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THE
TEN COMMANDMENTS AS A
COVENANT OF LOVE.

AN ADDRESS BEFORE THE
COLLEGE STUDENTS' SUMMER SCHOOL FOR BIBLE
STUDY, AT NORTHFIELD, MASS., JULY 1, 1888.

By H. CLAY TRUMBULL.

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All of us are familiar with the Ten Commandments, given from God on two tables, or tablets, of stone to the people of Israel at Mount Sinai. But not all of us are accustomed to think of these Ten Commandments as ten separate clauses of a loving covenant between God and his chosen people, recorded on stone tablets for their permanent preservation. Yet these witnessing tablets are repeatedly called in the Bible "the tables of the covenant," and "tables of testimony," not the tables of the commandments; while the chest or casket which contained them is called "the ark of the covenant," and "the ark of the testimony," not the ark of the commandments.

There is obviously a world-wide difference between a loving covenant that binds two parties to each other in mutual affection and fidelity, and a series of arbitrary commandments enjoined by a sovereign upon his subjects; between a compact of union, having its statement of promises on the one hand and of responsibilities on the other, and an instrument that asserts the rights of the ruler and defines the duties of the ruled. In our estimate of the Decalogue we have made too much of the *law*

element, and too little of the element of *love*. As a consequence it has not been easy for us to see how it is that God's law is love, and that love is the fulfilling of God's law. But the Ten Commandments *are* a simple record of God's loving covenant with his people, and they are *not* the arbitrary commandings of God to his subjects. They indicate the inevitable limits within which God and his people can be in loving union, rather than declare the limits of dutiful obedience on the part of those who would be God's faithful subjects. A close examination of the Decalogue will show that this is its nature and scope.

It must be borne in mind, in our Bible reading, that the Bible was originally written by Orientals for Orientals, and that it is to be looked at in the light of Oriental manners and customs, and Oriental modes of speech, in order to its fullest understanding. Hence when we find the term "covenant," or the term "commandment," in the Bible, we are to inquire into the Oriental meaning of that term, so that we may know the sense in which it was employed by the Bible writers.

Now a "covenant" among Orientals is, and always has been, a sacred compact binding two parties in loving agreement. Oriental covenants are made in various forms and by various ceremonies. The most sacred of all forms of covenanting in the East is by two persons commingling their own blood, by its drinking or by its inter-transfusing, in order that they may come into a communion of very life. Two persons who wish to become as one in a loving blood-friendship, will open each a vein in his own arm, and allow the blood to flow into a common vessel, from which both parties will drink of the commingled blood. Or, again, each person will open a vein

in one of his hands, and the bleeding hands will be clasped together so that the blood from the one shall find its way into the veins of the other. Or, yet again, the two will share together the substitute blood of a sacred animal. Usually, in such a case, a written compact is signed by each party and given to the other, with the stamp of the writer's blood upon it as a part of the ceremony of covenanting; and this writing is carefully encased in a small packet or casket, and guarded by its holder as his very life. It is in the light of such customs as this that we are to read of the sacred covenant entered into between God and his Oriental people.

It was at the foot of Mount Sinai that Moses came before the people of Israel with God's proffer to them of a covenant, whereby they should bear his name and be known as his people. "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient." Then it was that Moses took of substitute blood and divided it into two portions, one half to be sprinkled on the altar God-ward, and the other half to be sprinkled on the people; and Moses said: "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words"—or, as the margin of the Revised Version has it, "upon all these conditions." Moreover we are told, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Moses sprinkled the blood upon the record, or book, of the covenant, as well as upon the people. It was after this—after the breach and the renewal of the covenant between Israel and God—that the stone tablets on which the covenant itself had a permanent record were encased in a casket, or an "ark," which was thenceforward guarded

sacredly as covering and containing the charter of Israel's nationality, the witness, the evidence, the testimony, of the loving covenant between God and his people.

