

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

TEXT: (Exodus 20:15, KJV)

¹⁵Thou shalt not steal.

INTRODUCTION

1. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3, KJV).
2. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image” (Exodus 20:4, KJV).
3. “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain” (Exodus 20:7, KJV).
4. “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8, KJV).
5. “Honour thy father and thy mother” (Exodus 20:12, KJV).
6. “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13, NIV).
7. “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14, KJV).
8. “Thou shalt not steal” (Exodus 20:15, KJV).

I. THE MEANING OF THE COMMANDMENT

1. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, KJV).

A. Property and ownership

1. “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers” (Psalm 24:1-2, ESV).
2. “Whoever can be trusted with a little can also be trusted with a lot, and whoever is dishonest with a little is dishonest with a lot. If you cannot be trusted with worldly riches, then who will trust you with true riches? And if you cannot be trusted with things that belong to someone else, who will give you things of your own?” (Luke 16:10-12, NCV).
3. “No servant can serve two masters. The servant will hate one master and love the other, or will follow one master and refuse to follow the other. You cannot serve both God and worldly riches” (Luke 16:13, NCV).

B. Respect for Another Person’s Property

1. “I, the LORD, love justice. I hate stealing and everything that is wrong. I will be fair and give my people what they should have, and I will make an agreement with them that will continue forever” (Isaiah 61:8, NCV).
2. “Treat others the same way you want them to treat you” (Luke 6:31, NASB).
3. “Forget about the wrong things people do to you, and do not try to get even. Love your neighbor as you love yourself. I am the LORD” (Leviticus 19:18, NCV).

C. A Selfish Heart

1. “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me’” (Matthew 25:41-45, ESV).

II. WAYS PEOPLE STEAL

A. First of all, we have the big three: theft, robbery and extortion.

1. “The people of the land practice extortion and commit robbery; they oppress the poor and needy and mistreat the foreigner, denying them justice” (Ezekiel 22:29, NIV).

B. Borrowing with No Intent to Repay

1. “The wicked borrows and does not pay back” (Psalm 37:21, NASB).
2. “Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need” (Ephesians 4:28, NIV).

C. Keeping Back a Laborer’s Wages

1. “Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts” (James 5:4, KJV).
2. “What sorrow awaits Jehoiakim, who builds his palace with forced labor. He builds injustice into its walls, for he makes his neighbors work for nothing. He does not pay them for their labor” (Jeremiah 22:13, NLT).
3. “Never take advantage of poor and destitute laborers, whether they are fellow Israelites or foreigners living in your towns. You must pay them their wages each day before sunset because they are poor and are counting on it. If you don’t, they might cry out to the LORD against you, and it would be counted against you as sin” (Deuteronomy 24:14-15, NLT).

D. An Unnecessary Delay

1. “Do not say to your neighbor, ‘Come back tomorrow and I’ll give it to you’ —when you already have it with you” (Proverbs 3:28, NIV).

E. Withholding Affection

1. “The husband should fulfill his wife’s sexual needs, and the wife should fulfill her husband’s needs” (I Corinthians 7:3, NLT).
2. “It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres” (I Corinthians 13:7, NIV).

III. STEALING FROM GOD

A. Not Returning Tithes

1. “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings” (Malachi 3:8, KJV).
2. “‘So a curse is on you, because the whole nation has robbed me. Bring to the storehouse a full tenth of what you earn so there will be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the LORD All-Powerful. ‘I will open the windows of heaven for you and pour out all the blessings you need. I will stop the insects so they won’t eat your crops. The grapes won’t fall from your vines before they are ready to pick,’ says the LORD All-Powerful” (Malachi 3:9-11, NCV).

B. Withholding Offerings

1. “I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread” (Psalm 37:25-26, KJV).

C. Ignoring the Gospel Debt

1. “When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (Luke 14:13-14, NIV).
2. “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise” (Romans 1:14, KJV).
3. “Pay your debts as they come due. However, one debt you can never finish paying is the debt of love that you owe each other” (Romans 13:8, GW).

CONCLUSION

1. “When a man or woman does something wrong to another person, that is really sinning against the Lord. That person is guilty ⁷ and must admit the wrong that has been done. The person must fully pay for the wrong that has been done, adding one-fifth to it, and giving it to the person who was wronged” (Leviticus 5:6-7, NCV).
2. “If a man steals a bull or a sheep and kills or sells it, he must pay back five bulls for the one bull he stole and four sheep for the one sheep he stole” (Exodus 22:1, NCV).
3. “Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, ‘Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.’
Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost’” (Luke 18:8-10, NIV).