eyes to understand the meaning thereof.

3. In your reading, seek to understand, so as to practise it; for that is the end of knowledge, and the end of the law itself aims at, Deut. v. 1, 2. We knowing no more in God's account than what we endeavour honestly to practise; and not aiming at practice, indisposeth both for understanding and practice, and makes men exceeding careless.

4. As ye hear and learn any thing to be duty or sin, reflect on yourselves, and try whether that be sin in you, and how far short ye are in that duty; for this is the proper use of the law, to reveal sin and transgression, Rom. i. 18.
therefore

therefore it is called a glass, James iii. 12. 24. and ye would look into it so as ye may know what manner of persons ye are, and may know what spots are upon you.

5. When the law discovers sin, ye would open your bosom to let in convictions; for the law entered that sin might abound, not in practice, but in sense, feeling, and conscience, Rom. v. 20. and follow these convictions by repentance, till they necessitate you to fly to Christ, and leave you there.

6. Take help from Christ's sermons, and the prophets, to understand this scripture, for they are the only canonical; and therefore the best commentary upon the commandments; yet ye would not despise the light holden forth in human writing, such as the larger catechism, which is very full as to this, and if conscientiously improved, will prove exceeding profitable for your instruction.

Lastly, The grave case that we would speak unto, before we enter particularly on the commandments is, Whether any of these commandments may be broken in our sleep, by dreams, imaginations, actions, &c. which otherwise are unlawful? or whether, when a man is sleeping and dreaming, he be subject to the rule of the law, and if its obligation extend to him even then? This question hath its own difficulty; and although it be not good to be curious in it, yet it wants not its own profit, as to the peace and quietness of God's people, or to their humbling and stirring up unto repentance, if it be rightly decided. I know almost all run on the negative, as if men were not in the least guilty of sin by such dreams, upon this ground, because they are not then in a capacity to use and exercise their reason, but that they are in this case as mad, distracted, or frantick men. I desire to be sober in speaking to this; yet I shall adventure to speak my mind a little about it, with the reasons of it.

And 1. We say there is a great difference betwixt sleeping-dreaming men, and mad-men. 1. Because madness is wholly in itself penal, and is a disease following sinful man as other diseases: but so it cannot be said of such dreaming; for as sleep was natural (there being before Adam's fall a day and a night as well as now, and there being an instance then of Adam's sleeping) so must dreaming be, being procured by the restlessness of the fancy, and the roving of the imaginations, which is some way natural; but that men dream of such subjects, or that their dreams are of such a nature (as filthy or prophane) seems clearly to follow sin, which dreaming simply doth not; and therefore man is not so passive in this, as in madness. 2. Because in dreams
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men have more use of reason than in madness, though (as the school-men say) that use be imperfect, yet as they grant (and experience confirmeth it, and Augustine, lib. 10. Confess. acknowledgeth it in himself) men may reason and debate in sleep, yea sometimes reject some motions, and though dreaming, yet not give consent unto them; and that upon reasons which at other times possibly they will embrace. Hence is it that there is a sort of suitableness and likeness betwixt men's dreaming, and their rational actings when waking; children and mad-men, or men in a distemper, having more foolishness and less reason in dreams, than these who have more use of reason; but wise men in a distraction, and natural fools, have no such difference then. Beside, we conceive that dreaming is more proper to reasonable men than beasts, and to men that have exercise of reason than to children, but madness may be in all. 3. Because a man's former carriage in moral things hath much more influence on his dreams when he has clear use of reason, than it can be said to have upon him when in madness, as to the things committed by him in it. 4. Neither is it without some weight, that under the law, Lev. xv. Deut. xxiii. 10. Sacrifices and washings were appointed for some sins committed in sleep and dreaming (whatever they be in themselves) which were not appointed for the sins of such as were frantick: All which put together, and duely considered, we cannot look upon sins, I mean things otherwise unlawful, in dreaming, and sins in distraction, as equal.

Yet secondly, there be some things that we willingly grant in this matter: As 1. That we do not comprehend under these sinful dreams every passing transient thought or motion in sleep, which has merely an idleness and unprofitableness with it, which though it might be possibly be sinful in men waking, (when they should aim in the least thought at something edifying) yet we think dreams that are meerly (so to say) negative, that is, not sinful on the matter, are not to be accounted sins; nay, nor yet sins historically, as it were, objected to the fancy, or only objectively proposed; I say they are not sinful, because man's fancy at such a time is open to such representations, and cannot hold them out, especially seeing they may possibly be carried in by the devil; who certainly waits these times; but there are other sinful dreams, such as that spoken of, Lev. xv. through occasion of which there is effusion of seed, rising in passion, delighting in revenge, it may be (as we have heard) to the committing of some act; such have (as it were) a more deliberate consent with them, and sometimes delight, yea sometimes external motion of the body

endeavouring the accomplishments of its desires : in all which it seems hard to say, that a man is passive only ; and when the subjects of the dreams are such things as a natural conscience will fear and tremble at, it is of these we speak.

2. We conceive there is a great difference, as to degrees of sinfulness, betwixt such sinful motions, desires, delectations, &c. that are in a waking man, and the same in one asleep ; the guilt is much less by many degrees in the one, than in the other.

3. A difference is to be made betwixt gross sins objectively represented to the fancy in sleep, and the same sins which are not only so represented, but also have more settled motions following thereon.

4. There is a difference also betwixt distempered men in their dreams of this kind, and men who are sober, and well at themselves ; yet we cannot but incline to think, that there is some guilt that may and ought to be repented of in such dreams, and so that men may in their sleep sin against these holy commandments, seeing that in *many dreams*, as in many words, *there are divers* (even sinful) *vanities*, Eccles. v. 7.

This truth is something clear from the grounds already laid down ; but we shall for further clearing and confirming of it, add these following arguments. The first is this.

1. That tickling delight, as an evil against the law of God, is a fruit of original sin which sin infects all our imaginations, and makes them evil, Gen. vi. 5. yea, they are the flowings out of habitual lust, which is now natural to us ; and if they be a fruit of that tree, or a daughter of that mother, must they not be of the same nature, and so sinful ? and that they must flow from original sin, may thus be made out ; That none can imagine such dreams to have been incident to Adam, in the state of innocency, while all was pure, even though sleep and dreams were natural to him : And this may be confirmed from that one maxim of the schoolmen, that Adam's innocency was capable of no deception, nor of any thing which might make him sad, either sleeping or waking ; but such dreams certainly imply both. If it be said, such dreams may be from an external cause, as the devils objecting such and such things to men in sleep : I answer, I grant in part it may be so ; but 1. Though he object them to us sleeping as well as waking, yet it is we that entertain these objected representations, it is we that delight in them, and move by them, though tempted thereto by him ; we may say, he is Father, and as it is, Acts v. 3. *he filleth the heart*, and furnisheth fuel ; but we are the mother (I say, it is our corruption) that bringeth forth ; and can any say, that if there were no corruption within us, that these

these would be so entertained? 2. Though they come from him as an external cause, yet considering that our nature is inclined to such things, so that powder of flax taketh no sooner with fire cast into them, than our corrupt nature doth with these temptations: Is it possible to imagine that a dart of temptation should be thrown in, and not at least awake and stir the savour of corruptions? Indeed pure nature in our blessed Lord (who was without original sin) was like water presently to quench all such fiery darts. 3. If they come from the devil, to what end can he object them to men? it must either be, because they are sinful, that being his aim to defile them thereby, and draw them to sin; or because they are troublesome and heavy to men, he having delight also in men's misery; but such dreams are no way weighty and troublesome to the most part of men, that therefore is not his aim, nor would be so much burdensome to others, were it not from their apprehension of guilt under them; and therefore Satan's aim must be thereby to defile men with sin.