But you may ask, Did not the tables of stone bear a record of specific commandments, rather than of articles of a covenant? And are not the words there recorded specifically called in the Bible the "Ten Commandments"? Look for yourselves, and see. It is true that our English Bible speaks of the Ten Commandments recorded on these tables of stone; but the word here translated "commandments" is more literally to be rendered "words," as indeed it is given in the margin of the Revised Version; and it is applicable to any declaration, injunction, or charge, made by one to another. It is by no means to be understood as simply an arbitrary mandate from an absolute sovereign to his subjects. Looking at the Ten Commandments as a set of moral laws covering man's duties to God and to his fellows, they seem strangely defective, when we find among them no command to pray to or to praise God, nor any command to give sympathy or assistance to man. But when we look at them as clauses of a loving covenant, indicating the scope and limits of relations within which a child of God's duties God-ward and man-ward are to be exercised, we find that they are far-reaching and all-inclusive. Looking at them as the tables of the covenant between God and his people in the light of Oriental views of covenanting, we can see a great deal more in the words on those tables than when we look at them as the tables of the commandments—in the light of our Western ideas of commandings.

A covenant involves the idea of a twofold agreement

between the parties making it. Even though God himself be one of the parties, he will not refuse to be explicit in his words of covenanting. And so we find it to be in the record on the tables of the covenant which were given to Moses at Mount Sinai. We call the opening words of that record the "Preface to the Ten Commandments;" but they are more properly God's covenanting words with his people. "I am Jehovah thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." The very name "Jehovah" includes the idea of a covenant-making and a covenant-keeping God. The declaration of Jehovah's eternally existing personality as Jehovah, is in itself a covenant promise, for all time to come, to those who are his covenant people. It is as though he were to say: I, who was and am, and am to be, the same yesterday and to-day, yea and forever, will be your God unfailingly. As I have given you a loving deliverance out of Egyptian bondage, so I am ever ready to deliver you from every evil that enthralls you.

Man, when he promises for the future, needs to say, "I will do;" but God can say nothing stronger than "I do," or than "I am." Thus the promise of promises of Jesus to his disciples as their ever-present, all-sustaining Lord is, "Lo, I am with you always;" not "Lo, I *will be*," but "Lo, I *am*." And so it is that God's covenant promise to Israel, to be their loving, guarding, and guiding God for all time to come, is in the words: "I am Jehovah thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." And this is the promise of "the party of the first part," as we should say in modern legal parlance, in this covenant between God and his people Israel.

Then there follow the covenant agreements of God's people, as "the party of the second part" in this loving compact. As it is God who prescribes or defines the terms on which this covenant is to be made, the indication of those terms is mainly in the form of such prohibitions as will distinguish the people of God from other peoples about them, in the bearing of that people toward God's personality, toward God's institutions, and toward God's representatives. This is all that is needed in the fundamental articles of covenanting. The details of specific duties may be defined in special enactments under the terms of this covenant, or they may be inferred from its spirit.

The first requirement is that this covenanting God shall be recognized as the only God; that no other god shall be conceded a place in God's universe. And this requirement is vital to any such covenant. A divided heart is no heart at all. He who can see any other object of love and devotion comparable with the one to whom he gives himself in covenant-union, is thereby incapacitated from a covenant-union. Therefore it is that this first word of the Ten Words of the covenant of God's people with their God is not an arbitrary mandate, but is the simple expression of a truth which is essential to the very existence of the covenant as a covenant of union.

And this principle is as vitally important now as it was in the days of Moses. The human heart is always inclined to divide itself when it ought to be undivided. It is reluctant to be wholly and always true to God alone. But, now as hitherto, without wholeness of heart a covenant of union with God is an impossibility. And,

indeed, the very idea of other gods is an outgrowth of man's sense of an unfitness to be in oneness of life with the One God; in consequence of which man seeks a lower divinity than the supreme God as the immediate object of his worship.

