

A
PRIZE-BOOK

FOR
GOOD CHILDREN;

CONTAINING
Rules for their Conduct

**Towards their Parents, their Fellow
Creatures and their God.**

[*EXTRACTED FROM MURRAY'S SPELLING BOOK.*]



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FOR
GOOD CHILDREN.

LOVE your father and mother. They love you very dearly ; and they have taken care of you ever since you were born. They loved you, and took care of you, even when you were poor little helpless babies, that could not talk, nor walk about, nor do scarcely any thing but cry, and give a great deal of trouble.

Who is so kind to you as your parents are ? Who takes so much pains to instruct you ? Who taught you almost every thing you know ? Who provides food for you, and clothes, and warm beds to sleep on at nights ? Who is so glad when you are pleased, and so sorry when you are troubled ? When you are sick, and in pain, who pities you, and tenderly waits upon you, and nurses you ? Who prays to God to give you health, and strength, and every good thing ?

Obey your parents. They know better what is proper for you, than you do ; and they wish you to be good, and wise, and happy.

If your parents are sick, or in trouble, do all you can to comfort them. If they are poor, work very hard, that you may be able to assist them. Remember how much they have done, and suffered for you.

Section 2.

Love your brothers and sisters. Do not tease nor vex them, nor call them names ; and never let your little hands be raised to strike them. If they have any thing which you would like to have, do not be angry with them, or want to get it from them. If you have any thing they like, share it with them.

Your parents grieve when they see you quarrel ; they love you all with dear love ; and they wish you to love one another, and to live in peace and harmony.

People will not speak, or think, well of you, if you do not behave kindly to your parents, and to your brothers and sisters. " Whom," say they, " will persons love, or be kind to, if they do not love their own father and mother who have done so much for them ; and their own brothers and sisters who have the same parents, and the same home as they have, and who are brought up with them ?

Section 3.

Do not meddle with what does not belong to you ; nor ever take other people's things, without leave.

Children, never allow yourselves to pluck a flower, or any fruit, that grows in your parents' or other people's gardens, unless you are told that you may do so ; never, without leave, take a pin, or a needle, or a bit of thread, from your companions : never, even if your parents are very poor, and have nothing to make a fire with, steal wood from your neighbours' hedges, or branches from their trees. If you steal little things, you will soon learn to steal great things.

Whenever you are tempted to steal, do not say, as some silly, naughty people do : " These are but very little things, nobody will miss them ; nobody sees me ; and I dare say, I shall never be found out." But say : " No, I will not steal : though no man sees me, yet God sees me ; and if once I begin, I shall go on stealing. Then every body that knows me, will find me out ; and I shall be punished, and despised, and called a thief ; and people will be afraid to trust me with any thing that belongs to them. All this, I am sure, will make me very miserable : and oh, what is still worse, God will be displeased with me ; for one of his great commandments is, " Thou shalt not steal."

Section 4.

Never tell an untruth. — When you are relating any thing that you have seen, or heard, endeavour to tell it exactly as it was. Do not alter, or invent, any part, to make, as you may think, a

prettier story : if you have forgotten any part, say that you have forgotten it. Persons who love the truth, never tell a lie, even in jest.

Consider well before you make a promise. If you say you will do a thing, and you do it not, you will tell a lie : and who then will trust, or believe you ? No persons are trusted, or believed, but those who keep their promises, and who speak the truth.

When you have done a wrong, or careless action, do not deny it, even if you are afraid you will be punished for it. If you are sorry for what you have done, and endeavour to do so no more, people will very seldom be angry with you, or punish you. They will love you for speaking the truth ; they will think that they may always believe what you say, since they find you will not tell a lie, even to hide a fault, and to prevent yourselves from being punished.

It is very foolish to tell lies ; for, soon or late, they are found out ; and it is very mean, and wicked. God himself has said that we must not lie that he abhors liars, and that he will punish them.

Section 5.

Do not speak rudely to any body, or quarrel with any body.

Who likes quarrelsome, ill humoured people, or likes to be with them, or takes pains to oblige them ? They do not look pleasant and cheerful.