2. Argument which confirmeth the former, (and let us consider it with reverence) our blessed Lord Jesus was made in all things like unto us, except sin: none of the fruits of original sin, which are sinful, are to be found in him; and yet, I suppose, none can without horror imagine such dreams to have been incident to him, or that his absolute holiness was capable of them. He is the only instance of one free from original sin, yet may he be supposed liable to any other penal thing, excepting, 1. What implies sin. 2. What implies distempers and infirmities in the contemperature and constitution of his body from inward causes, because he had no inward cause, being free of sin, as Adam before his fall; and therefore not naturally (I mean from inward principles, or necessity, as we are) subject to sickness or death.

3. The third argument is, That men are often accessory to the sinful dreams themselves, either, 1. By excess, disposing themselves to such inclinations; or 2. By a loose mind that delights in following such things throughout the day in their more reasonable meditations, and more determinate purposes; it being ordinary, that dreams follow much the constitution of the body, or the habitual strain of our practice: in which respect, men's callings, or particular employments, will run up and down before the fancy in their sleep, and so their sinful exercises also: or, 3. By not praying to God to guard against them, and neglecting to press more after mortification for that end: or, 4. By not being suitably affected with them after they are past

and gone : In which cases, even the school-men (who are not the most rigid and tender casuists) will grant (all things being considered) sin to be *ex consequenti* in dreams; and we suppose few fall in such dreams, who may not in one circumstance or other read their accession to sin therein : and though our frame and constitution be in itself natural, yet that it should incline us sleeping or waking to any thing sinful, that is and must be from corrupt nature, seeing it clearly speaketh the inordinateness of our natural inclination.

4. The fourth argument is from the law of washings and sacrificings for the sin of uncleanness in men's dreams, when they pass seed in their sleep, which seemeth to say thus much, that both sleeping and waking men should be holy; and although there be sacrifices and cleansings appointed for some things that are not morally sinful, as the touching of a dead body, having leprosy, &c. yet simply to say so of the case in hand were hard : For, 1. If it be said, there was no moral sinfulness in that kind of pollutions, what then could these sacrifices and washings signify ? If any say, as they must say, they looked to secret actings of original sin, it doth confirm what we have said : But 2. Is there in any such things as are not accounted sinful in themselves, such a dependency upon, or likeness to any commandment, as there is in that which is mentioned, Levit. xv. to the seventh commandment, to which it seemeth to have a direct reference ?

5. The fifth argument may be taken from the extent of the law, which reacheth to the whole man, outward and inward, soul, heart, mind, and if to the whole man, then why not to the fancy, memory, imagination, &c. And we are sure when spirits are made perfectly conform to the law of God, there will not be found in them any such fancy imaginable as consistent with it ; Besides, doth not this law oblige and tie always ? even sleeping men (as we conceive) are under the negative precepts of it ; that is, altho' they be not bound to pray and hear in their sleep, yet they are bound not to murder, nor commit adultery, &c. in their sleep ; and the more renewed and holy Christians are in their ordinary walk, so are they in their dreams ; and even in this, sanctified persons differ from unrenewed ones.

6. The sixth argument is this, we suppose these grounds that prove involuntary lust in the first motions thereof, and before they can come to consent to be sin, will infer these motions in sleeping men (of which we speak) to be sinful also : For 1. Though these motions of lust be involuntary, and weaken not the deliberate use of reason more than the other : And 2. Though they be in the regenerate wrestled
against

against, and not approved more than the other, yet because these are not according to reason, (though not brought forth by it) and not answerable to that simple purity and angelick holiness which should be in man, and it is hard to imagine the most passing motions of lust, running never so swiftly through us, not to leave behind them some dreg of defilement by reason of our corruption, that sideth still in less or more with temptation (which cannot be said of sins objected by the tempter to our Lord) and such lusts, or motions of lust, have still by the orthodox, according to Paul's doctrine, Rom. vii. been thought sinful upon the foresaid reasons; and we see not but these same reasons will hold here.

Lastly, we add, that generally the consciences of the godly look on this kind of practices, although committed in sleep, with horror, and no reasoning or disputing will truly quiet them, till they be humbled before God under them, and yet they use not to be so troubled in other things that are meerly ceremonial: How doth Augustine complain of this, yea confess and lament it? Confess. lib. 10. cap. 30. (though else where he accounts it no sin) yet he cries out of it, and that he thought it a mercy, that he had not done in sleep he consented to act, *Reperimus nos non fecisse, dolamus tamen quoquo modo in nobis factum fuisse*, It grieves him that it should be any way done in him, and he aggregeth it thus, that he had not always rejected these as sometimes he had done: And do not the godly sometimes in their sleep make opposition to these motions? and how often do they in prayer wrestle against this evil, and that (as I conceive) from another apprehension of it than simply because of any punishment or affliction that is in it? for many things more afflictive do not so effect them; and yet even these know the reasons that are made use of against the sinfulness of it, which maketh me think there is something directly against conscience and purity in these sinful actions or motions.

To conclude, sure we are, this opinion is not unsuitable to the end of the law, and that absolute purity and angelical holiness God calleth for in it; namely, that not only when we are awake we are to be still with him, but that our sleep should not break our communion with him: And certainly, it is most safe for man to humble himself under the sense of his sinful nature; and the sad necessity of sinning, both waking and sleeping, he hath brought on himself; that thereby he may the better press on himself the necessity of a Mediator for righteousness; which are the great ends and uses of the law.

We come now more particularly to the words which the

Lord

Lord himself spoke, concerning the number of these commandments, and general scope of them (as hath been said.) There is no question, but there be four things we would speak a little to, for further clearing of the text, before we come to speak particularly to the first commandment. The first is, whether these words, *I am the Lord thy God*, &c. be a part of the first commandment, or a preface to all the ten? *Ans.* We think it is a ground laid down for pressing and drawing forth our obedience to all the commandments, yet it hath relation more especially to the first commandment, as the negative expression there cleareth, which is *Thou shalt have no other God's before Me*; that is, no other than *Me*; what *Me*? even *Me the Lord thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt*: So then, there is a special relation betwixt this commandment and the preface, as including the positive part of this negative commandment, and it doth especially clear these three things:

1. What is the right object of worship? it is *Jehovah, Elohim, the Lord*, that sheweth the unity of the divine essence; for so *Jehovah*, being a word in the singular number, is ordinarily looked on as pointing out this: then *Elohim*, which is a word in the plural number, speaketh the plurality of persons in the Godhead; so that the Lord commanding and requiring obedience, here is one God, and three persons.

2. It cleareth what is the right channel in which our service should run, it is the channel of the covenant, our obedience is to be directed, not to God abstractly considered, but to God as our God, *I am the Lord thy God*, saith he, and thy God by covenant; so the expression is, Deuter. xxviii. 58. *That thou may fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD*. This maketh our service and worship sweet and kindly; and without this relation there can be no acceptable service performed by sinful man to God; and that relation (that by the covenant of works once stood betwixt them) being broken, it saith it must be made up again, which only can be done in Christ; and it saith also, that this relation to God in him, and obedience to the law can consist well together.

3. It cleareth what is the right and great motive of obedience, to wit, the benefit of redemption, love and thankfulness, upon that account, constraining to the performing of these duties that are commanded, that they may be done willingly and in a chearful manner.

