

# The Ten Commandments

## Eight Commandment: Don't Steal

### Exodus 20:13

"You shall not steal"      לא תגנב

### Deuteronomy 15:8

Rather, you shall open your hand to him      כי פתח תפתח את ידך לו

### Maimonides Negative commandment #243

The 243rd prohibition is that we are forbidden from kidnapping any Jewish person. The source of this prohibition is G-d's statement in the Ten Commandments, "You may not steal." In the words of the *Mechilta*: "This verse refers to stealing a person." The Talmud says in tractate *Sanhedrin*, "What is the source for the prohibition of kidnapping? R. Yoshiya says it is the verse, 'You may not steal.' R. Yochanan says it is the verse, 'They may not be sold as slaves.' In actuality, however, they both agree — one refers to the prohibition of kidnapping and the other refers to the prohibition of selling [the kidnapped person]." The Talmud mentions these two prohibitions together] because the punishment is given only when the transgressor both kidnaps and sells — and if he does both transgressions, the penalty is strangulation. [The source for the punishment is] G-d's statement (exalted be He), "If one person kidnaps and sells another, and [the victim] is seen in his hand, then [the kidnapper] shall be put to death." The details of this *mitzvah* are explained in the 11th chapter of tractate *Sanhedrin*.

## **Maimonides Negative commandment #244**

The 244th prohibition is that we are forbidden from stealing money. The source of this prohibition is G-d's statement, "Do not steal." In the words of the *Mechilta*,

"The verse 'Do not steal' constitutes the prohibition of financial theft." One who transgresses this prohibition must pay back according to the formula written in the Torah — either two, four, or five times the amount stolen, or only the actual value. The *Sifra* says, "The verse that says 'He must pay back double' [the value of the stolen object] teaches us the penalty. What teaches us that the act is prohibited? The verse 'Do not steal' — even if just to disturb." This phrase ["just to disturb"] means when the intention is to [not really steal, but only to temporarily] anger and confuse the victim, and afterwards return it to him. The *Sifra* continues,] "the verse, 'Do not steal,' teaches that you may not do so, even if you intend to pay him back four or five times the value." The details of this *mitzvah* are explained in the 7th chapter of tractate *Bava Kama*.

## **Maimonides Positive commandment #195**

The 195th *mitzvah* is that we are commanded to give charity — to support and relieve the poor. This command is expressed in the Torah in various ways: "Open your hand generously"; "Help him survive, whether he is a convert or a born Jew"; "Help your brother survive with you." These verses all have the same point — that we must provide for our poor and support them in accordance with their need. The details of this *mitzvah* are explained in a number of places, the majority in tractates *Kesubos* and *Baba Basra*.

The Oral Tradition relates that even a poor person who himself lives from charity is also obligated in this *mitzvah* — to give even a small amount of charity to someone less fortunate than him or on the same level as himself.