

A look at The Tree of Life and its meaning

God had a remedy for Adam's death. Adam was to be redeemed by way of rebirth (regeneration), the death of a seed. Adam's assignment as a tiller of the soil, or botanist (Gen 3:17-19), revealed to him the physical truth of God's plan for his salvation. Adam would discover that new life emerges from the burial of a seed under soil (1Cor 15:35-36). This imagery points to redemptive work of Christ in the OT and in the NT (Matt 12:24,25). It is our poverty and humility that brings about rebirth to a new life. The Figure 2 illustrates how God prepared creation to teach Adam about his condition and destination. We will discuss more about the origin of Tree of Life, Figure 2: later in Chapter 2.

Let's summarize: TGE is moral choice, it is awareness of God's will, and that we are contrary to God's will. This state or condition is called spiritual death. (Gen 2:7). Just like Adam, we are given life when we realize our death and poverty. We are translated to God's presence by means the Tree of Life (TOL) . It enables us to live forever.

Chapter 2: Finding the Tree of Life and Wisdom's House

Do not think that I have come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to destroy but to fulfill.

(Mat 5:17)

The book introduces a study method that is extracted from Matt 5:17-7:29 and references Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the OT. The study method helps us to realize the truth of

Colossians 1:7: “And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” (Col 1:17). The approach will look for Christ in OT writings (John 5:46) by surveying, subdividing, and comparing. It will show that John’s Gospel completes the picture of Christ as Lord of creation. Our goal is to immediately begin to use the building blocks provided by Matt 5-7 to form a framework for learning. Table 1 below summarizes what we are about to learn.

Matt. Chapter 5	Matt .Chapter 6	Matt. Chapter 7
6. Do not kill	9. Do not bear false witness	10. Do not Covet
7. Do not commit adultery	10. Do not Covet	
8. Do not Steal		

Table 1: Summary of Matt 5-7

Finding the Tree of Life in Matt 5-7

Matt 5-7, Deuteronomy, and the Gospel of John are structured like a tree that starts with specific topics (a branch), but the topic points to a more general source, origin, or root. The more general origin or root is the person and work of Christ. In this chapter, we will discuss how commandments 6 through 10 of the Decalogue (from Deuteronomy) are explicitly referenced in sequence in Matthew 5-7. In the next chapter, it will be shown that the first five commandments of the Decalogue are implied within the same text of Matt 5-7. The last five commandments are called “fruits of the Decalogue”...the first five commands are called “roots of the Decalogue”. They form a foundation and a framework. Table 2: Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy below summarizes the commandments as they appear in Deuteronomy 5, and Exodus 20. The bolded text in Table 2 highlights what we will cover in this chapter

The Ten Commandments (Deut Chapter 5)	
Roots	Fruits
1. I redeemed you from Egypt, have no other gods before me.	6. Do not kill.
2. Make no graven images.	7. Do not Commit adultery.
3. Do not take God's name in vain.	8. Do not steal.
4. Remember the Sabbath.	9. Do not bear false witness.
5. Honor Your Parents.	10. Do not covet.

Table 2: Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy

The commandments in Matthew 5-7 will be revealed by the following method 1) **surveying** the subject passage, then 2) **subdividing** the passage into sections that represent each commandment. And lastly, 3) **comparing** the subdivided text to the book of Deuteronomy. The commandments shall be revealed to be in sequence.

Looking at Table 1: Summary of Matthew 5-7, we can see that Matt Chapter 5 reveals three commands (6th -8th) in sequence. Matt Chapter 6 shows two other commands (9th – 10th) in sequence . Matt Chapter seven discusses more of the 10th commandment.

One may ask why this exercise is important. There are seven major reasons: 1) To gain an understanding of Christ as Lord in the OT and NT. 2) To demonstrate the survey, sub-divide, compare, Double “s” “c” (DSC) “**DiSCover**” study method. 3) To understand that there is an

organized structure that is contained in the text Matt 5-7 that helps us to retain, recall, and apply the information found therein. 4) To recognize that the structure is based on the Ten Commandments. 5) To observe that the pattern matches that of Deuteronomy, an OT book of the Law (Jn 5:46). 6) To realize that this pattern is the grace of Christ (Jn 1:14b) 7) To show how this passage is related to the Tree of Life in Genesis.

Let's begin the exercise. To do our surveying, read Matt 5:17-7:27 in its entirety, preferably in one sitting. For now, the section of scripture that is of particular interest, is listed below:

“Do not think that I have come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to destroy but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, Till the heaven and the earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle shall in any way pass from the Law until all is fulfilled. Therefore whoever shall relax one of these commandments, the least, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven. But whoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven. For I say to you that unless your righteousness shall exceed *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.”

(Mat 5:17-20)

Matt 5:17, Christ clearly states that the OT Law and prophets have relevance. The fulfillment of prophecy is the apparent reason for their usefulness; however, starting at verse 19, Christ states that our treatment of his commandments has a direct affect upon our standing in His kingdom. One may ask to what commandments is He referring? We need not look very far to see that He is speaking about the Ten Commandments that are given in Exodus 20, and Deuteronomy 5.

