

CLASSROOM IN A BOOK DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

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BOOK 10

AN OLD TESTAMENT
PARADIGM
OF
SALVATION

A NEW LOOK AT THE BOOK OF EXODUS



EXODUS
God's
Deliverance



LAW
God's
Direction



REDEMPTION
God's
Provision



WILDERNESS
God's
Training



PROMISED LAND
God's Purpose

By

WILLIAM E. VINSON, JR., PhD



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**CLASSROOM IN A BOOK
DISCIPLESHIP SERIES**

Book 10

**AN OLD TESTAMENT PARADIGM OF
SALVATION:
A New Look at the Book of Exodus**

**By:
William E. Vinson, Jr.**

**Published by
William E. Vinson, Jr.
Fort Worth, TX**

First Printing

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Preface

THE CLASSROOM IN A BOOK

DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

The *Classroom in a Book Discipleship Series* is a unique approach to education. The author has twenty-five years of experience in classroom teaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Internet teaching. The teachings covered Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, Church History, Hermeneutics, Christian Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Evangelism, and Biblical Backgrounds. In other words, the teacher was a generalist in the world of specialization.

During recent years of teaching, God sent two people into the classrooms that have made this series possible. One student brought in some audio recording gear into the seminary classrooms and recorded everything said by teacher and students. The other person, Helen Agnew, transcribed the tapes into weekly sessions. Finally, Helen put all the weeks together for a course into a book, which became the nucleus for a formal book. Next came the editing phases in which the improper English and sentence construction was corrected. Also, the organization and thought flow was improved in order to facilitate a reader's comprehension.

Each class session became a chapter that went through several iterations of the editing process. Also, Helen provided computer drawings of the theological charts and models used by the teacher. These models were inserted into the book at the appropriate places.

INFORMAL WRITING STYLE

You should be aware that the chosen style of communication in this series of books is much more informal than the typical. I have worked to retain the folksy way of expression that I use in the classroom and pulpits. In a

formal treatise, like my doctoral dissertation, the expression was stiff and formal (one may even say that it was written by a stuffed shirt). So, who is going to read my dissertation because of its stiff formality?

These books are going to be easy reading because they will be what you hear in everyday conversation. In the classroom, I am a great communicator. When reading the transcripts of my audio-recorded classroom lectures, the students have commented that they could actually hear my voice with its inflection and volume in the printed words. These sensory experiences add to the impact and learning by the reader. So, I want you to know that the folksy level of communication was purposefully chosen in order to enhance your learning experience.

Dear saint, you are in for a treat. There will be points of time in which your mind will be so absorbed into thinking new and analytical thoughts of our Most Wonderful Lord, that you will be unable to resist sharing them with a loved one. In my editing passes of the various drafts, I found myself reliving the classrooms and all the high emotion and drama. My pulse rate would quicken and convictions and tears would return.

CLASS PROCESS

Each book is a semester-long class. The subject matter is explored very thoroughly because all the students are participating in the questioning and answering. You will have the next best thing to being in the classroom. In fact, there will be times in your reading in which you will be in the classroom through imagination.

BENEFITS

Discipleship has been declared by many to be the greatest need in Southern Baptist life today. In my many years of teaching, I have had churches to bus in many of their members to take my classes at Southwestern Seminary. The reason that was given was that it was a very good source for discipleship training. This discipleship training is a step up from Sunday school and other training because *it involves seminary training at the lay level*. Armed with this new discipleship training, the new lay ministers are fulfilling their calls and impacting the Kingdom of God in a very positive way. Pastors are benefiting by having some new lay ministers to help them minister. Churches and society are benefiting by receiving positive help that is theologically sound and practical.

For you, the busy Christian of today, this series is a rare opportunity to actually participate in a seminary classroom to learn from the teacher and your peers in high impact and focused studies that are not available in any other books. The teacher's experience of teaching as a generalist will provide *intercon-*

nected insights and truths that are not available in specialization. The *student interactions* in these books will create a *relevancy* that is unheard of outside the classroom. The quality of the *class dynamics* will lift you, the reader, up into unparalleled densely packed teachings that will greatly improve the *efficiency of your learning*. You owe it to yourself to jump into this series because you can get an education that is the next best thing to actually going to seminary.

In addition to the student interactions recorded in each chapter, the major points that I made which would be the source of the tests given to the classroom students are stated in the text, and the *test questions* are stated at the end of each chapter (class session). The *answers* to those tests are given at the end of the book for you to check yourself. If you seriously want to know that you have accomplished the goals of each chapter and to be able to teach a course like this, answer those questions to the point that you can do so without going back into the chapter itself—i.e. memorize those points and charts.

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INTRODUCTION

In this course you will experience the rescue and journey of the Hebrews from Egypt all the way to the edge of the Promised Land. You will be asked to put yourself in the shoes of an ordinary Hebrew and in those of Moses and Aaron to view the trials and triumphs from their perspectives. You will try to view the terrible sin failures from God's perspective.

With the rescue of the Hebrew slaves, a nation was born. God's power is shown in His redemption of the Hebrews. His wisdom is shown in His providence. His love, mercy, and grace are shown in His forgiveness.

You will learn what the cost of discipleship is. In so doing, you will be shown the doctrine of salvation that is taught and illustrated in the book of Exodus. The doctrine's three elements of justification, sanctification, and glorification will be examined.

You will learn of Satan's strategies of compromise, deception, and temptation. You will marvel at how Moses defeats Satan by his strict obedience. You will be lifted to joyful heights as you see Moses grow into a mature and great leader. Then, you will sink to self-realizing lows when you see Moses and Aaron stumble and fall.

You will learn about how to face the trials of sanctification, spiritual warfare, and per-

sonal problems. The *kenosis* will be seen to be a requirement at this early stage in the lives of God's people. You will learn how the cross can sweeten the bitterness of our sufferings and trials. It is the source of the joyful life of ministry.

