

The Eighth Commandment

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29th day of the 10th month?5848 years after the creation of Adam
The 10th Month in the Third year of the third Sabbatical Cycle
The Third Sabbatical Cycle of the 119th Jubilee Cycle
The Sabbatical Cycle of Earthquakes Famines, and Pestilences

This is also the end of the Forty Second week of this the Third Tithe Year for the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow - Deuteronomy 26:12

January 12, 2013

This week we are covering the Eighth Commandment. Thou shalt not steal. I drew a blank when we were discussing this one. How much deeper is there than just not stealing? So I am also blown away at this week's lesson and do appreciate the help that has been given. I have mentioned her in the past and been asked not to again.

So let's get to this week's lesson. May Yehovah help you understand the deep meaning it shows you and may each of us prayerfully consider it when we think of ourselves. You can all point to others, but these are written so that you look at yourself.

The Eighth Commandment

“You do not steal” Exodus 20:15

This commandment looks like this in the Hebrew:

לא תגנב

Using modern English lettering it looks like this:

Lo tegannab

Ganab means...

“to take that which belongs to another without his consent or knowledge.”

Strictly speaking, it is the taking of someone else's things in secret.

According to Strong's Concordance ganab {gaw-nab'} a primitive root; TWOT – 364; v AV – steal 30, steal away 7, carry away 1, brought 1; 39 1) to steal, steal away, carry away 1a)

(Qal) to steal 1b) (Niphal) to be stolen 1c) (Piel) to steal away 1d) (Pual) to be stolen away, be brought by stealth 1e) (Hithpael) to go by stealth, steal away

This commandment not to steal is pretty straightforward. Therefore in this article, a good scriptural review will be accomplished as a reminder and to get a good view of stealing and theft in our instruction manual and history book – God’s Word – The Bible. We will also cover the spirit of the commandment as well to some extent to provoke some self-evaluation and repentance where necessary.

In this study through His Word, the concept of stealing came forth in many forms. Before the written Torah was given to Moses to actually ‘write down’ we see stealing, mostly in the concrete form in reference to the plain meaning: stealing property of another. This is one level. As we walk through the prophets, we see stealing of Yehovah’s Word from the land and from His people and this is another level. In the teachings and life of Messiah, we see stealing again mostly related to what the adversary does, the way of Satan in the world. Each of these we will look at through this article. We pray you are blessed and Yehovah is edified.

It was interesting to note, the first occurrences of our word – ganab, turns up in the life events of Jacob and Laban. One might have thought that stealing would turn up before then, or perhaps this was the best occasion to call it by its specified name – ganab, steal.

In Genesis chapter 30, we encounter Jacob desiring to break free from Laban, his mother’s brother, and take all his family and belongings, which he has acquired through hard work, back to Canaan and away from Padam Aram. Jacob comes up with an idea on how to fairly separate the livestock that belongs to Laban and that which belong to him. The livestock and flocks will be separated by coloring and spots. That way, any livestock Laban finds among Jacob’s flock that is colored or not spotted appropriately, Laban will know that Jacob stole (ganab) that livestock.

Jacob proclaims:

“And my righteousness shall answer for me in time to come, when you come concerning my wages; every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the lambs, it is stolen if it is with me.” Genesis 30:33

Here we can read, see, and understand the plain language of what it is to steal: taking the property of another person.

Our next encounter with stealing is found in Genesis chapter 31 having to do with people and idols. Laban accuses Jacob of stealing his daughters, grandchildren, and idols.

Genesis chapter 31

And he heard the words of Laban’s sons, saying, “Ya’aqob has taken away (stolen) all that was our father’s, and from what belonged to our father he has made all this wealth.”

2And Ya’aqob would look at the face of Laban and see that it was not toward him as before.

3And Yehovah said to Ya’aqob, “Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives. And I am with you.”

4And Ya'aqob sent and called Rahel and Le'ah to the field, to his flock, 5and said to them, "I see your father's face, that it is not toward me as before, but the Elohim of my father has been with me. 6"And you know that I have served your father with all my strength. 7"Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but Elohim did not allow him to do evil to me. 8"When he said this, 'The speckled are your wages,' then all the flocks bore speckled. And when he said this, 'The streaked are your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked. 9"So Elohim has taken away (natsal: as in delivered, not stole) the livestock of your father and given them to me.

10"And it came to be, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and looked in a dream and saw the rams which leaped upon the flocks were streaked, speckled, and mottled. 11"And the Messenger of Elohim spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Ya'aqob.' And I said, 'Here I am.'

12"And He said, 'Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks are streaked, speckled, and mottled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you.

13'I am the El of Beyth El, where you anointed the standing column and where you made a vow to Me. Now rise up, get out of this land, and return to the land of your relatives.'"

14And Rahel and Le'ah answered and said to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house? 15"Are we not reckoned by him as strangers? For he has sold us, and also entirely consumed our silver. 16"For all the wealth which Elohim has taken (natsal) from our father are ours and our children's. Now then, do whatever Elohim has told you." 17So Ya'aqob rose and put his sons and his wives on camels, 18and he drove off all his livestock and all his possessions which he had acquired, his property of the livestock which he had acquired in Paddan Aram, to go to his father Yitshaq in the land of Kena'an.