After you have completed the reading of Matt 5:17-7:21, begin the subdividing the commandments by looking directly at the Matt 21 and 27. The 6th, “...do not kill” , and The 7th, “...do not commit adultery” can be seen by simply reading verses 21 and 27 respectively.

The text referring to the 8th commandment, “ ...do not steal ...” is not as apparent. We will skip it for now, and return to it later in this chapter.

Let us proceed to the 9th commandment, “...Do not bear false witness...” and the 10th commandment, “...do not covet...” They can be seen by looking at the context of the topics that Christ mentions in the passage Matt 5-7.

Bearing false witness not only includes lying, but also deceit. We will find the 9th commandment by surveying or scanning Matt 5-7 for a context of lying and or deceit. Matt 6:1-2, 6:5, 6:16, fit the prescription:

“Take heed that you do not do your merciful deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward with your Father in Heaven. Therefore when you do *your* merciful deeds, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may have glory from men...”

(Mat 6:1-2)

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, so that they may be seen by men...”

(Mat 6:5)

“And when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, of a sad face. For they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to men to fast...”

(Mat 6:16)

Next we will look for the 10th commandment in the selected text. Coveting includes avarice, greed, and the stockpiling of goods. We need not look far to see that Matt 6:19 addresses our stockpiling of material wealth.

“Do not lay up treasures on earth for yourselves, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal...”

(Mat 6:19)

To summarize, we have located and subdivided the 6th, 7th, 9th and 10th commandments. By now, you should be somewhat convinced that a structure exists in Matt 5-7.

Now that we have found four the five sections of scripture that reference the Ten Commandments, let's turn our attention to 8th, (“...do not steal...”) and last commandment that must be found in the subject passage. The text that we are concerned with is sandwiched between the marker for the 7th commandment (Matt 5:27) and the marker for the 9th commandment (Matt 6:1). This must be true if the commands are to follow in sequence in Matt 5-7. Divorcement is the subject of Matt 5:31-32. Oaths (vows) are the subject of Matt 5:33-37. Justice is the subject of Matt 5:38-48.

A quick Survey of Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy

One may be tempted to say that the divorcement passage (Mat 5:31-32) is related to “...do not commit adultery...” (Matt 5:27-30). The rationale is that divorcement causes one to commit adultery. But, you will discover that it is actually related to “...do not steal...” To see this, we need to look at the master plan of the Ten Commandments, Deuteronomy. Its name means

“second law” or repetition of the law. Deuteronomy is subdivided into sections that deal with the commandments, just like we have witnessed here in Matt 5-7. We will witness a portion of the structure in Deuteronomy. We will not survey and subdivide for the entire book of Deuteronomy in this chapter, but we will do enough to establish boundaries between the 7th and the 9th commandments in this book. Table 3: Comparing Matthew 5-7 to Book of Deuteronomy shows the subdivisions within Matt. 5-7 and the book of Deuteronomy . The bolded text in Table 3 identifies where our discussion will be focused.

The Ten Commandments	Matthew Chapter	Deuteronomy Chapters (Detail)
1. I redeemed you from Egypt, have no other gods before me.	Matt 5 (implied)	Deut 6
2. Make no graven images	Matt 5 (implied)	Deut 7
3. Take not God's name in vain	Matt 5 (implied)	Deut 8-9
4. Remember the Sabbath	Matt 6 (implied)	Deut 10
5. Honor your father and mother	Matt 6,7 (implied)	Deut 11-19
6. Do not kill	Matt 5	Deut 19:1-22:8
7. Do not commit Adultery	Matt 5	Deut 22:9-23:14
8. Do not steal	Matt 5	Deut 23:15-25:12
9. Do not bear false witness	Matt 6	Deut 25:13-26:10
10. Do not covet	Matt 6,7	Deut 26:11- 28:68

Table 3: Comparing Matthew 5-7 to Book of Deuteronomy

A quick survey of “Do not Steal” in Deuteronomy 23:15-25:12 (Table 3)

How will we find our starting point where “...do not steal...” is discussed in Deuteronomy? We will allow the Apostle Paul to guide us there. In 1Corinthians 9, Paul brings up the subject of “...do not steal...” when he defended his right to receive an offering from the Corinthian church:

“Who serves as a soldier at his own wages at any time? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who feeds a flock and does not partake of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things according to man? Or does not the Law say the same also? For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox threshing grain.” Does God take care for oxen? Or does He say *it* altogether for our sakes? It was written for us, so that he who plows should plow *in* hope, and so that he who threshes *in* hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown to you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?”

(1Co 9:7-11)

The passage that Paul quotes, “You shall not muzzle and ox threshing grain”, comes from Deuteronomy 25:4, the same section of Deuteronomy that we want to see. The context for Paul’s usage is that he should be compensated for the labor that he bestowed upon them. He generalized the meaning to include anyone who works, not just oxen. You can be sure that this topic is encompassed in the command “...do not steal...”.