Secondly, it may be asked, why the second commandment, and the fourth commandment, have reasons pressing obedience annexed to them, which none of the other hath, at least

least exprefly fet down by the Lord? *Anfw.* This may be a reason, becaufe all the other commandments are by the law of nature determined in men's confciences, and the fins againft them are by natures light feen to be evil; but the fubftance of thefe two, to wit, what way he fhall be worfhipped in externals, and on what day as that folemn time of worfhip, being determined by God's pofitive law, they are not fo impreffed on men's confciences as the duties required in the other commandments are; therefore the Lord addeth reasons to each of thefe to perfwade to the obedience of them. As to the fecond, *I am a jealous God*; and therefore will not admit of any the leaft appearance of declining from me, even in externals; and to the fourth, keep the Sabbath-day for I have put a difference betwixt it and other days, though before there was none, which is further amplified in the text: Now by this reason (which is alfo given by the fchool-men) it may appear, that the fecond commandment concerning outward worfhip according to our way of diftinguifhing them, is diftinct from the firft, which requireth the inward worfhip due to God: for the firft commandment is moral natural, and can never be altered, and has as much impreffion on a natural confcience as any; and therefore, according to this ground, needed no reason.

Thirdly, It may be obferved alfo, that fome commandment have promifes added to them, which others have not, not that any implied commandment wants encouragements, but in fome they are exprefed, as in the fecond, *He fheweth mercy to thoufands, &c.* and the fifth, *That thy days may be long, &c.* The reason given why promifes are particularly exprefed in thefe two, is that obedience to thefe two feemeth to bring moft hurt to men, and is moft contrary to their corrupt wills and affections; it feemeth not fo prejudicial, nor is it fo obnoxious to the hatred of the world, that men love God, and fear him in their hearts, &c. as it is outwardly to confeff him before men, and that by adhering clofe to the true manner of worfhipping him: This maketh men obnoxious to perfecutions, croffes, loffes, &c. to be ferioufly taken up in the externals of godlinefs, fometimes, bringeth much prejudice with it, and is to many troublefome, and fo to be obedience to fuperiors, and tender of inferiors,, is not eafily condefcended unto; therefore God to counterballance the difficulties that accompany the obedience of thefe two commandments, hath added promifes to them, the more to encourage and ftir up to the obedience of them.

The fourth thing we would notice is, that fome commandments

ments have threatnings expressed in them, which others have not, as the second, and the third, not that any commandment wanteth implied threatnings; but the reason is, because men ordinarily count light of the breach of these two commandments, if they be (as they think) honest at if it be to the true God, they think the less of it: And so also men are given to count very light of the reverent the heart, though they be very negligent and careless in many outward things; and though in the manner of worship they be very slight and perfunctorious, yet using God's holy name; therefore he hath put a threatening to both these commandments, to make men know, he will not so easily pass them, as men oft-times imagine; and that all these three, reasons, promises, threatnings, are added to the second commandment, it doth very clearly and convincingly shew of what concernment that commandment is, and how ready men are to break it, and that there is special consideration and regard to be had to it, so far as it is from being to be attempted to be expunged out of the number.



E X O D U S xx. 3.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.

IN this first command we may consider these two: 1. The thing commanded. 2. The qualification of the command.

The thing commanded is negatively set down, *Thou shalt have no other Gods*, directing to the right object of worship, and differencing the true God from all supposed Gods; for though there be but one God, yet are there many who are called Gods, 1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6. The qualification added, is in these words, *before me*, which tend not only to the aggravation of the sin here discharged, as being done in his presence, and done as it were in contempt and despite of God, who always sees; but especially to shew the extent of the prohibition, that it tieth up not only from outward idolatry, but even from that which is inward and secret, and that man see not, and is known to God only, and so this commandment requireth not only external worship, but that which is inward and spiritual before God. Hence the scope of this first commandment lyeth clearly in these two things, (wherein it differeth from the second) to wit, 1. That it sheweth who is the right object of worship, and direc-

directeth men thereto. 2. That it regulateth mens internal worshipping of God, and calleth for that; whereas the second commandment supposeth both these, and directeth as to the manner of worshipping the true God, in externals and regulateth these.

This commandment, as all the rest, hath a positive part requiring something, and a negative part prohibiting something: We shall in the first place, speak to what is required here, and we take it up in these three things.

1. And first, it requireth the right knowledge of God; for there can be no true worship given to him, there can be no right thought or conception of him, or faith in him, till he be known: He must be known to be one God in essence, Deut. vi. 4. and three persons, 1 John v. 7. He must be known in his attributes and essential properties, infiniteness, immenseness, unchangeableness, eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, wisdom, goodness, justice, and faithfulness: He must also be known in his special works, whereby his sovereignty and majesty appeareth, as his works of creation, providence, redemption and what concerneth it; as the covenant of grace, and its terms; the Mediator, and his offices: no service of worship can be offered to God, nor can we have any ground of faith in him, without some measure of distinct knowledge of these.

2. It requireth from a suitable acknowledging of God in all these his properties: As 1. That he be highly esteemed above all. 2. Loved. 3. Feared. 4. Believed, and trusted in. 5. Hoped in. 6. Adored. 7. Honoured. 8. Served, and obeyed. And so, 9. He must be the supreme end in all our actions, that should mainly be aimed at by us.

3. It requireth such duties as result from his excellency, and our acknowledging him to be such a one: As 1. Dependence upon him. 2. Submission to him, and patience under cross dispensations from him. 3. Faith resting on him. 4. Prayers put up to him. 5. Repentance for wronging him. 6. Communion, and a constant walking with him. 7. Delighting in him. 8. Meditating on him; and such other as necessarily may be inferred as duties incumbent to creatures in such a relation to such a God, whose excellency and worth calleth and inviteth men to all suitable duties.

Next, it is necessary that we add some advertisements to these generals.

And first, That the commandment requireth all these, and in the highest and most perfect degree.

2. That it not only requireth them in ourselves, but obligeth us to further them in all others, according to our places and callings,

3. That it requireth the diligent use of all means that may help and further us in these ; as reading, and meditation, study, &c.

4. That these things which in some respect may be given to creatures, as love, fear, &c. yet when they are required as duties to God, they are required in a far more eminent way ; so that creatures must yield and give place when God cometh in competition with them in these ; and these things which are proper to God, as resting on him, adoring of him, are to be given to no other.

5. All these things are so required, as none of them thrust out another ; but that all so consist, as every duty may keep its own place, without prejudice to any other.

In the next place, we would consider the negative part of this commandment, for the extent thereof will be best discerned by considering what is forbidden therein, and how it may be broken : It is indeed the commandment, in reference to which, beyond all the rest, almost the generality of men think themselves most innocent ; and yet upon trial it will be found, that men are most guilty of the breach thereof : We may look upon the breach of this commandment more largely, as God is any way wronged in that which is his due ; or more strictly, as it relateth to that which is more properly idolatry.

Being more largely considered it is broken two ways.

1. When what is proper and essential to God, is denied to him in effect, or practically ; as when he is not accounted eternal, omnipotent, one blessed God in three persons : and thus men are guilty, either in opinion or in practice, when they walk so before God, as if they thought him not omnipotent, omniscient, &c. And so Tit. i. 16. it is said of some, *That they profess to know God, but in works they deny him.*

2. It is broken, when any thing unbecoming the holy majesty of God is attributed unto him ; as that he changeth favoureth prophanity, &c. So Psal. l. 21. It is said of some prophane men, that they thought him like unto themselves. These two may be called more general idolatry. We shall speak further to them afterward.