Let us read and understand here, that in the eyes of Laban and his sons, Jacob stole. But in the eyes of Yehovah, he did not. Yehovah has delivered more flocks into Jacob's hand by the divine order of the increased spotted and speckled sheep. Additionally, the daughters and grandchildren are not Laban's property... they are Jacob's property. One cannot steal their own property. Stealing is when one takes the property that belongs to another. Now, the idols are a different story. The idols belonged to Laban, and Rachel stole them, in secret, from him. The perfect definition of theft.

19And when Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rahel stole (ganab: steal) the house idols that were her father's.

20And Ya'aqob deceived Laban the Aramean, because he did not inform him that he was about to flee. 21And he fled with all that he had. And he rose up and passed over the river, and headed toward the mountains of Gil'ad.

22And on the third day Laban was told that Ya'aqob had fled.

23Then he took his brothers with him and pursued him for seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gil'ad. 24But in a dream by night Elohim came to Laban the Aramean, and said to him, "Guard yourself, that you do not speak to Ya'aqob either good or evil." 25Then Laban overtook Ya'aqob. Now Ya'aqob had pitched his tent in the mountains, and Laban with his brothers pitched in the mountains of Gil'ad. 26And Laban said to Ya'aqob,

“What have you done, that you have deceived me, and driven my daughters off like captives taken with the sword?”

Laban is accusing Jacob of kidnapping here, but these people belong to Jacob.

27“Why did you flee secretly and deceive me, and not inform me, and I would have sent you away with joy and songs, with tambourine and lyre? 28“And you did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now you have been foolish to do this. 29“It is in the power of my hand to do evil to you, but the Elohim of your father spoke to me last night, saying, ‘Guard yourself, that you do not speak to Ya’aqob either good or evil.’

Remember Abraham and Isaac also deceiving in order to deliver their lives? We now see this with Jacob and Laban. All of these times, it is Yehovah who personally shows up and instructs these gentile men on how to treat His people. This is a testimony of the workings of Yehovah. We will discuss this more when we cover the ninth commandment about bearing false witness.

30“And now you have gone because you greatly long for your father’s house, but why did you steal (ganab) my mighty ones?”

31And Ya’aqob answered and said to Laban, “Because I was afraid, for I said, ‘Lest you tear your daughters away from me.’ 2“With whomever you find your mighty ones, do not let him live. In the presence of our brothers, see for yourself what is with me and take it with you.” For Ya’aqob did not know that Rahel had stolen them.

33And Laban went into Ya’aqob’s tent, and into Le’ah’s tent, and into the tents of the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he came out of Le’ah’s tent and entered Rahel’s tent.

34Now Rahel had taken the house idols and put them in the camel’s saddle, and sat on them. And Laban searched all about the tent but did not find them. 35And she said to her father, “Let it not displease my master that I am unable to rise before you, for the way of women is with me.” And he searched but did not find the house idols. 36And Ya’aqob was wroth and contended with Laban, and Ya’aqob answered and said to Laban, “What is my transgression? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? 37“Now that you have searched all my goods what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my brothers and your brothers, and let them decide between the two of us!

38“These twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your sheep. 39“That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you, I myself bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night.

40“Thus I was! By day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 41“These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times.

Here we see how the stealing on the part of Rachel sets into motion the events that may have brought about her early death. Her secretly taking the idols was not known to her husband Jacob, and he pronounced a deadly curse upon the person who has taken them if in fact, it is

true. We are left to speculate whether this curse did in fact bring about her death, but it is interesting to contemplate. For the wages of sin is death we are told and it is obvious to us, that even at this time prior to the 'written Torah' that theft was socially unacceptable. Stealing brings evil to us.

Next we look into the life of Joseph. In Judaism, this commandment in some sects has been changed to specifically read "no kidnapping". Sometimes kidnapping is used in some translations for the Hebrew words: ganab (steal) nephesh (being). So in our understanding these words have been assigned the word: kidnapping. It is not in error but just denotes a specific type of stealing. It is still stealing.

Once again we see the evil that befalls those who engage in stealing in the event of Joseph being taken captive by his brothers and sold into slavery. This event also involved deception, cover up and so many other trespasses which is so very common in the sin of theft. This event also occurred prior to the written Torah, but we witness the damage this trespass does to a family, a society, and to individuals who do this.

We find the events Genesis chapter 37 were the brothers of Joseph because of envy and jealousy propose to murder him. Through discussion amongst themselves, they decide to fake his death through a deception so as not to murder, but instead sell him into captivity as a slave.

We read in the written Torah:

Leviticus 19:11

"Do not steal, do not lie, do not deceive one another."

Deuteronomy 24:7

"When a man is found kidnapping any of his brothers of the children of Israel and treats him harshly or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die. Thus you shall purge the evil from your midst."

And just because this is only 'written' later does not mean the brothers did not know better. The evidence is in their lying to their father Jacob and the cover up.

We notice that around this transgression of stealing is sadness, grief, anger, division, scattering, and death and a whole host of other sins.

Stealing in the written Torah by Moses:

Exodus "You do not steal" Exodus 20:15

"Do not steal, do not lie, do not deceive one another." Leviticus 19:11

Deuteronomy 5:19

"You do not steal"

Very plain indeed. In Exodus chapter 22 we are given some boundaries as to how to deal with theft when a member of our people engages in theft and how to bring about Yehovah's right ruling.

