Commentary on God’s Ten Commandments

Tibetan-English Edition
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Every day we have to obey rules and laws. There are government laws, and regulations, religious laws, and rules where we work. Schools have many rules. There are traffic rules, and even rules about borrowing money from a bank. Without rules and laws our society would be ruined and there would be much suffering. Because God loves us, he also has given us many rules and laws in the Bible. Among the most important are the Ten Commandments. If we live in accordance with the ten commandments we will please God.
དཀོན་མཆོག་གི་བཀའ་ཁིམས་བཅུ།

༡ ང་རང་ནི་ཁོད་ཚོའི་གཙོ་བོ་དཀོན་མཆོག་ཡིན་ཏེ། ང་རང་མ་གཏོགས་
དགོན་མཉམ་ལང་ཁོད་ཚོས་བེན་མི་ཆོག་ལ་དད་པའང་བྲེད་མི་ཆོག །

༢ ཁོད་ཀྱིས་སྐུ་འདྲ་དང༌།  སྲེང་གི་ནམ་མཁའམ།  འོག་གི་སའམ།  ས་འོག་
གི་ཆུ་ལ་ཡོད་པའི་སྲེམས་ཅན་གཟུགས་བརྙན་གང་ཡང་མ་བཟོས་ཤིག
དྲེ་དག་ལ་ཕག་ཀྱང་མ་འཚལ་ལ་བསྲེན་བཀུར་ཡང་མ་བྲེད་ཅིག །

༣ དོན་མྲེད་གང་བྱུང་དུ་ཁོད་ཚོའི་གཙོ་བོ་དཀོན་མཆོག་གི་མཚན་མ་སྤོད་
ཅིག །

༤ ངལ་གསོ་བའི་ཉིན་མོ་དྲན་ཏྲེ་དམ་པར་སྲུངས་ཤིག   ཉིན་དྲུག་གི་རིང་དུ་
ལས་ཀ་བྲེད་ཆོག་ཀྱང༌།   ཉིན་བདུན་པ་ནི་ཁོད་ཚོའི་གཙོ་བོ་དཀོན་མཆོག་
གི་ངལ་གསོའི་ཉིན་མོ་ཡིན་པས།   དང་གི་ལས་ཀ་བྲེད་མི་ཆོག །
༥ ཤིང་ིས་བཤད་པ་བཞིན་པའི་ཐོད་ཅིག
༦ ཤིང་ིས་སྣ་སྨྲན་ཅིག
༧ མི་མ་བྲེད་ཅིག
༨ རྐུ་མ་མ་བརྐུ་ཞིག
༩ གཞན་ལ་རྫུན་གི་དཔང་པོ་མ་བྲེད་ཅིག
༡༠ མི་གཞན་གི་ཁང་པ་ལ་ཧམ་སྲེམས་བྲེད་མི་ཆོག་ཅིང༌།

༦ ལོག་གཡྲེམ་མ་བྲེད་ཅིག
༧ སུ་མོ་བཞིན་ཅིག
༨ ལོག་པོ་། ལོག་མོ། བ་གླང་དང༌། དྲེ་ལྟར་མི་ལ་ཡོད་པ་

༩ མི་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་ཧམ་སྲེམས་བྲེད་མི་ཆོག་ཅིང༌།

༠ གཞན་གི་ཆུང་མ་དང༌། གཡོག་པོ། གཡོག་མོ། བ་གླང་དང༌། དྲེ་ལྟར་མི་ལ་ཡོད་པ་
God’s Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall rely on or believe in nothing other than me.
2. Do not make idols or any image of anything in the sky above, of anything in the earth below, or anything in the waters under the earth, nor bow down to or worship them.
3. Do not use the name of the Lord your God in vain.
4. Remember the Day of Rest and keep it holy. You may do work on six days, but the seventh is the Lord your God’s Day of Rest; do not do any work on it.
5. Honor your parents.
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not bear false witness.
10. Do not greedily desire another’s house, or wife, or male or female servants, cattle, or anything else he has.
1.1 Many centuries before Tibet’s first kingdoms, the Jewish people lived in the land of Egypt. They served as slaves to Egypt’s king. The king treated the Jewish people with great cruelty. God saw their suffering, and he sent a prophet named Moses to rescue them. Under God’s leadership, Moses led the Jewish people out of the land of Egypt into the desert to Mount Sinai. There God revealed his great power to the Jewish people by doing many works of miraculous power. Through the prophet
Moses God gave the Jewish people many religious laws, and the ten commandments. God promised that if the Jewish people obeyed these commandments, he would bless them. The account of how this happened is found in the Bible in the books of Exodus (20:1-17) and Deuteronomy (5:6-21).