The second requirement in this covenant of union is, that no material image or representation of this covenanting God shall be made use of as a help to his worship by his covenanting people; that, as a Spirit, God shall be worshiped in spirit by his people. Here, again, is no arbitrary mandate, but only the recognition of a vital truth. Because God is Creator of all, no creation of God can be like God. Because God is a Spirit, the human mind can best commune with him spiritually, without having its conceptions of him degraded by any image or representation—which at the best must be wholly unworthy of him.

In this second requirement, as in the first, a danger is indicated to which the Israelites were peculiarly exposed in their day, and to which all the people of God are exposed in any day. In the Assyrian, or Chaldean, home of Abraham there was practically no image worship, but there was a belief in a plurality of gods. In the Egyptian home, from which the Israelites had just come out, images in great variety were the objects of worship. As the covenant people of God, the Israelites were to refrain from the polytheism of their ancestral home in the far East, and from the grosser image worship of their more recent home in the West. And so it must be with the people of God at all times; they must worship only God, and they must worship God without any help from a material representation of the object of their worship.

As there is still a temptation to give a divided heart to God, so there is still a temptation to seek the help of some visible representation or symbol of God's presence in his worship. The Christian believer does not bow down to an idol, but many a Christian believer thinks that his mind can be helped upward in worship by looking at some representation of his Saviour's face, or at some symbol of his Saviour's passion. But just because God is infinitely above all material representations and symbols, so God can best be apprehended and discerned spiritually. Anything coming between man's spirit and God the Spirit is a hindrance to worship, and not a help to it. Suppose a young man were watching from a window for his absent mother's return, with a wish to catch the first glimpse of her approaching face. Would he be wise, or foolish, in putting up a photograph of his mother on the window-pane before him, as a help to bearing her in mind as he looks for her coming? As there can be no doubt about the answer to that question, so there can be no doubt that we can best come into spiritual communion with God by closing our eyes to everything that can be seen with the natural eye, and opening the eyes of our spirit to the sight of God the Spirit. This, again, is no arbitrary requirement of God; it is in the very nature of his being and of our own.

The third requirement of this compact is, that there shall be no insincerity on the part of God's covenant people in their claiming and bearing his name, as the name of their covenanting God. This requirement is not generally understood in this light; but all the facts in the case go to show that this is its true light. In the Oriental world, and in the primitive world everywhere, one's

name stands for one's personality; and the right to bear one's name, or even to call on one by his personal name, is a proof of intimate relation, if not of actual union, with him. God was now covenanting with this people to be his people; thereby authorizing them to bear his name, and to be known as his representatives. In the very nature of things, this laid upon them a peculiar obligation to bear his name reverently and in all sincerity.

It is not that God arbitrarily commanded his people to have a care in the *speaking* of his name, as if he were jealous of its irreverent mention; but it is that he reminded them that the coming into the privileges of his name was the coming into the responsibilities of that name. It was as though Mr. Moody were taking a little street waif into his home to train the boy as his own son, and were formally giving to that boy the right to take and bear his name. Naturally he might say: "Understand, now, my boy, that, wherever you go, they'll say, 'There goes a young Moody.' Now I value my name, and I don't want it disgraced. See to it that you take care of that name wherever you are." So God said to his people: "Thou shalt not take"—shalt not assume, bear, carry—"the name of the Lord thy God in vain"—insincerely, vainly; "for the Lord will not"—cannot—"hold him guiltless that taketh"—claimeth the privileges of—"his name in vain"—vainly, insincerely.

This covenant obligation also is on us as it was on God's people of old. As Christians we are baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Wherever we go, we are counted as members of God's family. His name is on us, and his honor is in our keeping. Wherefore, "let every one that nameth the

name of the Lord"—claimeth it as his own name—"depart from unrighteousness;" and let him never feel that it is a light or a vain thing to bear that name before the world.