Surveying the upper boundary of “Do not Steal” (Table 3)

We will survey for the context of verses after Deut 25:4 and before Deut 25:4 to find the upper and lower boundaries of the “...do not steal...” topic in Deuteronomy. Looking at the verses after Deut 25:4, one can see that Justice is the subject of 25:5-12. False weights are the subject of

Deuteronomy 25:13-17. Thus, the boundary for “...do not steal...” is found at 25:12 because justice is the process of rendering compensation for one’s deeds. Theft occurs when justice is not properly rendered. False weights are a type of deception by having a double standard. One may argue that false weights also concern commerce and trade and just compensation. One might say that it falls between both justice and deception. But the following verses, Deut 25:17-18 deals with the deception of lying in wait. Amalek gave the appearance that all was well and waited until the feeble folk passed by to slaughter them.

Surveying the lower boundary of “Do not Steal” (Table 3)

Now we are looking at verses before Deut 25:4. Our objective is to find the boundary where the topic “...do not steal...” ends and do not commit adultery begins. One must turn backward through chapter 24 to the middle of chapter 23 before topics that have to do with “...do not commit adultery...”, appear: See Table 3 for overview.

And you shall have a paddle on your weapon. And it shall be, when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it, and shall turn back and cover that which comes from you. For Jehovah your God walks in the middle of your camp, to deliver you and to give up your enemies before you. Therefore your camp shall be holy, so that He may see no unclean thing in you and turn away from you.

(Deu 23:13-14)

“You shall not deliver to his master the servant who has escaped from his master to you. He shall live with you, among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of your gates, where it seems good to him. You shall not oppress him. “

(Deu 23:15-16)

“You shall not bring the hire of a harlot, or the price of a dog, into the house of Jehovah your God for any vow. For even both these *are* hateful to Jehovah your God. You shall not lend for

interest to your brother, interest of silver, interest of food, interest of anything that is loaned on interest.”

(Deu 23:18-19)

A subdividing line should be drawn between 23:14 and 23:15 to separate purity /adulteration topics from “...do not steal...”, theft topics. Deuteronomy 23:13 -14 is concerned with sanitation, a purity cleanliness topic, while Deuteronomy 23:15-16 is concerned with oppression and exploitation of a slave that is in destitution. This is a stewardship and ownership issue that is related to theft. Furthermore, the following verses, Deut 23:18-19, reject male and female prostitution, and the charging of interest on loans. Both are topics of forbidden commerce practices related to misappropriation, theft or stealing.

Identification of “Do not Steal” boundaries (Table 3)

We have arrived at our planned destination, at last. From Deut 23:18 to Deut 25:12 we have discovered topics that are related to theft or “...do not steal...”.

Observations within “Do not Steal” boundaries

The first thing to notice is that vows or oaths are the very next subject and divorcement follows:

“When you shall vow a vow to Jehovah your God, you shall not wait to pay it, for Jehovah your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin in you. But if you shall cease to vow, it shall be no sin in you.”

(Deu 23:21-22)

“When a man has taken a wife and married her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes, because he has found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a bill of divorce and put *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she has departed from his house,

she goes and becomes another man's; and the latter husband hates her and writes her a bill of divorce and puts *it* in her hand and sends her out of his house; or if the latter husband dies, he who took her to be his wife her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife after she is defiled. For that *is* hateful before Jehovah. And you shall not cause the land to sin, which Jehovah your God gives you for an inheritance.”

(Deu 24:1-4)

Relating Deuteronomy (do not steal) findings to Matt 5-7 (Table 3)

Do recall that divorcement is the subject of Matt 5:31-32? and Oaths (vows) are the subject of Matt 5:33-37? Justice is the subject of Matt 5:38-48? We were trying to decide which category they belong. We now have the answer: “...do not steal...”, theft.

Identical branches of the Deuteronomy and Matthew trees (Table 3)

We can see that the very same subtopics are covered within of both Deuteronomy outline and Matt chapters 5-7. This convenient order makes retention, and recall easier. Not only this, but we can build a hierarchical tree that branches to many other sub-topics that are discussed within each major topic . We will explore this observation later, when we develop a Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil for common every day words and concepts.

Diametric branches of the Deuteronomy tree

A careful scan of within the “do not steal” boundaries shows that not only is the subject of theft discussed (e.g. Deut 24:7) but the opposite of stealing (diligence, Eph 4:28) is listed as well (e.g. Deut 24:8). This fact is useful when we look for the opposite of the commandments later in this text. As you may have noted, not only is the tree of life contained in the commands, but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is embedded too.

Let's summarize what we have established in this chapter. Table4 summarizes what is itemized in text below.

1) We discovered that there is a structure that is contained in the text Matt 5-7. 2) We found that the structure (pattern) is based on the Ten Commandments. 3) We established that the structure matches that of Deuteronomy, an OT book of the Law. The structure of both books was found to be hierarchical because they have a major heading and a subheading 4) We discovered that the order and structure helps us to retain, recall, and apply facts readily. 5) We discovered that the diametrical opposites of the commands are embedded within the subdivided text also.

(Words in parentheses show the opposite action described in Deuteronomy and Matt,)

Matt Chapter 5	Matt Chapter 6	Matt Chapter 7
6. Do not kill. (Be forgiving, kind)	9. Do not bear false witness (Seek spiritual truth)	10. Do not Covet (Be content)
7. Do not commit Adultery (Be pure)		
8. Do not Steal. (Be diligent)	10. Do not Covet (Be content)	

Table 4: Summary of Matthew 5-7 Prohibitions and (God's will)

The structure and foundation that we discovered using the DSC method may leave you wondering what we should do with these observations. How do we use this for our good? The verse below answers the question.

