

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

(ITS MOSAIC ENUNCIATION.)

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.

The legislation of Moses had for its foundation the inculcation of a reverential awe for the Supreme Being. Idolatry, idol-worship, and blasphemy were all punishable by death. "The congregation shall certainly stone him who blasphemeth the name of the Lord."

The taking of an oath is to be distinguished from the uttering of an oath. When made with unmixed solemnity, a vow or a promise made in God's name is not a wrong. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him and shalt swear by his name."

The uttering of the form of an oath in ordinary speech, when there is no necessity for such, is blasphemy, and such blasphemy has always been