

The Third Commandment

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Exodus 20:7

In 2002, **Alan Segal** wrote an important book documenting the idea of “two powers in heaven” in Jewish tradition. The idea is as it sounds. In heaven, there is God. But there is also another good “**principle angelic or hypostatic manifestation in heaven equivalent to God.**”¹ Sometime after the destruction of the second temple (70 AD), in the second century, the idea became heretical. But before that, for perhaps centuries, including the time when Christ walked the earth, it was orthodox and flourishing. Segal notes that “**The Christian messiah may have been a target of the [anti] ‘two powers’ [rabbis],**” and that “**other mediating or intermediary divine helpers in Jewish tradition [such as**

¹ Alan Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, x.

Michael, Metatron, or Peniel (Phanuel, Uriel, and Samriël are interchanged with Phanuel)] **may also have offended rabbinic sensibilities.**” This included also several words that were sometimes added in the OT to explain difficult “two powers” texts such as *Yeqara* (glory), *Memra* (word/*logos*), and *Shekinah* (dwell/glory). These words almost took on the quality of the heavenly person.

For example, where **Exodus 25:8** says, “Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them,” Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (TPJ) says, “They shall make a Sanctuary to My Name, that My Shekinah may dwell among them.” This is an interesting substitution of God with both the word “Name” and “Shekinah,” which are capitalized in the English. Another example is **Leviticus 26:12** which says, “I shall live among you; I shall be your God and you will be my people.” Yet, the Targum says, “The Glory of My Shekinah shall dwell among you, and My Word [Memra] shall be to you for a redeeming God, and you

shall be unto My Name for a holy people.” This time, the Word, or *Memra*, is added to Shekinah and Name.

Often times, the name of God is tied closely to the *Memra*, such as in the strange interpretation of **Genesis 4:26**, “To Seth also was born a son, and he called his name Enosh. That was the generation in whose days they began to err, and to make themselves idols, and surnamed their idols by the name of the Memra of the Lord.” You see, rather than calling upon the name of the LORD, as the Bible has it, the Targum talks about the name *of the Memra* of the LORD. The *Memra* was thought of as a physical manifestation of God, just like the Shekinah. Yet, it is both God, and, not God. **Genesis 19:24** is one of the best examples to show where this might come from. The Bible says, “Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven” (see also **Amos 4:11** and **Isa 13:17a, 19**). **Michael Heiser** writes, “Kind of odd, isn’t it? *The Lord* (Yahweh in Hebrew) is the one raining fire out of heaven *from the Lord* (Yahweh). It really looks

like there are two Yahwehs here!”² The Targum “solved” the problem of the strange wording by inserting “Memra,” saying, “Then the Memra of Yahweh rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from Yahweh out of heaven.” This same Memra figure later appears to Abraham and many others in the Targums. We know him as the Angel of the LORD.

I love giving teasers like this to keep your interest, because I know that you may be asking, what has this to do with the third commandment? Let us consider the third commandment the rest of our time together. It says, “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain” (Ex 20:7). As always, we need to ask, what does the commandment require and what does it forbid? The Shorter Catechism (Q. 54) tells us, “The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God’s names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works.” Q. 55 says, “The third

² Michael Heiser, “An Unexpected Word” (PDF online), 5.

commandment forbids all profaning or abusing of anything whereby God makes himself known.” Those are both very broad, so perhaps it is best to look at the commandment itself in order to see what is going on here.

There are two words in the commandment that you need to understand. The first is the word “name.” The second is the word “vain.” What is a name? In the Bible, the name identifies the person. It is so inextricably linked to the reality, that they two were one. If you know the name, you know the nature of the one named. Adam means “man,” the most apt name for the very first man. Noah means “rest,” a word you find many times in the flood narrative. Noah’s son Shem means “Name,” for through him God would make a name for himself. He did this through Abram who became Abraham, “Father of Many Nations.” Jacob was “deceiver,” and what was ever more true than this name? But God changed it to “Israel,” the one who strove with God and prevailed. Jesus means “savior,” and Christ means

“anointed one” (messiah), and **Emmanuel** means “God with us.” All of these names and many more explain the very essence of a person.

God revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush by telling him his *Name*. He said, “**I AM WHO I AM. . . The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. . . This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations**” (**Ex 3:14-15**). We know this name as Yahweh. This name obviously gets to the **heart of God’s being**. He is **always in existence**, the Ever Living One: before all things, during all things, and the goal of all things. If anything comes after him, it therefore owes its existence to him. Thus, the name reveals many of God’s **attributes** such as his omnipotence, omniscience, and wisdom. In the context, the name is also a reference to his covenant, and therefore of that which cannot be known from creation alone. God makes his covenant, calls his elect, keeps his promises, remembers his covenant when we sin, fulfills his word, does all that he

says. God is faithful, trustworthy, good, relational, gracious, just, and merciful. This makes his name infinitely greater than any other name in the universe. As such, it is wholly worthy of devotion and respect.

Vanity, however, is the opposite of devotion and respect. As one person says, “To ‘take up’ (*niśśā*) the name of the LORD on one’s lips ‘in vain’ (*laššāw*) meant to ‘misuse’ it, i.e., *to use it for no purpose.*”³ To treat something as a vain thing, is to treat it as trivial, ephemeral, inconsequential, light, ordinary, meaningless, temporary, in a word: profane. This is forbidden.

Before looking at what “no purpose” means, I want to first look at what *no use at all* means! Does the command say that you are not to use God’s name at all? I bring this up because of the Jews. The reason why we have the word Jehovah, is because it is a cross between *yhvh* and *adonai*. Why do you need a “cross?” Because

³ Kaiser, *Exodus*, EBC, 423.

the Jews forgot how to pronounce *yhvh*, which is the Name “I AM WHO I AM.” Why did they forget? Because they were forbidden from ever saying it, because of their interpretation of the third commandment! Whenever they saw that word, they said “adonai,” which simply means “lord.” But *yhvh* has no vowels in the original script. “Jehovah” is thus the vowels of *adonai* combined with the consonants *yhvh* (with the “J” replacing the “Y” in Latin). You can see something similar today in a chat room when you talk to a Jew. They will spell “G-d” without the vowel, for fear that even typing G-O-D will result in breaking the third commandment!

But the command doesn't say you may never *use* God's name, it says you may not use it *vainly*. We know this from the many laws on taking oaths. Think of **Deut 10:20**, “You shall fear and serve the Lord, and by his name you shall swear.” The flip side? **Num 30:1b-2**, “When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break

his word but must do everything he said.” Far from forbidding taking God’s name in an oath, it actually commands it! What did Isaiah get angry at? The people “swear by the name of the LORD and confess the God of Israel, *but not in truth or right*” (Isa 48:1). Isaiah is concerned with the seriousness of the Name of God, and of not doing what you say you will do? Using God’s name properly involves being a person full of truth and integrity, following through with what you promise, keeping your word, acting responsibly. As such, this is a related law to the ninth commandment, not to bear false witness against your neighbor. Both are concerned with a specific kind of falsity and lying. One is against God, the other is against your neighbor.

A lot of people today, who have no ability to handle the Word of God properly (and even many who do⁴), think that Jesus is overthrowing the taking of oaths in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:33-37). But if you

⁴ For example, D.A. Carson, one of the best exegetes of our day embarrassingly writes, “It must be frankly admitted that Jesus here formally contravenes OT law.” D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” vol. 8 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (ed. F. E. Gaebelin, et al.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) 154.

