

Jan. 1.—"How and why God gave the Commandments." Ex. 19. 16-25; Deut. 6. 1-2.

The situation and circumstances of the Hebrews at the time of the record ought to be understood by the Juniors. To make this plain, give out the following questions a week or two ahead of your meeting and let them be answered by the persons holding them:

1. What great work had God for Moses to do? Ex. 3. 10.
2. What was the condition of the Hebrews at this time? Ex. 1. 13, 14.
3. Was Moses willing to obey God's call? Ex. 3. 11, 4. 1.
4. Who did God send with Moses? Ex. 4. 14, 15.
5. How did the King of Egypt receive them? Ex. 5. 2.
6. What wonders were wrought before he would let them go? The ten plagues.
7. What was the purpose of the plagues?
8. How did they pass the Red Sea? Ex. 14. 21.
9. How did God supply their needs in the wilderness? Ex. 16. 4.
10. Where was the camp of the Hebrews when the law was given? Ex. 19. 1.
11. How did God show them his presence? Ex. 19. 16-19.
12. Whom did God call into the top of the Mount? Ex. 19. 20.
13. How long was Moses there? Ex. 24. 18.

Here the Commandments were given, and if your Juniors understand the facts given in above questions, they will appreciate the "How and Why" of the topic. The Hebrews had been many years in bondage in Egypt. They were to be led by Moses, at God's command, into the Land of Promise. They could not be God's people without knowing God's will. Hence the Law was given to preserve order and ensure righteousness. The millions of Hebrews were to become a great and mighty nation whose life was to show God's glory on the earth. They must therefore understand what God required of them. They were to be very different from all the other nations, and the positive difference was to be in their character as "a people of God." So God made his Law very plain and very clear. The Ten Commandments are easily understood by all. There is a plain meaning in every case, and in them are precepts for the whole of life. Make it positive to the Juniors that the Commandments are still in force. They are not put to one side by Jesus Christ, but they lead up to him, and he is their greatest exponent. That is, for us, the Commandments are to be understood and obeyed in the light and spirit of his teachings. We will see as we progress in our weekly topic studies that the demands of the Commandments on us are greater than they were on the Jews. Christ goes behind the letter of the Law, and demands a proper spirit of obedience. So, as Christians we ought to be better than the Jews ever were. We know more under the light of Christ's teachings than they did about God and his Word, and unless we are obedient thereto we shall come into condemnation. So, God gave the Law to the Jews that they might live as his people and enjoy his favor, and he has given us Christ that we might know and serve him here and have eternal life hereafter.

Jan. 8.—"Two commandments and the person who disobey them." Ex. 20. 1-6.

Your youngest Juniors may easily learn the following simple summary of the Ten Commandments:

1. I am God and I alone.
2. Bow the knee beside to none.
3. Never take my name in vain.
4. My Sabbaths never profane.
5. Honor sire and mother still.

6. Follow-men thou shalt not kill.

7. For adultery ever shun.

8. Take dishonestly from none.

9. Lying witness never bear.

10. Covet not thy neighbor's share.

Explain that the first commandment was the great distinguishing mark of the Hebrew nation in comparison with others. It acknowledged the sovereignty of one God. Other people had many gods, the Jewish people but one, Jehovah. This was to separate them from all others forever. The second Commandment showed the spirituality of this one God, Jehovah. He was to be likened to any temporal or material thing. "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." These words are foreshadowed by the second Commandment. Emphasize these two vital points, (1) God, One; (2) God, Spiritual. In keeping these commandments was life for the people, for a nation's life depends on correct views of God. In breaking these commandments, great loss and trouble must come. And it did. So still, we must not allow anything to usurp the place of God in our hearts and lives. We must keep a pure worship of him ever before us. "The dearest idol I have known, whatever that idol be, Help me to tear it from my breast and worship only thee." Let this be our prayer daily.

### Helping the Pastor

Dear Mr. Editor.—Apropos of your reference in your editorial comments of last month's Era to Dr. Wilbur J. Chapman and a member of his church, permit me to say that while conducting a series of special services at one of my appointments recently, we received the following letter from a Christian mother in the lowly walks of life, which encouraged us very much, and which I think worth passing on, if for no other reason than for the spirit manifested: "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Follett.—I write, asking your prayers for the salvation of my daughter S.—and for her friend M.—. They both know and feel their need of a Saviour, and are very much troubled, but I cannot tell you what is the hindrance. I humbly ask your prayers for their salvation. Oh, that others may be troubled as well! I pray that there may be many souls saved this week. I cannot go to the meetings on account of ill-health, but you have my earnest prayers and sincerest sympathy, and while you are preaching I am praying. Will close with love in Christ to you both." I have only to add that among those who gave themselves to Christ during the meetings were the two young women above referred to. Yours, etc., C. W. Follett.

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