

2. The truth that God assuredly answers prayer is not inconsistent with the doctrine of His decrees.

#### IV.—CREATION AND PROVIDENCE.

In the beginning, the heavens, the earth, and all creatures had, as yet, no existence, but God by His great power created them, all perfectly good, and continues to sustain and govern them and all their actions; nothing is left without His control.

#### V.—THE FALL.

1. Adam, the ancestor of all mankind, when created was perfectly good and holy. With him God made a covenant, on condition of perfect obedience, and this covenant included his descendants.

2. Adam, disobeying God, by his first transgression involved all his descendants in sin and misery, and hence all are born with a corrupt nature and incapable of saving themselves.

#### VI.—THE WAY OF SALVATION.

1. The Son of God, who was in the beginning with the Father, did, when the fulness of the time was come, descend into the world, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, with the human nature, but free from the consequences of Adam's sin. Although in body and soul truly man, yet from first to last He never had the least taint of sin.

2. He for ever continues to have both His divine and His human nature. These two natures, although quite distinct, are thus for ever united in the one person of Christ, who perfectly obeyed the law of God, fulfilled all righteousness, was despised and rejected of men, suffered even unto death, and thus provided for His people perfect righteousness, once (and only once) offering Himself a sacrifice to make for ever complete atonement for sin.

3. The Lord Jesus, having died, rose again, and ascending into heaven, continues to be the Mediator of His people, through whom our praises and prayers obtain acceptance with God. Further, all power in heaven and on earth is His, and He is Head over all things for the Church.

4. Sinners are accounted righteous and become the children of God only by trusting in Christ, and thus receiving His righteousness to be theirs, not at all from any merit of their own.

5. Men are born again, repent and believe on Christ, only by the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit.

6. The Holy Spirit, dwelling continually in the hearts of the saints, enables them to have abiding fellowship with Christ and thus grow in holiness, and rejoice in the law of God as the rule of their life. Yet no man is able perfectly to keep God's commandments, still less to do anything beyond what God requires and thus acquire supererogatory merit.

#### VII.—THE CHURCH.

1. In the Scriptures, the term "Church" sometimes denotes all the saved, but generally the visible Church in this world, consisting of those who avow their submission to the truth of God, together with their little children.

2. It is the duty of all who profess themselves disciples of Jesus to unite themselves to the Church, to have fellowship one with another, to unite in hearing the Word and worshipping God, shewing themselves to be members of one body; and in particular it is incumbent on them to observe the Lord's day and meet for its public services.

3. It is the duty of the Church to choose men to hold office for the administration of the ordinances of Christ's appointment, and for the oversight, government, and instruction of the Church. There are diversities of office, but none higher than that of pastor.

4. The offices and government of the Church are distinct from those of civil government, and there must be no confusion of the two, but it is the duty of all church members to be subject to the civil power.

5. Baptism, representing and sealing the blessings of the New Covenant, has taken the place of circumcision; all believers in Christ, therefore, together with their infant children, ought to be baptized; each individual once and no oftener; but regeneration and the forgiveness of sin do not depend upon any virtue in this ordinance.

6. In the ordinance of the Supper, Christ's death is commemorated by the breaking and eating of bread and the pouring out and drinking of wine. This ordinance is not a sacrifice, but, symbolizing the sacrifice of Christ, is a seal of the New Covenant, shewing that believers are recipients of its blessings.

7. The body and blood of Christ are not in the

bread and the cup, but those that worthily partake of this ordinance have, by faith, such fellowship with Christ, that spiritually, they as it were are partakers of His body and blood.

#### VIII.—THE LAST THINGS.

1. The soul of man never dies. When the bodies die the souls of believers being made perfect in holiness are immediately present with the Lord. The souls of the wicked perish, for in the other world there are only heaven and hell and no such place as purgatory.

2. There ought to be no prayer for the dead or to the dead.

3. At the last day the dead shall all rise, and those still alive shall be changed, and put on immortality. Then the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge all men of all nations and all generations, condemning the wicked to everlasting punishment, and bestowing on the righteous the blessedness of everlasting life.

It appears that a considerable number of congregations and mission stations have not yet sent in to the treasurer the collection taken up for the French Evangelization Fund. It is very desirable that this matter should be attended to at once, as the funds are low.