Exodus 22

1. When a man steals an ox or a sheep, and shall slaughter it or sell it, he repays five cattle for an ox and four sheep for a sheep.

2. If the thief is found breaking in, and he is smitten so that he dies, there is no guilt for his bloodshed.

3. If the sun has risen on him, there is guilt for his bloodshed, he shall certainly repay. If he has not the means, then he shall be sold for his theft.

4. If the theft is indeed found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he repays double.

5. When a man lets a field or vineyard be grazed, and lets loose his livestock, and it feeds in another man's field, he repays from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard.

6. When fire breaks out and spreads to thorn bushes, so that stacked grain, or standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall certainly repay.

7. When a man gives silver or goods to his neighbor to guard, and it is stolen out of the man's house, if the thief is found, he repays double.

8. If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought before Elohim to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor's goods.

9. For every matter of transgression, for ox, for donkey, for sheep, for garment, or for whatever is lost which another claims to be his, let the matter of them both come before Elohim. And whomever Elohim declares wrong repays double to his neighbor.

10. When a man gives to his neighbor a donkey, or ox, or sheep, or any beast to watch over, and it dies, or is injured, or is driven away while no one is looking,

11. let an oath of YHWH be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbor's goods. And the owner of it shall accept that, and he does not repay.

12. But if it is indeed stolen from him, he repays to its owner.

13. If it is torn to pieces, then let him bring it for evidence, he does not repay what was torn. 14. And when a man borrows from his neighbor, and it is injured or dies while the owner of it is not present, he shall certainly repay.

15. But if its owner was with it, he does not repay. If it was hired, he is entitled to the hire.

Did we notice here, that there is no chopping off of body parts, no imprisonment, and no putting to death? No. This is not the way of Yehovah, Elohim of Israel. There is repayment only. This is the right-ruling of God. This ruling has gone forth, is proper, and has not changed. How many thousands are in our prisons today because of theft? We call ourselves Christians and profess our nations to be Christians nations? Yet our laws in the regard to stealing do not line up with God's Laws. Perhaps we are also stealing God's words, for He has not told us to do this. His Right ruling is "payback" of that which has been stolen plus a portion.

Punishment for theft in Israel was not as severe as that of some neighboring nations, where the death penalty was inflicted. The Law required the thief to return to his victim twice the amount he had stolen (Ex 22:7).

Thus the thief lost the exact amount he had hoped to gain. The penalties were doubled and more if the thief slaughtered or sold a stolen animal. Only in the case of kidnapping (Ex 21:16) or theft of “devoted things” (Joshua 7:11, 25) was a thief executed.

However, when the theft involves the taking of a person, the punishment is the death penalty.
Exodus 21:16

“And he who kidnap’s a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall certainly be put to death.

Let us move now from the books of the Torah and into the book of Joshua where we find another event of theft, disobedience, and yes... most grievous death as a result.

Joshua 7:11

“Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. And they have even taken some of that which is under the ban, and have both stolen and deceived, and also put it among their own goods.”

What happened here, to cause Yehovah to say these things? Theft (among other sins)
Joshua chapter 7:1

But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding that which is under the ban, for Akan son of Karmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of that which is under the ban. And the displeasure of Yehovah burned against the children of Israel.

Notice here also, that the entire nation was under judgment because of this one person who stole, deceived, and disobeyed God. This act set them up for defeat against the Amorites, where many died. This is serious brethren, very serious. What we do in the open or in secret effects the Whole Body of Messiah, not just ourselves. Please remember this! Toward the end of this article, some things will be shared on how we are stealing as the assembly of Yehovah’s people and House.

Let’s take a look at Abshalom and King David, where again we find theft of a different type and what happens as a result.

2 Samuel 15:6

And Abshalom did this to all Israel who came to the sovereign for right-ruling. And Abshalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

2 Samuel Chapter 15

And it came to be after this that Abshalom prepared a chariot and horses for himself, and fifty men to run before him. 2And Abshalom used to rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. And it came to be, whenever anyone who had a complaint came to the sovereign for a right-ruling, that Abshalom would call to him and say, “What city are you from?”

And when he said, “Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Yisra’el,”

3Abshalom would say to him, “Look, your matters are good and right, but you have nobody from the sovereign to hear you.”

4And Abshalom would say, “Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any complaint or case would come to me, and I shall let right be done to him.”

5And it came to be, whenever anyone came near him to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him. 6And Abshalom did this to all Yisra’el who came to the sovereign for right-ruling. And Abshalom stole the hearts of the men of Yisra’el.

7And it came to be at the end of four years that Abshalom said to the sovereign, “Please, let me go to Hebron and pay the vow which I vowed to YHWH. 8“For your servant vowed a vow while I dwelt at Geshur in Aram, saying, ‘If indeed YHWH brings me back to Yerushalayim, then I shall serve YHWH.’ ”

9And the sovereign said to him, “Go in peace.” And he rose up and went to Hebron. 10But Abshalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Yisra’el, saying, “As soon as you hear the sound of the ram’s horn, then you shall say, ‘Abshalom is sovereign in Hebron!’ ” 11And with Abshalom went two hundred men from Yerushalayim who were invited, and they went along unsuspectingly, and did not know the matter at all. 12Abshalom also sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, counselor of Dawid, from his city, from Giloh, while he was bringing offerings. And it came to be that the conspiracy became strong, for the people with Abshalom kept increasing. 13Then a messenger came to Dawid, saying, “The hearts of the men of Yisra’el are with Abshalom.” 14And Dawid said to all his servants who were with him at Yerushalayim, “Rise up, and let us flee, for none of us shall escape from Abshalom. Go in haste, lest he overtake us quickly and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.”