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on a rock. And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house. And it did not fall, for it was founded on a rock. And everyone who hears these sayings of Mine and does not do them shall be compared to a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the wind blew and beat on that house. And it fell, and great was its fall.

(Mat 7:24-27)

Relating the Tree of Life to Wisdom's House

This chapter discussed the fruit of the Tree of Life (Figure 1 of Chapter 1) and the next chapter discusses the roots of the Tree of life: 1) Redemption, 2) Cleansing, 3) Goodwill 4) Rest and 5) Provisions and Nurturing.

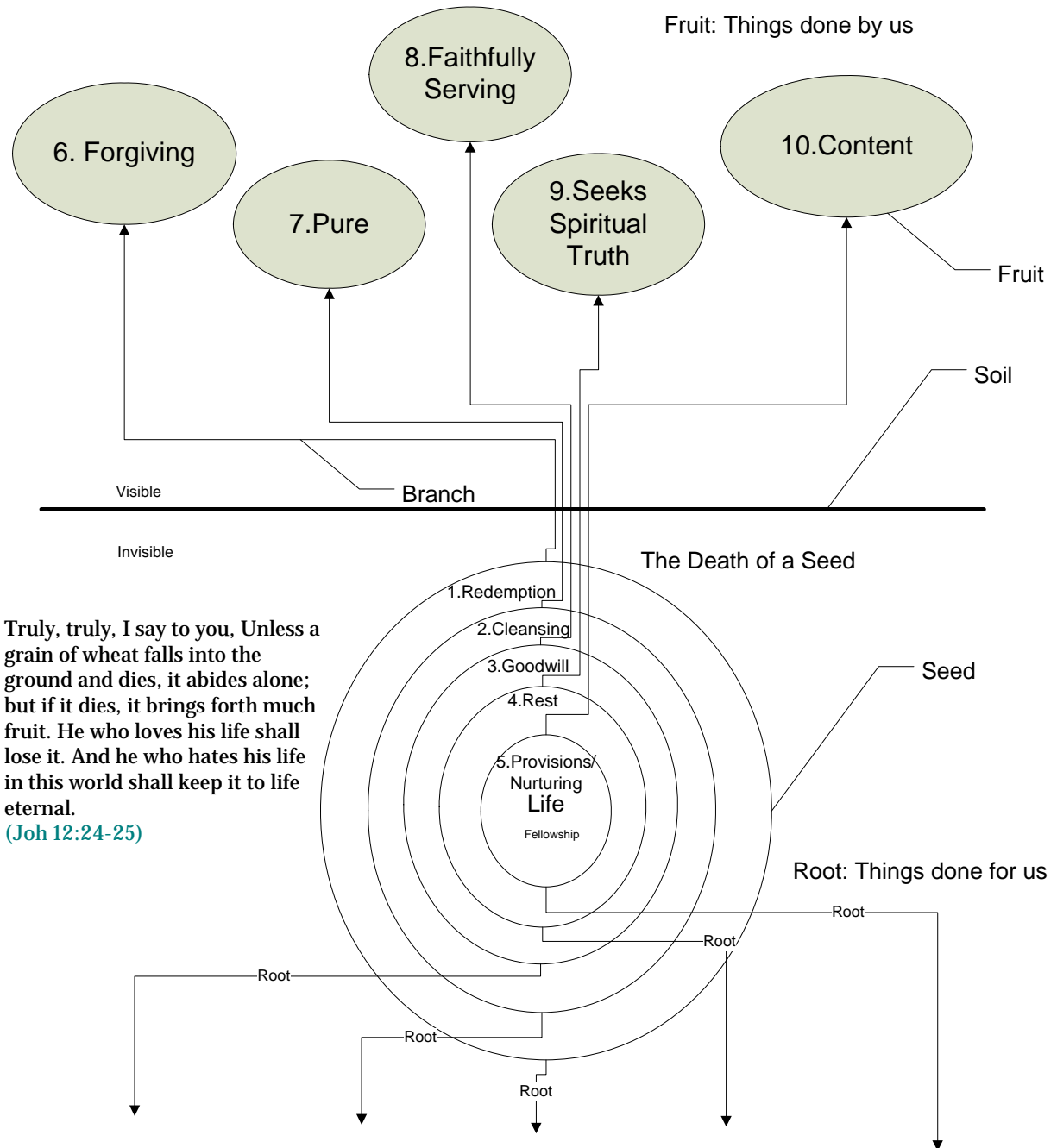
These terms represent the essence of God's grace, the core message of the Pentateuch, and the objects of the Tabernacle.

The God's grace is intended to be a shelter for believers to give us a refuge from the hostile world environment. The title of this text, "Wisdom's House" is based upon Mat 7:24-27 . One may express that this house is too narrowly defined (Matt 7:13-14), and does not allow for the flexibility and benefits of our modern world, including the sciences. Please reserve your judgment until we look at the structure of John's Gospel by looking at God's will vs. Man's will (i.e. light and darkness as described in 1John1:5).