We are given to understand that the amount left by the late Mr. Joseph Mackay, of Montreal, to the French Evangelization Society was not, as stated last week, \$30,000, but only \$3,000. We are also informed that none of the public bequests made by Mr. Mackay will be forthcoming for some considerable time to come.

## SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

#### LESSON XXXV.

Aug. 28,  
1881.

#### THE COMMANDMENTS.

Ex. xx.  
1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"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."—Matt. xxii. 37, 38.

#### HOME READINGS.

M. Ex. xvii. 1-16 . . . . . The Israelites at Rephidim.  
T. Ex. xviii. 1-27 . . . . . Jethro's Visit.  
W. Ex. xix. 1-25 . . . . . At Sinai.  
Th. Ex. xx. 1-11 . . . . . Duties to God.  
F. Deut. v. 1-15 . . . . . The Laws of the First Table.  
S. Gen. i. 1-31; ii. 1-3 . . . . . Labour and Rest.  
Sab. Heb. xii. 18-29 . . . . . "Unto Mount Zion."

#### HELPS TO STUDY.

Sustained by a regular supply of manna, but still subject to occasional relapses into discontent, the Israelites passed on through the Wilderness of Sin, were miraculously supplied with water from the rock at Rephidim, and, under the leadership of Joshua, defeated the Amalekites who attacked them there.

In the third month after their departure from Egypt they reached Mount Sinai, where, amidst the most awe-inspiring manifestations of the Divine majesty and power, they received the Ten Commandments—a comprehensive summary of that Moral Law which always has been, and ever shall continue to be, the universal rule of right.

This moral law is not at all a peculiarly Jewish institution. It has not been abrogated under the Christian dispensation, and as a rule of life is obligatory upon every individual of Adam's race. In Eden it formed the substance of the covenant of works, but it has its place in the covenant of grace as well. The words of our Golden Text were quoted by the Saviour from the Old Testament (Deut. vi. 5) as the sum of the first table—the four commandments which form the subject of our present lesson—and in repeating these words and the context immediately following them He reaffirmed the moral law instead of abrogating it.

The believer can take the Ten Commandments as ten promises and appropriate to himself all the consolation afforded by the fact that although he is not now able to keep them perfectly, he shall in the future be enabled to do so. To him "thou shalt not" is not the lash of Sinai, but the confirmation of his brightest hopes.

In presenting the following division of the lesson our aim is to adhere to the simple, common-sense view of the duties required and the sins forbidden in the first four commandments: (1) *The Object of Worship—Atheism Forbidden*, (2) *The Mode of Worship—Idolatry Forbidden*, (3) *The Abuse of Worship—Profanity Forbidden*, (4) *The Time of Worship—Sabbath Desecration Forbidden*.

I. THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP—ATHEISM FORBIDDEN.—Observe that in all these commandments the address is in the singular number. God deals with His people as individuals; though calamities are oftentimes national, their infliction is at the same time distributive and personal.

This commandment forbids (1) the utter absence of worship. It is only the "fool" who says ever in his heart "No God, no God." (2) The worship of false gods. (3) The worship of self, i.e. supreme selfishness. (4) The worship of supreme love of wealth, pleasure, honour, or anything else. God will be first or nowhere in our hearts.

Note: 1. Everybody must have some God. We all

have what Carlyle calls hero-worship; we must look up to some one greater and better than we. 2. The test as to who or what is our God is the supreme affection and choice of our souls. This is the Ithuriel's spear of our moral natures. Whatever we love most, and choose as first, is our God. It may be ourselves, or money, or pleasure, or honour, or it may be our heavenly Father.—*Peloubet*.

II. THE MODE OF WORSHIP—IDOLATRY FORBIDDEN.—This forbids the worship of an image of anything in all the universe as representative of God. It forbids not only the worship of false gods, but the wrong worship of the true God. Let this commandment be read in the light of John iv. 24.

In the tabernacle and temple there was no likeness of God, and it is told of Pompey that when he entered the shrine at Jerusalem he was amazed at beholding no similitude of its deity; all was vacant, God seemed fled, although this, in reality, was the sublimest token of His presence; had there been no other truth taught from the Mount and in the system of Sinai than the unity and the spirituality of God, it had been more than worth all the expenditure of terror and glory which accompanied it.—*Gilfillan*.

