

International Bible Lessons Commentary
Leviticus 19:17-18

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, May 25, 2014

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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, May 25, 2014**, is from **Leviticus 19:17-18, Deuteronomy 6:1-9** (some churches will only study Deuteronomy 6:4-9), **Mark 12:28-37**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, a study guide for teachers, discusses the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **International Bible Lessons Commentary** website. The weekly *International Bible Lesson* is usually posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Leviticus 19:17-18

(Leviticus 19:17) You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself.

Both the Old and New Testaments show that God's concern for how we think and act extends deeper than our external behavior and includes concern for the state of our hearts. Because we have refrained from revenge, evil outward selfish actions, or saying harmful words to or about someone, we may not have hurt them. But God says we are not even to hate or want to do damage to someone in our hearts. God commands us to not plot possible harm against others in our minds or wish harm to befall them. When we hate in our hearts, we deeply hurt ourselves. In addition, God tells people to become concerned not only about their own behavior, but also the behavior of others – to wisely help others turn from doing wrong to doing right. The evil actions or words of others can do great harm, so the Bible tells us to warn others about the harmful consequences of their behavior to others and themselves. In some cases, believers may need to report the evil behavior of others to responsible authorities. To hide a crime or keep quiet about a crime can make us guilty for not doing what we could to promote justice and help victims. Without hating in our hearts, we can work for justice to be served.

(Leviticus 19:18) You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

Loving our neighbors as ourselves includes not taking vengeance or retribution into our own hands if they harm us – God established a rule of just laws and punishments, and rules for witnesses and judges, so those harmed could

bring someone who harmed them before a judge and seek justice. If someone mistreats us, we may choose to forgive them and not seek to punish them in a court of law or a church court. If we hold a grudge against someone, that grudge will distort our thinking, will damage our own hearts, will cause great pain to us, and may even hurt others. One good reason for doing what is right inside and outside is this: God has told us to obey Him in all of these things. God declared, “I am the LORD,” and because God is the Lord, we owe Him our obedience in all things inside and out.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

Because this *International Bible Lesson* includes three different Scripture texts, only one question will be asked below.

1. If someone is holding a grudge against someone, what are some things they can do to obey God?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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