1.2 Parents make rules for their children in order to keep them safe. For example, a father tells his son not to go near the bank of a river. If the son obeys his father’s command, he will be kept safe. If he disobeys his father’s command, he may fall into the water and drown. In the same
way, God gave us the ten commandments to keep us safe from sin. If we obey them, God will give us grace and blessing. If we disobey them, God will punish us just as a loving parent punishes a disobedient child. But since God loves us, he has given us these ten commandments for our benefit.

1.3 The first four of the ten commandments tell us how we should worship God. According to the Lord Jesus, the first four commandments mean that we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30).

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The other six commandments tell us how we should behave towards other people. The Lord Jesus said that these commandments mean that we must love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31). Each commandment tells us that we must do certain things. These are our duties. There are also things we must not do. These things are called sins. God gave these commandments so that we will know how to please him, and so that we will not sin. By observing the following ten commandments we will avoid sin and please God.
God’s Ten Commandments (First Section)

The First Commandment: I am the Lord your God. You shall rely on or believe in nothing other than me.

2.1 God is very great. He made the world and everything in it. He is present everywhere, he sees all people and knows everything. He depends on nothing, and he is holy and completely separated from sin. God has all power. Since there cannot be two gods who are each all-powerful, Yaweh
God alone is God (Mark 12:28-29). Since there is only one God, we should worship him only. We believe his word, praise and thank him, pray to him, obey him. We are also to love him because he loves us. If we do this, God will give us his blessing.

2.2 Some people say that there is no God. As the Bible says, “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’”. We know that God exists because he made the world. He speaks to us in his word, the Bible. He sent his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to save us.
from our sins. He gives us his Holy Spirit. Every day we speak to God in prayer. All who believe in the Lord Jesus know that God exists. There are also philosophical proofs that God exists.

2.3 Other people rely on things that are not God. For example, the person who is greedy relies on money. The person who is proud pretends to rely on himself even though he cannot add even a single hour to his span of life (Luke 12:25). People who go to fortune tellers or shamans depend on evil spirits. If we depend on or believe in anyone or anything other than

6 སྐྱོང་ནང་ཚེ་འདི་ཆུ་ཚོད་གཅིག་ཙམ་གི་རིང་དུ་གཏོང་མི་ཐུབ་ཀྱང༌། 25 ི་སྡིག་ཉེས་བྲེད་པ་ཡིན། གཙོ་བོ་ཡེ་ཤུ་ལ་དད་མཁན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་དཀོན་མཆོག་ཡིན་པར་ཤྲེས། 

6 ཤི་ཞིད་འབོད་པའི་སར་འགོ་མཁན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་གདོན་འདྲེ་ལ་རྲེན། ང་ཚོས་དཀོན་མཆོག་ཕུད་གཞན་གང་ཡང་ལ་བརྲེན་ན་རང་མགོ་རང་གིས་སོར་ཏྲེ་སྡིག་ཉྲེས་བྲེད་པ་ཡིན། གཙོ་བོ་ཡེ་ཤུ་ལ་དད་མཁན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་དཀོན་མཆོག་ཡིན་པར་ཤྲེས། 

2.3  །ཐར་བར་མཛད་པའི་ཕིར་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་སས་གཙོ་བོ་ཡྲེ་ཤུ་མཱ་ཤི་ཀ་འཛམ་གླིང་འདིར་མངགས།  ཁོང་གིས་ངྲེད་རྣམས་ལ་དམ་པའི་ཐུགས་ཉིད་གནང་བྱུང༌།  སོན་ལམ་འདྲེབས་པའི་སོ་ནས་ང་ཚོས་ཉིན་ལྟར་ཁོང་ལ་ཞུ།  གཙོ་བོ་ཡེ་ཤུ་ལ་དད་མཁན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་དཀོན་མཆོག་ཡིན་པར་ཤྲེས། 