The Tree of Life (TOL)

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivulets of water that brings forth its fruit in its seasons, and its leaf shall not wither, and all which he does shall be blessed.

(Psa 1:3)



Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. He who loves his life shall lose it. And he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.

(Joh 12:24-25)

I am the Vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

(Joh 15:5)

Figure 4: The Tree of Life in Matthew 5-7, and John 12-17

A question you may ask is why did Jesus only discuss the 6th through the 10th commandments in Matthew 5-7? If the commandments are so important to affect our standing in His kingdom, why did Christ not discuss the 1st through the 5th also?

Wisdom's House represents our service to the Lord; however, it may appear as a prison to some.

We have been liberated from serving sin (John 8:34-36). The first five commandments are the roots of our faith. We typically cannot see roots of plants, but we can see the fruit of plants.

Jesus tells us that we know others by their fruit in Matt 7:15-19. The first five commands represent our relationship to Christ and His influence in our lives. They are “ things done for us” because we are “ in Christ.” They are implied as roots of those commandments 6 through 10 that were explicitly mentioned in Matt 5-7. We will explore how the roots and fruits are connected, and will explore the liberation that Christ offers. In Figure 4, the branches above the soil summarize what we have covered. The roots in the soil represent what is to be covered in the next section. At the end of the next chapter, we will see an outline of John 12-17 that shows how the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and the roots of Tree of Life both point to the same source, Christ.

Chapter 3: God's Grace in Gen, Deut, Matt 5-7, and John 12-17:

Finding the Roots of the Tree of life in Matt 5-7

In this chapter we will identify the roots of each of the five fruits from chapter 2.

The Root of “ ...do not kill...”

The driving motive (root) of the 6th commandment, “...do not kill...” (Forgiveness) is the price paid for our release from sin (redemption). God says because I released you from debt, so you are to release others. We find the reminder of our redemption and the Redeemer in the 1st commandment.

I *am* Jehovah your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods besides Me.

(Deu 5:6-7)

The parable of the unforgiving servant Matt 18:21-35 clearly speaks about the connection between being forgiven, and our need to forgive others. We do not demand payment of debt because we are grateful to our Redeemer for our release from debt. The passage in Matt 5:21-26 shows that our failure to forgive is equivalent to murder.

In the Mat 5:23-26 passage, we see that our standing with the Judge of Heaven depends on our ability to settle our debts with others.

Therefore if you offer your gift on the altar, and there remember that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him; that the opponent not deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Truly I say to you, You shall by no means come out from there until you have paid the last kodrantes.

(Mat 5:23-26)

The Root of “...do not commit adultery...”

The main motive of the seventh commandment, “...do not commit adultery...”, is rejection of anything that conflicts with serving Christ. Things that conflict with serving Christ refer to idols,

the 2nd Commandment. The rejection of corruption is called purity or chastity. Marital faithfulness or fidelity is an outward display of our commitment to God. The Lord draws this parallel in book of Hosea:

“... And Jehovah said to Hosea, Go, take to yourself a wife of adultery and children of adultery. For the land has utterly gone lusting away from Jehovah. “

(Hos 1:2)

We can see Christ telling us to separate from to anything that may have corrupting influences in our spiritual walk in Matt 5:29:

“And if your right eye offends you, pluck it out and throw *it* from you. For it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not *that* your whole body should be thrown into hell. “

(Mat 5:29)

The Root of “ ...do not steal...”

Ownership and a good name are at the root of “...do not steal...”. Stealing is taking possession and misuse of goods without the consent of the owner. To prevent theft, personal property a pledge is sometimes offered as a means of security for a debt (Deut 24:10-14). If one has a good name, goodwill may be used instead of a pledge by giving a simple vow or commitment.

Goodwill is a term originally used to reflect the fact that an ongoing business had some "intrinsic value" beyond its assets, such as the reputation one has enjoyed with its clients. “Taking God’s name in vain...” , the third commandment” involves God’s goodwill or reputation for fulfilling commitments, and payment of debt. It is the Root of “ do not steal...”. We should not discredit His ability, and commitment to make good on His promises. We should not presume to take

ownership of those things He alone possesses (Matt 5:33-37). We should not disregard our commitments to Him (Matt 5:31-32). This is considered theft. An excellent example of this principle is found in Matt 24:45-51.

The Root of “...not bearing false witness...”

Rest in the Spirit of God is the root of “...not bearing false witness...”. We tend to have confidence in deceptive appearances, but God sees all. Each of the examples in alms, prayer, and fasting (Matt 5:2-3) contrasts our tendency to trust in our flesh (the temporal) and each offers a spiritual (eternal) alternative. Our faith should rest in the evidence of things not seen. Resting God is “...Remember the Sabbath...”, the 4th Commandment. Hebrews 4:9-12 says it best: “So then there remains a rest to the people of God. For he who has entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God *did* from His. Therefore let us labor to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of unbelief. For the Word of God *is* living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to *the* dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things *are* naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”

(Heb 4:9-13)

The Root of “...do not covet...”

