

This is a chapter from the book “Key to a Fear and Guilt Free Life”

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Chapter Ten: Latin Ten Commandments

There is not a Christian alive that would actually want to live by the rules in the Old Testament or want them enacted into law if they knew what they represented. Most Christians believe the Ten commandments are proof of the Christian influence on American government without having any understanding of their true meaning or even who wrote them and why. The reality is that the Ten Commandments are a contradiction in semantics. Why would the religious politicians be interested in forcing these particular commandments on non-believers if they didn't want to kill the people who violated them as commanded by their God? Plus, those ten are only a minor fraction of the six hundred and thirteen commandments.

Yes, there are six hundred and thirteen Commandments and rules of the Lord in the Christian Bible and no way to comply with them. The Roman Catholic Church thought that was simply too many laws for simple Christians to comprehend or comply with without a fight. Yes, most religious authorities have always thought Christians were simple peasants with no curiosity or need for the truth. The claim is that God only gave Moses Ten Commandments. So --- who created the other six hundred and three laws for the Jewish religion and why did they?

The real question is why would Christian Church leaders promote even the Ten Commandments attributed to Moses, rather than the Two Commandments attributed to Jesus, after Jesus said you are Gods? “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 first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:37-40).”

Timothy warns that many teachers neither understand the laws or what they affirm. Timothy was right, the law is good, if leaders use it lawfully, “Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; (1 Timothy 1:71”).

For a major part of Christian history, the Roman Catholic Pope has been God to the Western World. The graven image of Jesus nailed to a cross served as a warning that anyone who crossed the church in any way, or attempted to read and understand the Bible, would be put to death. Killing someone to save their soul was common practice until the age of enlightenment when the churches quit burning heretics at the stake for challenging the power of Rome and translating the Bible.

The various Ten Commandments have been shortened for simple Christian gentiles who might be concerned they are worshipping the Jewish God. The first Latin Commandment is especially important when you consider the New Testament statement of Jesus in John 10:34-35: “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the

scripture cannot be broken;"But Jesus was not the first to make that statement. He quoted Psalms 82:6, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most high."

What we have to keep in mind is that the Ten Commandments are not really about God. They are part of the Greek fable created some twenty-five hundred years ago to placate Jewish captives in places conquered by Alexander. It is clear the Greeks played up the belief that they were brought by God to punish the Jews for some unknown sin -- and the Greeks had a guaranteed perfect translation of the Jews own religious documents to prove the Jews were too stubborn or evil, to listen to their own God.

1. I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.[which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, Thou shalt not make thee any graven image. (Deuteronomy 5)]

"I am your God." This statement of Moses evokes the image of a very powerful entity standing tall with a stern look on his face who is not giving the ancient Jews any choice in the decision. The writer of Exodus indicates this was only one of many God like individuals wandering around the Middle East with similar powers. Why else would he state so emphatically: "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people (Exodus 22:28)."

In the beginning God did not give out any rules when He talked to Abraham and Jacob. Abraham described the Lord as a man in Genesis 18 when he fed the Lord and two other men butter, milk and the calf he had dressed. By the time two of the same men arrived in Sodom to destroy it in Genesis 19 they were called angels by Lot who invited them into his house and fed them again. Even Ezekiel called the pilot of the Cherub that took him to the city of the Gods some three hundred years before the Greek translation of the Jewish history as having the face a man

The writers claimed this was the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jacob's great-grandson Moses. It would appear this all-knowing God was not a very good judge of character and it has haunted the Jewish people for over two thousand years if it were true. During the time of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and early years of Moses, there were no rules. Abraham married his half-sister Sarah. He lied in order to sell Sarah to a Pharaoh when she was sixty-five years old and to the king of the Philistines when she was eighty-nine years old. These religious leaders were horrified to find out Sarah was his wife, rather than just his sister and at God's insistence let Abraham keep all they had paid for her.

Children had no value. This was the same God who ordered Abraham to sacrifice Sarah's son Isaac as a burnt offering in Genesis 22 to see how faithful he was. However, Abraham failed to carry out that order because a lowly angel countermanded the order. Furthermore, to placate Sarah, even after Isaac's half-brother Ishmael was circumcised at thirteen, Ishmael and the sons of his concubines were sent away to protect Isaac's inheritance. Isaac grew up and married his first first cousin Rebekah. Isaac also claimed Rebekah was his sister when he tried to sell her to the same Philistine king. They eventual had twin boys, Esau and Jacob.

Jacob was Rebekah favorite son and she helped him steal Esau's firstborn blessing from his father Isaac. While Rebekah had been purchased as a wife for Isaac, Jacob had to work for twenty years to purchase his Rebekah's two nieces, Rachel and Leah, and as many animals as he could trick uncle out

of. Jacob fell in love with Rachel who was the youngest. However, Uncle Laban tricked Jacob into marrying her older sister Leah first. Their two maids were thrown in for free. When Jacob left his uncle's place, Rachel stole her father's household Gods and kept them until the children were grown. It was only after Leah's sons, Simeon, and Levi, slaughtered the men in the city of Shechem over their sister Dinah's promised marriage, and took the women and children slaves, that Jacob buried all the strange Gods held by his family under an oak tree there.

On his deathbed Jacob cursed Simeon and Levi in Genesis 49 for their deceit, violence and cruelty during the slaughter at Shechem, they were to be divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel. Strange, after the slaughter at Shechem, God changed Jacob's name to Israel. However, it would appear God didn't hear Jacob's curse on Levi as he became the namesake of the priesthood through his grandson Moses. Levi's daughter Jochebed was actually married to his grandson Amram and they became the parents of Moses and Aaron.

The writers do not claim this God was the God of Abraham's son Midian, but Moses lived with a Midianite priest and his daughter for some forty-plus years before getting the call from God. His Midianite father-in-law taught Moses how to manage a large religious organization and even worshipped with the Jewish congregation. The writers also claim this was the God of Abraham's son Ishmael.

The Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches do not believe the commandment against making graven images should be included in the Ten Commandments. The theory is that Moses constructed the image of a Serpent on a pole to cure snake bites in the wilderness as well as putting images of cherub (cherubim) on the ark. David also created images of Cherub in the temple as well as other images of trees and animals. However, the theory does not include the three thousand men killed because of the graven image of the golden calf that God's high priest Aaron made for them to worship. The prohibition against making any image is actually very specific and reflects badly on the Jews as a whole, "Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: (Exodus 20:4 / Deuteronomy 5:8) --- Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen. (Deuteronomy 27:15) ---But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back: (1 Kings 14:9)"

Perhaps the scariest part about this God is that the writers claim that he will punish the sins of the father down to the fourth generation. How can a God be merciful and forgiving who is going to punish the next three or four generations that have no idea why they are being punished? This sounds more like an explanation for an inherited genetic defect that is being blame on God, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation (Exodus 34:7)."