2.3 མི་གཞན་གིས་དཀོན་མཆོག་མ་ཡིན་པ་རྣམས་ལ་རྲེན།  དཔྲེར་ན་ཧམ་སྲེམས་པས་ནོར་ལ་རྲེན།  རང་གི་མི་ཚེ་འདི་ཆུ་ཚོད་གཅིག་ཙམ་གི་རིང་དུ་གཏོང་མི་ཐུབ་ཀྱང༌། 25 ི་སྡིག་ཉེས་བྲེད་པ་ཡིན། གཙོ་བོ་ཡེ་ཤུ་ལ་དད་མཁན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་དཀོན་མཆོག་ཡིན་པར་ཤྲེས། 

6 ཤི་ཞིད་འབོད་པའི་སར་འགོ་མཁན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་གདོན་འདྲེ་ལ་རྲེན། 6 ལུ་ཀཱ་ཡིས་བྲིས་པའི་འཕིན་བཟང་ལྲེའུ་12 ི་25 ི་སྡིག་ཉེས་བྲེད་པ་ཡིན།
God, we deceive ourselves and commit sin. Only God is worthy of our trust. For this reason, God says, “I am the Lord your God. You shall rely upon or believe in no other gods.”
The Second Commandment: Do not make idols or any image of anything in the sky above, of anything in the earth below, or anything in the waters under the earth, nor bow down to or worship them.

3.1 God is greater than anything we can see. God is greater than anything we can see or think of. No model or image can represent him. Only the Lord Jesus can perfectly represent God (Hebrews 1:3). We worship God by praying and reading the Bible with other believers. We do not need any images to worship God.
3.2 Many centuries ago, when God gave the Jewish people the ten commandments, in order to represent God, they made a golden idol in the shape of a calf. Making this idol was an insult to God. When the prophet Moses saw it, he put it into the fire, ground it to powder and as a punishment made the Jewish people drink it (Exodus 32:20). Making this idol was a great sin, and God punished the people because of it. Believers in the Lord Jesus must throw out any idols they have in their homes. If they do so, God will bless them.

8 ལུང་སོན་པ་མོ་ཤྲིས་བྲིས་པའི་མདོ་གཉིས་པ་སྲེ་ཐྲེགས་པ་ལྲེའུ་20 དཱ་ལུས་ཁུག་32 གཉེན་
3.3 People depend on idols because they want to accumulate merit. They pray or offer a gift to an idol in order to get long life or money or some other benefit for themselves. But no one can do that with God. Idols and the spirits in them are not from God. Before God, the gods have no power at all. As the Bible says,

Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands.

They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see.

They have ears, but do not hear;
3.4 The prophet Isaiah told a story about a carpenter. This carpenter took a log and sawed it in two. One half he burned in the fire to cook his food. The other half he carved into an idol. He bowed down to the idol and said, “Save me, for you are my god.” Half he burned and half he worshipped. Isaiah said that such noses, but do not smell. They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat.

Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them (Psalms 115:3-8).
མགོ་རང་གིས་སོར་བར་གསུངས། 10 གཉེན་ཐམས་ཅད་
དགོས་ཚེ་ལ་ ལྷག་མི་ས་བརྒྱད་སུམ་གོན་
དགོས་ཚེ་གིས་ཐུབ་ཤེས་གྲེལ་ཀྱི་
མི་ཐུབ་པས་ དཀོན་མཆོག་གིས་ཁོད་ཀྱིས་སྐུ་འདྲ་
དང༌།  སྲེང་གི་ནམ་མཁའམ།  འོག་གི་སའམ།  ས་འོག་
གི་ཆུ་ལ་ཡོད་པའི་སྲེམས་ཅན་གཟུགས་བརྙན་
དྲེ་དག་ལ་ཕག་ཀྱང་མ་འཚལ་ལ་བསྲེན་
བཀུར་ཡང་མ་བྲེད་ཅིག་ཅྲེས་གསུངས་སོ།།

10 རྡོ་རྗེ་འཇོག་པའི་དབང་ལྡན་ལྡན་པའི་མཚན་གཤི་44 ལྷི་10-20 པར་
བཟོད་པ།
The Third Commandment: Do not use the name of the Lord your God in vain.