Thus we see that the first three of the ten requirements of the loving covenant of God's people with their God, are simply the requirements to worship God as the only God, to worship him in unhindered spirituality, and to worship him in all sincerity. These three fundamental requirements seem to have been in the mind of our Lord Jesus when he said to the woman of Samaria at the well of Jacob: "God"—the One God—"is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

Coming to the fourth requirement of the loving covenant of God and his people, we find it differing in form from the preceding three requirements; differing also from the form of all but one of those which follow it. The preceding three are in the negative form; this is in the affirmative form, beginning with the injunction, "Remember." Of course there is a reason for this. The first three requirements are in the line of obvious, if not of self-evident, truths; the requirement of one day in seven for rest and worship is not, however, of obvious importance. Hence this requirement is specifically affirmed as an article of the covenant; while the others guard against departures from primal principles of vital moment.

The "Sabbath" was a recognized institution long before the days of Moses. Traces of its strict and sacred observance in the ancestral home of Abraham are disclosed in the Assyrian records unearthed in these later days. And now that the Lord, at Sinai, is drawing away his covenant people from the sins and errors of their

fathers and neighbors, he reminds them that there is good in some of the observances of the past, which they are not to forsake or forget. "Remember," therefore he says, "the sabbath day to keep it holy"—as your fathers in all their polytheism had a care to observe it of old. Bear *that* institution in mind, as worth your remembering.

And here again there is affirmed a principle which is for all time and for all people. Although the reason for setting apart one day above another for rest and worship is not on the surface of things, the experiences of mankind as well as the teachings of God's Word go to show that there is such a reason below the surface. In the long run, man can do more work, and do it better, in six days of a week, than he can in seven; and unless a man worships God at stated times, he is not likely to worship him at all. So it is that God makes it a part of his loving covenant between himself and his people, that ever and always they shall worship him statedly, as well as worship him sincerely, spiritually, and solely; because without this stated recognition of the covenant, the covenant itself would be forgotten.

And now we come to the fifth of the ten covenant requirements: "Honor thy father and thy mother." This also is in the affirmative form, and for a very good reason. God is here declaring, as it were, that those who are in legitimate authority are so far his representatives. He wants it understood that while no other gods are in existence, even in a subordinate place in the universe, he has his representatives in various spheres of human government and rule, and they are to be honored accordingly by his covenant people.

We are accustomed to speak of the division of the Ten

Commandments into two tables, the first comprising four requirements, and the second six; but it will be seen that this fifth requirement belongs with the preceding four in the group of those which look God-ward. It is as though the one table pointed upward from ourselves, while the other pointed outward. We are to honor those who are over us in the Lord, not as our fellows but as our superiors; not because of what they are as men, but because they are, within the scope of their rule, the representatives of our God.

And just here it is important to know that by Oriental custom the terms "father" and "mother" are by no means limited to one's natural parents, but are applicable to superiors in years, or in wisdom, or in civil or religious station. This truth was impressed on my mind by an incident in my journey across the desert of Sinai. My companions in travel were two young men, neither of them a relative of mine—as my dragoman very well knew. When, however, in mid-desert, we met an old Arab shaykh, through whose territory we were to pass, my dragoman introduced me as the father of these young men. "No, they are not my *sons*," I said to the dragoman; but his answer was: "That's all right. Somebody must be father here." And when I found that, according to the Arab idea, every party of travelers must have a leader, and that the leader of a party was called its "father," I saw that it would look better for me to be called the father of the young men, than for one of them to be called my father.

Traces of this idea are found in the Bible use of the term "father." In Genesis, Jabal is said to be "the father of such as dwell in tents, and have cattle;" the

man who started the long line of nomad shepherds. Jubal is called "the father of all such as handle the harp and pipe;" the pioneer instrumental musician of our race. Joseph in Egypt speaks of himself as "a father to Pharaoh," in view of the confidence reposed in him by the ruler of the empire. "Be unto me a father and a priest," says Micah to the young Levite, in the days of the Judges; because a religious guide is, in the East, counted as in a peculiar sense a representative of God.