Let's look at that one more time. The Lord has great mercy, forgives iniquity and transgressions of the father but even that is not going to clear the guilt of the father and the Lord is going to pass those same genetic traits on to the children of the third and fourth generation. The writer was talking about genetic traits when he said, "The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and

transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation (Numbers 14:18).”

The reality is not quite as complicated as it appears to be. Powerful leaders who abuse that power and their subjects and yet survive into old age must have been forgiven their iniquity and sins by God. Generally, the next generations would be weaker and overthrown from within or conquered from without which would indicate the next generations were suffering for the sins of the original father.

As an example, it would appear God forgave Aaron for making the golden calf and taking a tenth of everything the other tribes had. However, when his grandsons acting as priests, Phinehas and Hophni, used some of the same tactics in their greed and sexual lust, God had the Philistines kill them in battle and gave the power to the non-Levite prophet Samuel. Primitive thinking was that God either protected you in battle or if you were killed it had to be because you pissed Him off.

A better example would be David and Solomon. David raped Solomon’s mother Bathsheba and killed her husband Uriah. God forgave David and killed Solomon’s older brother shortly after he was born as their punishment. The writers claim God loved Solomon, the second son of the union until he became morally corrupt by being wise enough to figure out a way to kill Shimei for David, who had promised not to kill him. Solomon killed Joab who was complicit in killing Uriah and as well as his older half-brother Adonijah who was actually in line for the throne. His biggest sin was taking a thousand wives and concubines who led him away from the worship of God. At this point he was forgiven of his sins because of David and God promised to take the kingdom away from his son Roboam.

The stories indicate that the ancient Jews really believed this God was a real person who walked through the Jewish camp and didn’t want see or step on anyone’s pile of shit.

2. **You shall not take the name of the Lord God in vain** [Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain (Deuteronomy 5)]

This Commandment seems to be a straight forward prohibition against using the Lord’s name, or any gods, in a curse, which calls for a death sentence. However, it is also used to mean lying prophets, “And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord (Leviticus 19:12).”

At first the Lord was not too concern with people claiming to speak for Him, “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him (Deuteronomy 18:22).”

There was a good reason for the people not to be afraid of the false prophets, the Lord sent them, “And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee (1 Kings 22:22-23).”

But wait a minute it seems the Lord set them up to be killed. . According to Zechariah, that called for the worse type of death sentence, "And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth (Zechariah 13:3)."

In those ancient times it was best not to insult the Lord or curse where you could be heard. You would think if the Lord wanted a person punished for blasphemy or cursing he would do it Himself. But that was not the case, "And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan) --- Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses (Leviticus 24:11 & 14-15&23)."

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day

Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day seems like a benign enough commandment that no one would object too. This was a day that required everyone as well as anything they owned to rest. At one time many states had Blue Laws which required businesses to be closed on the Sabbath in an effort to comply with the commandment. Unfortunately, as long as someone was working to enforce the law the commandment was being violated as no one was allowed to leave their house.

For a time Virginia decided this was a Christian Nation and the state required everyone to attend the state owned church on the Lord's Day. The militia was even used to enforce the law. Some bright individual finally figured out that these actions caused the preacher, the militia and the people to violate the commandment. Virginia stopped the practice in 1776 and sold the state churches in 1778. It not only allowed freedom of religion, it allowed freedom from religion.

Christians, their teachers and preachers still violated this Commandment every Sunday. The Lord was adamant, "But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou (Deuteronomy 5 & Exodus 20). --- See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day (Exodus 16:29)."

Few people realized the seriousness of violating this commandment. A person could be put to death for sweeping the floor, lighting a fire in cold weather to keep warm or just cooking a meal. Even the ancient priests didn't like this commandment. By the end of the book of Numbers the priests were making burnt offerings on the Sabbath.

Can you imagine the police coming to your door on Monday morning and saying, you have to die for going to church yesterday or for mowing your lawn. I don't think any Christian really want this Commandment to become their law, "Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be

cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant (Exodus 31:14-16).” On the other hand it would solve the over population and water shortage problem.

These religious fanatics were serious, “And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses (Numbers 15:32-36).”

There is little doubt that Jesus was well read. He understood that high priests worked the burnt offerings on the sabbath violated the commandment. Therefore, they did not believe it was a sin. As a teacher he saw no sin in working on the sabbath to get their food, “At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat (Matthew 12:1).”

Jesus did not believe the priest should have a separate set of rules and chose to teach and heal on the sabbath. This was a time when it was illegal for a sick person that had been healed to carry their own bed on the sabbath, “The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed (John 5:10).”

In response to their charges that he had healed a person on the sabbath, Jesus pointed out that the priests also worked on the sabbath by circumcising a man. Not only that but Jewish law showed that that the priests profaned the temple on the sabbath and are blameless. He said, “Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day (John 7:22-23)?”

Much like today, when you are the keeper of the law, the law is what you say it is. This fact is regardless of what the law actually states whether it is religious or civil. Therefore, Jesus had no chance of surviving the persecution of the religious right of the time. Let’s face the facts. The Jews as such did not persecute Jesus it was the high placed religious and political leaders on whose authority he had challenged and Romans who want to placate the leaders in order to keep peace. Some leaders still do the same thing today. Being a Jewish scapegoat for gentiles has never been easy, “And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. --- Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God (John 5:16 & 18)”

4. Honor your father and your mother

This would appear to be a fairly simple commandment everyone could agree on. However, things are not always what they seem where the Greek translation of the Old Testament is concerned. Failing to honor your father and mother could get the ordinary person killed.

Anyone who raised a hand against their parents or cursed them could expect, “And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death (Exodus 21:15) --- And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death (Exodus 21:17) --- For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him (Leviticus 20:9).”

This Commandment would also help solve the population problem, “If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear (Deuteronomy 21:18-21).”

Unfortunately, those are not the only ways to dishonor a father and mother. Mostly the main way of dishonoring the father and mother in the Greek translation of the Old Testament is of a sexual nature. The following verse appears to apply to all of the family until it states that it applies to the mother. That reference points specifically to Abraham’s son Midian who had a number of children with his mother. Midian was the first to establish a religious organization. One of his priests was the father-in-law of Moses. Just like modern PR studies passed off as science, a sentence is added that turns everything upside down, “None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD. The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness (Leviticus 18:6-7) --- Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. --- And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah (Genesis 25:1-4).”

In God’s chosen family, both male and female children made a habit of dishonoring their father. Well at least that is the way the Greek translators made it appear for David’s great-grandmother Ruth. Ruth was a wonderful person, but she was a descendant of an incestuous relationship between Abraham’s nephew Lot and his oldest virgin daughter. Apparently, when Abraham’s nephew Lot was escorted out of Sodom, he took enough alcohol into the mountains with him so his two daughters could get him drunk for at least two days in a row.

