

Improved  
Uniform  
International | SUNDAY  
SCHOOL  
LESSON

By HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, D. D.  
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Lesson for January 20

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THE LAWS OF A PEOPLE

LESSON TEXT—Exodus 20:1-17.  
GOLDEN TEXT—I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.—Psalm 119:47.

Law is necessary to order. Basic laws have been laid down by God for the orderly administration of His universe.

Physical laws are of great importance, but of even deeper significance are the moral and spiritual laws which control the human life. There is in the world a moral law a distinction between right and wrong—which man may ignore only to his own sorrow, and which he cannot abrogate or destroy. All laws of men which are true and right are founded on this underlying moral law, and they are in reality simply a development and interpretation of “God’s Code of Morals”—the Ten Commandments.

These fundamental laws were given to Israel at Mount Sinai, but they speak to us with remarkable freshness and directness. They merit more extensive study than we can give them in this limited space, but we can note their broad outlines and certain practical applications. There are two divisions—one concerns man in his relation to God, and the other in his relation to men. We have:

I. A Right View of God (vv. 1-11).

The first and most important question to be asked regarding any law is, “By whom was it established?” Legislation by an unauthorized person or organization has no power over others. Who gave the Ten Commandments? Verse 1 tells us “God spake all these words.”

Men may sneer at theology as being outmoded, but the fact is that Christian doctrine is the only safe foundation for Christian character.

1. Whom to Worship (vv. 2-5). There can be but one true God, and He alone is to be worshipped. He is a personal being, ready to enter into communion with each one of us. No image or likeness can take His place. Bowing down before idols, no matter what they may be called, is expressly forbidden by God.

2. How to Worship (vv. 6, 7). We are to love Him and to keep His commandments. There is to be no sham about this, for no matter how sweet and pious may be the praise and prayer of man, he has taken the Lord’s name in vain unless he keeps the Lord’s commandments by holy living.

3. When to Worship (vv. 8-11). God has ordained that man should not incessantly bear the burden of toil. He is to have a day of rest and a time for worship, undisturbed by the duties and responsibilities of daily labor.

America needs a mighty stirring up about the desecration of the Lord’s day. The stalwarts of the last generation fought a valiant battle against a rising tide of secularism and worldly pleasure. Now no one seems to care. Do you? “Six days shalt thou labor.” Give God one day out of seven.

II. A Right View of Man (vv. 12-17).

To be right with God means that we will also be right with our fellowman. Conversely, the man who is manifestly wrong in his relation to his fellowman is either not right with God at all, or he is not living out his Christian life in practice. This should show in:

1. Family Life (v. 12). The fifth commandment has to do with the relation between child and parent. There is a plain and direct command that father and mother should be honored. Only in respect and obedience to parents can the child possibly find true and proper development.

Parents who have permitted children to go astray during the war years will need to stress anew the God-required obedience to their authority.

2. Physical Life (vv. 13, 14). God is interested in our bodies. Already we have noted His provision for a day of rest each week. Now we are reminded of the sanctity of human life. “Thou shalt not kill,” and remember there are many others to kill a man other than shooting him.

Let us be sure that we are not a party to the destruction of any one’s life either by reason of carelessness or greed.

Note the emphasis on adultery. Moral uncleanness, which is so awfully common in our day, is one of the most effective methods of destroying the body even while degrading and defiling the soul within.

3. Social Life (vv. 15-17). “Thou shalt not steal”—and remember any dishonest appropriation of what does not belong to you is stealing, call it what you will. And “false witness”—how it has honeycombed our very civilization! Not a little of it is found within the church, more shame upon us! Lastly we come to “covetousness”—which has been called one of the “respectable sins” of nice people.” It is subtle and often hidden. Let us root it out of our lives by God’s grace.

# COME TO CHURCH

## Creamed Comments On The Sunday School Lesson

### THE LAWS OF A PEOPLE

Exodus 20:1-17.

The ten commandments were first spoken to all the children of Israel as recorded in this lesson and later dictated to Moses on Mt. Sinai and written on two tablets of stone. There was given to all mankind a practical moral and civic code on which constitution, governments could be built and on which individuals could build a moral life.

V. 12. “Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” An ideal father is a representative of God and as such he needs to be honored; honoring a good earthly father makes it easier to honor God. Evidently, God expects fathers to reverse and worship him; the child problems is a parent problem.

V. 13. “Thou shalt not kill.” God’s ideal of the human race was that the people of the world should be a divine family and as such no murder could be tolerated.

V. 15. “Thou shalt not steal.” As members of the divine family people are to share good things with each other and such a program forbids stealing. Modern stealing today goes by different names—getting something for nothing, telling the half truth for the making of a bargain, short-changing, using scales out of balance, dishonest prices etc.

V. 16. “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” God demands true witness. — \* —

V. 17. “Thou shalt not covet.” Evil has its beginnings in wrong desires, wrong impulses, and wrong motives.

the movies have crowded houses; the demands for more time in social enjoyments has forced a shortening of the Sunday morning services of worship; the list of Sabbath violations is long.

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### War Religious Experience

A private from Michigan voiced his desire, “I want to make my church practical. Not just sending funds to Christianize the Negro in Africa but daily manifesting the spirit of Christian brotherhood toward the Negroes and other races, with whom we daily come in contact. I don’t want to listen to the preacher talk about our children and young people falling into the pits of sin. I want to remove those people’s values of living for Christ. The church must be open more than just on Sunday. It must serve the widest possible group of persons. Its leaders and members must be Godly in their daily living. They must possess the Christ they profess.”

“As I’ve thought about my church back home,” says a sergeant, “I’ve realized during the lonely hours just how much it has meant to me, and found satisfaction in the simple teaching of faith in Christ. I’d like to help my church catch a vision of a wider program for the Lord. We must get hold of the boys and girls whose parents never go to church. They will never hear about Christ unless we get them into the Sunday school and the boys’ club. I want my church to see that its central purpose is to preach Christ in every section of its organization and to bring non-church men into vital relationship with the Saviour.”

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