

## THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

**DATE:** April 7, 2019

**SUBJECT: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: The First Commandment—You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me**

**SCRIPTURES:** Exodus chapter 20; Exodus 20:1-3; Deuteronomy 5:6-7; Isaiah 45:5a; John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:5-6; Acts 14:15b; 17:24-25; 14:17: 1 Thessalonians 1:9b

**AIM:** To show the children that the one true God is the Creator of the universe, the heavens, the earth, and all the creatures in them. Only He should be our God. He is the Provider and the Caretaker of His creatures (especially man). He alone should be our God, the One we love above everything else.

**MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM:** Exodus 20:2a, 3 (I am Jehovah your God,...You shall have no other gods before Me.); Isaiah 45:5a (I am Jehovah and there is no one else; Besides Me there is no God;)

**SUGGESTED SONGS:** 5512 (Psa. 113:1-3 From the Rising of the Sun); 51 (God); 61 (Who Made?); 95 (Just Because He Cares); 162 (Praise Him); 2811 (God is so Good); 3427 (I'm Thankful); 8315 *BSS Moses Vol. 2, #15* (Moses Climbed the Mountain High); 4611 (My God is so Great) 6719 (The Ten Commandments); 6711 *BSS Matthew Vol. 2, #20* (The Great Command); 8208 (You Shall Love the Lord Your God); 146 (I Want the Lord to Have the First Place); 1609 (Psalms 95:6-7 Come let us Worship)

**CRAFT IDEAS:** 1) Draw an outline of a tablet on brown or grey construction paper, or crinkled brown paper bags. Have the children write the commandment on the tablet. For younger children, print out and glue the commandment onto the tablet. 2) *Long term project:* Cut two tablets (8x11 each) out of brown or grey construction paper or cardstock, or brown paper bags. Glue a piece of paper on each tablet. Add lines if needed. Every week, have the children write the commandment on their tablet. Keep the projects for them. Over the course of these lessons, they will complete this Ten Commandment project.

**BACKGROUND:** God's chosen people, the children of Israel, lived for hundreds of years as slaves in Egypt. Finally, when their sufferings became so difficult that they could no longer bear them, they remembered the God of their fathers and cried out to Him to save them and deliver them from the slavery of the Egyptians. God answered their prayer and with His mighty power, He delivered the whole nation of about two million Jews out of Egypt, brought them through the great Red Sea on dry ground, and led them to a special place, Mount Sinai, where He would reveal Himself to them in a very special and intimate way.

At Mount Sinai, God gave His people His law. They had already seen many miracles which showed His great power, but now He gave them something that would reveal His Person and character to them. His law, and especially the Ten Commandments, was like an ancient "photograph" which God used to show His people what He was like. God wanted His people to know Him, to know His character, and to know His personality and heart. He loved them, so He spoke to them and revealed Himself to them through His law.

In the United States, laws are written and passed by legislators, or lawmakers. Before new laws are passed, they are introduced as bills in Congress. Ideas for new laws represent what kind of persons they are and what topics are important to them (e.g., recycling laws and environmental protection). By looking at the Ten Commandments, we can see what kind of God we have, what He likes and what He hates, what He approves of and what He disapproves of, His loving heart towards us and how He wants us to live. The first four commandments tell how the children of Israel should honor God. The last six commandments tell how the Israelites should treat other people.

## **CONTENT:**

**I. The First Commandment (Exo. 20:2-3).** The first of the Ten Commandments that God gave His people at Mount Sinai was: “I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the slave house; **You shall have no other gods before me.**”

The first thing that the Lord wanted to show His people about Himself was that He alone was their God. What God was He? He was the God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. He was the only One who cared about them, who loved them, who answered their prayers, and had compassion on their sufferings and afflictions. Their God was the real God, a loving God, a powerful God, a God who saw their needs and cared about them, and rescued them when they cried out to Him.

The Egyptians worshipped and served many so-called gods. They had a sun god, a moon god, star gods, and a Nile River god. The children of Israel had lived so long among the Egyptians that they were greatly influenced by their customs and beliefs. But no Egyptian god ever helped them. They continued in sorrow and in slavery. Their fate seemed hopeless and their situation was helpless. But the Lord looked upon their sorrow and heard their groaning (their prayers). He had compassion upon them and kept His covenant with their fathers (Exo. 2:23-25). He sent ten terrible plagues upon Egypt, defeated Pharaoh and all of his armies, and opened up the Red Sea so they could cross over on dry ground to safety. Like a great eagle He snatched them out of the house of bondage and brought them to safety (Exo. 19:3-4). Was not He alone their God? Surely they should have no other god.

## **II. There are no other gods before Him.**

**A. There is only one true God.** He is the Creator of the universe. He created the heavens, the earth, and all things. Apart from Him, nothing has come into existence that has any existence (John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:5-6). Since He is the Creator of all things, we should only worship Him.

**B. This one true God is the living God** (Act 14:15b; 1 Thes. 1:9b). He is the One who made the universe and everything in it. He is the Lord (owner, possessor) of heaven and earth. Since all lives, including our own, come from Him, He alone should be our God.

**C. This unique living God is the One who takes care of all His creation and His creatures.** He sends rain from heaven and gives fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:17). Since only God provides for our sustenance, our prayers should only be said to Him. And our thanksgivings should be given to Him alone.

**SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:** *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover. Please do not try to cover all the applications. It is sufficient to cover just **one or two applications** which are appropriate for the age group of the children you are serving.*

- Since our God, the only true God, is the Creator of the universe, and is our Provider, we should only worship and love Him. Whatever a person loves more than everything else is his god. Some people love money more than everything else. Money then is their god. Some people love their possessions (bicycles, skateboards, computer or video games, dolls, etc.) more than everything else. Their possessions are their god. For others, their cell phone is their god. God alone must be our God, the One we love with all of our heart, soul, and strength; the One we love above everything else. We should not allow anyone or anything to take the place of our God.
- Our God is living and is always available to help us. In times of trouble or need, we can always ask God for help because He is always there and He is eager to help us.
- We must be watchful concerning our environment. Many things can influence us—if people around us believe in or worship many gods, it is easy for us to be affected and become indifferent, just like the children of Israel did in Egypt. Therefore, we must know our God by praying and reading His word so that we will not be deceived.

Adapted from *Bringing Children from Adam to Christ—The Ten Commandments*, Vol. 3, Lessons 1-3, and the Church in New York City Children’s Meeting lessons: 5/3/98; 5/10/98; 5/5/02; 5/12/02; 6/15/08; 4/06/14