God’s provisions and care is the root of “...do not covet...”. His provisions surpass the parental care and nurturing that we offer our own children. Since the Lord is our Shepherd, because we have been adopted as sons and daughters, we do not lack anything (Ps 23:1). “Honor your father and Mother...”, the fifth commandment, is a reference that we are not orphans. He has provided

stewards (parents), nurturing, and provisions. We see the reference to the 5th commandment in Matt 7:1-6 and 7:7-11:

We honor the Father in Heaven by allowing our fruit to come from His root. We do not presume to act without His authority. When we act as novice judges, we have a temporal perspective and yield corrupted results (Mat 7:1-3, Gal 6:7-8a). When our fruit comes from His root, we see clearly, and deal justly (Mat 7:5, Gal 6:8b, John 7:24). We become His agents.

We are merely stewards of the children God has entrusted to us. We are earthly parents. He is the heavenly, eternal Parent who freely gives all good things (Jas 1:5):

“Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you. For each one who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, if his son asks a loaf, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks a fish, will he give him a snake? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father in Heaven give good things to those who ask Him?”

(Mat 7:7-11)

Relating the Tree of Life to Deuteronomy Chapters 6-19

The goal of this section is to compare the roots of the Commandments (1st -5th) to the Commandments in the book of Deuteronomy. The bolded text in Table 5 below summarizes what we will be surveying. The bolded text in Table five outlines the subject topics.

The Ten Commandments	Deuteronomy Chapters (Detail)
1. I redeemed you from Egypt, have no other gods before me.	Redemption: Deut 6
2. Make no graven	Cleansing: Deut 7

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3. Take not God's name in vain	Goodwill: Deut 8-9
4. Remember the Sabbath	Rest, Seeking Spiritual Truth: Deut 10
5. Honor your father and mother	Provisions and Nurturing: Deut 11-19
6. Do not kill	Deut 19:1-22:8
7. Do not commit Adultery	Deut 22:9-23:14
8. Do not steal	Deut 23:15-25:12
9. Do not bear false witness	Deut 25:13-26:10
10. Do not covet	Deut 26:11- 28:68

Table 5 : Ten Commandment Summary in Book of Deuteronomy

Our goal is to find the roots mentioned above: 1) Redemption 2) Cleansing 3) Ownership and Goodwill, 4) Rest 5) Provisions and Nurturing.

To compare to the book of Deuteronomy we must do the same thing as we did with the previous passage: survey, subdivide and compare the book of Deuteronomy. Where will we start? Well, we will start with the first commandment. Where can we find the first Commandment in Deuteronomy? Jesus tells us where it can be found in Mar 12:29-30.

“And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, "Hear, O Israel, *the* Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." This *is* the first commandment.”

(Mar 12:29-30)

This is a direct quotation of Deut 6:4-5.

Hear, O, Israel. Jehovah our God *is* one Jehovah. And you shall love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

(Deu 6:4-5)

What is interesting is that the 10 Commandments are listed in Det 5:6-21, yet Christ is referencing 6:4-5. What is the reason for this? It turns out that the Ten Commandments are summarized in Matt 5:6-21. But, they are detailed in sequence in Deuteronomy chapters 6-28. You can see the verses that summarize the fruits of the Commandments (6th -10th) in Table 3, column 3. In the same column of Table 1, you can find the section of Deuteronomy that gives the detailed description.

In Search of Redemption (Table 5, item 1)

We have found where the first Commandment is located in Deut 6:4-5. All that we must do is survey around this verse to see if the subject of the price paid for our freedom (redemption) is mentioned. In Deut 6:21, we find the reference that we expected to see:

“When your son asks you in time to come, saying, What are the testimonies, and the statutes and the judgments which Jehovah our God has commanded you? Then you shall say to your son, We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.”

(Deu 6:20-21)

Israel was to acknowledge that they were redeemed to their descendents from generation to generation.

Finding the 1st Commandment in Deuteronomy was not too difficult, but finding the others will require surveying and looking for context that is consistent with what we have already defined in Mat 5-7, and In Deut 5:6-21. The clues that we have are very well defined: 1) Redemption, 2) Cleansing, 3) Ownership of God and His good will, 4) Rest 5) Provisions, and Nurturing.

In search of Cleansing (Table 5, item 2)

Our next Commandment tells us not to make graven images. We will begin In Deut 6 and scan the text for any hints that give specific detail about avoiding idols (graven images).

In Deut 6:14, there is mention of other gods:

“You shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people all around you, for Jehovah your God *is* a jealous God among you, lest the anger of Jehovah your God be kindled against you and destroy you from off the face of the earth.”

(Deu 6:14-15)

This idea of the jealousy of God has stumbled some, but it has same idea as what we read in Matt 6:24.

“No one can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

(Mat 6:24)

Having dual affections equates to duplicity, or a violation of our vow of service to the Lord.

This mention of idols is not the dividing line of the 1st (“serve only the Lord...”) and 2nd (“...make no idols...”), because subsequently, it rehearses the practice of what is commonly done in a Jewish Seder during Passover: recognition of the Redeemer and the redemption (Deut 6:17-25). This practice is equivalent to what Christians practice with Holy Communion (1Cor 11:24-34).