You will learn what part the Abrahamic Covenant plays in our lives. You will see why the Mosaic Covenant (the Law) was instituted. Then you will see how the New Covenant comes out of the Abrahamic Covenant and fulfills the requirements of the Mosaic Covenant. Lastly, you will then be shown how the New Testament provides heaven and a share in Jesus Christ's ownership of the universe to his heirs because of His death.

You will learn the purpose of the Tabernacle and how it should be viewed today. You will contrast the Tabernacle's purpose with that of the Temple, and see how the Temple should be viewed today. And then you will understand better the doctrine of salvation.

Finally, you will be warned that you can go through justification, sanctification, and all the way to the final victory and yet fail. Victory depends on faith, and faith must be focused on God, not on limitations and weaknesses that we are aware of existing in our selves.

Chapter 1

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

JUSTIFICATION: THE NEW BIRTH

An understanding that salvation is just the new birth experience is a reductionist view of a very large, wide-scoped doctrine. Salvation consists of justification, sanctification, and glorification (see Chart 1.1). We will look at Exodus as an Old Testament paradigm of the doctrine of salvation.

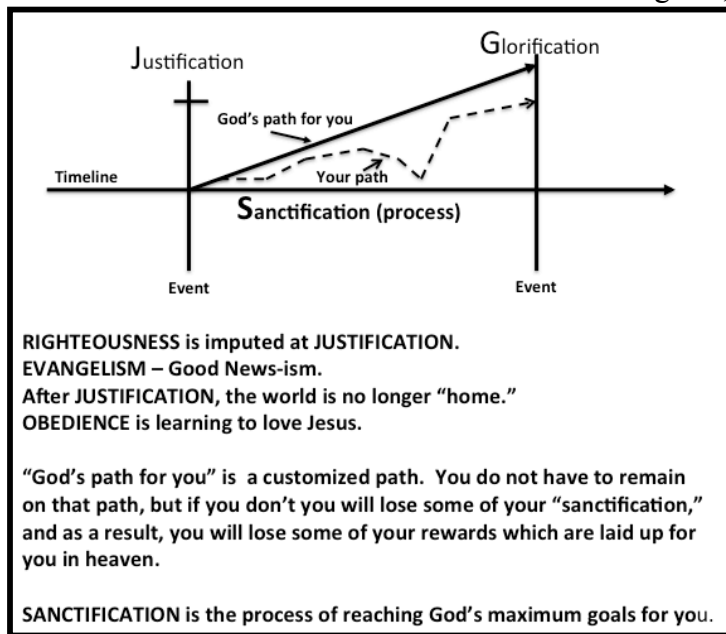


Chart 1.1

Salvation starts with a timeline on which the unsaved person comes to a point in time in which justification occurs. Justification is an event, an instant in time in which the person realizes that he is without hope without God and living a life that will end with a terrible eternity. He realizes that he is a sinner, and that he deserves and is bound for hell. He admits to God that he is a sinner and wants forgiveness. Because of his repentance and belief in Jesus, God forgives him and gives him the gift of eternal life.

That event occurs in an instant in time. In

it, the person is changed forever. Once past that event, you will never go through it again. That one-time, special event is called justification. It is the new birth in which one is born again into God’s family.

The new birth launches the baby Christian into a long process of changing behavior, changing personality, change of life style, a new mind, new words, new thoughts, new goals, new values, and a new demeanor.

Changes continue to occur for the rest of the Christian’s life. This life process is called sanctification. Sanctification is the life-long process that follows justification. It is your life’s walk as a Christian. The sanctification part of the doctrine of salvation terminates with another event that is called glorification in which the Lord Jesus gives out rewards to each saint for what the saint accomplished during his life of sanctification (Mt. 25:14ff).

In justification there is a righteousness that is imputed to you. That imputed righteousness is something that you do not earn on your own. It is a gift that is accounted to your credit and put within you. It is not something that is generated from within, but something that was put within. God puts His perfect righteousness in our being when we go through the justification event.¹

¹ When you hear the Gospel say, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” and you conclude that you are numbered within the “all” who come short of the glory of God, then you are ready to hear the bad news: “The wages of sin is death.” That is terrible news. But the good news is that “The gift of God is eternal life.” In juxtaposition to the bad news is this wonderful news. The word Gospel means God’s good story, and the word evangelism means good news-ism.

SANCTIFICATION: LIFE'S NEW JOURNEY

At that point of justification, I began a journey; I became a child of God, a citizen of heaven, and a pilgrim in this world. I began to walk a new walk. I began to act differently. This long pilgrimage is one of obedience. Certainly, it may begin with obeying because you are fearful of punishment. After much practice of learning obedience, you may begin to gain the mind of Christ. As you begin to gain the mind of Christ, your motivation begins to change ever so gradually, and the next thing you know you are doing it because you love Jesus and want to please Him. However, we should never lose our fear of God because it is a commandment which has the reward of wisdom for that fear.²

You see, there is a change that begins to evolve in us as we begin to move forward in our pilgrimages, and that change is called the sanctification process. His road has a goal in it, and He sets a path for each of His saints that allow us to participate with Him in His achieving that goal. Every time somebody comes through that door of justification and starts on this journey, he gets an assigned path that is customized by God just for him.

Sanctification of our personhoods occurs at justification. Sanctification of our lives occurs progressively as you learn to obey the Lord and square your behavior with what has been imputed to you. Your outward form, your outward behavior, and your outward appearance begin to become more and more like what you truly are.³ What you are on the outside begins to conform to what you are on the inside.

Your responsibility is to follow Jesus. Look for the path that He has for you, and get on it. Do not let anyone else bump you off

that path or deter you from following the Lord. If you get on your path and stay on it, you cannot get any better than that. Even though you are not a great evangelist, like Billy Graham, you do not need to be. God has gifted you and put you on His chosen path that is designed just for you. That is your path, and if you do not get on your path, then your path goes undone. It is imperative that you understand this simple fact!

