

Session 17 – Study Notes
Exodus 20: 8 – 11
February 6, 2024
Rev. Janice Y Cook – The Village Church

1. The Ten Commandments are known as “The Ten Words” in the Hebrew scriptures.
2. Our relationship with God forms the plumb line in our relationships with others.
3. First four commandments are specific to the Hebrews (cultic) and religious in focus.
4. Sabbath predates the issuance of the commandments but underwent constant redevelopment.
5. Modern day “Blue Laws” are an attempt to legislate this commandment. (see end notes)
6. To keep the sabbath day holy is to keep it separate from the other six days as “a sanctuary of time”.
7. The commandment to sanctify the Sabbath affects the entire Israelite household, animals, slaves, and the resident alien. This makes this commandment inclusive of humanitarian and justice concerns.
8. This humanitarian concern of the Sabbath is a bridge to the commandments concerned with interhuman relationships, which are reflected in the next set of commandments.
9. God’s resting is a divine act that builds into the very created order of things a working/resting rhythm.
10. Sabbath-keeping is an act of creation-keeping. To keep the sabbath is to participate in God’s intention for the rhythm of creation.
11. In Deuteronomy 5:12-15- Sabbath rest is rooted in Israel’s salvation from Egyptian slavery, and not in creation.
12. In the context of the ancient world, the Sabbath was unique to Israel. On the other hand, it required an extraordinary trust in God’s provision.
13. We can gain some new insight on the significance of the “set-apartness” of the Sabbath by looking at the incident from chapters 31-34 involving the Golden Calf.
14. On the Sabbath, the Jews could not buy or sell. They could not work or pay others to work for them. It was the day dedicated to the celebration of the things that have value but no price.
15. *Remembering* is more than a mental act, it is an active observance.

16. Shabbat or (Sabbath) has meant many things over the course of time.
 - During the Biblical era it was a sustained protest against slavery. For one day in seven, even a slave was free.
 - In later ages it was a defense against poverty and oppression, a moment in which a much-afflicted people found serenity and breathed a more spacious air.
17. Some Christian groups believe in the letter of the law and its enforcement, such as Seventh Day Adventists, who proclaim the gospel but still adhere literally to the commandments and dietary laws. Thus, they worship on Saturdays.
 - Other Christian groups believe that since Christ came and we are no longer under the rule of the law but worship the one who fulfilled the law, then we no longer need to adhere to the fourth commandment.

REFLECTIONS

- 1. In what way do the Ten Commandments contribute to the Christian experience?**

- 2. How do you mentally and spiritually prepare yourself for your day of worship?
What might you do to better prepare to worship God and gather with community?**

- 3. What does it mean to have a “Sabbath Attitude?”**

- 4. Are “Blue Laws” an effective way of keeping the Sabbath, discuss.**

Sources

1. The Book of Exodus by Brevard Childs
2. Exodus (Interpretation) by Terence Fretheim
3. The Particulars of Rapture by Rabbi Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg
4. Covenant and Conversation by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks
5. The New Interpreter’s Bible

“Blue Laws, Legislating Sabbath Keeping”

Blue law is a colloquial term for state statute or ordinance that forbids or regulates entertainment and commercial activities (ex. sale of liquor) on Sundays or religious holidays. Blue laws can also be referred to as Sunday closing laws, Sabbath laws, and uniform day of rest laws. California has no blue laws.

Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania restrict the sale of motor vehicles on Sunday, though some states have loopholes and exceptions.

Connecticut, Maine, Pennsylvania, and many counties in West Virginia still prohibit hunting on Sunday, with few exceptions. North Carolina explicitly bans gun hunting on Sundays.

TEXAS BLUE LAWS

UNTIL 1985, YOU COULDN'T BUY THESE THINGS ON SUNDAY:

- FURNITURE
- KITCHEN UTENSILS
- STOVES
- AIR CONDITIONERS
- REFRIGERATORS
- ELECTRIC FANS
- RADIOS
- WASHERS AND DRYERS
- TELEVISIONS
- CAMERAS
- JEWELRY
- POWER TOOLS
- CLOCKS
- LUGGAGE
- MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
- BABY BOTTLES

SUNDAY LAWS
In Force in the Province of Ontario

PROHIBIT

- LABOR.** With certain exceptions this includes:
 - THE WORK OF LABORERS, MECHANICS and MANUFACTURERS.
 - ALL FARM WORK, such as SEEDING, HARVESTING, FENCING, DITCHING.
 - WORK ON RAILWAYS, such as BUILDING and CONSTRUCTION, and also REPAIR WORK, except in emergencies, and TRAFFIC, excepting the forwarding of PASSENGER and CERTAIN FREIGHT TRAINS.
 - ALL BUILDING, TEAMING, DRIVING FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES, THE WORK OF BARBERS and HARRERS, Etc.
 - THE WORK OF MUSICIANS and PAID PERFORMERS OF ANY KIND, Works of necessity and mercy excepted.
- BUSINESS.** It is unlawful to MAKE CONTRACTS or to BUY, SELL or DELIVER ANYTHING on Sundays, including LIQUORS, CIGARS, NEWSPAPERS, Etc. Generally speaking the only exceptions are DELIVERING PASSENGER BAGGAGE, MILK for domestic use, and SUPPLYING MEALS and MEDICINES.
- ALL GAMES, RACES OR OTHER SPORTS FOR MONEY OR PRIZES,** or which are noisy, or at which a fee is charged, and the business of AMUSEMENT or ENTERTAINMENT.
- ALL EXCURSIONS** for hire and with the object of pleasure, by TRAIN, STEAMER or OTHER CONVEYANCE.
- ADVERTISING** in Canada, unlawful things to take place on Sunday, either in Canada or across the line.
- IMPORTING, SELLING or DISTRIBUTING FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS** on Sunday.
- ALL GAMBLING, TIPLING, USING PROFANE LANGUAGE,** and all other acts which disturb the public quiet.
- ALL PUBLIC MEETINGS,** except in Churches.
- HUNTING, SHOOTING, FISHING; also BATHING** in any public place or in sight of a place of public worship, or private residence.

THE PENALTY IS FROM \$1.00 TO \$500.00

THE GAME LAW
Of the Province makes Sunday a CLOSE SEASON for all GAME and HUNTING and SHOOTING UNLAWFUL on that day.
THE PENALTY IS FROM \$5.00 TO \$25.00

**SUNDAY BASE BALL
REGARDED AS MENACE**

Presbyterian Report Condemns All Sabbath Secular Games.

FINAL ACTION IS DEFERRED

Motion to Limit Ban to Commercialized Games and Sports is Voted Down—Bible Society Report Read.

CHICAGO, May 23.—Sunday base ball