The actual dividing line between the 1st and 2nd commandments should be drawn between Deut 6:25 and Deut 7:1. The idols (Deut 7:3-4) are described as coming from some seven nations that were “...greater and mightier than Israel...” (Deut 7:1). These seven nations represent our sinful nature. Our sin dominates us (John 8:34), if we do not live according to the Spirit of God. In the past, some have attributed this annihilation of sin in our lives to the necessity of ethnic cleansing separation, or segregation from some particular race of people. The separation God prescribes is due to spiritual defilement and not racial defilement (Deut 7:4, Jn 8:39). Our challenge comes from within, not outside of ourselves (Mark 7:15-23). In the NT we are told to kill off the sinful nature:

“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness (which is idolatry), “

(Col 3:5)

“For if you live according to the flesh, you shall die. But if you through *the* Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.”

(Rom 8:13)

The seven nations represent all of the things that God told Israel not to do in the Ten Commandments: 1) Pride, 2) Rebellion, 3) Bitterness, 4) Defilement, 5) Theft, 6) Deceit, and 7) Covetousness. Each nation that appears Deut 7:1, is in their respective order of the seven vices listed above. As an example, the Hivites appear as the sixth, item in the list seven nations. The sixth item in list of vices is deceit. The Hivites (Josh 9:7) deceived Israel into a treaty by pretending to come from afar with old molded bread and worn shoes (Josh 9:1-22). We will talk more about where the list of seven vices originates in Chapter 5.

We do not cleanse ourselves but God cleanses us. This is evident from the reference to the Lord's deliverance in Deut 7:3:

“...and Jehovah your God shall **deliver** them before you, you shall crush them, completely destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them...”

(Deu 7:2)

Finding God's Ownership and Goodwill (Table 5, item 3)

Our next Goal is to find the dividing line between the 2nd (“...do not make idols...”) and 3rd (“...do not take His name in vain...”). If you recall, not taking the Lord's name in vain means that we recognize His ownership of all things, and that we acknowledge his goodwill in our lives. God's goodwill is His reputation for fulfilling commitments, and payment of debt.

Starting at Deut 8:1, it does not take long to find a reference to God's goodwill, provisions, faithfulness, and benevolent hand:

“Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell, these forty years. And you have known with your heart, that, as a man chastens his son, *so* Jehovah your God chastens you. And

you shall keep the commandments of Jehovah your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. For Jehovah your God brings you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey, a land in which you shall eat bread without want. You shall not lack any *thing* in it. *It is* a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you may dig copper. And you shall eat and be satisfied, then you shall bless Jehovah your God for the good land which He has given you.”

(Deu 8:4-10)

The Lord warns us of taking his Good name in vain by our failure to acknowledge Him...

“Beware that you do not forget Jehovah your God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command you today, lest *when* you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and lived in *them*, and *when* your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart might be lifted up, and you might forget Jehovah your God who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves.”

(Deu 8:11-14)

Chapter 9 continues to warn us not to disregard God’s goodwill, His contribution and responsibility for our existence, by attributing our status to ourselves:

“Therefore, understand today that Jehovah your God *is* He who goes over before you. *Like* a consuming fire, He shall destroy them, and He shall bring them down before your face. So you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly, as Jehovah has said to you. Do not speak in your heart, after Jehovah your God has cast them out from before you, saying: For my righteousness,

Jehovah has brought me in to possess this land. But for the wickedness of these nations, Jehovah your God drives them out from before you. Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go to possess their land. But for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah your God drives them out from before you, so that He may perform the Word which Jehovah swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, understand that Jehovah your God does not give you this good land, to possess it, for your righteousness. For you *are* a stiff-necked people.”

(Deu 9:3-6)

We can see the element of theft involved when we take credit where credit is not due.

In search of Rest [Spiritual Truth] (Table 5, item 4)

Our next Goal is to find the dividing line between the 3rd (“...do take God name in vain...”) and the 4th (“...Remember the Sabbath...”). The intent of the Sabbath is to avoid our tendency to be deceived by outward appearances (the temporal), but instead we are to cease from our own work and rest in Christ (Heb 4:10).

Deut 10:1 is where the line of separation between the 3rd (“...do take God name in vain...”) and the 4th (“...Remember the Sabbath...”) should be drawn because it starts with the subject of meeting with God:

“At that time Jehovah said to me: Cut out two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to Me into the mountain, and make an ark of wood...”

(Deu 10:1)

The tabernacle is the place where we rest and meet with God. Psalms 27 is a good example of this. The priests had no inheritance in this world. They sought spiritual riches. We are called a royal priesthood in the NT (1Pet 2:5, 2:9). We see our resting place in Deut 10:8-9:

“At that time Jehovah separated the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, to stand before Jehovah to minister to Him, and to bless in His name, until today. Therefore Levi has no part nor inheritance with his brothers. Jehovah *is* his inheritance, according as Jehovah your God promised him.”

(Deu 10:8-9)

The ark of the Covenant represents the presence of God. The contrast of material inheritance with spiritual inheritance shows that the priest's focus is upon external consequences not temporal consequences. Paul makes a reference to this truth in the NT.

“For this cause we do not faint; but though our outward man perishes, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. For the lightness of our present affliction works out for us a far more excellent eternal weight of glory, we not considering the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen; for the things which *are* seen *are* not lasting, but the things which *are* not seen *are* everlasting.”