According to the writer, the oldest daughter raped him the first day to produce Moab, the ancestor of Ruth, and the youngest daughter raped him on the second day and also became pregnant. The writer would have you believe that it was all the young women’s fault and Lot never became aware that he had been raped or how his daughters became pregnant, which was also against the law, “And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of

our father. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. And the first born bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day (Genesis 19:31-36)."

The Greek translators were intent on making the whole family look like a gang of sexual misfits who dishonored their mother and father starting with Abraham. He sold his sister/wife Sarah to the Pharaoh when she was sixty-five and to the Philistine king when she was eighty-nine years old. She had Isaac when she was ninety. It was only after he sold Sarah the second time that he admitted she was really his sister. This was not a good start for a religious organization, 'And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. (Genesis 20:12) --- Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen (Deuteronomy 27:22) --- The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover (Leviticus 18:9.) --- And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it is a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity (Leviticus 20:17)."

It would appear God did forgive Abraham of his iniquity, but God visited the genetic traits of the Abraham upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. Actually it would appear the genetic traits were passed down through another 7 generations from Abraham to Isaac, to Jacob, to Levi, to Jochebed, to Aaron, to Eleazar and to Phinehas.

According to the Greek translation of Jewish history, a man was more likely to dishonor his father by having a sexually relationship with his father's wife, "Cursed be he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen (Deuteronomy 27:20) - -- And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them (Leviticus 20:11)."

The first recorded instance was Abraham's son Midian having a sexual relationship with his mother. The second instance was Jacob and Leah's son Reuben having sex with Jacob's wife Bilhah. That cost Reuben his firstborn inheritance rights. According to the Greek translation, it should have cost him his life, "And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: (Genesis 35:22) --- Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch (Genesis 49:3-4)."

The third instance was when the writers have the Lord send David's son Absalom to have public sex with some of his wives as punishment for raping Bathsheba, "And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong. (2 Samuel 15:21)."

David's son Absalom also killed his brother Amnon for dishonoring their father by raping their sister Tamar. David did not protest the outrageous act of sister rape by his son Amnon so he enforce the law, "And Jonadab, the son of Shimeah David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose that they have slain all the young men the king's sons; for Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar. (2 Samuel 13:32)

Perhaps one of the most unique ways to dishonor your father, is to have a sexually relationship with your father's sister. Levi's daughter Jochebed was married to her brother Kohath's son Amram. That makes their sons Aaron and Moses grandsons of Levi who had been cursed by his own father, "And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity (Leviticus 20:19) --- And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram were an hundred and thirty and seven years (Exodus 6:20) --- And the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom her mother bare to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister (Numbers 26:59)."

Aaron and Moses did not have a good genealogical heritage. His great-grandfather Jacob had dishonored his father Isaac by tricking him into giving him (stealing) the firstborn blessing from his brother Esau. Their grandfather Levi had dishonored his father Jacob by agreeing with the family to let Shechem marry their sister Dinah if Shechem and the men of his kingdom were circumcised. Their mother was dishonored when she was forced to marry their father Amram the son of her brother Kohath who was also dishonored.

Jacob cursed Leah's second and third son, Simeon and Levi, for dishonoring his name by lying to Shechem about letting their sister marry him, killing Shechem and all the men of the city and stealing all the women and children as well as anything else of value, "Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. (Genesis 49:5-7)."

A unique feature of this curse is that Jacob was forced to change his name to Israel after his children had plundered the kingdom of Shechem and they moved out of the territory. There was really no possibility of dividing them in Jacob and scattering them in Israel as a curse. The curse worked just the opposite for the descendants of Levi. The Greek writers have him becoming the father of the priesthood. The curse worked very well for the Lord said, "Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him. (Deuteronomy 10:9) --- But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. --- Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithe. Thus ye also shall offer an heave offering unto the LORD of all your tithes, which ye receive of the children of Israel; and ye shall give thereof the LORD'S heave offering to Aaron the priest (Numbers 18:24-28)."

Judah, the fourth son of Jacob and Leah, also dishonored his father first be selling his brother Joseph into slavery and then when he had sex with his daughter-in-law. Yet, he was blessed by Jacob to be head of the royal line of King David and, according to the writer of Luke 3, the ancestor of Jesus. You

might remember in Genesis 38 that Judah's son Er was married to Tamar and was killed by the Lord for some misadventure. Then she was taken by his brother Onan who it is claimed was killed by the Lord because he dropped his seed on the ground so there would not be a child to inherit the firstborn inheritance rights. When Judah would not allow Tamar to marry his third son Shelah, she pretended to be a harlot and Judah had sex with her. When he found out she was pregnant Judah was going to burn her – that is until she proved it was his. The resulting child Pharez did inherit the firstborn rights. According the Greek translator, both Judah and Tamar should have been put to death, “And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them. (Leviticus 20:12).”

The New Testament writers Matthew and Mark still called for the death of anyone who dishonored their father and mother. The funny part is they still quote the laws of Moses rather than the law as given by Jesus, “For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death (Matthew 15:4) --- For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: (Mark 7:10).”

5. You Shall Not Kill

There is little doubt this is a rule any society must have to develop a peaceful culture. Unfortunately, it is generally held to be applicable only within one's own culture and religion providing you follow the laws to the letter. Therefore, it cannot really be a commandment from God. According to the laws of man God created everyone in his image, yet he chose the Jews to demonstrate his power and chose those with no conscience to be his executioner.

What religious zealot doesn't believe God murdered everyone on the planet with the great flood, except for Noah's family? What religious person doesn't remember that God wouldn't let the Pharaoh release the Jews to leave Egypt until he had killed all the firstborn children and animals, just to prove his power?

If the God of the Old Testament was really the creator of the world and the people in it and knew everything about our destiny, why would he be disappointed enough to kill every one on earth and start the process over again with an old drunk who would curse his own child for seeing him naked. Not only that, but why would he harden the heart of Pharaoh to keep him from obeying his desire to release the Jews until the time came to kill the Egyptian's firstborn.

Most Christians will agree that the family of Abraham worshipped the same God. Yet, as an example, it would appear God had no problem telling Moses to kill the descendants of Abraham's son Midian (even though Moses was married to a Midianite woman and had two children by her) and the people of his nephew Lot's son Moab.

If this God really created man in his image with a female (X) chromosome and a male (Y) chromosome, should he have been surprised that one might dominate and cause a person to have homosexual desires. The question is why would a loving God order the killings of the people he created because of their sexual desires?

There is an irony in this commandment since every other commandment calls for killing those Jews who violate them as well as non-Jews. It seems that the only ones that could not be killed for violating the commandments were those who appeared to be God's chosen ones with absolute power. The Greek translated stories we know as the Old Testament show God and the ancient Jewish leaders had no reservations about killing their own men, women and children, much less the those of the heathen Abrahamic nations around them.

While Levi might be forgiven for killing Shechem and the men of his kingdom because he was not a Jew, and his grandson Moses might be forgiven for secretly killing an Egyptian who abused a Jew, it is hard to explain how Moses could be forgiven for killing three thousand Jews for worshipping the golden calf Aaron made when he was the high priest. Yet Moses did order the death of at least three thousand Jews who were killed without any warning.