Redemption

The doctrine of salvation includes redemption in which God takes you out of a hopeless predicament. The predicament is that you are in bondage to sin in a life that ends with an eternity of suffering in the lake of fire because of your sins. You are enslaved to this life because you cannot get out of bondage without God's help.

This same pattern of salvation is portrayed in the book of Exodus. The Hebrew people are in bondage in Egypt, and they need somebody to get them out of that predicament. God alone has the power for getting his people out of hopeless predicaments. He sent His messenger to them with good news, somewhat like an evangelist.⁴ God's message was that He was going to rescue His people out of their enslavement to Egypt.

God's rescue of His people from Egypt pictures justification. Once out of Egypt, the Hebrews started their pilgrimage toward the Promised Land. This pilgrimage is filled with test after test and fraught with dangers. God is with them all the way. They miraculously go through the Red Sea as God parts the waters. When the pilgrims reached the other side of the sea, the waters closed to mark the

² Proverbs 9:10.

³ Hypocrisy is the opposite of sanctification. It is when you are not behaving like what you really are.

⁴ We do the same in evangelism. I go to lost people and tell them that God has provided the way for their release from bondage. God's power is in that message. In the Exodus model and in evangelism, there is redemption. From the predicament of bondage to sin, God rescues all those who repent and ask for forgiveness.

end of the old life. There is supposed to be no returning to enslavement. They were a new people heading on a new journey of sanctification.

Well, what do we do now in our New Testament walk? We follow the Lord, and warfare crops up everywhere we go just like it did for the Hebrews. We have the same kind of tests that the Hebrews had. He gave us the Law. He expects us to abide by that Law because the Law is just like the nature of God. The Law defines holiness; it is the picture of holiness. He tells us, “Be ye holy.”⁵

GLORIFICATION: OUR JOURNEY’S GOAL

Exodus is the paradigm of salvation in story form before the New Testament was written. Exodus pictures the Hebrews as eventually arriving in the Promised Land as a picture of glorification. The rescue is a gift from God, and the Promised Land is a gift from God. Thus justification and glorification are gifts from God. It is sanctification, our pilgrimages that will test our obedience within the many trials of life.

When you die, there will be closure—the glorification. It will be your coming home to your Promised Land, the fulfillment of your hope. God’s doctrine of salvation is pictured quite well in the book of Exodus.

Baptism: The New Life’s Sign

If salvation were nothing more than the new birth, it would have occurred while the Hebrews were still in Egypt because crossing the Red Sea was the baptism which comes after the new birth. Some of us are still in Egypt and standing on the bank of the Red Sea. There are people who have never begun their walk of obedience with the first tiny step of baptism. Much is going undone with others who have stopped their pilgrimages

after that little initial step. The Christian is commanded to get up and walk by denying himself, taking up his cross, and following Jesus.⁶

The doctrine of salvation that is portrayed in the book of Exodus will help us be better warriors in our pilgrimages. Now some of us have just recently gone through justification; others of us are well into our sanctification. How much time do we have? Whatever time it is, that is all we will ever have to make profit for the Kingdom of God.

Do you understand about the paradigm of salvation in the book of Exodus? It pictures the doctrine very clearly in its historical form. It provides a model for us to see more clearly the doctrine of salvation in the New Testament.

Redemption

The theme of the book of Exodus is the Lordship of God over history, nature, man, and worship. God’s Lordship over these four categories is going to work its way out in the sovereignty of God as foundational to the doctrine of redemption.

Redemption has the look of rescuing a person who cannot get out of a deep hole. He can jump but he cannot reach the rim; he is trapped. God who is standing outside the hole can reach down, grab him by the hand, lift him out, and put him on solid ground. That is the picture of redemption.

The doctrine of redemption deals with power, the power base of God. It is the Lordship understanding of God. No matter where you are in history, God can reach down and get you out of your hole and put you on solid ground. No matter where you are in

⁵ Leviticus 11:45.

⁶ There is a sermon in Ephesians about awaking, arising, and walking to redeem the time. This is the time, the only time you have from justification to glorification. Whatever you are going to do, you must do it now. Redeem your time; it is all you are going to get.

nature, you can cry out to God and He can stop nature and reach down and get you to solid ground. Redemption is based on the power of God; it is His sovereign Lordship.

Yet, God gives free will to man. Thus, there is going to be testing of the two, one against the other in the book of Exodus. The sovereignty of God versus the free will of man is going to be examined in this book.

Sovereignty and Providence

There is linkage of the sovereignty of God also with the doctrine of providence. The doctrine of providence is involved when God puts you on a hard path that is going to lead through hardship and suffering and everything going wrong to His glory for you. As you look at your path and its circumstances, you will think that everything seems to be going wrong. You will naturally think, “This cannot be God’s path for me!” You are struggling, and it seems like no matter that you do what is right, it brings hardship.

Providence means providing in light of foresight. God looks down the long haul and puts me on the path that leads to **His goal** for me: “I want Bill to achieve the maximum goals for Me. Bill wants a path that is soft and easy. But I (God) want this hard, rough path of testings that gets Bill right to My chosen end point.” However, my carnal self desires to seek out the soft path and say, “Oh, this is God’s path for me, I feel it. This feels good; everything I do is right. It has to be God’s path.” But you see, that is not God’s path because it is not sacrificial; there is no *kenosis* in that path. You must be discerning to find God’s path for you. God’s path has suffering, heartache, and hardship. These things are not required for their own sakes but for following Jesus in self-denial. They are the costs of discipleship. Jesus said that no man can be His disciple unless he denies

himself, takes up his cross, and follows Him.⁷

The doctrine of providence is clearly seen in the history of Joseph. Joseph was sold into slavery—could that hardship be within God’s will? Yes, because there is a greater good in the future salvation of Israel to be achieved by this evil setback.

