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A Spiritual Lesson In Toon Language 59

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(In God I Trust And Write)

Series: The Super Mario Bros. Super Show, Digimon, GI Joe, MGM, The Simpsons, The Smurfs, Baby Looney Tunes, Animaniacs, Darkwing Duck

Episode: The Ten Koopmandments, The Great Gladiator Gig (The Super Mario Bros. Super Show), Lasers In The Night (GI Joe), The Dancing Digimon (Digimon), Good Will To Men (MGM), The Joy Of Sect, Homer Vs. Lisa Vs. The 8th Commandment, Old Money, Brother's Little Helper, Lisa's Rival, Covercraft, When Flanders Failed, Bart The Lover, Black Widower, The Blunder Years (The Simpsons), All Work And No Smurf, Fuzzle Trouble (Smurfs), La La Law (Animaniacs), Brush With Oblivion (Darkwing Duck)

Topic: The Ten Commandments

1: Opening Prayer

2: Opening Discussion: What do the Ten Commandments mean to you?

Let's look at The Ten Commandments and then we will start the overall lesson.

The Ten Commandments (ISV)

Exo 20:1 Then God spoke all these words:

Exo 20:2 "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

Exo 20:3 You are to have no other gods besides me.

Exo 20:4 "You are not to make for yourselves an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above, or on earth below, or in the water under the earth.

Exo 20:5 You are not to bow down to them in worship or serve them; because I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God,

punishing the children for the iniquity of the parents, to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me,

Exo 20:6 but showing gracious love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Exo 20:7 "You are not to misuse the name of the LORD your God, because the LORD will not leave the one who misuses his name unpunished.

Exo 20:8 "Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Exo 20:9 Six days you are to labor and do all your work,

Exo 20:10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. You are not to do any work, neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your livestock, nor the alien who is within your gates,

Exo 20:11 because the LORD made the

heavens and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them, in six days, then he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Exo 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

Exo 20:13 "You are not to murder.

Exo 20:14 "You are not to commit adultery.

Exo 20:15 "You are not to steal.

Exo 20:16 "You are not to testify falsely against your neighbor.

Exo 20:17 "You are not to covet your neighbor's house. You are not to covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Exo 20:18 All the people experienced the thunder and lightning, the sound of the ram's horn, and the smoking mountain. And as the people experienced it, they trembled and stood at a distance.

Exo 20:19 They told Moses, "You speak to us and we will listen, but don't let God speak with us, or we may die.

Exo 20:20 Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid, for God has come to test you, so that you may fear him in order that you don't sin."

Exo 20:21 Then the people stood at a distance, and Moses approached the thick cloud where God was.

The fact is that these commandments are the Laws of God handed down to Moses on Mt. Sinai, but are much more than that. These seem like just ethical rules of conduct until we understand that there is only One God, not many and one way and not many. There is no wiggle room for our human idea of interpretation and

what we think God meant. In this session's cartoons, we see a group of situations where these commandments are used in interesting ways. We will discuss if cartoons do justice to these commandments. When we get to the literal commandments, we are going to look at each commandment individually and show cartoon clips about them and see what a cartoon take on them looks like. We will then extract the spiritual truth of the cartoons on the pro and con side—most will show characters breaking these commandments.

But first, a song:

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/159/The_Ten_Commandments_Of_Bart.mp3

What do you hear?

This song is a Simpsons style take on this subject and is in the perspective of Bart Simpson. We hear where his mind is about conduct and we find that he thinks that being disrespectful and doing as you feel like without thinking about others is best. However, Bart also in Commandment # 7, says that if you follow him that you won't make it to Heaven at all and Hell would be your home; then says that Hell is effectively not very bad.

Commandments include:

10: Thou Shalt Shake Your Big Rear End.

9: Thou Shalt Always Make Rhymes.

8: Thou Shalt Procrastinate (You must always be late).

7: Thou Shalt Be Wild 'cause you'll never get to Heaven.

6: Thou Shalt Dance Like Lunatics.

5: Thou Shalt Be Alive.

4: Thou Shalt Slam The Door.

3: Thou Shalt Question Authority

2: Thou Shalt Do Exactly What You Want To Do

1: Thou Shalt Have Fun.

Personally, I can see that 5 of these commandments aren't too terrible because there is a likely place for #'s 10, 9, 6, 5, and 1 (however in the context of this study, they are not good a lot of times because life isn't always a game or a big party). The rest of the commandments seem to tell people to be disrespectful to others or not caring about feelings or consequences—even wanting some really bad consequences.

3: Cartoon Clips And Show:

Clip # 1: The Super Mario Bros. Super Show: **The Ten Koopmandments**

Cartoon Link:

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/159/The_Ten_Koopmandments.webm

What do you see in this clip?