15And the sovereign’s servants said to the sovereign, “Look, your servants shall do according to all my master the sovereign chooses.” 16And the sovereign went out, and all his household at his feet.

As we look at this case of Abshalom, King David’s son, we can see he is acting as an adversary. The adversary comes to steal, kill, and destroy. What was he doing specifically? How did he do it? Do we do the same things?

First, Abshalom gained for himself material goods – chariots, horses, and men. He puffed himself up in the sight of other people. He was not awarded these from the King (Yehovah), but obtained them for himself although Yehovah allowed him to obtain them, which is different. This is like a “self-appointment” of sorts. Just because he desired the position of King of Israel, he thought it all right to simply go out and take it. Chariots are as to cars and homes. Horses are to businesses, and the men are as to employees, staff members, and servants.

Secondly, Abshalom began a secret plan to “steal” the hearts of the people from the King. He rose early in the morning and day after day publicly and purposefully made known to the people how he would be a better and more available judge.

“Oh that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any complaint or case would come to me, and I shall let right be done to him.”

Do you know how many we have among ourselves doing this very thing in the Assembly of Yehovah?

Many today talk of how evil Yehovah was in the Old Testament in how He dealt with the nations of Canaan through Israel. They accuse Him of being “unfair” “partial” “wicked” “mean”

They tell others how He was wrong in what He did and is an unjust and wicked God. They are proclaiming themselves to be the proper and better judge than the King, just as Abshalom did. They are stealing the hearts of men and women secretly from Yehovah. They are acting as adversary.

Sometimes we can fall into doing this unknowingly. What do we tell people when they ask us questions about the character of Yehovah? What do we tell them when they accuse Him of not answering prayers? Do we have a proper answer for them, or do we behave as the adversary to Yehovah when we express our own opinion concerning what He has done? It is better to admit we don't yet know why some things are the ways they are if we don't yet know or understand them. We can always proclaim His goodness, mercy, and grace though and then urge one another to continue to study, ask, and pray about these things.

Abshalom also allows himself to be worshipped. We read, "whenever anyone came near him to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him." v. 5 Do we do this too? Do we advise people to consult with Yehovah and plead to hear from His Spirit, or are we always there with our own answers, relishing the fact people come to us for answers and advice so that we can feel important? Evaluate, evaluate, evaluate our motives and heart continuously is what we need to do. If a brother or sister is more dependent upon us than the Holy Spirit, we are stealing from Yehovah just as Abshalom was stealing from King David. This is also what Anti-Christ will do to Yeshua. This group is not a group to share company with! It is so very easy to slip into as well. Ask Yehovah to show you your heart every so often on matters. He will.

Something interesting about the word Hebron, where Abshalom desired to go to proclaim himself king.

The word Hebron comes from the word chebar.

chabar {khaw-bar'} a primitive root; TWOT – 598; v AV – couple 8, join 8, couple together 4, join together 3, compact 1, charmer + 02267 1, charming + 02267 1, have fellowship 1, league 1, heap up 1; 29 1) to unite, join, bind together, be joined, be coupled, be in league, heap up, have fellowship with, be compact, be a charmer 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to unite, be joined 1a2) to tie magic charms, charm 1b) (Piel) 1b1) to unite with, make an ally of 1b2) to unite, join, ally 1c) (Pual) 1c1) to be allied with, be united 1c2) to be joined together 1d) (Hiphil) to join together, pile up (words) 1e) (Hithpael) to join oneself to, make an alliance, league together

Secrets, planning, plotting, and conspiracy are always related to oaths, loyalty, coupling by vows, etc. Wonder why Abshalom proclaimed he had to go there to serve Yehovah when he was only serving himself?

Are some of us guilty of this from time to time? Most of us would not openly admit to doing this, but what about just between ourselves and God? Most of us do not have the courage to look at ourselves and ask the question, "Am I behaving as 'The Adversary' (that is haSatan) in my thoughts and actions, and are they even secret from myself?"

Do you have the courage to ask this question, and ask Yehovah to show you if, in fact, you are?

The instruction to us is, “you shall not steal.” Many of us believe we are good and obedient children because we do not steal material goods from another. We believe we are good and obedient children because we do not go out and rob other people. Yet we rob and steal from Yehovah Himself. Did He not say, “The greatest commandment is this?

‘Hear O Israel, YHWH our Elohim, YHWH is One. And you shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind and all your strength.’ Deut 6:4, Mark 12:29-30.

Let us take heed not to steal the Kingship and Judgeship from Yehovah! Let us not go to Hebron, the place of association where the enchanter lives and secretly plan to steal from Him.

In the books of the Prophets, less is written about specific situations of stealing and what it causes. This makes sense, for what we have already read in the Torah of Yehovah and through the lives of the Patriarchs it should be very clear! As stated before and will be stated over and over again... is the Right ruling and Word of Elohim has gone forth. So what we find in the prophets is... a stealing of God’s Word itself. Yehovah Himself lets this very thing to be known too, that His Word has gone forth and He truly does expect us to love Him and obey. Coming up with something “new” is not necessary or desired by our Father and in fact can be a very very dangerous path for us to be on.