It must be observed that the *jealousy of God*, here referred to, does not, like human jealousy, have its root in selfishness and pride, but rather in God's just and necessary regard for His own glory as God. Murphy says "The passions of a moral being have their right as well as their wrong use. Hence anger, jealousy and revenge are ascribed to God not as passions, but as feelings of a holy being in regard to that which is evil."—Deut. xxxii. 21, 22, 35.

It is a rule of nature, as well as of Scripture, that "the iniquities of the fathers are visited upon the children." But it is a blessed thought that *grace also* is hereditary. Yea, the far-reaching quality of mercy is even greater than that of sin; for while the latter is visited on the third and fourth generation of the ungodly, the former (verse 6) is "shewn unto thousands," rather, *unto the thousandth generation*, of them that love Him.

III. THE ABUSE OF WORSHIP—PROFANITY FORBIDDEN.—This forbids: (1) Being false to judicial oaths; promising in the name of God, and not fulfilling the promise. It does not forbid a judicial oath, which is of a very different nature from profane swearing, or taking God's name in vain; though even of such oaths Coleridge says, "The more swearing, the more lying." (2) It forbids all careless, trifling use of God's name. Men excuse themselves for swearing, by saying that they did not mean anything; but that is the very sin forbidden here. (3) It forbids all irreverent use of the Bible, hymns, sacred things; all joking and punning upon them, or connecting funny stories with them. (4) It forbids all irreverence, thoughtless laughing and talking in the house of God. (5) It forbids all empty forms of religion, without its spirit. (6) It forbids all that large class of by-words which may be called substitutionary oaths. They are the devil's drill-ground for profanity, and recruiting-office for the army of profane swearers.—*Peloubet*.

Profanity is the easiest, silliest, cheapest of sins. "It is the tribute which the servants of Satan pay to their master in token of their allegiance, as the tenants of a Scotch landlord pay him a peppercorn annually in token of submission." No gentleman swears, no honest man swears, no prudent man swears. It is the most thoughtless of sins; and for that very reason God has marked it with a special warning, *He will not hold the swearer guiltless*. What the peculiar punishment for this offence will be He does not say, but it will be safe for young men to avoid it.

IV. THE TIME OF WORSHIP—SABBATH DESECRATION FORBIDDEN.—The word "Remember" shews that men had a previous acquaintance with the Sabbath. It is no new institution. It is old as creation and founded in the constitution of man. Up to the time of the resurrection of Jesus the seventh day in order from the beginning of creation was celebrated as a *rest day*, and the legal authority for its observance is found in verse 7. Afterwards the first day of the week or eighth in order from the beginning of creation, was thus observed, taking its authority from the fact that on that day Jesus arose from the dead, thus signifying that the new creation was complete, and entered into rest. The change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week had been predicted in Ezekiel xlii. 27; and may be found referred to in Matt. xxviii. 1; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10, etc. It must be observed that we really keep a *seventh day* as the Jews did; that is, we set apart a seventh part of the week for rest.

Observe that, in this commandment, the obligation to work six days (verse 9) is made just as binding as to rest on the seventh. The Bible everywhere sets forth the dignity of labour. An indolent man can have no real enjoyment of the Sabbath, the rest of God.

The Sabbath should be a day of holy rest, the most profitable as well as the most enjoyable of days. Labour must entirely cease. Only works of piety, necessity, and mercy are allowed. It is a time for the withdrawal of the soul from perplexing cares and burdens into communion with God. It is a day when He manifests Himself peculiarly in the sanctuary, in the closet, and in the pages of His Word.

After the captivity the Pharisees multiplied the restraints of the Sabbath day to a most burdensome extent. It was forbidden to pluck an ear of corn and rub out the grains to satisfy hunger in passing through a cornfield (Matt. xii. 2), or to relieve the sick. Matt. xii. 10; Luke xiii. 14. According to rabbinical authorities it was forbidden to travel more than two thousand cubits on the Sabbath, to kill the most offensive kinds of vermin, to write two letters of the alphabet, to use a wooden leg or a crutch, to carry a purse, or for a woman to carry a seal-ring or a smelling-bottle, to wear a high head-dress or a false tooth. Among other restraints laid upon animals, the fat-tailed sheep were not allowed to use the little truck on which the tail was borne to save the animal from suffering. These are a portion of thirty-nine prohibitions of the same kind.—*Cook*.

Read in this connection the words of the Lord Jesus in Mark ii. 23-28, also in Luke xiii. 10-17.