This was not according to the laws Moses gave, "Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbour secretly. And all the people shall say, Amen (Deuteronomy 27:24) --- And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. (Exodus 2:11-12) --- And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, *which Aaron made*. (Exodus 32:35) --- Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men (Exodus 32:26-28)'

Moses and the Lord worked together to kill the Jews who associated with Lot's descendants the Moabites. Any association with outsiders was a death sentence, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye everyone his men that were joined unto Baalpeor (Numbers 25:4-5)." Yet David was the great-grandson of the Moabite woman Ruth.

At about the same time this slaughter was happening Zimri, the son of a leader from the tribe of Simeon, brought a Midianite woman named Cozbi into the camp. She was a daughter of a Midianite leader, a descendant of Abraham son. That should not have been a problem since Moses' Midianite brother-in-law was traveling with him, "And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel. (Numbers 10:29)."

Unfortunately, Aaron's grandson Phinehas took it upon himself to kill both Zimri and Cozbi. Twenty-four thousand died in the plague that resulted from the civil war with the tribe of Simeon. God did not have a problem with the killings. In fact, He will later promise to kill Phinehas for being greedy and committing adultery with women that came to the tabernacle, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: And he shall have it,

and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel. (Numbers 25:10-13).”

The killings did not end there. Under Moses’ command, Phinehas led an army against the Midianites. This is a strange story because Moses left his wife and two children with his Midianite father-in-law, “And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian. --- And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. --- And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. (Numbers 31:3/7/9).”

It would first appear that what Moses really wanted was the Midianite women and all their valuables. The army did not kill the women and children they had captured, but returned with them to the Jews camp. Apparently, he had no compassion for his wife and male children nor did he consider his Midianite brother-in-law’s feelings when he ordered the army to kill all male children that had been captured as well as any woman or female child that had sex, “Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves (Numbers 31:17-18).”

The most dramatic example is when the main body of the Jewish tribes slaughtered all of the men, women and children of the tribe of Benjamin after the priest Phineas killed his straying wife and cut her into twelve pieces. He claimed some unknown men of Benjamin raped and killed her in Judges 19 and 20. This was all done without a single witness testifying to the validity of his charges. The slaughter of the men, women and children stopped when only six hundred men of the tribe remained alive.

To find these men wives, the tribes sent an army of twelve thousand warriors to the Jewish city of Jabeshgilead which had not supported the slaughter. The army’s orders were to slaughter all the Jewish men, women and male children as well as female children who had had intercourse. Since the marriage age for children was twelve years old, it would appear that out of this major city, the twelve thousand man army only found four hundred girls under twelve that had never had sex to become the wives of the remaining tribe of Benjamin.

The Greek translators made sure we understood the children were put to death for the sins of the fathers – who in this case had not sinned, “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin (Deuteronomy 24:16).”

The commandment itself covers the killing Bathsheba’s husband Uriah in an attempt to cover up her rape. However, God forgave David because it would have given enemies of the Lord something to talk about, the Lord helped cover up the crime by killing the child, “ And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die. And Nathan departed unto his house. And the Lord struck the child that Uriah’s wife bare unto David, and it was very sick (2 Samuel 12:13-15).”

Some Christian leaders hold David and Solomon (Bathsheba's second son) up as outstanding examples of righteousness because of their closeness with God. However, without the power of the kingdom behind them, it is highly unlikely they would be invited to be a deacon in any church. Some think Solomon was wise because he threaten to split a child in half when it could not be readily determined which of two women was actually the mother. On the other hand, his father David thought Solomon was wise because he thought of a way to kill a man David had promised not to harm.

After the Exodus, Priests, judges and prophets spoke to God as a Spirit who instructed them as they went about killing people. In effect, God or the Lord was their religious organizations familiar spirit. Yet, those people with familiar spirits outside the religious organization were condemned to death as well as anyone who used their services. Saul did acquire the services of the witch of Endor which was against the rules, "A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them. (Leviticus 20:27)

Few Western Christian religious leaders prior to the twentieth century thought this commandment against killing applied to them as they burned witches, heretics and Bible readers as well as the Bible translators and publishers. The Greek translators had to be grinning when they wrote this law against killing as a part of the Ten Commandments to condemn God as well as the original Jewish leaders.

6. You shall not commit adultery

Most people think they know what committing adultery means. Generally they understand it to mean a sexually relationship between any single person and a married person or two married persons not married to each other. The originally meaning was that only the woman was required to be married, "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death (Leviticus 20:10) - -- If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel (Deuteronomy 22:22)."

A woman was not safe from the accusation of adultery even if she had nothing wrong. If the husband was of the jealous type he might even cause her to commit adultery by bring her to the priest for the bitter water trial. Rather than submit to the trial by drinking the bitter which could kill her even if she was innocent, it is more likely she would submit to sexual abuse by the priest and commit Adultery. If she would be declared innocent by the Lord she was expected to become pregnant as a sign of her innocence.

The question is when does rape become adultery? Yes, married priest did sexually abuse the women in the Bible. What woman would dare accuse a priest of raping her? Until recently, no one dared accuse a priest of sexual abuse, especial a child. We only know Phinehas was married because his wife died on the same day he did while giving birth to a son, "Now the sons of Eli [Eleazar] were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord (1 Samuel 2:12) --- Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat

for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them (1 Samuel 2:22-25).”

Like Jacob whose sons dishonored him, the writers had to change Eleazar’s name to Eli because his sons dishonored the old name. This writer made it very plain that Eli was the son of Aaron when the Lord only refers to thy house and the house of thy father. Not only that, but his sons would die for failing to follow the Lord, “Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me forever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. (1 Samuel 2:30-31) --- And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them (1 Samuel 2:34).”

There is no clear cut case of consensual sexually adultery in the Christian Bible. You cannot consider the rape of the married woman, Bathsheba, as consensual adultery in 2 Samuel 11. The Commandment against adultery is actually directed at the Jewish family the Lord chose to be his wife/nation. The Greek translators and the prophets have the Lord calling his wife/twelve tribe nation harlots and whores committing adultery with other Gods and nations. The culture as a whole can then be blamed for the sins of the leaders. This would explain why God divorced the early Jews and brought in other nations to conquer the tribes. Idol worship was fornication or adultery against God and it happened in the most sacred place of Jerusalem as well as high place of individual tribal areas, “How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. (Isaiah 1:21) --- Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto. --- But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: (2 Chronicles 21:11 & 13) --- But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was. And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so. --- Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way, and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to everyone that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms. Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger. --- Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, because thou wast unsatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldest not be satisfied. Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied therewith. (Ezekiel 16:15-16 & 25-26 & 28-29).”