Jeremiah 23:30

“Therefore see, I am against the prophets,” declares Yehovah, “who steal My Words every one from his neighbor.”

How does someone steal Yehovah’s Words? How would we consider that someone stole our words? Perhaps if we had said or written something, and then someone else takes our words and twists them, misquotes them, or maybe they were stating something and proclaimed we said that when we did not.

Let us read the entire chapter from Jeremiah to get an idea. Consider Jeremiah expressed these words, had them written down, and that is why we have them today. He was instructed to speak out by Yehovah Himself and to write these things down. During this time, Judah was about to fall to Babylon because of their sin, but there was still time to turn things around if they would start obeying Yehovah and His Ways. But all the King’s prophets and priests were what we might call, “yes men” to the King and not helpful to him because they were not truthful and faithful to Elohim.

The King’s prophets and priests were prophesying peace and prosperity, amid great sin and chaos and disobedience! They had a message of confidence, a “feel good” message. They would not speak of the great sin and trespass of themselves and the people. They preached prosperity, peace, good times. Can’t you just hear them now? There are many on TV and

radio today doing the same thing and preaching the same words, all the while there are murders, starvation, theft, adultery, abortion, and addiction. Yet many of the King's men are talking prosperity, name it and claim it, you are all right, you are a child of God and you can do no wrong, you are blessed and protected they cry, etc. etc. etc. Let us see what Yehovah gave

Jeremiah to say to these people and this situation to see if we can learn something about "stealing Yehovah's Words."

"Woe to the shepherds destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture declares Yehovah. 2Therefore thus said YHWH Elohim of Yisra'el against the shepherds who feed My people, "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and have not tended them.

Shepherds care for sheep by: keeping them together, keeping them in the proper path and in a pasture area of good food, leading them by water, and keeping away the wolves. When sheep do not have these things... they begin to wander away, looking for food, water, good pasture, and they disperse to get away from danger. But as long as there is a good shepherd providing food, water, and safety for them, they will not wander, scatter, and go astray, but will stay in the flock.

See, I am punishing you for the evil of your deeds," declares YHWH.

3"Therefore I shall gather the remnant of My flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and shall bring them back to their fold. And they shall bear and increase.

These next words Yehovah gave to Jeremiah are indeed words of promise, but take note that they are for a future time when He Himself will do these things for His people.

4"And I shall raise up shepherds over them, and they shall feed them. And they shall fear no more, nor be discouraged, nor shall they be lacking," declares YHWH.

5"See, the days are coming," declares YHWH, "when I shall raise for Dawid a Branch of righteousness, and a Sovereign shall reign and act wisely, and shall do right-ruling and righteousness in the earth. 6"In His days Yehudah shall be saved, and Yisra'el dwell safely. And this is His Name whereby He shall be called: 'our Righteousness.'

7"Therefore, see, the days are coming," declares, "when they shall say no more, 'As YHWH lives who brought up the children of Yisra'el out of the land of Mitsrayim,' 8but, 'As YHWH lives who brought up and led the seed of the house of Yisra'el out of the land of the north and from all the lands where I had driven them.' And they shall dwell on their own soil."

Now we are brought back to Jeremiah's present day and words against these 'false prophets' who are stealing God's Words.

9My heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake. I am like a drunken man, and like a man overcome by wine, because of YHWH, and because of His setapart words. 10For the land is filled with adulterers; for the land mourns because of a curse.

The pastures of the wilderness are dried up.

And their course is evil, and their might is not right. "For both prophet and priest have become defiled. Even in My house I have found their evil," declares YHWH.

12"Therefore their way is to them like slippery ways in the dark. They are driven on and they shall fall in them. For I bring evil on them, the year of their punishment," declares YHWH.

13"And I have seen folly in the prophets of Shomeron: they prophesied by Ba'al and led My people Yisra'el astray. 14"And among the prophets of Yerushalayim I have seen a horrible matter: committing adultery and walking in falsehood. And they strengthen the hands of evil ones, so that no one turns back from his evil. All of them are like Sedom to Me, and her inhabitants like Amorah. 15"Therefore thus said of hosts concerning the prophets, 'See, I am making them eat wormwood, and shall make them drink poisoned water. For defilement has gone out into all the land from the prophets of Yerushalayim.'"

16Thus said YHWH of hosts, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, they lead you astray. They speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of YHWH.

17"They keep on saying to those who despise Me, 'YHWH has said you shall have peace.' And to all who walk according to the stubbornness of their own heart they say, 'No evil comes upon you.'"

18For who has stood in the counsel of YHWH, and has seen and heard His word?

Do we know what this question means? Do we know what our Father is asking here? He is asking: Who has been in My Word? Is this Word He is referencing a dream? No. Is this counsel a group of men? No. Is this word or counsel the internet or fellowship, or church, or commentary? No.

This counsel of YHWH, this Word that we are to see and hear... are His. His Words He gave to us by Moses- His Instructions and right rulings and judgments and statutes. These are His counsel. To stand in His counsel is to know His right rulings and judgments and then teach them and do them. Anything else is lying, stealing, and deceit.