It is not merely that the terms "father" and "mother" *may* include others besides human parents; but it is that no Oriental would think of limiting those terms to that relationship. Hence this fifth requirement of the covenant of God's people with their God, just as it stands, is in substance: Honor those who are over you in the Lord, as the representatives of the Lord; for the powers that be are ordained of God, and he who fails to honor them lacks in due honor to him who has deputed them to speak and to act for himself. And herein is affirmed a principle which is as important to us to-day as it was to the Israelites in the days of Moses. Indeed, it may be questioned whether any precept of the ten covenant requirements has a more specific bearing on the peculiar needs of the American people, than this injunction to reverence those who are in authority because they are God's representatives in their sphere. Anarchy can have no tolerance in the mind of a child of God; but reverence for rightful authority has its home there.

Turning from the first table of the covenant with its upward look, to the second table with its outward look, we find that each new requirement in its order stands for

a great principle which is applicable alike to all peoples and to all times, and which has its basis in man's loving union with God. The first of this series, the sixth of the ten requirements, is: "Thou shalt not kill;" or, "Thou shalt do no murder." Here is a great deal more than an ordinance forbidding the striking down to death of a fellow-man. Here is a call of God to guard sacredly the life of every child of God, as that which is dear to God. In the Oriental world, as in the primitive world generally, blood stands for life, and life is supposed to proceed from God and to return to God. When, therefore, an Oriental is told that he must not take it upon himself to shed another's blood, he realizes that that prohibition is equivalent to saying that it is not for him to decide when a life that God has given shall be recalled to God.

This idea it is that runs through the whole system of what is popularly known as "blood revenge" in the East. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man," was the declaration of God as early as the days of Noah; and it is in the line of that declaration that any man in the East who sheds another's blood must surrender his own blood to the other's family, at the present day—as ever since the days of Noah. Not personal revenge, but divine equity, is the real basis of this system. Not because the life belongs to the man, but because it belongs to God, must it be guarded sacredly, and be accounted for—if taken away.

It is on this principle that the civil magistrate, as the messenger of God, takes the life of one who has taken another's life, in these days of the Christian dispensation. "He beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister

of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil." A child of God must count sacred every life which God has given; and except while acting as a specific messenger of God, he must never send back a human life to God.

The seventh covenanting requirement is a call to regard the family institution as an institution of God's appointing, and to refrain from aught that tends to its injury. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" means a great deal more than Refrain from unchastity because of its harm to yourself or to your neighbor. It means, Guard God's primal institution for man, as an institution which God holds dear. At the very beginning of the race, it was ordained of God that one man and one woman—the twain, not the three, or the four, but the twain—should be one flesh in loving union. This institution of God's ordaining is dear to God, and it ought to be dear to every child of his; therefore God says to those who would be in loving compact with him, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Because your and my interests are made one, you must not, you cannot, as my loving people, do aught that shall prove injurious to the family—to the institution which I have established, and which is dear to my heart.

This, again, is not an arbitrary commandment; nor is it one for a single period, or for a single people only. It is the enunciation of a principle which is vital to the well-being of all peoples at all times. It was so from the beginning, and it must be so unto the end. The family is the unit in the State and in the Church. It must not be ignored in the realm of society, of government, or of religion. He who would be true to God must be true to the institution of the family. And who shall say that

we have no need of remembering this truth in our land and day?

The eighth requirement of the covenant guards the rights of property as within the plan and ordering of God. "Thou shalt not steal" is announced as an article of the loving compact of God's people with their God. Not merely because your fellow-man would object to your taking his property from him, but because the rights of property are of divine appointment, are you to refrain from claiming as your own that which now belongs to another.