There is linkage between providence and sovereignty. Sovereignty is when God uses the kind of power to bring you through the rocky, bumpy, hard road to His final destination for you. Providence is when He brings other things across your path along with other people and other circumstances to help you get there and the other people to get where they are supposed to go. Sovereignty in combination with the foresight of providence is the power to bring all those things to work together for your good in order for God’s good goals to be achieved. It is all mixed together. The history of Joseph demonstrates the doctrine of providence, and Exodus demonstrates God’s power in the doctrine of sovereignty. Both demonstrations emphasize one of the two sides of redemption.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Authorship

Authorship has a lot of internal and external evidence for Moses as the author, and I am not going to waste a lot of time dealing with all the various kinds of questions there exist. I will list for you the internal and external evidences in Chart 1.2.

Moses is the author.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE	EXTERNAL EVIDENCE
Exodus 17:14; 24:4-7, 34:27.	2 Chronicle 25:4 Daniel 9:1 & 13 Mark 10:5; 12:26;

⁷ Matthew 16:24

	John 5:46; 7:19 & 23 Matthew 19:8 Luke 24:27 & 44 Acts 13:39; 15:5; 28:23 2 Corinthians 3:15 Hebrews 9:19; 10:28
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Chart 1.2***Dating***

Dating is done in 1 Kings 6:1.

6:1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which [is] the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

If the temple of the Lord was built in 956 BC, and that was 480 years after the Exodus, then simple calculation pinpoints the Exodus to have occurred in 1436 BC.

This dating is confirmed by the Amarna Tablets which were written in the 15th century BC by the Hyksos. These tablets are clay tablets which are shaped like small bed pillows. They are oval (fat in the middle) and tapering down to thin sides and ends. The messages were scratched into the clay, and then the tablet was baked. Baking the pillow-shaped tablets preserved them by making them hard and solid. Archeologists have found about 20,000 of them, and some of them still had the baked clay sleeves (like an envelope) into which they were inserted. These tablets were communications between Egypt and Palestine during the 15th century BC.

The Hyksos ruled Egypt from 1800 to 1570 BC. They were the shepherd kings described in the Amarna tablets. These were rulers from foreign lands who had conquered Egypt, but were expelled by Egypt's Ahmose in 1570 BC.

A change of attitude toward the Hebrews occurred after the expulsion because of the rate and growing strength of the Hebrews who had been friends of the Hyksos. When the Egyptians resumed self-rule, they became anxious about the prolific birth rate and the threatening possibility of an alliance between the Hebrews and enemies of Egypt.

The 18th Dynasty (1570-1310) began with Ahmose who expelled the Hyksos. *Hebiru* was a word mentioned in the Amarna tablets, and it referred to the Hebrews. In the 15th century the Exodus occurred and the Hebrews moved toward Palestine. These tablets were written back and forth among the Hyksos, Palestinians, and the Egyptians. Apparently, many from each nation maintained their friendships and corresponded prolifically via the tablets after the Hyksos had left Egypt.

Most scholars date the book of Exodus in the 19th Dynasty during Raamses I and Raamses II, but my foregoing calculations show that the Exodus occurred earlier in the 18th Dynasty. The oppression of the Hebrews occurred approximately a century after the expulsion of the Hyksos rulers. Pharaoh began to oppress the Hebrews because of the fear of their birth rate. The enslavement lasted for about a hundred years.

The Hebrews' Predicament

The Hebrews began calling out to God, and God responded and delivered them. That is the redemption motif. God lifts us out of the holes that we are in. The holes do not necessarily result from a fault of our own. The situations mostly occur while you are minding your own business, doing what you are supposed to be doing. The next thing you know you are in a predicament that you can do nothing about except to call on God. God has the power to reach down and set you on safe ground.

Look around this room at all of these bad guys sitting in here. These ex-cons and for-

mer outlaws have been redeemed, and they are as nice now as anybody can be. Only God could have worked the miracles that produced results like these.⁸

THE OFFICES OF CHRIST

Pair the following three motifs with the three offices of Christ?

1. The Exodus (Chapter 1—15)
2. The Wilderness (Chapters 15—18)
3. The Sinai Wanderings (Chapter 19—end).

Jill: The Exodus correlates to the prophetic work of Christ.

V: Why would we put prophet with the Exodus?

Oscar: All three of them.

V: Certainly, the paradigms of Christ's work are in all three motifs, but there is an emphasis in each motif. What is the emphatic work of the office of Christ when He devastates the Egyptian gods, gets His people across the sea, and then pulls the sea down on the Egyptians to drown them all? The answer is the office of King because it uses divine power for redemption.

King is the emphasis in the beginning. Priest is needed after they break the Law. The instructions about when and where the nation should go are proclaimed in the prophetic function. However, all three functions are required all the way along because God is in all three offices all the time. You really cannot do away with any at any time, but there are also emphases at certain times. When Moses is rescuing, that is as a King.

⁸ When guys with terrible backgrounds applied for seminary, they were sent to my classes for probationary testing. If they survived the classes without causing a ruckus and made grades of C's or better, then they could be admitted. Likewise, when former outlaws relapsed in other classes, they were sent to me as their last chance of reforming before being expelled.

When Moses is interceding, that is as a Priest, and when he is giving instruction, that is as a Prophet. The three motifs line up with the three works or offices of Christ. I am not saying that each work of Christ is to the exclusion of the other two, but there is an emphasis on each work of Christ in the three motifs.

OUR OWN EXODUS PROGRESS

Let us examine ourselves. Where are we right now? We are in the wilderness on our journey toward the Promised Land, or we are wandering in circles in the Sinai. But it is certain that we are not in Egypt because we have already been born again, i.e. redeemed from sin's enslavement. Most of us are in the wilderness. What are we doing here? We are learning obedience. We are in the middle motif, the part between the justification and the glorification. We are in sanctification where the prophetic work is emphasized in giving us directions for our journeys.