Who has listened to His word and obeyed it? 19See, a storm of shall go forth in a rage, a whirling storm! It whirls on the head of the wrong. 20The displeasure of YHWH shall not turn back until He has done and established the purposes of His heart. In the latter days you shall understand it perfectly.

21"I did not send these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.

22"But if they had stood in My counsel, then they would have let My people hear My Words, and they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their deeds.

Do we see and hear these words spoken by Yehovah through Jeremiah His prophet? God Himself says, "But if they had stood in My counsel, then they would have let My people hear My Words, they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their deeds." We ask the question, "if the prophet, preacher, minister is not preaching God's right rulings

and teaching His Ways and showing what is 'sin', then whose words are he or she speaking? If not Yehovah's, then who's?

23"Am I an Elohim close by," declares YHWH, "and not an Elohim afar off?"

24"If anyone is hidden in secret places, would I not see him?" declares YHWH. "Do I not fill the heavens and earth?" declares YHWH.

25"I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy falsehood in My Name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' 26"Till when shall it be in the heart of the prophets? – the prophets of falsehood and prophets of the deceit of their own heart, 27who try to make My people forget My Name by their dreams which everyone relates to his neighbour, as their fathers forgot My Name for Ba'al.

When will we ever learn? Do you have a Bible in your home, in your hands? Then you have the full counsel of YHWH. You have it. He is near you and within you. When someone decries, "I have had a dream, a vision, a prophetic word" you can tell them – if it is from Yehovah, I already have it in my hand... for I have His Word in my hand. I already have His Vision in front of me. I already hear His Voice in my ear. This has not changed and will not change.

28"The prophet who has a dream, let him relate the dream, and he who has My Word, let him speak My Word in truth. What is the chaff to the wheat?" declares YHWH. 29"Is not My Word like a fire?" declares YHWH, "and like a hammer that shatters a rock?"

30"Therefore see, I am against the prophets," declares YHWH, "who steal My Words every one from his neighbour. 31"See, I am against the prophets," declares YHWH, "who use their tongues and say, 'He declares.'

32"See, I am against those who prophesy false dreams," declares YHWH, "and relate them, and lead My people astray by their falsehoods and by their reckless boasting. But I Myself did not send them nor have I commanded them. And they do not profit this people at all," declares YHWH.

33"And when these people or the prophet or the priest ask you, saying, 'What is the message of YHWH?' then you shall say to them, 'What message?' I shall forsake you," declares YHWH.

34"As for the prophet and the priest and the people who say, 'The message of YHWH,' I shall punish that man and his house. 35"This is what each one says to his neighbour, and each one to his brother, 'What has YHWH answered?' and, 'What has YHWH spoken?' 36"But the message of YHWH you no longer remember! For every man's message is his own word, for you have changed the Words of the living Elohim, of hosts, our Elohim!

37"This is what you say to the prophet, 'What has YHWH answered you?' and, 'What has YHWH spoken?' 38"But since you say, 'The message of YHWH!' therefore thus said YHWH, 'Because you say this word, "The message of YHWH!" and I have sent to you, saying, "Do not say, 'The message of YHWH!"'

39therefore see, I, I shall utterly forget you and cast you away from My presence, along with the city that I gave you and your fathers. 40'And I shall put an everlasting reproach on you, and an everlasting shame that is not forgotten.' "

Isaiah helps us to understand by what is meant in Jeremiah where Yehovah proclaims: “for you have changed the Words of the living Elohim of hosts.” [Stealing the Word of Elohim]
Isaiah Chapter 24

See, YHWH is making the earth empty and making it waste, and shall overturn its surface, and shall scatter abroad its inhabitants. 2And it shall be – as with the people so with the priest, as with the servant so with his master, as with the female servant so with her mistress, as with the buyer so with the seller, as with the lender so with the borrower, as with the creditor so with the debtor; 3the earth is completely emptied and utterly plundered, for YHWH has spoken this word. 4The earth shall mourn and wither, the world shall languish and wither, the haughty people of the earth shall languish.

5For the earth has been defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the Torot, 1changedv the law, broken the everlasting covenant.

6Therefore a curse shall consume the earth, and those who dwell in it be punished. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth shall be burned, and few men shall be left. 7The new wine shall fail, the vine shall languish, all those glad at heart shall sigh. 8The joy of the tambourine shall cease, the noise of those who rejoice shall end, the joy of the lyre shall cease. 9No more do they drink wine with a song, strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

10The deserted city shall be broken down, every house shall be shut, no one enters. 11There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy shall be darkened; the gladness of the earth shall be gone. 12The city is left in ruins, and the gate is stricken with destruction. 13For thus it is to be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, like the shaking of an olive tree, like the gleaning of grapes when the grape harvest is done. 14They lift up their voice, they sing of the excellency of YHWH, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

15Therefore praise YHWH in the east, the Name of YHWH Elohim of Yisra’el in the coastlands of the sea. 16From the ends of the earth we shall hear songs, “Splendor to the Righteous One!” But I say, “I waste away, I waste away! Woe to me! The treacherous betray, with treachery the treacherous betray.” 7Fear and the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth. 18And it shall be that he who flees from the noise of the fear falls into the pit, and he who comes up from the midst of the pit is caught in the snare. For the windows from on high shall be opened, and the foundations of the earth be shaken 19The earth shall be utterly broken, the earth shall be completely shattered, the earth shall be fiercely shaken. 20The earth shall stagger like a drunkard. And it shall totter like a hut, and its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and not rise again. 21And in that day it shall be that punishes on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the sovereigns of the earth.