This idea of regarding property rights as of God's appointment is peculiarly prevalent in the Oriental mind. The lines of tribal division in the desert are recognized as having divine sanction; and now, as in the days of old, it is hardly less than sacrilege to remove an ancient landmark in the East. Tribes which are at enmity will make raids across these border lines for purposes of plunder; but this is in the nature of what "civilized" nations call a "military necessity." Again, a stranger who enters a tribal domain without obtaining consent is treated as a smuggler, and all his property is confiscated accordingly. This, however, merely shows the primitive origin of the "high tariff" principle. Orientals who plunder from their enemies, or who collect impost duties from immigrants, do so in the belief that God sanctions these habits of the ages.

When one of the Arabs of our party, in crossing the desert of Sinai, found he had dropped a bag of meal, he went back to look for it, in perfect confidence that it would be left untouched by others. On my asking him if he had no fear that another Arab had carried it off, he replied

that no Arab would steal from an Arab. Dr. Edward Robinson saw a black tent hanging on a tree, where, as he was told, it had remained a full year awaiting its owner's return; and he says that if a loaded camel dies on the desert its owner draws a circle in the sand about it, and leaves it without any fear that it will be disturbed in his absence. Burckhardt illustrates the estimate put by the Arabs on stealing, by the story of an Arab father who bound his own son hand and foot, and cast him headlong to death from a precipice, because the son had stolen from one of his tribal fellows. Life can only be taken at the call of God; but, according to this Oriental view, he who violates the property rights of one of God's children forfeits his very life to God.

The principle underlying this estimate of the sacredness of property rights, like every other principle enunciated in the Decalogue, is not an outgrowth of an arbitrary commandment, but it inheres in the very nature of God's dealings with the sons of men. What hast thou that thou didst not receive by God's consent? What has thy fellow that he did not receive by the same permission? It is God who gives. It is for God to take away. No loving child of God will refuse to heed the limits which his Father has assigned in the distribution of his possessions among the children of his love. That was the way in which the Orientals were taught to look at it. That is the way in which we ought to view it. Anti-property communism is rebellion against God.

Ninth in the list of the covenant requirements comes the summons to hold in sacred regard the personal reputation, or good name, of every child of God. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" is a

prohibition of slander, or of careless speech affecting the good name of one's fellow-man. This is not, as many have supposed, a mere injunction to truthful speech on all occasions. Lying needs no specific prohibition in a loving compact between God and his people; although the duty of truthfulness is inseparable from the thought of any compact with God—who could not be God if he were to approve untruthfulness. But a disregard by man of the reputation of his fellow-man does need to be guarded against in such a compact; therefore its mention has a place here. A child's good name is always dear to his father. He who loves and honors the father will not be heedless of the reputation of the child. God is the Father of all. The good name of every one of his children is dear to him. He who loves and honors God will not be careless of the reputation of any one of God's dear children. Therefore it is that, in the loving covenant of God with his people, it is declared that love for God includes a truthful fidelity to the good name of every child of God.

How the application of this principle comes home to us in our social life as God's children! We are jealous of the good name of the members of our own families. We are tender of the reputation of those whom we know to be very dear to our dearest friends. But how careless we are of the good name of those in whom we feel no special concern, or of the reputation of those who happen to be personally disagreeable to us! We hear and repeat the words spoken to their discredit without knowing whether or not those words are true. By our unguarded speech or looks we help, perhaps, to give a false impression to others concerning them. And all the while they are God's dear children, and every spiteful or thoughtless

blow at them is a stroke at him. Is this consistent with our claim of loving union with their God and ours?

It was in the line of this principle that our Lord Jesus gave emphasis to his one new commandment, that those who loved him should love one another, as being dear to him; and, again, that he declared that whoever ministered tenderly to one of his disciples should be reckoned as ministering to himself. God links himself in loving sympathy with all his children, and he wants their welfare to be held dear by all who hold him dear.