In this clip, we see that King Koopa made himself a Pharaoh and set up laws. These 10 commandments of the Koopa are an intentional funny royal mockery of the

real thing and I might add hilarious. As cartoon parodies go, I think that it's very cool, but in real life the real commandments are no joke (unlike this wonderful send-up). In this clip, we see a parody of the 1st, 2nd, and 6th commandments. However, I find it fascinating that these rules are to not admit plumbers (Mario's and Luigi's profession), commanding the Mushroom people to be robbed blind, and denying the favorite food of the Mushroom People, which is pasta. Incidentally, pasta is also the Mario Bros. favorite food as well. Most notably, by banning plumbers, King Koopa is trying to ban a savior from coming into their world--the Koopa regimes are always vulnerable to plumbers like the Marios. King Koopa wants these rules to never let him be reminded of the Mario Bros. These rules actually break the 1st commandment (Thou shalt have no other gods before me) because King Koopa doesn't care about anyone but himself and therefore worships himself, the 8th commandment (Thou shalt not steal) because the Mushroom People are forced to give up their gold coins and have nothing, and Jesus' commandment (Love thy neighbor as thyself) because if you don't really care about your subjects and are selfish, it's not love, but hate. In the real world, this regime would not be accepting of Jesus, the true Savior.

Clip # 2: MGM: **Good Will To Men**

Cartoon Link:

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/159/Good_Will_To_Men.webm

What do you see in this cartoon short?

This cartoon is known as a war protest cartoon and shows the Hanna-Barbara take on the subject. In this cartoon, we see that it covers mostly the 6th commandment (Thou shalt not kill), but it also shows a glimpse of the 8th Commandment (Thou shalt not steal) and really shows Jesus' commandment (Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself)

Clip # 3: The Simpsons: **Homer Vs. Lisa Vs. The 8th Commandment**

Cartoon Link:

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/159/Homer_Vs_Lisa_Vs_The_Eighth_Commandment1.webm

What did you see in this clip?

In this clip, we see that Moses comes down from Sinai literally, and reads three of the Ten Commandments (In no particular order): the 2nd commandment (Thou shalt not build any graven images), the 7th commandment (Thou shalt not commit adultery), and the 8th (Thou shalt not steal).

Clip # 4—This is also from Homer Vs. Lisa Vs. The 8th Commandment.

Cartoon Link:

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/159/Homer_Vs_Lisa_Vs_The_Eighth_Commandment2.webm

What do you see in this clip?

In this clip, we see that the Sunday School teacher is

talking about Hell and Bart is enthusiastic because he thinks it would be possibly fun eventually and then the teacher tries to correct him; in doing so, she actually quotes a little scripture albeit paraphrased.

This is found in Isaiah 14: 9-11 (NIV)

9 The realm of the dead below is all astir
to meet you at your coming;
it rouses the spirits of the departed to greet you—
all those who were leaders in the world;
it makes them rise from their thrones—
all those who were kings over the nations.
10 They will all respond,
they will say to you,
“You also have become weak, as we are;
you have become like us.”
11 All your pomp has been brought down to the
grave,
along with the noise of your harps;
maggots are spread out beneath you
and worms cover you.

This clip also shows a close up of the Ten Commandments and the teacher says to live by

these to avoid Hell. This is only partly right because of the fact that we as Christians live in a covenant with God of salvation by grace and faith in Jesus Christ who died for us and rose again instead of just salvation by works and good deeds.

This is a wonderful opening, however, do you see anything interesting within the music, the cartoon short and the three other clips as a whole?

There are a couple of glaring points of symmetry; every one of the cartoons has three commandments in them, every one of them has a commandment about stealing (the 8th commandment), however granted, in the case of **The Ten Koopmandments** the commandment to steal (in King Koopa's commandments it is his 1st commandment--which might show where his mind ultimately is). So, for the most part, cartoons skirt the topic of the Ten Commandments. Our music selection was an outright parody. **Why do you think this is so?**

Cartoons may only dabble in The Ten Commandments and make fun of them as a whole, but individually, cartoons hit the topics very well--this is to the point of

being able to learn and glean much information about God's decrees.

As a pastor and teacher that has been archiving cartoons for 19 years and have built up a decent amount of knowledge about cartoons over the years, it's a pleasure to bring these commandments to life with some of these clips from cartoons that you might have seen before, but didn't think about at the time. Therefore, we are going to take a tour of The Ten Commandments and Jesus' added comments and added command of **Love thy neighbor as thyself**

4: Bible Study Of The Commandments And Clips:

Before we really get started, here are a few things to get the most out of this lesson.

Note # 1: All commandments are quoted from the KJV(unless otherwise noted); supporting scriptures are quoted from the ISV (unless otherwise noted).

Note # 2: Not all characters in these cartoons literally commit the actual sinful deed, but in their hearts they do

and therefore commit sin nonetheless according to God's laws. Most of these characters commit definite wanton acts of sin and are guilty of such sins as the commandments speak against.

Note # 3: Some of these toon characters have a brush with death or serious injury when they do what they do. In a lot of cases in real life death or injury doesn't happen, but then a lot of times it does. When we sin, repentance is absolutely necessary. God does have the right to chastise and even take away the life of the sinner when commandments are broken. Repent when you commit sin. If we are honest, the need for repentance and forgiveness is great for every day and for everyone.

Note # 4: The individual commandments will be in their own sections of the lesson and be titled with a paraphrase of the commandment. These will be titled like any heading of a chapter or book and will be in capital letters on the first word of each word (like titles should be). This is important especially with the 1st Commandment titled “No Other Gods” because we are talking about idolatry; normally, the word “Gods” would be “gods”, as we are talking about something else than the True God.