22And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and be punished after many days. 23And the moon shall blush, and the sun shall be ashamed, for YHWH of hosts shall reign on Mount Tsiyon, and in Yerushalayim, and before His elders, in esteem!

It is interesting to notice that during these times of the Words of Yehovah to His prophets, the people did not have each man, woman, family the Torah of God in their own hands and homes. They were very dependent upon the prophets and priests. They were no longer preacher and advising the leaders and people concerning their sin and trespass and teaching repentance. Today – we all have the ability to read His Word for ourselves. We do well to remember, that to whom much is given, much is required.

A passage in Hosea also supports the case of the sign of stealing from Elohim. Once again, the complaint is the same that Yehovah has against us that He had when we read His Words in Jeremiah. He says, ““For there is no truth or kindness or knowledge of Elohim in the land.”

Hosea 4:1-4

Hear the word of YHWH, you children of Israel, for YHWH has a case against the inhabitants of the land: “For there is no truth or kindness or knowledge of Elohim in the land.

Swearing, and lying, and murdering, and stealing, and committing adultery have increased. And bloodshed follows bloodshed.

Therefore the land mourns, and every one living there languishes, with the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens. And the fish of the sea are taken away.

However, let no one strive or reprove another, for your people are like those striving with a priest.

Stealing is one of those trespasses that appears among the land when there is no knowledge of Elohim.

Continuing through the Bible and looking at specific references to stealing, we find a significant prophecy by Zechariah. Zechariah chapter 5

And I lifted up my eyes again, and looked and saw a flying scroll.

2And he said to me, “What do you see?”

And I answered, “I see a flying scroll, twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide.”

3And he said to me, “This is the curse that goes forth over the face of all the earth: ‘everyone who is stealing shall go unpunished,’ on the one side, according to it, and, ‘everyone who has sworn falsely shall go unpunished,’ on the other side, according to it.”

Did we see? What is the curse? The curse is that there is ‘no punishment’ for stealing His Words and swearing falsely by His Name. This is a curse. So many people falsely teach and believe that the punishment is the curse. No. The curse is ‘no punishment’. Do we understand this? When there is no more punishment, there is no more turning. When there is no more turning, there is no more waking up to the awareness of sin and trespass and sin will increase and continue. This is misery! It also should speak to us to start today becoming the priests of our own homes! His Truth, His Deliverance, His Word, and His Name – is in ‘your hand’ in ‘your mouth’ in ‘your tongue’ and in ‘your heart’

4“I shall send it out,” declares YHWH of hosts, “and it shall come into the house of the thief and the house of the one who shall swear falsely by My Name. And it shall remain in the midst of his house and shall consume it, both its timber and stones.”

In the books of the Writings, we find wisdom and people of God sharing what they have come to know through experience concerning stealing.

In Proverbs

Thievery is compared to not having a heart and is associated with the foolish woman, the foolish virgin, and harlotry. Stealing is associated with “secret knowledge” that comes from others who profess to have a special wisdom they have gained and they tempt others... the unsuspecting... to partake in their ways (the way of the Adversary)

Proverbs 9:17

A foolish woman is loud, simple, and without knowledge.

For she has seated herself at the door of her house, on a seat by the highest places of the city, to call to those who pass by, who go straight on their way:

“Who is simple? Let him turn in here.”

And as for him who lacks heart, she says to him,

“Stolen waters are sweet, and bread in secret is pleasant.”

But he does not know that the dead are there, her guests are in the depths of the grave.

Lacking heart is as lacking spirit. To some, stolen waters are sweet because the conscience is seared and they cannot “hear” the conviction of Yehovah through His Word and Holy Spirit. Again – the idea of “no punishment”. The same is for the pleasantness of “secret” bread. Let us not fall prey to this. If we are in sin, and are not being convicted of it internally, we are in deep deep trouble for our eternal souls. We should pray to receive conviction by whatever it takes so that our souls may be delivered.

Proverbs 30 verses 5-9. This is by Agur, son of Yaqeh.

Every Word of Eloah is tried; He is a shield to those taking refuge in Him.

Do not add to His Words, Lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar.

Two I have asked of You – deny them not to me before I die:

Removed falsehood and a lying word far from me

Give me neither poverty nor riches;

Feed me my portion of bread;

Lest I become satisfied and deny, and say, “Who is YHWH?” and

Lest I be poor, and steal, and seize the Name of my Elohim.

So few words and yet so full of simple wisdom! The words of Agur... how many of us pray this to Yehovah? Two simple things: Remove from me falsehood and lying, give me just enough... not too much and not too little, for either extreme will lead me into sin and trespass. Notice how Agur compares stealing to bringing the Name of Yehovah to naught! Tying the eighth commandment directly to the third commandment of not taking the Name of Yehovah in vain.

Stealing is one of those actions that is so blatantly not of Yehovah and in fact is blatantly reflective of haSatan instead.