look carefully, he is not overthrowing the law (as he himself swore he would not do; cf. **Matt 5:17**). Rather, **he showing that God never allows loopholes to swearing falsely**. To overthrow this commandment would have been to put his own stamp of approval upon being a liar and perjurer, because it is impossible to get away from taking an oath! The Pharisees would not swear in God's name (because they wouldn't even say it aloud), but they would swear by all sorts of other things, and since these things weren't God, they believed they could break their vows. This is why Jesus tells them not to swear by anything in heaven or earth, but let the "yes" be yes, and "no" be no (which are themselves oath-promises). He was saying that no matter what you swear by, you must fulfill your vow, because God is Lord of heaven and earth and anything you choose to swear by!⁵

How then might we apply the third commandment? In the legal system of Israel, it has its first application in civil life in making vows. This extends anywhere from pledging fidelity in marriage to making a legal vow in a court of law. American society once took oaths seriously:

⁵ See my sermon on Matthew 5:33-37.

oaths of office, oaths in court, oaths of marriage, oaths of fidelity to a confession of faith and membership, ordinance vows, even giving your word in a transaction. The seriousness of vows is embedded in our very own Constitution of the United States (Art. 2, Sect. 1) which says, “Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation: ‘I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.’” This, of course, was based upon the general recognition, even among deists and other unbelievers, that the third commandment is written upon our hearts, and that any society that does not take oaths seriously, is a false society and bound for ruin. The oath thus served a foundational culture purpose, without which, the culture would (and will) die.

For, what good is a general oath, if you live in a relativistic worldview that twists the meaning of words

and does not believe in the God of the Bible? Remember a **former President**, who was asked about sexual relations with an employee at the White House? He swore an oath about his behavior, but then equivocated by saying, “**It depends upon what the meaning of ‘is’ is.**” Thus, he got out of his oath on a technicality. Or, what if you take an oath, swearing to uphold the Constitution, but your view of the Constitution is that it is a “living document?” You can swear that Presidential oath or oath to be a Federal Judge and feel perfectly justified in twisting its every meaning. Or, what if you are a false person in the first place, and you swear upon your own falsity to uphold the Constitution? Then, you justify yourself in not keeping your word, because you swore upon something that is false in the first place. All of these **tactics are used by wicked men and hypocrites**, just like Jesus saw 2,000 years ago.

But civil life does not only include the courts and our national leaders, it involves all of culture. One person

writes, “The oath of office, the trustworthiness of witnesses, the stability of a society in terms of a common regard for truth, the faithfulness of the clergy to their ordination vows, of wives and husbands to their marital vows, and much more all hinge on the holiness of the oath or vow. Where there is no regard for truth, when men can subscribe to oaths and vows with no intention of abiding by their terms, then social anarchy and degeneration ensue.”⁶ But the commandment concerns taking God’s name specifically (though implied is the oath sworn by anything). For you see, swearing and oath taking is always **swearing upon God’s name, even when you don’t believe in him or use his name explicitly**. As I said, that was Jesus’ point. And so you must be quick to fulfill your vow (**Ecc 5:4**), while being slow to make rash and thoughtless vows as did Jephthah (**Jdg 11:30**). Your word must be taken very seriously, because you always stand front and center before the Throne of Heaven.

⁶ Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, 111.

Maybe the most important places this can be done today is in the marriage and the church. Both marriage vows and membership/ordinance vows are almost meaningless to most people today, even though they say them in front of God! Still, more and more people live as if they only need to keep them when times are good or when they are favorable or to their liking. When they don't like their spouse anymore or when the church won't pick up their particular hobby horse, they are out of here. But if we, who make vows in God's name in these sacred institutions won't even keep our own vows, how dare we rail on the culture for breaking its vows when they don't even swear by God's name? Hypocrisy starts here, not out there.