We are on the journey together; we are just like the nation of Israel. We are traveling toward the Promised Land; we are trying to find our way. We have a map that tells us how to get there. Some of us need to help the others read the map. In this nation we have warriors like yourselves; then there is the next level down, and then another level down, and then eventually you have the babies. You cannot just leave them out in the wilderness. We are going to pack up, strike our tents, get together, and go. We will not leave anything behind. We are going to nurture the babies, grow them up strong. Soon they can walk all by themselves. We go out and fight; they watch us fight. Soon they grab up a sword and in the next battle they jump in and whack away. Eventually you will be old and decrepit, and they are out there fighting and defending you and helping you on the way. That is the way we are. We are the family of God. We take care of one another and go through life just like the Hebrews did.

GOD IS IN CHARGE!

The Old Testament understanding of history is God centered. God manages history by moving and limiting it. History has its source in God and takes place for God. God is sovereign and the Lord of history. God uses history as one of the forms of revelation.

In philosophy it was the Hebrews who pictured history as linear. If you know God as the Lord of history, then you know that God created history. He is going to bring it to an end. It has a beginning and an end; it is linear. Its source is in God, it is for God, and it is going to culminate in God. God's Lordship of history is a linear concept.

Now the ancient Greeks and the Romans pictured history as a cycle. This cycle was a never-ending kind of thing. The glorious time occurred when the empire was at its zenith. Everything was wonderful, and it was called the golden age in history. However, every golden age tipped over and went into a decline, and as it declined, there was a terrible, oppressive time in history. During the cycle, there was a change of policies and the learning of lessons that paved the way for a return to another golden age.

Nature's cycles basically determined the cyclical philosophy of history. The year is a cycle of the seasons. The day cycles through light and dark. Life and death are cyclical in nature. Thus, nature conditioned man to adopt the cyclical kind of philosophy.

If you add to the cyclical concept something of the linear concept, then a spiral view of progressive history results. In the spiral view, there is the cycle of decline and incline of progress. In progressive thinking, history is going somewhere, i.e. utopia. It depends upon men learning the lessons for change which allows for spiraling upward to the next level of progress.

The Hebrews were the first to view history as linear because God was its author

as the Creator of history in Genesis. The New Testament book of Revelation reveals to us the completion of history to which we are headed. Thus, God has history lined out in His Scriptures which tell us exactly where we came from and where we are going. We can be comfortable in the biblical context of history because God is Lord of history. That is why you can call upon God and expect miracles when you are on your path.

God's Covenants with Man

1. *The Suzerainty Covenant* is a covenant between unequals. The stronger person says, "We are making a Covenant together, and here is the Covenant." There is no negotiation. It is a handed-down Covenant between unequals. We can agree or disagree to participate in it by accepting our part. That is all the power that the lower person has. He does not make the terms of the Covenant.
2. *The Parity Covenant* is a covenant between equals. The parties can negotiate and come to an agreement on the terms of the covenant.

The Old Covenant was a *suzerainty* covenant. That is the covenant that we will look at in the book of Exodus.

God's Laws

1. *Apodictic* law is from dictation. *Apo* is from; *dictic* is to say. *Apodictic* law is law from decree. An example of *apodictic* law is God says, "Thou shalt not have any other gods before me." That law is established by God's decree.
2. *Casuistic* law is case law. It is based on a condition: "If he does this, then I will do that." In other words, if the case is such and such, then the penalty is. . . . For example, if a son blasphemes his mother and father, then he shall be stoned to death. That is an example of case law or *casuistic* law.

You will see both kinds of law in Exodus and in other parts of the Bible. You will be able to identify the kind of law that we shall examine. Mosaic Law contains both *apodictic* and *casuistic* laws.

There is similarity between the suzerainty covenant and *apodictic* law. Agreement in the covenant is the only difference. The *suzerainty* covenant requires agreement by the lower party. *Apodictic* law is imposed on the lower party without the necessity for agreement.

God's *apodictic* law and also *casuistic* law are by decree as well; they are both *apodictic*. Neither negotiation nor agreement are required in these laws.

Covenants require agreement by both parties. However, we get into a heap of trouble when we start bringing "parity" into

suzerainty Covenants. We will see how that begins to happen in the book of Exodus.

EXODUS: A BOOK FOR US NOW

As we go through this study of the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings, I want you to place yourself in with the Hebrews. Be thinking, "That is me; I am in this story." Let's be participants rather than just spectators. We are going to do this pilgrimage together, you see. After all, we are failing in New Testament times just as badly as the Hebrews failed in the Old Testament times. We must learn from this book. If we can learn Exodus and get its picture in our minds, it will make for a much better journey for us here in the New Testament.

Chapter Questions

1. Why did the Egyptians oppress the Hebrews?
2. What are the three motifs in Exodus that emphasize a particular part of the paradigm for the work of Christ?
3. What is the Old Testament understanding of history?

Chapter 2

ENSLAVEMENT IN EGYPT

There was a turning over of the generations in Egypt, and the people of Joseph's generation had died away of old age. The new generation of Hebrews was born in Egypt, and their tribes were growing in numerical strength. In this milieu, a new king who did not remember Joseph had come up over Egypt.

After expulsing the Hyksos, the Egyptians resumed self-rule under the new Egyptian pharaoh, Ahmose. Eventually, Pharaoh became opposed to the Hebrews' growing numbers because he feared an alliance of the Hebrews with the Hyksos that had been recently expelled.

Exodus

1:9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel [are] more and mightier than we:

1:10 Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and [so] get them up out of the land.

This is an expression of fear of being conquered from within. The Hyksos had conquered Egypt from within, and they had shown favor to the Hebrews. There was a natural thought pattern that would lend itself to the possibility of another alliance of the Hebrews with the Hyksos. The Egyptians had not too long ago won back self-rule, and they could very well think that if the Hyksos came back and the Hebrews joined with them in an alliance, Egypt could lose their self-rule once again.

