

The Ten Commandments

Tenth Commandment: Do Not Covet

Exodus 20:13

לֹא תִחְמַד בֵּית רֵעֶךָ לֹא תִחְמַד אִשְׁתֵּי רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וְעַמְּךָ וְשׂוֹרְךָ וְחֲמֹרֶיךָ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbor."

Deuteronomy 5:18

וְלֹא תִחְמַדְנָהּ בֵּית רֵעֶךָ "nor shall you desire your neighbor's house.."

Maimonides Negative commandment #265

The 265th prohibition is that we are forbidden from using our thought to think up schemes of how to acquire something that belongs to our brother. The source of this prohibition is G-d's statement (exalted be He), "Do not envy (*lo sach'mod*) your neighbor's house."

The *Mechilta* says, "From the phrase 'Do not envy,' I might think the prohibition applies even if you just feel envy. But another verse says, 'Do not be envious of the gold and silver on them [i.e. idolatrous statues] and take it for yourselves.' Just as in that case the prohibition applies only when [because of his envy] he does an action, so too here it applies only when he does an action."

Maimonides Negative commandment #266

The 266th prohibition is that we are forbidden to occupy our thoughts with our desire for someone else's property and to develop a craving for it, and dwell upon it, since this will lead us to carry out a plan to acquire it. The expression used for this prohibition is G-d's statement, "Do not desire (*lo sisaveh*) your neighbor's house."

These two prohibitions [*lo sach'mod* and *lo sisaveh*] do not have the same goal. The first prohibition, *lo sach'mod*, forbids buying someone else's belongings, whereas the second, *lo sisaveh*, prohibits even having the feeling of desire and envy.