They are not at all happy. They feel quite uncomfortable. They know they do wrong ; and they know that the persons who live with them, do not love them, nor wish to oblige them, as they do those who are kind, and civil, and good humoured.

When you are disappointed of any thing you wished for, do not teale people about it, nor fret, nor cry, nor look sullen. Try to think no more of it ; and amuse, or please, or employ yourselves, with something else. No persons can have every thing they desire.

Section 6.

When you see very old people, or people who are very ugly, and deformed, do not stare at them, or laugh at them, or mock them.

Though you are now so young and healthy, you may be very sick, and become thin, and pale, and weak, and look very ugly ; or you may have a fall, and break your leg or back, and be lame and deformed.

If you live to be old, your hair will become gray, or fall off ; you will loose your teeth ; your faces will be covered with wrinkles ; you will be very weak, almost like little children ; and, perhaps, you will be deaf, and blind, and lame.

Would you then like that naughty boys and girls should laugh at you, and play you tricks ? No ; I am sure you would like that every body

should pity you, and be kind to you, and try to help you.

Section 7.

Never amuse yourselves with giving pain to any body, not even to dumb creatures.

A great many animals are killed, because we want their flesh for food ; and a great many are killed, because, if we were to let them live, they would do us harm : but I can see no reason that little boys or girls should kill flies, or pull off their wings, or legs ; or catch butterflies, and crush them to death ; or steal young birds from their soft, warm, comfortable nests ; or whip, and beat, horses and asses, till their sides bleed, and are very sore ; or do any cruel actions.

The beasts kill one another : wolves kill sheep ; kites, hawks, and eagles, kill little birds ; and little birds kill worms and flies : but wolves kill sheep ; kites, hawks, and eagles, kill little birds ; and little birds kill flies and worms for food, and not for sport, as some naughty children kill, or torture insects, birds, and beasts. O, it is very cruel sport indeed !

Section 8.

Do not waste any thing. If you have more clothes and food than you want, do not spoil them, or throw them away : but give them, or ask your parents to give them, to poor little boys and girls, who have no clothes scarcely to put on, no meat for dinner, and perhaps no bread and milk for breakfast and supper.

When any body is ill in the house where you live, be very quiet, lest you should disturb them. Do every thing you can to make them well again.

When you are ill yourselves, try to be patient : do not cry, nor be ill humoured to the persons who are so kind as to wait upon you.

Take what is given to you to make you better, without a cross word, or look. Medicines are not pleasant to taste ; but they are meant to do you good.

Section 9.

Do not be unc'eanly, or untidy, whether you are well, or ill. Keep your hands, and faces, and hair, and every part of your body, quite clean ; and your clothes neat, and in good order. It is very unpleasant to look at filthy people, or to be near them.

Children who are kept cleanly and tidy, generally grow much stronger and healthier, and more cheerful and good humoured, than those who are seldom cleaned, and who wear very filthy, ragged clothes.

Section 10.

If the clothes, and the food, that are given you, are proper for you, do not find fault with them ; but be thankful for them, though they are not what you like as well as some other things.

Do not eat more than is necessary. Persons who eat too much are called gluttons. They are

stupid, and heavy, and idle ; and, very often, they have a sad pain in their head, and stomach.

Take care of every thing that belongs to you. If you have drawers of your own, keep them in good order. Persons who always put their things in the proper places, very seldom lose any thing : when they want a thing, they know where to find it ; and they need not waste their time in looking for it.

Section 11.

Do not, if you can help it, keep company with children who lie, or steal, or quarrel, or use bad words, lest they should teach you to do as they do ; and that people who see you with them, should think, and say, that you too are naughty.

If the people whom you must live with, behave ill, take great care not to learn their bad ways. If they see that you are very good indeed, perhaps they will learn to be like you. Good people should not learn to be like bad people ; but bad people should learn to be like good people.

Section 12.

Do not be curious to know what people do not wish you to know. Do not look at their letters, or what they are writing, unless they give you leave ; perhaps there is something in their letters, or what they are writing, which they do not wish you to see.

Do not listen at doors, or in any places where people who are talking, do not see you, or know that you are attending to what they say.

Section 13.

