As the Decalogue stands in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, it contains more than ten commandments. If we determine the commencement of the separate commandments by the repetition of the words of command in independent sentences, we have eleven commandments, beginning respectively with verses 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17a, 17b. There being thus eleven commandments out of which ten must be formed, various combinations become possible, and, in fact, different churches have made different combinations of these eleven commandments, and hence do, at this day, use different Decalogues. Either verses 3–6 have been combined to form the first commandment, 17a and 17b being separated to form respectively the ninth and tenth commandments; or else the whole of verse 17 is formed into the tenth commandment, while at the other end verse 3 is separated from verses 4–6. The Massoretic division agrees essentially with the former arrangement, differing only in that it begins the Decalogue with verse 2 instead of verse 3. A third, or, rather, fourth, division is advocated by some scholars; namely, to treat verse 2 as the first commandment, verses 3–6 as the second, and verse 17 as the tenth.

Analyzing the Decalogue as it now stands, every one is confronted, furthermore, by the difficulty, or, rather, impossibility, of dividing it into two reasonably homogeneous tables of comparatively equal length. The latter commandments are very short; the former are, for the most part, long. What English-speaking Christians know as the second commandment, verses 3–6, consists of three parts. First comes the simple command, לֹא נִעֲשֵׂה לְךָ מִסְכָּל. The second part is an amplification or exposition of this as applying to any representation of anything in the three spheres, and as forbidding the rendition of homage or service thereto. In the third place, the commandment is grounded with a “because”; namely, that Jehovah never fails to punish his adversaries and their offspring to the remotest generations, but plentifully rewards his faithful worshippers. The third commandment consists of two parts,—the command proper, and the ground or reason for its observance; which latter, as in the case of the second commandment, is a threat of punishment. The fourth commandment, like the second, consists of three parts. First,
the command proper (8); second, the amplification of the same, and
its application in detail (9, 10); third, the ground or reason of the
commandment, in the form of an historical argument from God's
action in creation. The fifth commandment, like the third, is in two
parts; but here the second part contains a promise couched in the
form of purpose. Then follow four brief commandments, containing
neither specifications nor reasons, three of them consisting of but two
words each. The tenth commandment is *sui generis* in that it is
doubled. Beyond this it consists of two parts: the command proper,
which, in this case, appears to be merely the two words לַחֲדָה נֶגְדוֹת
and several specific applications of the same. It will be observed,
that there is in the form of these commandments a considerable diver­
sity, ranging from the terse and weighty brevity of the simple com­
mand with authority, to the comparative perplexity of the fourth
commandment, where the command is followed by specifications of
the mode and *personnel* of its observance, as well as by an argument
to explain the origin and obligation of such observance.

In the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy we have another version of
the Decalogue. Comparing this with the twentieth chapter of Deu­
teronomy, we find that the prefatory sentence עֲבֹדֵיהֶנוּ אֵלֶּה
is the same in both, and that the commands proper are identical in
all cases, excepting only the substitution in the fourth commandment
of לְכָלְכָלֵינוּ (Deut.) for לְכָל־כָלֵינוּ (Ex.), and in the ninth of לְכָלְכָלֵינוּ
(Deut.) for לְכָל־כָלֵינוּ (Ex.), and that in Deuteronomy several of the
commandments are connected by a 以色列 of quotation. But when we
compare in the two versions those parts of the commandments which
consist of specifications and reasons for observance, we find in three
out of the five more or less divergent forms in the two versions.¹

In the second part of the fourth commandment, besides a phrase
of historical reference inserted immediately after the command
proper, the Deuteronomic version adds to the specifications of Exo­
dus; but the most important difference is found in the third division.
The causal sentence of the version in Exodus is replaced in Deuter­
onomy by a sentence of purpose, after the manner of the fifth com­
mandment, and an historical argument, based on the deliverance
from Egypt, takes the place of that based on the story of creation.

The differences in the case of the fifth commandment are of the
same nature as in the second part of the fourth commandment.