3. The third way it is broken, (considering the breach of this commandment strictly) is by attributing that which is due to God, and properly belong to him, to creatures ; as trusting in them, calling on them by prayer, accounting them omnipotent, omniscient, or believing that they have influence or power to guide the world, which some do attribute to stars, to the heavens, to fortune, to saints, to angels, to devils ; this is properly idolatry : And because it is the chief scope of this commandment, and we are bidden expressly to keep
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ourselves from idols, 1 John v. we shall insist a little on it.

And first, We shall premit some distinctions of idolatry. 2. Shew how men fell in it. 3. What are the special idols men commit idolatry with. 4. Which are the most subtle and dangerous idols. 5. Give some rules whereby ye may try this sin of idolatry, even when it is most subtle.

And first idolatry may be distinguished, 1. Into idolatry against the first commandment, when worship is not directed to the right, but to the wrong object; and idolatry against the second commandment, which striketh against the prescribed manner of worshipping God: We are now to speak to the first.

2. This idolatry is either, 1. Doctrinal or idolatry in the judgment, when one professedly believeth such a thing beside God to have some divinity in it; as heathens do of their Mars and Jupiter, and Papists do of their saints: Or 2. It is practical, when believe no such thing, and will not own any such opinion, yet on the matter they are guilty of the same thing as covetous men, &c. The first taketh in all Heathens, Turks, Hereticks, that by their doctrines and opinions wrong the true God, or his worship: The second taketh in all self-seeking, ambitious, covetous, and voluptuous persons, &c. who fall in with the former in their practice, tho' not in opinion.

3. It may be distinguished into idolatry that hath something for its object, as the Egyptians worshipped beasts, and the Persians the sun or fire, and that which has nothing but mens imaginations for its object, as these who worship feigned gods; in which respect the apostle saith, *an idol is nothing*, 1 Cor. viii. 4

4. We would distinguish betwixt the objects of idolatry; and they are either such as are in themselves simply sinful, as devils, prophane men: or they are such as are good in themselves, but abused and wronged when they are made objects of idolatry, as angels saints, sun, moon, &c.

5. Distinguish betwixt idolatry that is more gross and professed, and that which is more latent, subtle, and denied: This distinction is like that before mentioned into opinion and practice, and much concideth with it.

6. Distinguish betwixt heart-idolatry, Ezek. xiv. Exodus xiv. 11, 12. and xvi. 2, 3. and external idolatry: The former consisteth in an inward heart-respect to some idol, as this tumultuous people were enslaved to their ease and belies in the last two forecited places; the other in some external idolatrous gesture or action.

In practical idolatry we are to distinguish betwixt the letting out our affections upon simply sinful objects, and the

letting them out excessively upon lawful objects. Thus men are guilty of idolatry with sinful objects, when they love and covet another man's house, wife, or goods, when things unlawful and forbidden have the heart. Again, men are guilty of idolatry in making lawful objects idols; as when by excess or inordinateness of love to their own means, wife, house, &c. they put them in God's room, as Nebuchadnezzar did with Babylon, Dan. iv. 30. So then, in the former sense, men make their lusts or sins, whatever they be, their idols, gluttons that serve their appetite, drunkards their drunkenness, make their bellies and appetite their idol; for to whatever men *yield themselves to obey, they are servants unto that which they obey*, Rom. vi. 16. An idol is something excessively esteemed of, and idolatry is the transferring of God's due, outwardly or inwardly, to what is not God, whether we esteem it God or not.

We shall first speak of practical heart idolatry, especially when lawful things are made idols, which is the most subtle kind of idolatry, and that which men most ordinarily fall into: And it may be cleared these five ways; by all which, men give that which is due to God unto creatures. There are five things that are incontrovertible due to God, to wit, 1. Estimation and honour above all. 2. Love with all the heart. 3. Confidence and trust. 4. Fear and reverence. 5. Service and obedience.

First then, men commit idolatry, when any thing, even any lawful thing, getteth too much respect from them; so that their happiness is placed in it, and they can less abide to want it in effect, whatever they may say in words, than communion with God himself: When men have such an excessive esteem of wife, children, houses, lands, great places, &c. and when they are taken from them, they cry as Micah, Judg. xviii. 24. *Ye have taken away my gods from me, and what have I more?* When all the other contentments a man hath, yea all the promises, and God himself also, proveth but of little value to him, in respect of some particular he is deprived of by some cross dispensation; it is a token it had too much of his heart: Try this by two things. 1. When any beloved thing is threatned to be removed, it then appeareth how it is affected, and stuck into. 2. What is made use of to make up that; see a notable difference betwixt David and his men, or most of them, 1 Sam. xxx. 6. when he wanted as much as they, they know no way to make it up, therefore they think of stoning him; but he encourageth himself *in the Lord his God*: they had no more left at all, it is like; he hath his God abiding, in whom he may yet be comforted.

The second way whereby men commit idolatry with creatures, is their love which is due to God with all the heart; but men ordinarily give away their hearts to creatures, in being addicted to them in their desires, seeking excessively after them, in their doating on them, or sorrowing immoderately for want of them. Hence the covetous man who loveth the world, 1 John ii. 15. is called an idolater, Col. iii. 5. Ephes. v. 5. Thus it discovered itself in Achab, who so loved Naboth's vineyard, that he could not rest without it: So Demas idolized the world, when for love of it he forsook his service with the apostle, (though it had been but for a time) 2 Tim. iv. 10. Men's love to creatures is excessive. 1. When their contentment so dependeth upon them, as they fret when they cannot come at the enjoyment of them, as we may see in Achab, when he cannot get Naboth's vineyard, and in Rachel for want of children. 2. When it stands in competition with God, and duty to him is shuffled out from respect and love to the world, or any thing in it, as we see in Demas, 2 Tim. iv. 10. 3. Though duty be not altogether thrust out, yet when love to these things marreth us in that zealous way of performing duty to God, as it did in Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 24. who is said to honour and love his children above God, ver. 29. not that he forbore them altogether, but because his sharpness was not such as it should have been, and (as it is like) it would have been, had they not been his own sons whom he too much loved; whereas to the contrary it is spoken to Abraham's commendation, that he loved God, because he withheld not his only Son when God called for him.

3. The third is, when confidence and trust is placed in any thing beside God, (to wit, excessively, as before we said of love.) Thus when a man's protection is placed in men, though princes, Psal. cxlvi. 3. or in multitudes, or in horses and armies, it is idolizing of them. Thus rich men may make (as it is Job xxxi. 24) *gold their confidence, and fine gold their hope*; that is, when men account themselves secure, not because God hath a providence, but because they have such means; as Asa trusted to the physicians, and not to God, namely in that particular, the cure of his disease; or as the rich man, Luke xii. 19. who founded his taking rest to his soul on his full barns: and so some trust their standing to such a great man who is their friend: And this is known, 1. By the means to which men betake them in a strait, as when they stand not to make use of sinful means. 2. By what noise they make when they are disappointed. 3. It is known by this, when their leaning on such a creature marreth their resting on God, and on his providence.

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Hence it is hard for men to be rich, and not to place their confidence in riches; and so Christ speaketh of the difficulty of rich men being saved. 4. Then men trust in their riches, when the having of them maketh them to think themselves the more secure, and maketh them proud and jolly, as if they added some worth to those who possess them; which could not be, if they were not something too much thought of.