Fear led to oppression. There is a natural progression: fear leads to oppression that in turn leads to killing. That progression is demonstrated in chapter 1 of Exodus.

Exodus

1:12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

The Egyptians began transplanting the Hebrews into various areas of Egypt for the purpose of building treasure cities. Even under the affliction, the Hebrews were prospering. However, the more they prospered, the more affliction was put upon them.

Exodus

1:13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

1:14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, [was] with rigour.

ABORTION

The bitter labor that was being put to the Israelites was not achieving the end result that the Egyptians wanted. A reduction in the number of Hebrews had not been achieved, and the Egyptians were still afraid. In order to achieve the desired reduction, the Egyptians came up with a new plan—abortion.

Exodus

1:15 And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one [was] Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:

1:16 And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see [them] upon the stools; if it [be] a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it [be] a daughter, then she shall live.

In this plan of gender selection, the males were selected to be killed because they would make up the potential army to join with the Hyksos. However, the midwives rejected this terrible evil.

Exodus

1:17 But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

We need to reconcile Exodus 1:17 which commends the midwives' disobeying pharaoh with Romans 13:1-7, which commands Christians to be law-abiding citizens.

Romans

13:1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

13:2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

13:4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to [execute] wrath upon him that doeth evil.

13:5 Wherefore [ye] must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

13:6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

13:7 Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute [is due]; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

How do we evaluate the action of the Hebrew midwives? Are they doing right or are they doing wrong?

Beth: They are doing right.

V: Okay, that is good, but how can you justify your answer with Romans 13?

Beth: The people that God put in charge in a civil matter are still under God's Law.

V: Okay, so then are we supposed to be thinking, when we are looking at Romans 13, that blind obedience is not good?

Tom: Blind obedience of a bad law is not good.

V: In Romans 13 there is a general statement that the government or governor or king is a servant of the good. What do you make of that? There is an ideal that is being expressed in Romans 13, and the ideal is that the governor or the king is a servant of God for the enforcement of good laws under God. But ideals are not being expressed when Pharaoh mandates killing the boy babies. That law is a violation of God's Law which prohibits killing.¹

Romans 13 was used by Hitler through the German Lutheran Church to bring German society into line with his way of thinking. This kind of thinking is the basis of political correctness. Whatever laws that came out of Hitler were considered by the Lutherans to be God's laws. The same thing is happening today for us. Whatever our government decides is thought to be God's will for us to obey.

Class, this German history involved a rigid, unthinking application to a legalistic kind of understanding of Romans without seeing the passage as a description of obeying God's ideals.

God's Laws apply to the king as much as they do to the people. The king has responsibility unto God. This is tough, but it says in that Romans passage that the king, governors, and government people are deacons of God. Let that sink in. A deacon of God is higher than a deacon of the church. God twice states in Romans 13 that the governor or the king is His deacon.

¹ Abortion and redistribution of wealth via the government are both clearly contrary to God's Laws which prohibit killing and stealing.

Guess what he calls the government leaders the third time? He calls them His *worship leaders*. Class, those descriptions describe very high callings. All government people are responsible to God as His chosen deacons to guide the people and to lead them into worship of God. Just as pharaoh has done a poor job of it, our courts, congress, and administrations, both federal and state, have failed miserably too.

When the governor or government departs from God's Laws, we should not join them in their departure. We must stay with God's Laws. We line up with God and take the resulting hit that inevitably will come our way. That is the cost of being politically incorrect.

There is going to come a time in the near future when you will be required to make a critical choice. You will choose either to be politically correct in order to live or to be politically incorrect and die. According to the book of Revelation, that choice will be either to worship the Beast and take his mark or to refuse to worship him and reject taking his mark.

It is likely that we who are alive today will soon have to choose whether we will fall in line with the majority in worshipping the Beast. It is imperative that we be an informed and thinking generation. We must read God's Word with some sense, not with your thinking closed. Do not earn the favor of "Pharaoh" and lose the favor of God.

Ted: When we find out that we have been going the wrong way, we can change.

V: The problem is that we may not find out in time that we are going the wrong way. Once, you take the mark of the Beast, God says that your destiny is forever set. We have to learn to think analytically right now. The best way to do that is in a safe environment where we can dialog about dangerous things. We do that in a class like this where nobody

gets hurt. But soon we will not even be able to do this. It is going to be hurtful and costly to do the right thing and to think critically.

Jack: The practical application of this in light of what you just said would be who would support organizations like Operation Rescue. It will be risky to come up against unfair laws and that sort of thing!

Sybil: It is already risky to do so. I have been in several churches where they really looked down on pro-life zealots. In fact, we are entering a time in which God's real disciples will be shunned by other Christians.

V: The street preaching that Peter did is an example of civil disobedience. The government whipped him and told him to stop doing it. He went right back to preaching in the streets again as soon as he was released.

In our times now, to be out of favor with our government is to be out of favor with the churches. We esteem the government too highly. Automatically, we think of the government as being correct and lawbreakers as being incorrect. That is political correctness at work **in us**.

Sybil: Peter would not come back to my church because if the government says that street preaching is illegal, then we would have branded him as a criminal.

V: He would have been a very unpopular guy. One of our seminary professors told me that we should keep our witnessing out of the public arena. I have been told by that professor and several church leaders that my buttonholing people in public is not good. Class, I am not the perfect witness, but I should not be accused of "buttonholing," especially by someone who has never observed how I witness.

In this abortion episode in Exodus, the midwives not only disobey the king, but also they lie to the king.

Exodus

1:18 And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, . . .

Mary: I bet they were shaking in their boots when he called them for their time of reckoning.

Exodus

1:18 . . .and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive?