And now we come to the tenth and last of the requirements of this covenant. Here we find an injunction that goes deeper than those which precede it on the second tablet of the written compact. "Thou shalt not covet." Not only, Thou shalt not openly disregard human life, or the family institution, or the property or the reputation of any one of thy fellows; but, Thou shalt not want to do any of these things. Thou shalt recognize thine own lot, and thy possessions, and the lot and the possessions of others, as God's assignment to thee and to them; and thou shalt be contented within the sphere which he has deemed best for thee.

This requirement in the second table of the compact corresponds with the third requirement in the first table. The one says that the child of God must be sincere and unfeigned in his loving devotedness to God as his Father; the other says that the child of God must accept in all heartiness his Father's ordering concerning himself, in his relations to all his brothers and sisters in the great family of God.

Here it is that we find the more spiritual teachings of the Decalogue concerning man's obligations to his fellow-

man in the loving service of God, as they are pointed out, and emphasized in the words of Jesus, in what we call the Sermon on the Mount. Here it is that the lesson comes home to us that it is not enough for us to refrain from actual murder and adultery and theft and false witnessing; but that it is inconsistent with our devotedness to God as our loving Father, for us to have a hateful thought toward one of his dear children; for us to look longingly in the direction of another family assignment than that which is ours in the way of God's appointment; for us to turn a wistful or an envious thought toward any possession of another which we have no right to seek after. And all this is not of God's arbitrary commanding, but is in the very essence of God's loving covenanting with his chosen people. Therefore it is that the Apostle urges Christians to keep themselves from "fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, the which is *idolatry*;" the indulging in which is being untrue to God as one's covenant God.

And now in the light of these disclosures of the nature and meaning of the successive clauses of this covenant of God with his Oriental people, let us look back upon it as a whole in its spirit and teachings, in order that we may see what is covered by it, and wherein its applications are for us as well as for God's people of old. God must be recognized as God alone. No heart can love God as God, unless it loves God wholly. God must be worshiped spiritually; for spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and only as a man is lifted above sight and sense can he be in communion with the spiritual and the infinite. Union with God must be sincere and unfeigned;

for only by a complete and willing surrender of one's self can one's self be merged into a holy and infinite Personality. The loving worship of God must have its stated times, and hence, of course, its stated places, in order to have its fitting hold on the worshiper; and the recognition of this truth in the covenant is the authorization of all legitimate seasons and methods of worship. God's representatives in the family, in the State, and in the Church, are to be honored as God's representatives; and herein is the authorization of all right forms of human rule. These are the teachings of the first table of the covenant; and those of the second table are like unto them.

He who loves God must love those who are God's. As the Apostle expresses it: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen. And [therefore] this [second] commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." Every child of man is a child of God. Wayward and prodigal son though he be, he still is one who was made in the image of God; and his Father's heart goes out toward him unflinchingly in love. Hence he who loves the Father must guard with sacredness the life of every child of that Father. He must honor the institution of the family, which is the human hope of the children of that Father. He must hold dear the property possessions and the good name of each and every child of that Father. And in his heart there must be such love for that Father's children as the children of his Father, that he will have no wish to do aught that shall harm any one of them in any degree.

Thus it is that the spirit and substance of the entire covenant compact stand out in those words of our Lord which lose their meaning if we look at the Ten Commandments as ten arbitrary commandings of God. When a certain lawyer came to Jesus with the knotty question, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said unto him: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law, and the prophets." And thus it is that we are enabled to realize that "love . . . is the fulfilment of the law."

The "Ten Commandments" are the law, the law of the covenant of love; but, be it remembered, they are not the "Mosaic law." They were not originated by Moses; nor were they done away with when the Mosaic law was fulfilled and abrogated in Christ. They are the law of the promptings of love; an orderly statement of the principles which rule in a heart which is devoted to God. Their origin is in the nature of God; and their continuance must be coexistent with the needs of the children of God. With all our shortcomings in love, and with all our failures in fidelity to our covenant-union with God in Christ Jesus, just so far as we are in oneness with God by faith shall we be true to the principles of this covenant-compact of God with his people. "God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." "And hereby know we that we know him, if we keep his commandments."