4. The fourth way how creatures are idolized by men, is in their fear, when men or events are feared more than God, and fear maketh men sin, or at least keepeth them back from duty, in less or more, like those professors, who for fear of the Jews (Job xii. 42) did not confess Christ. Thus men may idolize their very enemies whom they hate, when they fear more him that can kill the body, than him that can destroy both soul and body. Thus great men and powerful in the world are often idolized, and good and well-qualified men may be made idols also, when men become so addicted and devoted to them, as to call them Rabbi, and to be as it were (sworn to their words and opinions (as the Sectaries in Corinth were, and such at all times, for the most part, are to their leaders) when it is not the matter or reason that swayeth but the person that teacheth such doctrine, or holdeth such an opinion.

5. The fifth way of committing this idolatry, is by service, when a man is brought under the power of any thing; so whatever a man serveth this way is an idol, every predominant, every person or humour that a man setteth himself thus to please is an idol: in this respect it is said, Men cannot serve two masters, *God and Mammon*; and if we yet serve men, we are not the *servants of Christ*, Gal. i. 10. This may be known, 1. By what men are most excessively taken up with, and most careful to fulfill and accomplish. 2. By looking to what it is for which they will take most pains that they may attain it. 3. By what getteth most of their time and labour. 4. By what overwayeth, and overcometh, or overaweth them most, so that they cannot resist it, though it thrust by duties to God; and when they are never so taken up with God's service, but it indisposeth them whenever they come to immediate worship; it is an evident token that such a thing is the man's idol.

These be the most ordinary ways how men fall in this sin of idolatry: it were hard to speak of all the several idols which may be loved, feared, rested on too much, and so put in God's room: I shall instance a few.

The first is the world; this is the great clay-idol that covetous and voluptuous men hunt after, crying, *Who will*
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show us any good? Pſal. iv. 6. By this thousands are kept in bondage, and turned head-long: An excessive desire to have the world's goods, and have by these a name in the earth, is many a man's idol.

A second is the belly, Philip. iii. 19. a shameful God, yet worshipped by the most part of men, who travel for no more but for a portion in this life to fill the belly, Pſal. xvii. 14. to win their living, and provide for their families. To this sort also belongeth gluttons, drunkards, palate-pleasers, (who are looked upon as the dainty men in the world, abounding alas in our days) being according to Satan's maxim, *ready to give skin for skin, and all they have for their life*; and aiming at no more, Job ii. 4. Thus Satan thought to have found out Job, when his riches were quite gone; thus he tempted the Lord Christ to provide bread in an anxious way; and thus fear of want captivateth many.

3. The third great idol (which is comprehensive some way of all) is a man's self, his honour, credit, reputation, good name, and applause in the world; his own will, opinion, tenets, judgments, whereof men are tenacious, and will not quit sometimes (as the proverb is) "an inch of their will for a span of their thrift". Thus men are said *to live to themselves*, 2 Cor. v. 15. in opposition to living unto God, when self-respect swayeth them to be *lovers of themselves*, 2 Tim. iii. 2, 4. *and lovers of their pleasures more than God, and self-willed*, Tit. i. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Ah who are free of this!

The fourth is, men of parts, &c. who have done or may do some considerable good or evil to one, or have something in them eminent beyond others: These oft-times, in regard of the fear, love, or trust men place in them, are made great idols.

The fifth is, lawful contentments, as houses, wives, children, unto which men are often too much addicted, and with which they are often too much taken up, even sometimes with that which is in itself very little, and so they prove their idols.

A sixth is, self-righteousness: Men's prayers, their repentance, blameless walking, &c. these may get, and often get more of their confidence, and weight of their eternal peace, than they should: So the Jews laid the great stress and weight of their salvation upon this idol, Rom. x. 3.

The seventh may be, outward ordinances in purity, external forms, and profession of religion: when men rest upon these, and press not after the power: as the Jews, who cried up the temple of the Lord, the covenant betwixt him and them, and their external relation to him, Jer. vii. 4. &c.

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The eighth is, any gift of God, which he hath bestowed on men, such as beauty, strength, wit, learning: when men who have them lay too much weight on them, to think too much of them; yea grace itself, the sense of God's love, and inward peace, may be put in Christ's room, and more sought for sometimes than Christ himself: Now when these are rested on, delighted in, and he slighted; or when they are missed, and he not delighted in, then they are idols.

Ninthly, Ease, quietness, and man's own contentment, is oft-times a great idol; and it is so when a man is so addicted to his ease, as he cannot abide to be troubled. Thus was it with that man, Luke xii. 19. *Soul, take thee rest*: His ease was his idol, and he rested on it, and made it the end of all his buildings, and laying up of goods; but his riches were his idol, as he grounded his expectation of rest upon that which he possessed: So many idle men, who frame their life so as they may not be troubled, though they be no ways profitable, but spend what they have, making this the drift of all they do, that they may have an easy life, when this overstayeth them as their last end, (though otherwise, if they were not wedded to their ease, might be more profitable) and often with abstaining from, and neglecting of many necessary duties, that they may eschew trouble, it is a prevailing idol.

A tenth is, wandering fancies and chimera's, the mind pleasing itself with them, and delighting to entertain them, and pursuing them from a design to find satisfaction in them, even in such things as never had, nor it may be, can have a being, except in their own imagination and fancy; such are called by Solomon, Eccles. vi. 9. *The wandering of the desire* (opposed to the *sight of the eyes*, which others delight in) as when men spread their wits and inventions on penning romances, love-passions, stage-plays, comedies, masks, balls, &c. or which is more subtle, yet much practised, when the minds of men frame imaginary and fictitious revenge, delight, eminency, &c. to themselves.

The means and second causes, physicians, armies, ministers, stars, and natural causes, by which God useth to work, (by some called nature) are oft-times so trusted and leaned to, as they are made men's idols; nay by many in these days, judiciary astrology, palmistry, &c. are much studied and doted on, and the scriptures antiquitated and laid aside in a great measure.

Next, if it be asked, what idols are most subtle? *Ans.*
1. An idol is then most subtle, when it lurketh in the heart, and seateth itself principally in men's minds, aim, and inward contentment, and they inwardly ascribe too much to such

such a thing, and yet, it may be, in their external practice, there is not much to discover this.

2. Then are idols most subtile, when they lye in such things to which some what of fear, love, delight, &c. is allowable, as in lawful things, which may in some measure be lawfully loved, feared, and sought for.

3. When they are in negatives, as in omissions, ease, &c. then they are more subtile than when they lye in something men positively seek after, or in the commission of something forbidden.

4. When they pass under a lawful name, as when pride goeth under the name of honesty. Anxiety under the name of lawful care, &c. then they are hardly discovered.

5. When sticking to one idol, the man rejecteth all others, (as he conceiveth) out of respect to God, as may be instanced in the cases of a monastick life, regular obedience, some singular opinion so much stuck to, and laid weight on by many.

6. When it is in means that we have used, or are allowed by God for attaining such an end, as it is hard to keep bounds in this case, so it is hard to discover the idolatry of the heart in it.

In all which it is to be advertised, that idolatry in these things consisteth mostly in the inordinateness of the heart and affections to them, and that it lieth not so much in our actions about them, as in the manner of our acting, and the circumstances accompanying us and our actions, anxiety, estimation, excessive care, love, &c.

For clearing the difference betwixt this idolatrous love, fear, service, and true love, &c. take these rules.