¹ In the second commandment, Deuteronomy inserts a 以色列 in verse 9, but this I
consider too slight a difference to be taken into account.
In the tenth commandment the words of command are the same in both versions; but, whereas, in Exodus the first application or specification was אַתָּה הָעַזְבֵּךְ, in Deuteronomy it is אַתָּה חֵזֶק. In Exodus, the words of command, לֹא עַדְּחֶם, were repeated; in Deuteronomy, they are replaced by the synonymous לֹא עָדְחֵם. There is, furthermore, one specification in Deuteronomy, שָׁהְדוּ, which does not occur in Exodus.¹

Making every allowance for the fact of quotation and the purpose of exhortation as permitting and accounting for some variations, it seems impossible to believe that the writer of Deuteronomy, believing the fourth commandment to have been written by the finger of God, should have ventured to mutilate it by omitting the God-given reason for its existence, and substituting another of his own invention. Such a thing would seem like blasphemous presumption even for an inspired law-giver.

I have already practically outlined what seems to me the true solution of the differences in the two versions; namely, that the original Decalogue consisted of the ten simple commands or words, and that the specifications and arguments are to be regarded as additional matter not belonging to the original. The Ten Words would then read as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table I.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהֵי אָדָם עַל פִּי דָּנִי. Thou shalt have none other god before Me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. לֹא תִשְׁמַע לְךָ מִסֵּל. Thou shalt not make thee an image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. לֹא תִשָּׁמַע אָדָם שָׁם יֵבְדֵּל אֱלֹהֵי לֵאמֶר. Thou shalt not bear utter the name of Jehovah thy God falsely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. זֹכֶר (שָׁמַר) אָדָם יֵבְדֵּל לְכָּם. Remember the day of rest to sanctify it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. בָּרֵךְ אָדָם אַבֵּךְ וָאָם. Honor thy father and thy mother.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The Deuteronomic version also omits לֹא before וֹר.
NOTES.

Table II.

6. Thou shalt not murder.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not testify falsely against thy neighbor.

10. Thou shalt not covet.

The variant reading in the fourth commandment seems to me due, in all probability, to a scribal error, the result of copying from memory rather than from inscription or manuscript. If the ninth commandment be accepted as original in its present form, then the variant reading here also is presumably to be explained in the same way. But there are two things which seem to me to militate against the acceptance of the present form as original. All the other commandments of the second table are alike in outward form, each consisting of the negative with a verb, and it seems as though we should expect this one likewise to consist of the two words, לֹא תָּנוּנָה. Again, it will be observed that the commandments of the second table form a descending scale, in which, as it stands at present, the ninth commandment seems to strike a note not in perfect harmony. The sixth commandment forbids injury to life, the seventh to honor, the eighth to property. The tenth, on the other hand, is more subtle, more refined; it enters into the heart of a man, and forbids him to harbor thoughts of envy or covetousness. Now, the ninth commandment seems, in comparison with the preceding, somewhat too limited in scope, and, in comparison of the succeeding, too external. But if we reduce the ninth commandment to a form similar to that of the other commandments of this table, will it give a sense better adapted to the context? If we had the form לֹא תָּנוּנָה, we should apparently be obliged to adopt another meaning for the verb, and translate "Thou shalt not humble," or "oppress," or "distress." We should
thus secure a more satisfactory gradation in the commandments of
the second table; but, on the other hand, we should raise new diffi-
culties perhaps more serious than those we are endeavoring to remove.
In adopting this form we should, in the first place, be obliged to sup-
pose that the author of the limiting specification or comment had
made an application of the word in a different root-sense from that
intended in the original. In the second place, all authorities affirm
that, with the root meaning "humble," the simple stem is always used
with passive force, nor am I able to allege, with certainty, any instance
to the contrary. In the intensive stem, it is true, the verb has the
required meaning; but as the verbs in all the other commandments
of this table are used in the simple form, it is natural to expect the
same here also.

My purpose has been to point out the distinction between the
original Ten Words and the commentary attached to them. Without
entering into a discussion of the authorship or antiquity of the latter,
I may, in closing, remark, as bearing on these questions, that a com-
parison of the two versions of the Decalogue seems to show that
some form of comment or midrash did, at an early date, begin to
attach itself to the simple Ten Words in their popular use, and that
such comment was at length welded upon the Ten Words; that, at
the time of the composition of Deuteronomy, while a considerable
portion of such comment had already assumed definite form, never-
theless the process of production and growth had not yet ceased;
and that to the writer of Deuteronomy Ex. xx. 2-17 was not known
as authoritative Scripture. With reference to Ex. xx. 2, Deut. v. 6, I
am not prepared to argue either that the verse belongs to the original
Ten Words, or that it is commentary. If the former be the case, I
presume it is to be regarded rather as a preface to the whole, than as
an integral part of the first commandment.