The New Testament writers totally confused the meaning of the term adultery. Fornication was the only cause for divorce which would save the woman from committing adultery. In Modern English, fornication is voluntary sex between two individuals not married to each other. As seen above, the simple meaning fornication is idolatry. To illustrate the point, a Christian who divorced his Christian wife for any other cause than fornication caused both to committed involuntary adultery if the remarried.

While some will argue that in John 8 a woman caught in the act of adultery was brought to Jesus for judgment, there, the term is used in a different context, “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso

marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery (Matthew 19:9). Since no man was accused with her, it would appear she was really be accused of idolatry.

The current definition of fornication is similar to that of adultery. It actually meant idolatry or whoredom among the culture at large between tribes or nations who did not believe in the Jewish version of God. In reality, more often the writer determined the definition of fornication and adultery depending on whether he thought God was married to the tribe or nation involved. When God was not married to the tribe idolatry was fornication. When he was married to the tribe idolatry was adultery.

In the New Testament the same trend is common among the writers when discussing the Old Testament stories. God was the husband and idolatry was fornication, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire (Jude 1:7) --- Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols (Revelation 2:20) --- And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. (Revelation 14:8) --- For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. (Revelation 19:2.)"

When Jesus accused the Jews of plotting to kill him, he compared them to the ancient Jews idolatry. Jesus acknowledged that he heard voices he understood to be God and taught with that background of truth. The writer in turn has the Pharisee Jews stating they were not born of fornication because they had one father, even God, "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard from God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God (John 8:40-41)."

An unusual application of fornication was when it applied to a sexual relationship with one's father's wife. While only two incidents are reported in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, Abraham's son Midian and Jacob's son Reuben, it appears to be common during the time of Jesus. However, those two incidents were not classified as adultery or rape, "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife (1 Corinthians 5:1)."

Since the only reason for divorce in the New Testament that would prevent adultery on the part of the male and female is fornication, we have to look for a definition that would not involve idolatry or adultery for both male and female. The writers think getting married is the only way to avoid fornication for both male and females which lead to one conclusion. The New Testament writers did not want people to masturbate and it was so sinful it was grounds for divorce, "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. (1 Corinthians 6:18) --- Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. (1 Corinthians 7:2)."

Therefore, it is self-evident the Sixth Commandment concerning adultery actually has very little to do with human sex. As an example, a married man having a sexual relationship with an unmarried woman is not committing Biblical adultery under the Jewish laws of the Old Testament. From the Bible writer's perspective, a sexual relation is only considered to be adultery if the woman is married and

consents to the sexually relationship. A Jewish Biblical marriage is consummated by any one, or all, of three steps, giving money, a contract, and/or sexual intercourse.

While Christians might like to think a real Christian Biblical marriage is between only one man and one woman, that is not the case. Christians still had a choice of having multiple wives. Jesus was considered to be the husband of the church. The Latin (Roman Catholic) Christian Church has taken that one step further with the priests replacing Jesus as the powerful head of the individual churches. In the Eastern (Greek) Christian Churches it is common for priest to be married, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (Ephesians 5:25.)"

While the New Testament writers, especial Paul, claims everyone should give up wives, children, etc., to follow Jesus, according to one New Testament writer, the leaders of the church were required to have only one wife. There was no option for adultery or fornication, "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; --- Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well (1 Timothy 3:2 & 12)."

One unique twist on adultery is found in the fifth chapter of Matthew which has nothing to do with idolatry or sex. Where the general reality had been that adultery could only be committed with a married woman, one of the writers of Mathew seemed a little fanatical when he determined that any person was committing adultery if he looked at any woman, married or unmarried, with lust in their heart. In this case it is a form of coveting, which is expected to be carried to the extreme, based on the example of David lusting after Bathsheba and raping her, even though the writers never classified his action as adultery, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matthew 5:27-28)."

This writer of Matthew had been reading Proverbs. It is clear he thought women were a distraction which led men away from the worship of God. It was just a sound bite without explanation. However, the writer of 1 John did provide the reason behind the thought, "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids (Proverbs 6:25) --- "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world (1 John 2:16). --- What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet (Romans 7:7)."

7. You shall not steal

We tend to think the term steal simply means secretly taking of something tangible of value from anyone without permission. However, this Commandment applies specifically to the Jewish tribes taking advantage of their brethren. The most serious thief is for a Jew to kidnap another Jew and sell him/her as a slave. Less serious is the thief of animals or other valuables from Jews as well as demanding excessive interest rates (usury) from a Jew and using falsified weights and measures.

The key word is for the Jew to be "found" stealing. This takes us back to Jacob, the immediate founder of the Jewish tribes, who stole his older brother Esau's firstborn blessing as his father Isaac was

dying. The commandment also condemns Jacob's favorite wife Rachel, who stole her father's household Gods. It would appear that Jacob's favorite sons, Rachel's two sons Joseph and Benjamin, would suffer for her thief of the Idols. Jacob's other children plotted to kill Joseph, but instead steal Joseph and sell him to the Midianites or Ishmaelites, "And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death (Exodus 21:16) --- If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put evil away from among you (Deuteronomy 24:7)."

Probably the most confused story in the Bible is the account of Jacob's children selling Joseph and how he got to Egypt. First they are going to sell Joseph to their cousins the Ishmaelites (Abraham's children) who were on their way to Egypt. Then their cousins the Midianites (Abraham's children) pass by and actually take Joseph out of a pit and sell him to the Ishmaelites. Then both the Midianites and Ishmaelites sell Joseph to Potiphar, Pharaoh's Captain of the guard, "And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. --- And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard (Genesis 37:25-28 & 36) --- And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. (Genesis 39:1,

Buying and selling Jews were acceptable under some circumstance, for a specific period of time, but they could not be treated as slaves or bondspersons. In effect, stealing and selling non-Jewish heathens was not against the law. This type of thinking led to slavery in the Christian world, "Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen forever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour (Leviticus 25:44-46)."

Stealing was also referred to as borrowing when the Jews were in Egypt. It is probable safe to say that Egyptians would not willingly let their slaves borrow jewels of silver and jewels of gold when they were leaving the country, "But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians (Exodus 3:22) --- Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver and jewels of gold (Exodus 11:2). --- And the children of Israel [Jacob] did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: (Exodus 12:35)."

Stealing an animal from a fellow Jew was expensive. A work animal had to be replaced at a five to one ratio. For a sheep it was only a four to one ratio. Killing heathen neighbors and taking the animals was not considered stealing, "If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep (Exodus 22:1)."

An Excessive interest rate on a loan was also stealing. Interestingly, the United States also had Usury laws against excessive rates until banks started sending out credit cards to the general public at large. Then Congress then made excessive Usury rates legal, "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury (Exodus 22:25) --- Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury: Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it (Deuteronomy 23:19-20)."

Now it seems Congress has taken a lesson from Proverbs. It doesn't seem to despise bankers, corporations and stockbrokers who steal people's life savings because they are hungry for money to satisfy their souls, "Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; (Proverbs 6:30)." I don't really think any of the bankers are going hungry any time soon.