1. When our love to creatures drowneth our love to God, and maketh us to cast off duties we owe to him, as in Demas. 2. When in part it marreth us in the performance of duties to God, as in Eli. 3. When it so taketh us up in our practice throughout the day; that we give not necessary time to the worship of God, in praying, reading, hearing, &c. 4. When it indisposeth for these, so that when we are praying or hearing, the heart is carried away after creatures, and the mind is taken up with some other thing than God, as Ezek xxxiii. 3. 5. When they too much, and very unnecessarily haunt the heart in meditation, or when we lye down or raise, and at such times when our thinking on such employments contributeth not to the furtherance of them, it sheweth that they have too much of the heart when they possess it always, and when it is seldom taken up actually with better things, but these steal in easily and at all times.

It may appear now, 1. How common this sin of idolatry is. 2. How great guilt and hazard men are lying under thereby, because, 1. Few are convinced of it. 2. Many years idolatry lieth together upon the consciences of many. 3. There is little repentance for it, though many ways one may insensibly slide into it.

It is not so very useful or needful here particularly to enquire what idol is predominant, and hath chief room, if these three things be granted. 1. That there may be, and are many idols often at once, as legions distracting the man, and swarming in his heart. 2. that successively they may be changed, according to men's intentions and conditions. 3. That men should study the mortification of all, and the giving God his due, so as none be spared; for if any one be spared, none at all are mortified and slain.

It would become believers, and it would be their advantage, to think much upon such scriptures as these Isa. xxx. 22. *And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.* Luke xiv. 8. *When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him.* 1 Cor. x. from ver. 5. to ver. 15. And that they would study conformity to them, and learn to abhor idols; yea, all creatures, in so far as they become idols to them.

We are now further to prosecute the branches of this commandment, which is a key to all the rest; and because God's sovereignty is holden forth here, there is no sin that may not be reduced to it, as being a disobedience to this sovereign God: We shall first permit some general ways whereby it is broken, then insist in some particulars.

More generally, it is broken three ways, as hath been said already.

1. By derogating from God that which is his due; so all contempt of him, disobedience to him, wronging his infinite Attributes, as if he were not Omnipotent, Omniscient, Infinite, &c. denying of his providence in less or more, are breaches of this commandment. Thus he is wronged, when he getteth not every way that which is his due.

2. By attributing to God what is not consistent with his absolute perfection, purity, and holiness, as that he doth or can do wrong, change, nor keep his promises, or not guide the world wisely; that he hath any bodily shape, or may be comprehended.

3. When, what is due to God, as faith, hope, love, fear, &c. is given to creatures, whether to idols literally, or to men; to saints, angels; ordinances, (as sacraments) stars, herbs, gold, physicians, &c. when too much weight is

is laid on them, or any thing not agreeing to them is ascribed to them, by which witch-craft, charming, covetousness, judicial astrology, &c. are reprov'd, as drawing the hearts of men away from the living God.

If it be asked, May not some things in the world be loved? and may not some confidence be placed in men, means, &c. I answer, love may be given to some things, and naturally is called for to some things; but, 1. Not simply, but with subordination to God; not for themselves, but out of obedience to God, and as they may be useful to us in helping us to honour him, and as they are his gifts. 2. We are not excessively to love or rest on these, but so, as from love to God, we are ready to quit, yea, to hate them, as Christ speaketh of father and mother, Luke xiv 26. Again, there may be some kind of confidence given to some things; but, 1. Not simply. Nor, 2. For themselves. 3. Nor always. 4. Nor in all things; but, 1. This confidence must be subordinate to God's appointment. 2. It must be with dependence on his blessing for making means effectual, and so may we expect health from meat, drink, physick, &c. for so they are looked on as means conducing to such an end; and yet it is the Lord alone that must be rested on. 3. There may be comparative confidence, whereby men lean more to one mean than to another, as more to a skilful physician than to an unskilful, and more to an army, as to overcoming an enemy, than when it is wanting, because that confidence is in some external thing, and concerneth not salvation, and but compareth means amongst themselves, as they are ordinarily made use of by God for attaining these ends; but in this case the means are not simply confided in.

Next, we are to consider that this command may be broken all these ways in four respects.

1. In doctrine; as when men maintain such things as dishonour God, or give his due to creatures, and do teach them, Matth v. 33. to 38.

2. By opinion or judgment; as suppose men should not vent and publish such things, yet if they in their heart think or believe so, Psal. xiv. ver. 1.

3. Though it come not to a settled judgment, but only reacheth the imagination; so that loose, unbecoming thoughts of God, or misapprehensions derogatory to him, are entertained; as Psal. l. 21. Acts xvii. 29.

4. In practice; when men live as if there were no God, Psal. xxxvi. ver. 1. as if he were not omniscient, just, &c. These do indeed deny him, whatever be their profession to the contrary, Tit. i 16. Thus all prophane men, who live

loosely, are guilty; as also formal hypocrites, who rest on the out-side of duties.

Therefore, in the third place, we are to consider, that this commandment, in the extent thereof, doth condemn, 1. All gross idolaters of any sort, who usually are mentioned under the name of heathens. 2. Jews, who worship not the true God, in his son Jesus Christ. 3. All hereticks, that deny the God-head of any of the Persons; as Sabellians, who make but one person; Arrians, who make Christ a made God; Photinians, who make him a pure man; and all that make a plurality of gods, or that lessen the divine attributes, and give to saints God's due, in adoration or invocation; or in a word, whoever contradict any truth, or maintain any error: for thereby they fasten it upon God and his word, and wrong him who owneth no such thing: And to these may be added all ignorant persons who know not God. 4. All prophane men, whether atheists in heart or in practice, disobedient persons, in deed denying God, and not giving him his due, which is obedience, whatever in words they profess concerning him. 5. All hypocrites, who give him but an out-side service, and so are not in their obedience sincere and perfect as before him. 6. All compacters with the devil, who consult him, or who leave God's way, and seek to come to the knowledge of any thing by an unlawful way; which is, 1. To meddle with God's secrets when he has not revealed them. 2. It is to be beholden to God's enemy, the devil, for revealing such things. 3. It is a making use of an unwarrantable mean, which has no blessing promised to it; therefore cannot be used as a mean with subordination to God, even tho' the matter enquired after by such means, or by the devil, be such as he may know. 7. All charming by-words, herbs, or such means as God hath not appointed for that end, or which have no natural and physical efficacy for bringing it forth; as in seeking health from witches, when there must be words so often repeated, or they must be said fasting or going backward, &c. all laying weight on these, or the like circumstances, without any reason. 8. All spells, fearing of events, and using superstitious means to prevent these, as laying bits of timber at doors, carrying a Bible meerly for a charm, without using it, esteeming days and times unlucky and unfortunate; these draw men off from God to some other thing: Of this sort is all divining by lots, stars, rods, or any other way, not having a warrant, to find out some secret, or to know something that is to come; (it being God's property and prerogative to declare what is to come, Isa xli.) for when there is no efficacy, no reason in
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the mean used, the effect must be looked for, either from God, or from the devil: Now when God has neither put it naturally in the mean, nor by his revealed will any way warranted it, as sometimes he doth, (as when he appointed washing in Jordan for curing Naaman's leprosy, and anointing in the primitive times for healing the sick) it cannot be from him. Hence sometimes one charm or word to one at one time, will do what it never doth to another: These means have always some circumstance in word or action immediately and explicitly, or implicitly flowing from the devil, which may be good in itself, yet has no force for the end, and so draweth men to own the devils institution, which is exceeding derogatory to the honour of God.