Neil Postman (a Jewish non-believer) picks up the theme regarding the fidelity of TV preachers and the second commandment, but I was thinking about this quote in relation to the third and more generally to any preacher to becomes bigger than his own vows. “**On television, God is a vague and subordinate character.**”

Though His name is invoked repeatedly, the concreteness and persistence of the image of the preacher carries the clear message that it is he, not He, who must be worshipped, I do not mean to imply that the preacher wishes to be so; only that the power of a close-up televised face, in color, makes idolatry a continual hazard. Television is, after all, a form of graven imagery far more alluring than a gold calf. God exists. . . in our minds, whereas Swaggart is *there*, to be seen, admired, adored. Which is why he is the star of the show. And why Billy Graham is a celebrity, and why Oral Robert has his own university, and why Robert Schuller has a crystal cathedral all to himself. If I am not mistaken, the word for this is blasphemy.”⁷

What is **blasphemy**? It is an **impious utterance or action against God**. Hence, in this broader definition, it is a good word to summarize the third commandment. In light of it, I want to move now from swearing oaths specifically to more general things such as your speech

⁷ Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*.

and even more generally your conduct. You have heard of the word “**profanity**.” We usually think of that word in terms of “dirty words,” which I will talk about in a moment. But profanity literally means “before the temple” (*pro-fanum*). A commentator explains, “Profanity is all speech, action, and living which is outside of God. [It] includes filthy speech, false swearing and cursing, and also polite and courteous speech and action which is outside God and which does not recognize His sovereignty.”⁸ Thus, to swear by God’s name or to swear without using it, it is all profanity, if you act falsely or if you act outside of the recognition of his sovereignty. In light of this last point, unbelievers are therefore breaking the commandment every second of their lives, because they do nothing in recognition of God’s sovereignty!

Let me talk about the nature of “**dirty words**” for a moment. Certainly, we think about the third commandment every time a person curses using God’s

⁸ Ibid.; 107.

name in their speech. In fact, this is probably the only way that many people ever think about the commandment at all! Why do we call them “dirty” words or “filthy” speech? Because a lot of the time, the language is quite literally about **excrement**! It is *literally* filthy speech, full of maggots and flies, showing where the person lives in their own heart and mind. They are gutter people, people of the sewer. Their language stinks like a cow feces on a hot summer day.

Notice also, speech about bowel movements is always accompanied with speech about unlawful sex acts and speech calling down curses and damnation. Have you ever wondered why? All of these things are “low” things, the very opposite of that which is high in heaven. The speech is thus always looking down, never up. It has its mind on things below, not on things above. The more disgusting or immoral or damnable, the farther away from God it is, the better.

Filthy speech is thus the opposite of using God's name properly. **R.J. Rushdoony** puts it brilliantly. "Godly oaths seek their confirmation and strength from above; ungodly swearing looks below for its power. Its concept of the 'below' is Manichaeian to the core: it is material. Hence, ungodly swearing finds its power, its 'below,' in sex and in excrement. The association is significant. Even while protesting the 'Puritanism' of Biblical morality, the ungodly reveal that to them sex and excrement are linked together as powers of the 'underworld' of the unconscious, the primitive, and the vital. The direction of profanity is thus progressively downward." Every time you say one of those words as a curse word, you are swearing an oath upon something utterly profane. Yes, you cannot get away from taking an oath, that is why they are called "swear" words!

Listen to how diverse the application of the third commandment is in the NT with respect to speech and language. "Let no corrupting talk (unwholesome words) come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for

building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Eph 4:29). “For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error” (2 Pet 2:18). “Let your speech always be with grace” (Col 4:6). “Put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth” (Col 3:8). “The tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!” (James 3:5). “Avoid the irreverent babble” (1 Tim 6:20). “Avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness” (2 Tim 2:16). It is thus not only swearing in God’s name, it is swearing more generally that is in mind. It is thus not only saying filthy things, but not saying good things that the commandment implies. You are bound, by law in this commandment, to say good and kind things. And you must remember that you sin not only in what you do, but in what you leave undone. Both are shown in the Proverbs: A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger (Prov 15:1-2).

In light of the verse which says worldly chatter leads to “further ungodliness,” Rushdoony remarks that

“verbal profanity is an oral witness to a social profanity. As the verbal profanity delves downward, so does society in its actions.” It is thus a barometer that indicates that a social revolution is in progress. First people say it, then they do it! What a culture tolerates in speech, they will tolerate in action. So, if I chose NT verses about the tongue to describe that which is profane, I want to choose OT verses about the rest of the body to describe profaning the name of God.