8. You shall not bear false witness

As with all the commandments, there is more than one meaning to this one. While it does apply to the individual who lies about factual information, it is primarily addresses prophets and priests who claim to be speaking the Lord's word, "Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness (Exodus 23:1) --- Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour (Deuteronomy 5:20)."

One example is found in 1 Kings 21, was King Ahab and Jezebel attempt to buy a vineyard from a man who would not sell. When they provided false witnesses to testify against him, the man was stoned to death and they took the vineyard. We find the same thing happen today with condemnation laws for the benefit of the government or private entities and false witnesses as to the value of the land.

The New Testament writers, like the Old Testament writers, had no love for the Jewish priesthood and the tribal leaders. It is little wonder the Jewish people barely survived the last two thousand years, "And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: (Acts 6:13) --- Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; (Matthew 26:59)."

In fact, it is a wonder Jesus survived for three years after he started teaching that the power and kingdom of God is within each of us. His highly visible role as teacher was directly challenging the authority of the priesthood. His great sin was accusing the priesthood of being false witnesses for God. The interesting point is the writers make the accusation both as a statement of fact and a question that needed an answer, "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God (Matthew 22:29) --- And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God (Mark 12:24)?"

While the people thought Jesus was a prophet and the writers imply that he might be a prophet, he had little in common with the old prophets. He did not attempt to control the people. He did not kill anyone. He did not prophesy against the Roman occupiers. He did not prophesy against the leaders. He did not claim to have the right to anoint new kings.

His problem was that the people thought he was a prophet and was supposed to be killed by his own mother and father. If had to be killed to save your soul, then he must have been killed by his father who put a curse on him in the book of Zechariah, "And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee (Matthew 21:11) --- And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: (Luke 24:19) --- Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world (John 6:14) --- And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. (Matthew 13:57)."

With the writers claiming Jesus was a prophet that opened up the opportunity for the Priesthood to claim Jesus was false witnessing in the name of God. The United States courts still hold to the original law against bearing false witness. There are some places were and Atheist is not allowed as a witness in court. That is strange when they still allow lawyers to practice without swearing to tell the truth. While I know there are good people in the profession, I have found that some will not even tell their clients the truth.

However, according to the writers, the disciples of Jesus did not want to admit to their followers it was possible for an individual to have similar abilities who had not been taught by Jesus. Therefore, they warn their followers to beware of false Christs and prophets, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect (Matthew 24:24) --- For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect (Mark 13:22) --- For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:13) --- But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction (2 Peter 2:1) --- Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. (Matthew 7:15)."

And a final warning for those who believe too strongly, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world (1 John 4:1)."

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife

Modern writers and scholars tend to assume that covet simple means an internal unfulfilled lust or desire for something someone else owns, such as a neighbor's wife in this commandment. It would appear the assumption is based on the belief that the commandment against adultery covers any direct sexual action against a neighbor's wife. For the Jews, a wife was just part of his household goods which was to be protected from those Jewish leaders with cunning plans to take his fields and house by violence, "Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds when the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage (Micah 2:1-2)."

In the grand scheme of the tabernacle, or church, the word covet covers a lot of ignored territory where violence or intimidation is used by leaders to take something of value. As an example, in 1 Samuel 2 the priests Phinehas and Hophni used their absolute authority to take more than their share of the sacrifices before it was properly completed. More important, they intimidated the women who came to the tabernacle door into having sex with them. The writer does not address their actions as falling under the category of adultery.

However, in 1 Samuel 1, the writer does illustrate the potential outcome of a priest having sex with the women who came to the tabernacle door. Hannah, the barren second wife of Elkanah prayed at the tabernacle door for a child she wanted very badly. Phinehas' father Eleazar (Eli) promise her she would have a child. She had wanted this child Samuel in the worse way. But immediately after weaning Samuel she brought the child back to the tabernacle and left him there to be raised by the priests.

It is interesting that the Latin Ten Commandments separate coveting a neighbor's wife from coveting a neighbor's property. A wife was property and acquired by purchase, capture, contract or having consensual or non-consensual sex with her. The scribes (those who copied the work), translators and editors were not always diligent in their work. Lust and covert had the same practical meaning whether it was applied to someone else's wife, property, or someone else's God. Scribes sometimes changed the context of some passages depending on their personal outlook. As an example, the writer of Exodus considered coveting a neighbor's house worse than coveting his wife. On the other hand, the writer of Deuteronomy considered the desire of a neighbor's wife worse than coveting his house. He also thought it was important to add "field" to the list of coveted items. Since the laws were supposedly written during the forty years in the wilderness the Jews did not have houses, menservants, maidservants or fields. These were only things that they coveted in the Promised Land. According to the Greek version of the Jewish laws, these were also things the Jews took from their neighbors when they invaded the Promised Land.

However, to keep it civil among the tribes, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's (Exodus 20:17) --- Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is thy neighbour's (Deuteronomy 5:21)."

The question is, what did the term neighbor mean? The reality is that it meant different things to different Biblical writers. When the question was put to Jesus he used the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Jewish victim of a robbery to illustrate the proper actions of a neighbor. In the story, a priestly descendant of Aaron's son Eleazar ignored the bloody robbery victim as he passed by on the opposite side of the road. Then a Levite descendant of Eleazar's brothers also looked at the bloody robbery victim and passed him on the other side of the road. Finally a Samaritan stopped and gave first aid. He then took the victim to an inn and paid the innkeeper to take care of the victim until he was well enough to travel. Jesus then asked, and answered, the same question, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (Luke 10:36-37)."

When the Jews conquered the Promised Land the inhabitants of Gibeon decided they had rather be their servants than be killed. They tricked the Jews into becoming their neighbors, "And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them. (Joshua 9:16)

You have to read closely to discover that a neighbor could be one of the brother tribes (brethren) or a gentile tribe or another country. The writer of Leviticus illustrates the difference between a Jew's wife and a neighbor's wife, "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death (Leviticus 20:10)."

On a national scale the Jews of Samaria played the harlot with her neighbors the Assyrians. Basically they were worshipping the Assyrian Gods. The same was true for the Jews relationship with their Egyptian neighbors, "And Aholah [Samaria] played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians her neighbours, (Ezekiel 23:5) --- Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger. (Ezekiel 16:26)

The writer of Ezekiel pulled no punches when he was raging against the Jewish people for abandoning the Lord and why they were going to be dispersed in the world. It is interesting that he blamed the victims while expounding on the sins of their fathers, although he was not brave enough to name names. In effect, Ezekiel was one of the first whistleblower when he wrote of God's chosen ones, "In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution. And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter (Ezekiel 22:10-11).

There are four instances of people uncovering the nakedness of their father: Noah's son Canaan, Abraham's son Midian, Lot's daughters and Jacob's son Reuben. The "her" that was set aside for pollution was the children of three priests: Habaiah, Koz and Barzillai. David was the one who did bad things with his neighbor's wife. Judah defiled his daughter-in-law Tamar. Abraham married his sister and then sold her to two kings and Amnon the son of David raped his sister Tamar. Jochebed the daughter of mother of Moses and Aaron was married off to her brother/nephew.