1:19 And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women [are] not as the Egyptian women; for they [are] lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

V: The midwives risked their lives in order to follow God's Law over Pharaoh's law. God had respect for their self-denying following of God's Law and its inherent risks.

Infanticide

Exodus

1:20 Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty.

1:21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

1:22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

Egyptian fear was pushing forward now at this point in history. Egypt had gone from fear, to oppression, to killing under cover, and eventually to open killing of the Hebrews.

The first level of killing was to be killing under the cover of the birthing process. When that did not work, pharaoh moved to the next level of killing which was an open killing. He ruled that the males were to be thrown into the river.

This law of desperation contained its own risk because if the Hebrews were as mighty as the Egyptians feared, there would have been the possibility of an uprising or civil war. However, I think that the Jews had no weap-

ons and that they were powerless to resist a formidable military might.

EXODUS 2: Moses

Parental Stewardship

Chapter 2 reviews the first forty years of Moses' life. He was born in the lineage of Levi. His mother took a risk to act in faith by hiding him for three months. She then made an ark to float him in the river.

The following passage from Hebrews describes this act by Moses' mother as a faith act.

Hebrews

11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, . . .

You see, this was an act of faith in which their fear of governmental reprisal was overcome by their sense of duty to God.

Moses and the Kenosis

Hebrews

11:23 . . .because they saw [he was] a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Let's talk about the choice to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the abundance of wealth and status with Pharaoh. This chosen path is the downward path of the *kenosis*.

In this *kenosis* by Moses, there is something that is challenging to you and me. That challenge is to esteem joining in Christ's reproach as a greater reward than great worldly treasures. This means that you choose to be

castigated and defamed and treated terribly because of following your faith in Christ. The other choice is to be favored and welcomed by applause into political correctness. In the future, the politically correct Christian will be lifted up as a model of integrity for both Christianity and also citizenship because of his following the civil behavior that is being declared proper by the government.

Hebrews

11:27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Before going further, let's look back at the parents who hid Moses for those three months. Hebrews says that they did that by faith. How is that a faith act?

Mary: From a practical point of view, you have to have a lot of faith that you can hide a baby that cries. Plus, there is no argument with the sex of the child for that would be easily proven false.

Wanda: Especially when your neighbors are likely to gossip.

Mary: You are living in a Hebrew ghetto, and it would take a lot of faith to think that you could keep secret a baby's presence.

V: How else can this be by faith?

Sybil: They saw that he was proper, so they had the foresight that he had a divinely designed destiny that must be met.

V: Yes, Sybil, that is important. I want you to know that by faith you should see that God has a plan for each of your children. If you belong to Christ, and you give birth to a child, you have a responsibility to raise that child to follow Jesus, and by faith you should know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God has a claim on that child. That child belongs to Him, not to you. You are his natural parents, but God is that child's **creator**, and God has a claim on that child. If you mess up that child, you are going to answer to God.

That is God's child, and He wants that child to follow Him. If you raise up that child to follow somebody else, and his faith and allegiance goes the wrong way rather than into perfection, then you will be held accountable for that.

You have a responsibility to God and by faith you must visualize and work towards getting the child's hand into the Lord's Hand. You must see with the eyes of faith that your child has a destiny that is to be shaped by the call from God.

This responsibility applies to a child in the womb as well. When that child is being knit together and formed in the womb by God, it is for a purpose. That purpose is as precious as anything in your own life. Just as you belong to God, that child belongs to God. You must understand your responsibility to nurture and guide that child to become a warrior to stand on his own two feet to follow the Lord in a life of service.

As an adult, you have that same responsibility for your own self, and parents are jointly responsible, you see, for the nurturing and rearing up of a child. When you are dealing with a child, you are dealing in treacherous territory. For example, if you were to put a year-old baby in the care of a babysitter, and that babysitter were to mistreat that child, perhaps even torture it, you would be explosively angry. Well, God sees you as the babysitter and Himself as the Father. When He comes to reckon with His babies, He is going to say to you, "What have you done with My babies?"

Are you going to say something like the following? "Well, I taught them how to quench the Spirit. I taught them how to change Christianity into churchianity. I taught them to lay up treasure on earth and forget about heaven because he has been saved and is going to get there anyhow. Now all he needs to worry about is being politically correct so that he can gain success in this

world.” Warning: neglect of this level will bring severe retribution!

Class, we have responsibilities to God for raising our children, and God is going to do a reckoning with us for how the children are raised. Our coming judgment is going to be big-time serious. If you ever get to the point where you are teaching a Sunday school or you are a pastor, and you are not teaching God’s children to love God and to follow God as pilgrims in His chosen path for them, then a reckoning is ahead for you.

Some pastors teach God’s children to love and to follow their pastors. Would that be almost as good as following God? Some pastors would say that their control of the flock is good. But that control is supposed to be shifted over to God.

We tread into treacherous territory all the time. We must be able to see with the eyes of faith like Moses’ parents did. These children are precious in God’s sight because **He created them for His Own use.**² We cannot just teach the children to pursue the good life in materialistic Babylon. No, we must teach them to pursue the Lord via self-denial of Babylon’s enticements.

God’s Mission for Moses

Exodus 2:10 speaks of the Providence of God when it says,

Exodus
2:10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

She named him *Moshe* by using a Hebrew verb that meant “drawing out.” What was the doctrine of redemption that we talked about in our last lesson about the doctrine of salvation?

Steve: Was it “being lifted out?”

² Holiness is to be a clean vessel that has been set aside for God’s exclusive use.

V: Yes, the picture of redemption is like someone being helplessly trapped in a hole, being lifted out, and put on solid ground. That is the picture of redemption. The name, Moses, means, “reach down and draw out.”

The name Moses is a picture of what God is going to do with Israel. God is going to use Moses whose name means redemption. Moses will likely know what his name means, but he is going to be confused over it because when he starts to apply what his name means, things go haywire. His misapplication causes him to lose his confidence.