Many times, the OT explains how you can “profane the name of your God.” When they offered their children in the fire to Molech (Lev 18:21), when they swore falsely a personal or legal oath (Lev 19:12), when they made the sanctuary unclean (Lev 20:3), when they lied and were false in action or denied the LORD or stole (Prov 30:8-9), when they broke the Sabbath and didn’t hold fast the covenant (Isa 56:6), when they offered wicked gifts and idols (Ezek 20:39). All of these profaned *the name of the Lord*.

In other words, *whenever they sinned in any way*, be it big like child-sacrifice or small like stealing, they broke the third commandment. In this way, to break one commandment is to break them all. And so, it is not only unbelievers or hypocrites who are constantly guilty of breaking the commandment, it is you and I! And this is why no one may keep the third commandment perfectly, and instead must fly to Christ for safety.

And fly to safety in Christ you must, because of God's wrath associated with the commandment. God says in the reason annexed to the command, "**The LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.**" The Larger Catechism (Q. 114) explains that, "because he is the Lord and our God. . . he will be so far from acquitting and sparing the transgressors of this commandment, as that he will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment, albeit many such escape the censures and punishments of men." God does not like it when you swear falsely, when you curse, when you fail to carry out your oath, when you hypocritically take an

oath, or when you in any other way profane his name, because he is jealous for his name. But when you come to Christ, your transgressions (past and future) are thrown as far away as the east is from the west. Your trespasses against taking the name of the Lord in vain are covered, your sins forgiven. For, this is why Christ died, so that you might have safely under his wings.

But just now, I want to finish by looking once more at the name. As I said earlier, the name of God and God are inextricably linked together. But there is a place where the two actually become one. So I want to ask a question. Could a Jew have flown to Christ? Yes! And they should have. Just here, I want to return to this earlier idea of the Memra of God.

One of the earliest recordings of this is in **Gen 16:11-13** in the story of Hagar and Ishmael. It says, “The angel of the LORD said to her, ‘Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has listened to your

affliction. . . So she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, ‘You are a God of seeing,’ for she said, ‘Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.’” She did not take the Name in vain, did she? But she saw him and confessed him, and trusted in him. It says that the Name of the Lord, that is the Angel of the LORD, spoke to her and saw her affliction.

Of this same angel it says in **Ex 23:20-21**, “Behold, I send *an angel* before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for *my name is in him*.” Several chapters later it says, “The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed *the name of the LORD*” (**Ex 34:5**). The Targum says here, “The LORD revealed himself in the cloud of the glory of His Shekinah, and Mos[es] stood with Him there; and Mos[es] called on the Name of the Memra of the Lord.”

Beloved, this is Christ in the OT, standing before Moses and others face to face. He is “The Name of the LORD.” And so, in a very tangible sense, he is the focal point of the third commandment. We must not take the *Name* of the Lord in vain. The Name is also called the Memra, the Word. And the Jews knew about him before Jesus came. Writing (probably) slightly before the time of Christ (20 BC – 50 AD), the Jewish historian and philosopher Philo wrote, “Even if there be not as yet anyone who is worthy to be called a son of God, nevertheless let him labor earnestly to be adorned according to his first-born logos, the eldest of his angels, as the great archangel of many names; for he is called, the authority, and the name of God, and the logos, and man according to God’s image, and he who sees Israel” (Philo, *On the Confusing of Tongues*, 146).

But we have the revelation made more sure and firm, because now, the *logos* has come *in the flesh* (John 1:14). What glory is hidden in such a thing? Isaiah predicts, “By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out

in righteousness a word (*logos*, LXX) that shall not return: “To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance” (Isa 45:23). The Christian “targum” (lit. translation, interpretation) is found in **Philippians 2:10-11**, “At the NAME of JESUS every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the GLORY (shekinah⁹) of God the Father. To read this most early of Church creeds and songs as a Targum, an interpretation of Isaiah in light of the Word made flesh, is to expand our understanding of both testaments, and to see in a very literal physical way how the third commandment is embodied.

