LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me that the Evil Foe may have no power over me. **AMEN.**

OR

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the Evil Foe may have no power over me. **AMEN.**

LARGE CATECHISM – NINTH COMMANDMENTS

[293] These two commandments are given quite exclusively to the Jews; nevertheless, in part they also concern us. For they do not interpret them as referring to unchastity or theft, because these are sufficiently forbidden above. They also thought that they had kept all those when they had done or not done the external act. Therefore God has added these two commandments in order that it be esteemed as sin and forbidden to desire or in any way to aim at getting our neighbor's wife or possessions; [294] and especially because under the Jewish government man-servants and maid-servants were not free as now to serve for wages as long as they pleased, but were their master's property with their body and all they had, as cattle and other possessions. [295] Moreover, every man had power over his wife to put her away publicly by giving her a bill of divorce, and to take another. Therefore they were in constant danger among each other that if one took a fancy to another's wife, he might allege any reason both to dismiss his own wife and to estrange the other's wife from him, that he might obtain her under pretext of right. That was not considered a sin

nor disgrace with them; as little as now with hired help, when a proprietor dismisses his man-servant or maid-servant, or takes another's servants from him in any way.

[296] Therefore (I say) they thus interpreted these commandments, and that rightly (although their scope reaches somewhat farther and higher), that no one think or purpose to obtain what belongs to another, such as his wife, servants, house and estate, land, meadows, cattle, even with a show of right or by a subterfuge, yet with injury to his neighbor. For above, in the Seventh Commandment, the vice is forbidden where one wrests to himself the possessions of others, or

withholds them from his neighbor, which he cannot do by right. But here it is also forbidden to alienate anything from your neighbor, even though you could do so with honor in the eyes of the world, so that no one could accuse or blame you as though you had obtained it wrongfully.

[297] For we are so inclined by nature that no one desires to see another have as much as himself, and each one acquires as much as he can; the other may fare as best he can. [298] And yet we pretend to be godly, know how to adorn ourselves most finely and conceal our rascality, resort to and invent adroit devices and deceitful artifices (such as now are daily most ingeniously contrived) as though they were derived from the law codes; yea, we even dare impertinently to refer to it, and boast of it, and will not have it called rascality, but shrewdness and caution. [299] In this lawyers and jurists assist, who twist and stretch the law to suit it to their cause, stress words and use them for a subterfuge, irrespective of equity or their neighbor's necessity. And, in short, whoever is the most expert and cunning in these affairs finds most help in law, as they themselves say: Vigilantibus iura subveniunt [that is, The laws favor the watchful].

[300] This last commandment therefore is given not for rogues in the eyes of the world, but just for the most pious, who wish to be praised and be called honest and upright people, since they have not offended against the former commandments, as especially the Jews claimed to be, and even now many great noblemen, gentlemen, and princes. (Continued Next Week)

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