The words of Yeshua: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to slaughter, and to destroy. I have come that they might possess life, and that they might possess it beyond measure." John 10:10

We now move into the life and teachings of our Messiah into the Apostolic writings so that we learn even more about stealing. Stealing is associated with the Adversary, Satan. It opposes Yehovah, and in relationship to our Messiah's Words above in John 10:10, let's continue reading and remember the words we read earlier about what Yehovah gave to Jeremiah about the shepherds who scatter His flock.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. But the hireling, and not being a shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, see the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees. And the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them.

Now the hireling flees because he is a hireling and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd. And I know Mine, and Mine know Me, even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father. And I lay down My life for the sheep." John 10:11-15

Here are some questions to ponder for us all:

Did Messiah have a church building?

Did Messiah receive a salary from people as an income for a house, a car, clothes?

He is the good shepherd. He is not a hireling. What is the price for a monetary payment for His Peace, His Teaching, His Comfort, His Healing, His Guidance. There is nothing He needs from us except ears, eyes, hearts, hands, and feet to hear Him and to serve one another. If starting tomorrow, we could never attend church or fellowship again... would we be able to learn, hear, and obey? Do we have enough love for the Master to hold our homes as the Sanctuary in which we live, meet, and sit at His Feet?

Matt. 6:19-21

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart shall be also."

There are many today both without and within the assembly who steal. When we steal from one another, we are in league with the adversary who steals. Perhaps we do not realize we are in league with the adversary, but we are.

For example: a believer hears and receives the truth and then many come along and press upon them their own beliefs and persecute them with strong words and insist upon a certain speech, or spelling of a name, or sow seeds of doubt concerning scripture and writings. These are thieves coming to steal. Many of the "things" we press upon people are not even part of His Instructions for life.

A measure with which to measure our actions could be: are we taking or are we giving? Yehovah gives to His child what He desires to give them, and He knows each of His own intimately just as a potter intimately knows the vessel He has created with His own two hands.

He knows the weaknesses, strengths, cracks, areas of thickness or thinness. When we, as also His created vessels, step in and put our hands upon the vessel, we become a thief, stealing that which Yehovah is creating, shaping, trimming down, or building up.

If a brother or sister receives from Yehovah a seed of Faith... add to it. Do we understand this? Let us "add" to it. A person says, "Jesus wrote the Torah, and it is not done away with as we have been taught!" Then what do some of us do? We have no joy over this, but berate the brother about the Name they are using! Instead of adding joy to joy, we steal the little bit of joy they have received from the Father! This is one example of many that could be listed and it is representative of Yehovah's adversary, not His Sons.

We read in the Apostolic writings of Yeshua being called many, many names. He was called Master, Lord, Son of David, Teacher, Rabbi and maybe some others that are not listed here. Yet, He never admonished the people over these things! He did correct one young man when the young man called Him good. In which case, Yeshua pointed to the Father, because only the Father is good. What do we do to one another? We accept the compliments of goodness and righteousness, but beat each other about the Names. We are not behaving as the Son of Elohim in these matters – but the exact opposite. How are we stealing in this instance?

So let us review the parable of the seed sower. These are the words of Yeshua:

Luk 8:5 "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some indeed fell by the wayside. And it was trodden down, and the birds of the heaven devoured it.

[Are we stepping upon one another and the seed of faith that has been given them, or are we protecting one another, building up?]

Luk 8:6 "And other fell on rock, and when it grew up, it withered because it had no moisture.

[Are we watering what little seed is given one another, or are we taking what little moisture they had?]

Luk 8:7 "And other fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it.

[Are we choking one another out or growing each other up?]

Luk 8:8 "And other fell on the good soil, and grew up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold."

Having said this He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Luk 8:9 And His taught ones were asking Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?"

Luk 8:10 And He said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the reign of Elohim, but to the rest in parables, that 'Seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not understand.'" Luk

8:11 "And this is the parable: The seed is the word of Elohim.

[Do we hear? The seed is the Word of Elohim. It is not our word... but His. No matter how small, how limited — it is His that He gives.]

Now let us look at the character of the Adversary, haSatan as some call this character, and let us "see" what it is "he" does to this seed of Elohim that falls.

Luk 8:12 “And those by the wayside are the ones who hear, then the “devil” comes and takes away the word from their hearts, lest having believed, they should be saved.

Luk 8:13 “And those on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy. And these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of trial fall away.

[here is where if we help and aid one another during times of trial may prevent another from falling away. But when we steal their joy...we are that adversary]

Luk 8:14 “And that which fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with worries, and riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to perfection. Luk

8:15 “And that on the good soil are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, retain it, and bear fruit with endurance.

Luk 8:16 “And no one having lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those coming in see the light.

Luk 8:17 “For whatever is hidden shall be revealed, and whatever is secret shall be known and come to light.

There will always be someone playing the adversary until Yeshua binds the spirit for a thousand years. The point is, do not let it be “you”

There is a great deal more to ‘search out’ on the commandment not to steal. We have covered here in this article about the plain language on material goods, persons, and punishments of His right-rulings and judgments. We covered stealing of His Words by prophets and priests, and also how we sometimes steal the seed of faith from others when we fail to lift up and add to their faith by tearing them down and continuous correction. Let us repent if we have done these things and broken the commandment of our Loving Elohim and move out of the realm of the thief and into the realm of the Giver of Life and Love.