4. We gather the breaches of this commandment from the duties that are required in it, such as faith, love, obedience, hope, fear, knowledge, &c. in which we may fail these ways in the general. 1. When we want these graces, or perform not these duties required. 2. When they are counterfeited, and not real; as when our humility is not real, our prayers not sincere, but in shew only. 3. When they are defective as to the measure of knowledge, faith, &c. which we should be at. 4. When they degenerate, as when knowledge turneth into curiosity, and faith into presumption, and hope into vain confidence, fear into unbelief and anxiety, by which we may see how often this commandment is broken.

1. That we may the better understand the breaches of this commandment, we would first take a view of God's excellency and attributes, and see how we sin against all these, for we should walk worthy of God, Col. 1. 10. And here ye may observe, that his infinite wisdom is wronged by not submitting to him, or not taking direction from him; his power, by not employing him; his grace, by not trusting him, or abusing it to wantonness; his omniscience, by wishing he saw not some things, hiding them from men, and not fearing him, counterfeiting in his service, &c. so is his justice wronged by expecting mercy without making use of a sacrifice, not fearing his threatnings, not fearing at sin, but hazarding on his wrath; and the like may be instanced in all the rest of his attributes, which are all sinned against, either by ignorance, or by omission of something they call for, or by the commission of something unbecoming them.

2. Consider God in his relations to us, how often is he sinned against as a Father? how is his kindness abused, and he not revered as Creator, of whom we have our being? yea, he is kicking against, and we live not to him, from whom,

whom, and by whom we live : He is a husband and yet we go a whoring from him, and prove unfaithful in all our ties to him : He is a Redeemer of his people, and a master and Lord of all, but what fear, love subjection getteth he from us, notwithstanding of all these relations ?

3. Consider God's works for us, about us, and to us, of creation, providence, and redemption, besides his particular dispensations both of mercies and judgments : All which call for something suitable for us, and yet every one of them is more ways slighted, by attributing whether good or evil, to chance, luck, or fortune, by unthankfulness to him, and abuse of what he giveth ; and by not studying these works, so as to admire and love him who is the worker.

4. Consider our obligation to God in all the parts of our covenant with him, sealed by baptism, and the Lord's-supper : Sure we should study to be like all these covenant-relations, and to answer these obligations ; but alas, how shamefully unanswerable are we to them all ?

5. Consider his will revealed in his word, and see how far short we are in performing it.

Lastly, Consider what care there is of using the means that may bring us near to, and abstaining from those things that draw away from God, such as sinful confederacies, evil company, light and unsound books, travelling needlessly to strange places, &c. All which, and whatever taketh the heart off God, are breaches of this commandment.

Next, we shall insist more particularly upon some manifest breaches opposite to the great and principal scope of this commandment.

1. The first is, ignorance, which is a direct breach ; for the commandment requireth us to know him, 1 Cor. ii. 8, 9. And if he be not known, there is no other duty can be rightly performed the knowledge of God being the ground of all duties.

For clearing of it, consider that some things concerning God are kept from us, other things are revealed to us. These things which are kept from us we cannot know : And 1. They are either such as we cannot see now, because they are incomprehensible in themselves, as God's infinite nature and attributes ; which, as they are in themselves, cannot be comprehensibly conceived, no not in heaven : but while we are upon earth, we see but darkly, as through a glass, and our knowledge of him is rather faith than sight ; or they are such things which are conceivable, but God has not thought good to reveal them unto men ; as when he will end the world when he will take every man from this life, who are particular-

ly elected, &c. to be ignorant of these is no sin. It is a duty not to seek to know them, yea curiosity in these is sinful; ignorance here is called rather a nescience than ignorance, which implieth a privation of knowledge which men ought to have; or, 2. These things concerning God are such as not only in themselves may be known; but such as we ought to know, because they are revealed to us. Ignorance of these is sinful: As, 1. Being a disconformity to that knowledge and holiness after which God created us. 2. A fruit of original sin. 3. A cause of many sins. 4. A disconformity to the law, which requireth us so to know and acknowledge God as he has revealed himself to us; and that in his essence, in the trinity of persons, in his attributes, covenants, works of creation and redemption, and in his relations to us; and that we should so know him, that we may thereby know ourselves also: And this is that great duty called for in this commandment, that we may know him, and his will.

Again, this ignorance, as to these things we ought to know, may be looked on as threefold, according to the diversity of its causes.

1. There is a natural ignorance that is the fruit of our natural corruption and blindness, which hath seized on mens memories and judgments, and, as they think, incapacitateth them to learn; and indeed doth so, as to the spiritual and saving up-taking of the matters of God, till the eyes of the mind be opened by the power of grace.

2. There is a wilful ignorance, when men have parts, means, and occasions, whereby they may attain knowledge and yet they will not know, but slight and despise the means which draweth often a judicial blindness along with it.

3. There is a lazy ignorance, whereby some do not wilfully reject the means of knowledge, yet are so negligent, that they do not actually stir themselves for attaining of knowledge. Now though there be difference among these, yet the least of them is sinful, and will not wholly excuse, it being a fruit of original sin (at the best) entertained by our own neglect of such means as might have more removed it: And thus a dull wit, or weak memory, can no more simply excuse, than other gross disconformities to the law in our natures (appearing in some more than others) which follow upon original sin.

In sum, men may be three ways guilty of the breach of this law, in respect of ignorance.

1. As to the object matter whereof they are ignorant, which may be less or more, according as less or more of that is known, which we should know concerning God, and
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which he hath revealed; and this is especially to be understood of these substantial things more necessary to be known there being a great difference betwixt these, and other things which do not so immediately concern God; such as chronologic questions, some prophecies, cases, &c. which yet are recorded in scripture.

2. They may be guilty of less or more ignorance, in respect of the degree; so some men are absolutely ignorant, others are doubtful only, and not confirmed in the knowledge of the truths of God, who yet have not contrary impressions of these things, as others have.

3. There are diverse kinds of ignorance in men: some are guilty of wilful ignorance, some are negligent, and some (even the best) are labouring under the remainder of natural blindness, who yet are not negligent.

If it be asked, Whether ignorance can excuse a man, and how far it excuseth? *Ans.* 1. There is no ignorance (properly so called) that excuseth wholly, *pro toto*, it being of itself sinful, and men being obliged to know what is sin, and whatnot; neither can ever men do that out of faith, which they do in ignorance, and know not if it be in itself sinful or lawful: this is to be understood in respect of *ignorantia juris, non facti*, of the ignorance of the law, and not of the ignorance of the fact, (as they call it;) for men may sometimes be ignorant of this, and yet be innocent; as when one is cutting with an ax, and it falleth of the helve, &c. but in respect of the law, there is no invincible ignorance that can excuse any for their not knowing God's mind, because they are obliged to know it.

2. Ignorance that is wilfully entertained with neglect of means that might help it, is so far from excusing, that it doth aggravate the faults occasioned thereby, because in that case there are two faults that concur, 1. Ignorance. 2. Another sin produced thereby.

3. Ignorance natural, or proceeding from paucity of means, or less occasion to learn, though it doth not fully yet excuseth: Hence it is said, They that know not the masters will, shall be beaten with few stripes: But Chorazin, and Bethsaida, and other places, having plenty of means, shall not in the least be sheltered under that excuse, Matth. xi. 22, 23, 24.