4.1 God’s name represents his character. According to the Book of Psalms, God’s name shows his righteousness (Psalms 89:15-16), holiness (Psalms 99:3), love (Psalms 138:2), salvation (Psalms 96:2) and glory (Psalms 148:13). This is why people can love God’s name (Psalms 5:11), praise God’s name (Joel 2:26), or give thanks to God’s
name (Psalms 54:6). To show respect to God’s name is to show respect to God’s character. If we say God’s name with reverence and show respect to him with our behavior, he is glorified (Colossians 3:17). We take God’s name in vain if we say we believe in him, but tell lies or commit sexual immorality. We take God’s name in vain if we use it in superstition or magic. God punishes anyone who misuses his name (Exodus 20:7) or who speaks against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:32, Mark 3:29, Luke 12:10). Because his name is holy, “God says, Do not use the name of the Lord your God in vain.”
The Fourth Commandment: Remember the Day of Rest and keep it holy. You may do work on six days, but the seventh is the Lord your God’s Day of Rest; do not do any work on it.

5.1 God created the world in six days. On the seventh day he rested. God blessed the seventh day and made it a special day (Genesis 2:2-3). So on the seventh day we and our families put aside our usual work or studies and gather with other believers to worship God, listen to his word, pray, and encourage one
another to do good. Since the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, God’s day of rest is on Sunday. The meaning of our not doing work on that day is to show that we do not work or gain merit to receive salvation. At the end of time we will rest in God’s presence forever. Since the day of rest is a blessing God gives to us, God commands us: Remember the Day of Rest and keep it holy. You may do work on six days, but the seventh is the Lord your God’s Day of Rest; do not do any work on it.
The Ten Commandments (Second Section)
The Fifth Commandment: Honor your parents.

6.1 According to the traditional story, there once lived in a forest an elephant, a rabbit, a monkey, and a bird. These four harmonious friends wanted to show respect to each other. They came to a tree and the elephant said, “When I first saw this tree, it was the same height as me.” The monkey said, “When I first saw this tree, it was about as tall as my body.” The rabbit said, “When I first saw this tree, I licked the dew off its leaves.” The bird said, “When
the roots of this tree were still underground, I fertilized it and it grew from that.” In this way the animals discovered the order of their ages, and the younger ones showed respect to the older ones. The animals in this story live in harmony with each other by showing respect. In human life we can only live in harmony with each other when we show respect to God. If we respect God, we will also respect our parents and elders. If we do not respect our parents we do not show respect to God. When we are children, our parents feed us and take care of us, and God is pleased when we return their kindness.
6.2 In a Christian family the father and mother teach the children how to read God’s word and pray. The children learn how to obey their parents. The Apostle Paul teaches that those who honor their parents will receive the blessing of a long life (Ephesians 6:2-4). God commands us to show respect not just to our parents but also to others who exercise authority over us and to those who are older than we are (Romans 13:1-2). Since God wants children to honor their parents and others who are older, he said, “Honor your parents.”
7.1 God made people in his image (Genesis 1:26a). God commands us not only to live in peace with others (2 Corinthians 13:11) but to love our neighbour as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18). Therefore murder is prohibited. The causes of murder include hatred, revenge, and anger. We are not to hate our neighbor or seek revenge. The Lord Jesus taught that anger is the root of murder, and that anyone who is angry with his brother will be punished. Even the one
who insults his brother is in danger of being punished in hell (Matthew 5:21-22). The Apostle John wrote, “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.” (1 John 3:15)

7.2 Even if we are not angry, we must not kill another human being. Since even babies and children bear God’s image, they must not be killed before or after they are born. Nor are we permitted to kill or harm ourselves, for our bodies are a gift from God. So abortion, killing infants or children, and suicide are forbidden. Because God tells us to love others as ourselves, he commands, “Do not murder.”
8.1 God created people to be male and female (Genesis 1:27). He made our bodies and they belong to him. For this reason God commanded that there should be marriage between one man and one woman only (Genesis 2:24). God will punish all those who commit sexual immorality (Hebrews 13:4). The Lord Jesus said, “... I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28)
pictures or computers which depict sexual sins. The Apostle Paul says that people who practice sexual immorality, adultery, or homosexuality cannot enter God’s kingdom (1 Corinthians 6:9-10) unless they repent of their sins. Because our bodies belong to Christ, they may not be joined to the body of a prostitute (1 Corinthians 6:15-16). Instead, we are to flee from sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 6:18). We are to have sexual relations only with our wife or husband and no-one else. We are not to associate with sexually immoral people who call themselves Christians (1 Corinthians 5:11). If those who
have already committed adultery repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus, he will forgive their sin. Because our bodies belong to God, he commands us, “Do not commit adultery.”
The Eighth Commandment: 
Do not steal.