If this is true, that Christ was right there in the wilderness with Israel, then in a very practical way, to

⁹ Hebrew NTs have *kabod* (glory). But Shekinah is a substitutive term. The Jewish Encyclopedia (“Shekinah”) explains, “The majestic presence or manifestation of God which has descended to ‘dwell’ among men. Like Memra (= “word”; “logos”) and “Yeḳara” (i.e., “Kabod” = “glory”), the term was used by the Rabbis in place of “God”. . . The term “Shekinah,” which is Hebrew, whereas “Memra” and “Yeḳara” are Aramaic, took the place of the latter two in Talmud and Midrash, and thus absorbed the meaning which they have in the Targum, where they almost exclusively occur.” Shekinah takes the place of *elohim* (Onk. Gen 9:27), *shem*/name (Onk. Deut 12:5), and presence/face (*panim*; Ex 33:14). A classic example of a NT idea of Shekinah is found at the birth of Christ in **Luke 2:9**, “The *glory* of the Lord *shone* round about them.”

take the name of the Lord in vain is to deny his reality. He is the Name which descended upon Israel, dwelt among them, and was established in their midst (**Deut 12:11; 14:23; 16:6, 11; 26:2; Neh 1:9**). He is the “presence” or “face” or **Shekinah** or **Memra** or Word of God. For, he *is* the *Name* of the Lord.

And therefore, consider one last thing this morning. All of you who gather here weekly to break bread and fellowship together, to sing Psalms and hymns, and to be fed the word of God, you all call yourselves *Christians*. That is, **you bear the Name upon your breast**. It has taken you to itself and linked you with God in heaven through union with the Son. You are inextricably linked to this word, as a name is to the person who bears it. Therefore, you must learn to act rightly in all things that you do. For if you bear the name, then when you sin in any of these ways mentioned today, you take the Lord’s name in vain in your own person, not just your speech or even your body.

To simply call yourself a Christian is to take an oath or a vow in the Name of the Lord! This vow is that you will ever obey him and seek to do what he commands. It is to repent when you fall short and so break your vow and take the name in vain. Most of all, it is to trust that in the Name of the Lord alone God is pleased, and that by faith in him, God has hidden your sins under Christ's Name. Therefore, you are free to obey the commandment out of gratitude, taking seriously all that it encompasses in all that you have become, because you are a Christians, bearers of the Name made flesh, the one who has called you each by your name, so that you now all bear the same name, the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Q. 53. *Which is the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Q. 54. *What is required in the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word and works.

Q. 55. *What is forbidden in the third commandment?*

A. The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning or abusing of anything whereby God maketh himself known.

Q. 56. *What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?*

A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is that however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.

Question 111: Which is the third commandment?

Answer: The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain.

Question 112: What is required in the third commandment?

Answer: The third commandment requires, That the name of God, his titles, attributes, ordinances, the Word, sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his

works, and: Whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and reverently used in thought, meditation, word, and writing; by an holy profession, and Answerable conversation, to the glory of God, and the good of ourselves, and others.

Question 113: What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?

Answer: The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, the not using of God's name as is required; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning, or otherwise using his titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; murmuring and quarreling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God's decrees and providences; misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the Word, or any part of it, to profane jests, curious or unprofitable Questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or anything contained under the name of God, to charms, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or anywise opposing of God's truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or backsliding from it.

Question 114: What reasons are annexed to the third commandment?

Answer: The reasons annexed to the third commandment, in these words, The Lord thy God, and, For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain, are, because he is the Lord and our God, therefore his name is not to be profaned, or any way abused by us; especially because he will be so far from acquitting and sparing the transgressors of this commandment, as that he will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment, albeit many such escape the censures and punishments of men.