4. In some things we would distinguish betwixt sinning *ex ignorantia*,) out of ignorance, and sinning *ignoranter*, ignorantly; one may do a thing out of ignorance (as Paul persecuted the church) that would not have done it; it was not malice, but ignorance that led Paul to that sin of persecuting.

secuting. This excuseth in part; but to do a thing ignorantly, is when a man is more immediately the cause of his own ignorance: As when by drunkenness, passion, hatred malice, &c. a man is so blinded and prejudiced, that he cannot discern what is duty, and what is sin: So some Pharisees were, who might have seen that Christ was God, and to be acknowledged as such, but prejudice marred it. Thus a sin considered in itself may be less, which being considered more compleatly, will be found a far greater guilt; as suppose, one in drunkenness swear, commit adultery, or in passion commit murder, the murder or adultery considered in themselves, as done in drunkenness or passion, are less, than when done in soberness, or deliberately; yet these sins being compleatly considered, the person is more guilty, because he hath murder and drunkenness, or murder and passion, both to answer for; which drunkenness, or passion he caused to himself by his unwatchfulness: and all the effects that follow upon these, are to be imputed to him, both as the actor and procurer of that which is the occasion or rather the cause of them. Thus you see how many ways ignorance breaketh this commandment.

2. We shall instance the breach of it in what is opposite to faith, or confidence which floweth from faith; to wit, unbelief, diffidence, temerity, or tempting of God (which floweth from unbelief, and is opposite to faith) the infidelity of Heathens and Jews, and the atheism of such as believe not the word: Thus also Hereticks, who abuse it, and apostates who fall from the truth thereof, and are opposers of it, are guilty of this sin; as also, those who receive the word in vain, and for all his invitations, rest not on him: these make God a liar, and despise him and his offers, being unwilling that he should reign over them. Here cometh in also anxiety, in respect of his providence and distrust or diffidence, in respect of his promises, which is a sin questioning the fulfilling of promises, from the apprehension of some weakness in the promiser, or in means used by him to bring about the accomplishment. Temerity or tempting of God, is against confidence also: This is an essaying or attempting somewhat without God's warrant, without which none can lawfully undertake any thing: That of diffidence wrongeth God's faithfulness; this of temerity wrongeth his wisdom, in not making use of the means prescribed by him; as if we would attain the end another way of our own. Opposite to faith also, and the profession of it, are dissembling of the truth, fainting in the profession thereof, especially in the case of confession, by which we dishonour God; and by our fearful, pusillani-

mous, and cowardly carriage, some way tempt others to think that indeed we do not indeed believe these things, on which we seem by our faint deportment to lay little or no weight.

3. We may instance the breach of this commandment in what is opposite to hope; namely, desperation and presumption, or vain confidence; and because every grace has many opposite vices, ye may see it is the easier to fail in obedience to this commandment. Desperation wrongeth many graces; it is two fold, either total from want of faith; or partial, from weakness of faith. There is also a desperation and diffidence that is good, Eccles. ii. 20. which is, when we despair in ourselves, or from any thing in ourselves or in the world, to attain happiness, or what is promised; that holy self-despair is good; but that is not it which is meant here, for it is not absolute despairing, but such as hath still a reservation with it, *If he help me not*, which implieth hope. Presumption runneth on the other extreme, looking for what is promised, without taking God's way to attain it, and it differeth from native and true confidence, which with peace and boldness resteth on his word, and in his way expecteth the thing promised; the fault of presumption is not, that it accounteth God's mercy too great, or expecteth too much from him, but that it accounteth him to have no justice; nor hath it respect to his holiness and greatness: Even as desperation faileth not in attributing to him too much justice, but in making it inconsistent with his mercy and promises, and extending sin, wants, and unworthiness beyond his mercy and help, as Judas and Cain did.

4. For finding of the breaches of this commandment, ye may consider the opposites to love with the whole heart, such as luke-warmness, Rev. iii. 15. coldness of love, Matt. xxiv. 12. self-love excessive love to creatures, hatred of God, not as he is good, but as he is averse from sinful men, prohibiting what they love, and punishing them for committing sin; for it is impossible for men to serve two masters, as sin and God; the one must be loved, and the other hated: and is their any thing more ordinary than love to sin which is evil. And hatred of God which is the great good? which appeareth in little zeal for him, and little reverencing of him.

5. Consider what is opposite to fear and reverence, and there you will find much carnal security and vain confidence in it, obstinacy, stout-heartedness, little trembling at his word, not being affected with his judgments, rashness and irreverence in his service, whereas there is a general fear
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in all our work called for, Prov. xxiii. 17. We ought to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long; and there is a peculiar fear in our walk called for in the ordinances of his worship, Eccles. xii. 23. Mal. i. 16. which was commended in Levi, Mal. ii. 5. On the other hand, opposite to this, is that carnal fear and anxiety, which is commonly called servile and slavish fear, and the fear of man which bringeth a snare, Prov. xxix. 25.

6 Look after the breaches of this commandment, by considering what is contrary to the obedience we owe to him as God, and our God. Now internal and external obedience may both be comprehended in this, every man ought wholly to give away himself, and the use of all his faculties and members, for the glory of God and to him only, and to none other: And this requireth a practice that is complete, both as to the inward bent of the will and heart, and also as to all the external parts thereof, which being seriously pondered, O! how often will we find this commandment broken? as the particular comparing of our life with the word, and the explication of the rest of the commandments, may easily clear and discover.

7. The sin of impatience, which is opposite to that patience and submission we owe to God in his ways and dispensations, is one of the special breaches of this commandment: It is very broad, and doth many ways discover itself: As 1. In fretting at events which befall us. 2. In not submitting cheerfully to God's way with us, but repining against it. 3. In wishing things had fallen out otherwise than God hath disposed. 4. In limiting God, and prescribing to him, thinking that things might have been better otherwise. 5. In not behaving himself thankfully for what he doth, even when his dispensations are cross and afflicting.

8 This commandment is broken by the many sins which are opposite to that adoration and high esteem that we should have of God in our hearts: He ought to have the throne and to be set far up in our minds and affections: but oh! how many are there that will not have one serious thought of him in many days, and are far from being taken up with him, or wondering at him and his way with sinners, &c?

Lastly, When invocation and prayer is slighted, this commandment is broken: When he is not by calling upon him acknowledged in every thing, and particularly, when internal prayer in frequent ejaculations to God (as Nehemiah ii. 4.) is neglected.

Now if all these were extended to ourselves, and these we have interest in, and that in thoughts, words, and deeds,

according to all the former general rules, what guilt would be found to lye upon every one of us, in reference to his a tributes, relations to us, and works for us? and as these hold him forth to be worshipped as such, so when that is slighted or neglected, it cannot but infer great guilt; especially, when his due is not given by such as we are, to such as he is, it make thus exceedingly guilty: and though the same thing be often mentioned, yet it is under a divers consideration; for, as one thing may break more commandments than one, so may one thing, divers ways, break one and the same commandment, as it opposeth or marreth divers graces and duties.



THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

EXODUS XX. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 4. *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 waters under the earth.*

Ver. 5. *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;*

Ver. 6. *And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*

THIS Commandment is more largely set down than the former, partly to clear the mandatory part of it, and partly to press it, in which two it may be taken up.

The preceptive, or commanding part, is expressed in two things, ver. 4. and 5. at the beginning. 1. That no image be made: And 2. That it not be worshipped.

Next, it is pressed three ways: 1. From a reason. 2. By a threatening. 3 By a promise: The words are multiplied, that they may the more fully and clearly express what is intended.

1. That this commandment is against all making of images for religious service, is clear from a three-fold extent mentioned in the prohibition. 1. The image of nothing in heaven above, or the earth beneath, or under the earth; that is, the similitude of no creature is allowed for this end.

2. Men are forbidden to make either similitude or likeness, that is, no sort of image, whether that which is engraven in, or hewn out of stone, wood, silver, &c. or that which is made by painting; all kinds are discharged.

3. No