Discovering your father's nakedness was a serious event in ancient times as Noah's son Canaan discovered in Genesis 9 when he found Noah drunk and naked. When he reported this to his older brothers Shem and Japheth they covered Noah up without looking at him or waking him up. Yet when Noah woke up he knew immediately that his youngest son Canaan had seen him naked and condemned his descendants to be the servants of Shem's descendants. God promised Abraham his descendants would inherit the Promised Land the descendants of Canaan occupied after they completed four hundred years of Egyptian slavery. While the sins of Abraham's family could have accounted for God giving the Jews to the Egyptians for punishment as slaves for four hundred years, the writers make sure the reader understands that did not occur.

The sins of the Jews fathers are actually listed in reverse order by the writer of Ezekiel. Jacob's (Israel) first born son Reuben coveted his father's wife and lost his right to be father of the Jews. His sin was uncovering his father's nakedness by have sex with Jacob's wife Bilhah. There was no accusation of adultery. Other than losing his firstborn birthright, neither Jacob nor God condemned the action even though their death was required, "And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them (Leviticus 20:11)."

It had to be humbling for the three priests and their children when the chief priest strip them and their children of all priestly rights because they were not in the proper genealogical registry, "And of the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai; which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name: These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood (Ezra 2:61-62)."

Jacob's fourth son Judah eventually ended up with the firstborn birthright of Reuben even though he lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law Tamar. You might remember that for some reason God killed Judah's firstborn son Er, Tamar's first husband. Tamar's second husband Onan was used as the poster child against masturbation. The writers claimed God killed Onan for dropping his seed on the ground rather than getting Tamar pregnant. The writers claim when Judah would not give her to his third son Shelah, she pretended to be a harlot on the road and Judah had sex with her. The sexual act actually became an act of marriage. Their son Phares inherited the firstborn rights. It would seem God did not fulfill the law. God killed Onan for obeying the law and failed to kill Judah and his daughter-in-law Tamar for disobeying the law, "And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless. (Leviticus 20:21) --- And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother (Genesis 38:9) --- And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them (Leviticus 20:12)."

The fourth sin of the Jews Ezekiel accused them of was some of them had humbled his sister, his father's daughter. The most obvious felon is Abraham himself, who coveted and took his sister Sarah as a wife. That sin alone was enough for his family to be cut off from his people. Not only did he take Sarah as his wife, he sold her to Pharaoh who coveted her when she was sixty-five and to the king of the Philistines who coveted her when she was eighty-nine years old. It is only after Abraham sells Sarah to the Philistine king that the writers confess she is really his half-sister. The Pharaoh and the Philistine king found it did not bode well to covet Abraham's wife. They each paid a fortune for her. Yet, they were so afraid of God when he alerted them to their mistake they gave Sarah back and didn't even ask for a refund. If we are to believe the Greek writers, God put a curse on Abraham for taking Sarah as a wife, "And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. (Genesis 20:12) --- And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it is a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity (Leviticus 20:17) --- Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen. (Deuteronomy 27:22)."

Levi could be said to have coveted and humbled his sister when he killed Dinah's husband Shechem and very possibly took her as his wife. Dinah is never mentioned again. Nor is the name of Levi's wife mentioned. Yet, Levi has three sons and at least one daughter. Levi's son Kohath is only of interest here because he is the father of Aaron, Moses and Miriam by his sister Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she is thy father's near kinswoman. (Leviticus 18:12) --- And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity (Leviticus 20:19)." The sins of Kohath was actually passed on to the fourth generation which ended when Phinehas and his brother was killed in battle.

According to the writers and Greek translators, the Jewish tribes generally did not covet any wives as such other than the Hivite wives Simeon and Levi took. Moses was known to kill any wives the Jews captured and just covet the virgin children for their use.

If the Greek edition of the Old Testament was true, God did solve the problem of Jews coveting their neighbor's wives by having them killed along with the men and children. Whenever the neighbor's wives were captured, they were also killed along with the male children. That would be enough to put fear and dread in the hearts of anyone the Jews came up against, "There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you (Deuteronomy 11:25) --- Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves (Numbers 31:17) --- And this is the thing that ye shall do [to the Jews at Jabeshgilead], Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead four hundred young virgins that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan (Judges 21:11-12)."

Functional psychopaths who hear God's voice guiding them have always been extremely dangerous to the culture they are in and those around them. The Greek version of the Old Testament illustrates the damage that can be done to a culture when writers create fables to explain why a weak culture is decimated by a stronger culture. Victims are always blamed whether it is a nation or an individual.

According to the Greek writers, Jeremiah had his facts right when he said everyone was given to covetousness. From the least to the greatest leaders were doing wrong. Not only that but the prophets and priests were dealing falsely with the people. For these wrong doings, God was going to give their wives to others, "For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealth falsely (Jeremiah 6:13) --- Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealth falsely (Jeremiah 8:10)."

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods

When we think of a neighbor's goods it is usually in a very narrow sense. We don't normally consider the ancients included the blessing given by the father, his house, his fields, his money, his servants, his animals, his wife or his children. The desire to have the goods another person has does not rise to the level of covet unless the goods are actually taken from a neighbor as the sons of God did when they took the children they wanted from their human parents, "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. (Genesis 6:2)."

While Jacob is shown to have coveted his older brother Esau's firstborn birthright of inheritance and blessing, it doesn't rise to the level of coveting a neighbor's good because he is taking it from his brother. The writers claim Jacob bought the firstborn birthright from Esau for some bread and a bowl of lentils. Jacob and his mother conspired to trick his blind father Isaac into giving him the firstborn's blessing, "And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. --- And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. --- Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over

thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee (Genesis 27:19/24/29)."

The writer of Exodus makes it plain the Jews (or God) coveted their Egyptian neighbor's jewels of silver and gold as well as their clothes. The writer implies that their Egyptian neighbor's willingly loaned the Jews their jewels of silver and gold as they were taking them out of the country. Borrowing sounds so much better than taking these goods from the Egyptians, "But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians. (Exodus 3:22)."

Unfortunately for the average Jew, Aaron and Moses really coveted the Jewels of silver and gold for their own purpose. Once Aaron was appointed the first high priest of this Jewish religion he called for all the gold earrings so he could create a golden calf to be worshipped as their God. The reality was, according to the Greek writers, gold was so coveted by the priesthood that it was a death sentence for any soldier to be caught with it. In fact, the death sentence was applied to the wife and children. This was illustrated after the battle of Jericho when a soldier named Achan coveted and took silver, gold and a garment which he hid in his tent. He did confess and the Jews took everything he had and then stoned him and his family to death. After that they burnt the bodies, "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it (Joshua 7:21) --- And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. (Joshua 7:24-25), "But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD (Joshua 6:19)."