9.1 God commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves. So we should help our neighbor and not hurt him by stealing his money or his property. We must be honest in trade. We must not commit crimes such as stealing, robbing, cheating, defrauding, or leaving debts unpaid. We are not to take or receive bribes. We are not to manage the property of others for our own benefit, or to waste the wealth of another.

9.2 The Lord Jesus told a story about the master of a
household. Before he left on a journey, he put a manager in charge of his servants. But the manager thought, “My master is delayed” so he beat the servants and used the master’s wealth to eat and drink and get drunk. But the master came back on a day and at a time that the manager did not expect. The Lord Jesus said that the master would cut that evil manager to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers (Luke 12:42-46). Because God commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves, he says, “Do not steal.”
10.1 God is always truthful (Romans 3:4). If we believe in God our Father, we must be truthful as well (Colossians 3:9) and not lie to one another. This means that we tell the truth and do what we say we will do. God sees all that we do, and he knows when we tell lies. To tell lies is to disobey God and commit sin. Much harm results from telling lies.
10.2 Once upon a time in the district of Gyantse there was a shepherd named Pemba. Every day he went out on the hills to tend the sheep. One day while he was tending the sheep he cried out to the other shepherds, “A wolf has come! A wolf has come! Come quickly to kill the wolf!” Carrying stones and guns, the other shepherds rushed to help Pemba. When they arrived they saw Pemba sitting there laughing. Realizing they had been deceived, they each returned to their work. A few days later a wolf really did come to Pemba’s flock. Again Pemba cried out to the other shepherds, “A wolf has come! A wolf has come!” But the other shepherds thought Pemba
10.3 Lying harms ourselves and others. The Lord Jesus said that those who lie are children of the devil Satan. The devil Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). Demons and spirits tell lies (1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Chronicles 18:21-22). Those who tell lies will be shut out of God’s kingdom (Revelation 22:15). We must be very careful in our speech. The Apostle James says, “The tongue is a very small member of the body, but boasts about great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unright-
teousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” (James 3:5b-8)

10.4 The proverb is right which says “Forsake lying and uphold the truth”. In this world there are many people who tell lies. We should abandon all lying and speak only the truth (Ephesians 4:14). Because God is truthful, he commands us, “Do not bear false witness.”
The Tenth Commandment: Do not greedily desire another’s house, or wife, or male or female servants, cattle, or anything else he has.

11.1 This commandment tells us not to desire what belongs to others. Some people want their neighbor’s money, or their yaks, or even their neighbor’s wife. This is wrong and against God’s commandment. If someone is greedy and steals what belongs to someone else, he may lose even what he has. Once there was a dog who was going over a bridge carrying a piece of meat in his mouth. When the
dog saw his reflection in the water, he thought, “If I get the one piece of meat in that dog’s mouth, I will have two pieces of meat.” So he opened his mouth and jumped into the water. The piece of meat in his mouth dropped into the water, and he did not find the piece he’d seen in the water. So he had to go home with nothing.

11.2 Being greedy is not only bad for us, it dishonours God. God has promised to supply everything we need if we follow and obey him. The Lord Jesus said to his disciples, “Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they
neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!
And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them.” (Luke 12:22-30) God looks after the smallest birds and plants. He knows exactly what is best for us. By trusting God to give us what we need, we can be content. Since God our Father will provide what we need, he commands, “Do not greedily desire another’s house, or wife, or male or female servants, cattle, or anything else he has.”
12.1 One day a teacher of the religious law came to the Lord Jesus and asked, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:28-31)
12.2 By giving us the ten commandments God shows his love and care for us. We all have broken God’s laws and committed sin. The punishment for that is death and separation from God. However as the Apostle Paul says, God shows his love for us when we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). In order to have our sins forgiven, the Lord Jesus himself experienced that punishment. Therefore we can have a right relationship with God. The Lord Jesus is the only person who has never sinned. Though he kept God’s commandments perfectly, he died in our place because of our sins.
As the Apostle Paul said, “If you say with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believing in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9) You can do that right now. May you have a closer relationship with God and become more like his Son the Lord Jesus as you study and keep his commandments.
May God bless you as you discover more about Jesus Christ.