

## The Seventh Commandment: “You shall not commit adultery” (Ex 20.14)

### Introduction

Our Lord taught the depth of this command: **You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart** (Mat 5.27-28). Clearly, we can make a distinction between a narrow and a broad definition of adultery. Narrowly, it refers to having sex with another person’s spouse. Broadly, it refers to sexual impurity of any kind in the heart or in the body (mentally or physically, inwardly or outwardly). Jesus opens the way to this comprehensive understanding that lies behind Qs 138 & 139 of the WLC. It will be profitable to read them deliberately and reflectively.

**138 What are the duties required in the seventh commandment? A. The duties required in the seventh commandment are, chastity in body, mind, affections,(1) words,(2) and behaviour;(3) and the preservation of it in ourselves and others;(4) watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses;(5) temperance,(6) keeping of chaste company,(7) modesty in apparel;(8) marriage by those that have not the gift of continency; (9) conjugal love,(10) and cohabitation;(11) diligent labour in our callings;(12) shunning all occasions of uncleanness, and resisting temptations thereunto.(13)**

- (1)1 Thess. 4:4; Job. 31:1; 1 Cor. 7:34 [purity of heart and life; watchfulness over the eyes, Mat 5.28]
- (2)Col. 4:6 [gracious speech; not corrupt speech, Eph 4.29]
- (3)1 Pet. 2:3 [correction: 1 Pet 3.2: respectful and pure conduct]
- (4)1 Cor. 7:2,35,36 [if...passions are strong]
- (5)Job. 31:1 [a covenant with my eyes]
- (6)Acts 24:24,25 [righteousness and self-control]
- (7)Prov. 2:16-20 [the evil person forgets the covenant of her youth]
- (8)1 Tim. 2:9 [respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control]
- (9)1 Cor. 7:2,9 [encouragement to marry]
- (10)Prov. 5:19,20 [18, rejoice in the wife of your youth...intoxicated in her love and none other]
- (11)1 Pet. 3:7 [understanding, honoring, praying]
- (12)Prov. 31:11,27,28 [an excellent wife: honest, open, trustworthy, not idle, worthy of praise]
- (13)Prov. 5:8; Gen. 39:8-10[do not go near; Joseph ran; make no provision for the flesh, Rom 13.14]

**139 What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment? A. The sins forbidden in the seventh commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required,(1) are adultery, fornication,(2) rape, incest,(3) sodomy, and all unnatural lusts;(4) all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections;(5) all corrupt or filthy communications, or listening thereunto;(6) wanton looks,(7) impudent or light behaviour, immodest apparel;(8) prohibiting of lawful,(9) and dispensing with unlawful marriages;(10) allowing, tolerating, keeping of stews, and resorting to them;(11) entangling vows of single life,(12) undue delay of marriage;(13) having more wives or husbands than one at the same time;(14) unjust divorce,(15) or desertion;(16) idleness, gluttony, drunkenness,(17) unchaste company,(18) lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays;(19) and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.(20)**

- (1)Prov. 5:7
- (2)Heb. 13:4; Gal. 5:19
- (3)2 Sam. 13:14 ; 1 Cor. 5:1
- (4)Rom. 1:24 ,27; Lev. 20:15,16
- (5)Matt. 5:28; Matt. 15:19; Col. 3:5
- (6)Eph. 5:3,4; Prov. 7:5,21,22
- (7)Isa. 3:16; 2 Pet. 2:14
- (8)Prov. 7:10,13
- (9)1 Tim. 4:3
- (10)Lev. 18:1-21; Mal. 2:11,12
- (11)1 Kings 15:12; 2 Kings 23:7; Deut. 23:17,18; Lev. 19:29; Jer. 5:7; Prov. 7:24-27
- (12)Matt. 19:10,11
- (13)1 Cor. 7:7-9; Gen. 38:26
- (14)Mal. 2:14,15; Matt. 19:5
- (15)Mal. 2:16; Matt. 5:32
- (16)1 Cor. 7:12,13
- (17)Ezek. 16:49; Prov. 23:30-33
- (18)Gen. 39:10
- (19)Eph. 5:4; Ezek. 23:14-16; Isa. 23:15-17; Isa. 3:16; Mark 6:22 ; Rom. 13:13 ; 1 Pet. 4:3
- (20)2 Kings 9:30 with Jer. 4:30 and Ezek. 23:40