Do as you are bid by those who teach you. Take pains to improve in reading, writing, and whatever else your parents are so kind as to teach you, or wish you to learn.

Do not think you know better than your parents, and your teachers. They have lived a great deal longer than you have ; they have read, and seen, and heard, a great many things which you know nothing of. You have lived longer than little infants, and you know more ; but great boys and girls know more than you do ; and men and women know more than great boys and girls do.

Do not read any books but those which your parents, or teachers, give you leave to read. Some books are not proper for you to read : they are like bad companions ; they teach bad things. It is better not to read at all, than to read bad books.

Section 14.

Our parents are very good to us ; but God is better than our parents, and he has done more for us. He gave us our parents, and every thing we have. He is not a man ; he is wiser, and better, than any man ever was, or ever can be.

He made the sun, moon, and stars ; the earth, and the sky ; water, trees, and flowers ; birds and beasts, fishes and insects ; and men, women, and children.

He has made us more excellent than the beasts ; for he has given us a soul. It is our soul that

knows God, and that he is good, and wise, and powerful. The beasts do not know God, nor the things which he has made; if we were to tell them, they would not understand us. Our souls learn and know a great many things, which the beasts cannot learn. Our bodies will die like the beasts. When we are laid in the grave, worms will devour our flesh, and our bones will crumble into dust. But our souls are immortal; they will never die.

God orders every thing. He keeps us alive; and he makes us die when he pleases. There is nothing which he cannot do. He sees us wherever we are, by night as well as by day; and he knows all that we do, and say, and think. There is nothing which he does not know.

Section 15.

We must love God. Good people love him more than they love any thing, or any person in the world. They never rise in the morning, or lie down at night, without thinking of him, and of the good he has done them. Often in the day they think of him; and they love to talk, and hear, and read about him.

We must pray to God; that is, we must tell him that we know he is very good, and worthy to be loved; that we hope he will forgive us when we do wrong, put good thoughts into our minds, and help us to be better and better; and that he will bless us, and our parents, and all our kind friends, and give us every good thing that is proper for us.

We must do to all persons what God requires us to do. It is his will that we should not be unkind, even to people who are unkind to us; and that we should do to all persons as we wish they would do to us.

The things that God requires of us will make us good and happy. If we do them not, he will be displeased with us, and punish us. He can punish us in whatever way he pleases. He can take away all our friends, and every thing that he has given us; and, after death, he can make us very miserable for ever. But if we try to be good, and to do as he would have us to do, he will help us to be good; he will bless us; he will make us feel happy in our minds; and when we die, that is, when our souls leave our bodies, he will take us into heaven; where we shall be with him, and know, and love, and praise him better than any body in this world can know and love, and praise him. Then we shall never grieve any more; we shall never do wrong any more; we shall be wiser, and happier, than any body who lives here, can be, or can imagine.

Section 16.

We must love to read the Bible. It is the most excellent and beautiful of all books. God himself commanded good men to write it. There, we read of all the great and good things God has done for us, and for all people; how just, and wise, and powerful he is; and what we must do to serve and please him. There, we read of good

men who loved God, and whom he loved and blessed ; of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Joseph, Moses, Samuel, and David.

There too, we read of Christ, who was so good, and who has done so much for us. He never did harm to any body ; he never did any thing that was wrong. He was gentle and patient when he was troubled, and when he was ill used ; he was kind to all persons, even to those who were unkind to him ; and when wicked men were just going to kill him, he prayed to God to forgive them.

When we have read, or heard, about Christ and who he was, and what great things he has done for us, we must love him, and be thankful to him, and try to be like him.

Children, make haste to learn to read, and to understand the meaning of what you read ; love to learn your duty, and to do it ; then you will be able to read the Bible, and you will love to read it.—There are many things in it which you can understand now, though you are so young. When you are older and wiser, you will understand it better ; and if you are good, you will delight in it more and more.—The whole of the Bible is important, and ought to be read with much attention, but the Decalogue or Ten Commands ought to be committed to memory by every Child. With that view they are added to this Book.

The Decalogue,

OR

TEN COMMANDS.

I. Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.

II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them : For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the

seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt do no murder.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

The sum of the Ten Commands is to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy Neighbour as thyself.