Some church leaders are still greedily coveting money and power by preaching prosperity theology to enhance their prosperity. The theology is based on the assumption that the more money a person gives to the church or preacher, the more money God will return to them as a reward for their generosity. Unfortunately, what they don't tell you is that Jesus sent his disciples out to preach without any money, "And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. (Luke 22:35)."

Teachers of the prosperity theology coveting money have to really stretch reality to justify themselves with only three references, one in the Old Testament book of Malachi, chapter 3 and the parable of the talent in the New Testament book of Matthew, chapter 25 as well as one in 2 Corinthians 9, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:6-7) --- Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it (Malachi 3:8/10)."

The parable of the talent could be compared to the teachers of the prosperity theology who would consider ten percent of a person's salary to belong to them -- well at least the Lord. Two of the three men in the parable doubled the amount of money they were holding for the master and were rewarded with more power. The third man only made sure the small amount of money he was holding for the master was safely returned to him.

While the parable is supposed to illustrate how the kingdom of Heaven operates, this parable has little to do with the Christian teachings of Jesus. It is self-evident that the parable is not about money. According to the Gospel, the rich master who only wanted profit from the money he left for safekeeping with his servants would have a hard time entering the kingdom of heaven, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:23)."

It is evident the writer of this parable did not get his point across because one word was omitted from the key sentence. The omitted word was faith. A poor person would have to have a tremendous amount of faith in himself to gamble that he could profit from small funds left in his hands for safekeeping, while his hard master traveled abroad. The key sentence is: "For unto every one that hath [faith] shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not [faith] shall be taken away even that which he hath.

The word faith was omitted from the same sentence the writer claimed Jesus uttered when he was explaining the mystery of the parables to his disciples, "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath [faith], to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not [faith], from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them (Matthew 13:10-17)."

It would appear the writers of Matthew paraphrased Isaiah. On the other hand they might have had a better copy of the Greek translation than is available to us, "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure (Isaiah 33:14-16).

More than likely, the reference to hearing and seeing is from the writer of Proverbs rather than the writer of Isaiah. According to the writer, the Lord is the source of the hearing ear and seeing eye in a child. Most people lose this ability as they move into adulthood developing the belief that those in authority actually have their best interest in mind, "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his

work be pure, and whether it be right. The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them. Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread (Proverbs 20:11-13)."

The writer of Ecclesiastes explains the problem for adults whose curiosity has been suppressed and do not question what they are told. Too often adults are so busy earning a living they have to depend on someone else to enlighten them on the fine points of history, religion or science. History shows us many people do not want hear anything that conflicts with their views or the written word and seldom offer to look at how it could affect themselves, "All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:8-9)."

The writer of Isaiah understood that many powerful leaders were greedy with voracious appetites for coveting other people's goods. Moreover, he was fully aware many religious shepherds had no understanding of what they were teaching and each was looking for what he could gain for his own benefit, "Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter (Isaiah 56:11)."

Some of the New Testament writers did get this message across in their writings. But too often readers fail to see the message or understand what they are hearing. Religious teachers with good intentions can very well lead their follows away from the true path to making them whole, "Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; (1 Timothy 1:7-8)."

There are clear warnings in the New Testament against coveting possessions and money. These warnings applied to the Christian Church leaders as much, or more, than it applied to the church members. The writers did not want the church leaders to follow the example of the Jewish Church leaders, "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. (Luke 16:14) --- For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows (1 Timothy 6:10) --- And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (2 Peter 2:3) --- And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth (Luke 12:15)."

The priest Flavius Josephus, who lived about the time of Jesus acknowledge the right of the priesthood to covet tithes and get rich in the history of his life. He claimed he did not take any tithes during this time, he did complained about some of the priests who had become rich from tithes by following him to administer the law in Galilee: "But those my fellow legates, having gotten great riches from those tithes which as priests were their dues, and were given to them, determined to return to their own country (The Life of Flavius Josephus, Sec. 12)."

Josephus also wrote that the history of the Jewish priesthood had changed very little since Aaron's grandchildren, Phinehas and Hophni, were killed by God for their greed and misuse of the tithing law. Just like the servants of Phinehas and Hophni, the Levite high priests of Jesus' time sent out servants to take the tithes by violence, if necessary. The high priests coveted the tithes so badly they

were unconcerned about the lower order of the priest starving to death, "Now as soon as Albinus was come to the city of Jerusalem, he used all his endeavors and care that the country might be kept in peace, and this by destroying many of the Sicarii. But as for the high priest, Ananias he increased in glory every day, and this to a great degree, and had obtained the favor and esteem of the citizens in a signal manner; for he was a great hoarder up of money: he therefore cultivated the friendship of Albinus, and of the high priest [Jesus], by making them presents; he also had servants who were very wicked, who joined themselves to the boldest sort of the people, and went to the thrashing-floors, and took away the tithes that belonged to the priests by violence, and did not refrain from beating such as would not give these tithes to them. So the other high priests acted in the like manner, as did those his servants, without any one being able to prohibit them; so that [some of the] priests, that of old were wont to be supported with those tithes, died for want of food. (Antiquities of the Jews, (sec. 2) --- "And such was the impudence and boldness that had seized on the high priests, that they had the hardiness to send their servants into the threshing-floors, to take away those tithes that were due to the priests, insomuch that it so fell out that the poorest sort of the priests died for want. To this degree did the violence of the seditious prevail over all right and justice (Antiquities of the Jews, Sec. 8)."

We need to make clear that the Jesus mentioned by Josephus was not the Jesus of the New Testament. Josephus only mentions in small part that he had heard about him.

It was not the intention of Jesus to follow in the footsteps of the Levite priesthood and create a rich church. He did not want his followers to be distracted by their possessions. He was only offering to teach them about treasures they could control in heaven. The writer of Matthew is the only one who actually uses the term kingdom of heaven and hints at the power of mind through faith, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Matthew 16:19)

When Jesus mentions giving to the poor, he means giving to the poor, "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me (Matthew 19:21) --- Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me (Mark 10:21)."

There was a reason for his disciples to sell everything as they were itinerate preachers moving from country to country. In this case giving to the poor actually means giving to the poor. I mentioned this here because based on Paul and Peter's writings some people think the poor refers to the disciples, "And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: (Mark 12:42-43) --- The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them (Matthew 11:5) --- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, (Luke 4:18)."

Jesus was the headmaster of a school, "And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; (Luke 6:13) --- And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) (Acts 1:15)."

The disciples believed the time was near to fulfill the ancient prophecies and to cover the gifts of the Spirit, "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:15) --- But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:31) --- Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues (1 Corinthians 14:39)

They believed in many gifts of the mind but foremost they wanted the gift of prophesy with a charitable mind, "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2) --- Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:1)."

They expected the people they spoke too to be charitable as well, "Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness (2 Corinthians 9:5)."