(2Co 4:16-18)

In search of Provisions and Nurturing (Table 5, item 5)

Now we must find the last subdivision between the 4th (“...Remember the Sabbath...”) and the 5th (“... Honor your Father and Mother ...”). As you recall, the meaning of honor our parents is

that we are to receive and give His provisions, nurturing. We are His agents or stewards. In Deuteronomy 11:3, parents are to continue to educate their children about God's provisions.

“And you know today, for *I do* not *speak* with your sons who have not known and who have not seen the chastisement of Jehovah your God, His greatness, His mighty hand, and His stretched-out arm, ...And you shall teach them to your sons, speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

(Deu 11:2...11:19)

We gain some insight from Mark 7 concerning the 5th commandment “...honor your father and mother..” because Jesus mentions it while talking with the Pharisees about caring for their parents with the tithe:

“And He said to them, Do you do well to set aside the commandment of God, so that you may keep your own tradition? For Moses said, "Honor your father and your mother." And, "Whoever curses father or mother, let him die the death." But you say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, Corban! (that is, A gift *to God*, whatever you may profit by me) and you no longer allow him to do anything toward *his* father or mother, making the Word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have delivered. And you do many such things.”

(Mar 7:9-13)

“Corban is a Hebrew word adopted into the Greek of the New Testament and left untranslated. It occurs only once (Mark 7:11). It means a gift or offering consecrated to God. Anything over which this word was once pronounced was irrevocably dedicated to the temple. Land, however, so dedicated might be redeemed before the year of jubilee (Lev. 27:16-24). Our Lord condemns the Pharisees for their false doctrine, inasmuch as by their traditions they had destroyed the

commandment which requires children to honor their father and mother, teaching them to find excuse from helping their parents by the device of pronouncing "[Corban](#)" over their goods, thus reserving them to their own selfish use."

<http://www.christiananswers.net/dictionary/corban.html>

In Deut 14 the tithe was to be distributed to the Levite, the fatherless, the widow, etc. It is apparent that the Pharisees diverted the tithe to themselves thus robbing those that are dependent upon the tithe for financial support; among them were parents (widows).

“and the Levite within your gates, you shall not forsake him, for he has no part nor inheritance with you. At the end of three years you shall bring forth all the tithe of your increase the same year, and shall lay *it* up inside your gates. And the Levite, because he has no part nor inheritance with you, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, who *are* inside your gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied, so that Jehovah your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.”

(Deu 14:27-29)

Steps toward Maturity	Fruit(Actions) of <u>Commandment</u>	Root (foundation) of <u>Commandment</u>
Recognize God's compassion, and your need	6. Do not murder. Hatred is murder (Matt 5:21-26) Be compassionate	1. <u>God redeemed us, serve Him</u> Summary: Deut 5:6-7 Detail: Mark 12:39:30, Deut 6:1-24 Redemption: Deut 6:17-25
Take God's plans, not your plans (Washing)	7. Do not commit adultery. Lust is adultery (Matt 5:27, 28) Mortification (Matt 5:29, 30)	2. <u>Make no idols (graven images)</u> Summary: Deut 5:8-10 Detail: Deut 7:1-26 Cleansing: Deut 7:1-3
Do what Jesus says; don't just hear what He says: temporal and spiritual labor, idleness, misappropriation	8. Do not Steal Divorce (Matt 5:31, 32) Forswearing, Oaths, Vows (Matt 5:33-37) Justice (Matt 5:38-48)	3. <u>Do not take His name in vain.</u> Summary: Deut 5:11 Detail: Deut 8-9 Ownership, Goodwill: Deut 8:11-14, Deut 9:3-6
Be Genuine, sincere: Seek Spiritual Truth	9. Do not Lie Hypocrisy: In Alms (Matt 6:1-4) In Prayer (Matt 6:5-15) In Fasting (Matt 6:16-18)	4. <u>Remember the Sabbath</u> Summary: Deut 5:12-15 Detail: Deut 10 Rest: Deut 10:8-9
When the Lord is your Shepherd, you do not lack (Pursue the enduring wealth of your Father)	10. Do not Covet Storing corruptible treasure (Matt 6:19, 20) Your treasure is your g(G)od. (Matt 6:21) The blinding effect of idolatry (Matt 6:22-24 , Col 3:5b) God's Daily Provision (Matt 6:25-35)	5. <u>Honor your parents (His agents, nurturing, and provisions)</u> Summary: Deut 5:16 Detail: Deut 11-18 Provisions, nurturing, parents: Deut 11:

Table 5: Steps to maturity

Table 2 demonstrates that we have subdivided out not only the fruits of the Commandments (6th -10th), but also the roots of the Commandments (1st -5th). Our goal was to 1) survey, 2) subdivide, and finally 3) compare our subdivided text to other references to confirm what we have discovered. We surveyed the text of Matthew 5-7 to see the fruits of the Commandments (6th -10th) in chapter 1. We subdivided the same passage to show a structure. We compared the passage to the book of Deuteronomy. Now in chapter 3, we have surveyed the same passage a second time to find the roots of the Commandments (1st -5th). We have subdivided them to show that there is a foundation and structure.