Homer: This is a sign that God can use other people than His Own to redeem His Own.

V: Yes!

Bob: Technically, Moses’ parents obeyed Pharaoh. They put him in the river. They obeyed the law in a sense.

V: In a strange sense, they did.

Let’s look now at the *kenosis* in verse 11:

Exodus
2:11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, . . .

This passage indicates that he chose to be identified with his enslaved brethren as over against with Pharaoh’s household.

Exodus
2:11 . . . and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.
2:12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that [there was] no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

He is already interpreting his name. He thinks that he is going to redeem his Hebrew people. Thinking that he will have to kill many people, he decides to get started.

Exodus
2:13 And when he went out the second

day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

2:14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

Turn to Hebrews 11:27.

Hebrews

11:27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Exodus 2:14 says that he feared, but in Hebrews it says that he did not fear. Would somebody care to explain that seeming contradiction?

Henry: He did not fear the king, but he was afraid of being declared an outlaw too soon.

Oscar: He may have been afraid that God might cast him aside and not use him.

V: Those are two very good observations.

Oscar: He feared that he might be tainted and maybe ruined.

Joe: I kind of get the sense that he feared that he had gotten ahead of God.

V: That is good Joe. We sometimes are guilty of doing the same thing as Moses. We sense God's mission for us, but we will choose the wrong timing or the wrong method. Moses knew what his name meant, his heritage, and the blessings of being in Pharaoh's household. Moses had walked in both worlds. He is the only person around who has been blessed by faithful parents **and by God** in a way that the parents can actually see God's hand upon him at a very early age. He had also been blessed by receiving all the teaching and wisdom of Egypt through Pharaoh's house.

Pete: Do you think his fear was one of loss?

V: Yes, I think it was. A fear of losing God's approval is my greatest fear and probably yours as well.

Pete: I think that Paul had the fear that he would do something that would jeopardize his calling from God and would put him outside of being a useful vessel. That haunting feeling is what will hold us on path. When we become so secure in our position with God and in our walk that we feel like we do not have to worry about that loss, we will be in jeopardy. We, too, can fall. We should never take for granted that we are secure in our walk. We can mess up and dirty his blessing to the point that God will reduce or even eliminate His use of us. Also, to the other extreme, we can be so afraid of messing up that we can cease any activity.

V: I agree, Pete. Extremes are treacherous. Carelessness can **ruin** our usefulness, and over cautiousness can **prevent** our usefulness.

Joe: My question is, how could he go back and forth with Pharaoh's animosity toward the Jews? I do not understand how he could be in both worlds at the same time and live.

V: His mother was paid to be his nurse by Pharaoh's daughter, and so the connections in both worlds occurred through Pharaoh's daughter and his birth mother.

Joe: So, he could not walk into court to see Pharaoh because he was a Hebrew?

V: Moses was not a Hebrew in Pharaoh's eyes, only in his own eyes. Moses could walk in both worlds as an Egyptian and a Hebrew in the same way that Paul could walk in the Hebrew and the Roman worlds as a Jewish Roman citizen.

Carl: Concerning the difference in looks, dress, and appearance, Moses would have

looked more like an Egyptian than like a Hebrew slave.

V: You bet.

Moses knew his call according to Hebrews 11. Some of what is going on in this history is not explained in the book of Exodus, but when you start looking at the New Testament, you gain additional insight into Exodus. For example, when adding the fact that he made a choice to leave the household of Pharaoh and to suffer affliction with his brethren to the statement that when he was grown, he went to his brethren, we learn a lot. That significant description of his willingness to become a slave is not explained in Exodus. Exodus very simply says he went out to his brethren. Through this additional information, we know that he understood his call.

Now I want to go to Acts 7:18.

Acts

7:18 Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

7:19 The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

7:20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

7:21 And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

7:22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

7:23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

7:24 And seeing one [of them] suffer wrong, he defended [him], and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

7:25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.

Moses understood his mission, but not the proper method. But his brethren did not have a clue.

Acts

7:26 And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?

7:27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

7:28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday?

7:29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons.

7:30 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

7:31 When Moses saw [it], he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold [it], the voice of the Lord came unto him,

7:32 [Saying], I [am] the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold.

7:33 Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

7:34 I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

7:35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send [to be] a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

Moses knew that he was to be the deliverer, the redeemer. When he jumped ahead of God and slew that Egyptian, he made a bad application of his call. The next day the Hebrew confronted him with this question: "Who made you to be a prince and judge over us?" That question introduces the source of

authority because to be a prince means to exercise authority.

The whole book of Judges depicts a series of deliverers who are sent by God to redeem the nation. The nation was stuck in cycles of apostasy, oppression, repentance, and deliverance. The nation under sin-caused oppression would call upon God for deliverance. God would send them a deliverer, i.e. a judge, who would rescue them into a good position once again. Prosperity would start the next cycle that would begin with apostasy.

The nation cycled up and down over and over again. Every up was done through a deliverer, a judge. The Hebrew asked Moses who made him to be a prince and a judge over the people? Well, the meaning of Moses' name said he would be a deliverer-judge of the same type listed in the book of Judges. God planned on using him as a judge and a prince. In fact Moses' destiny was to become in his mission a ruler and a judge, just like that Hebrew asked him.

Wrong Application of Mission

Moses knew something about his mission but he did not know how to accomplish his mission. That is our problem sometimes too. We know what our missions are, but we sometimes do our worst because we do not want to do it God's way.

Moses may have thought that because he was aging (forty years old), his time was growing short. At 40 years of age, Moses figured that he was no longer in the prime of life and still had to go out and lead the whole nation out of bondage. He figured that he would have to fight multitudes of Egyptians. How was he going to do it? He probably figured that he had to get started soon if not now. We begin to see the intrusion of human understanding to fulfill God's call. In God's actual plan, Moses will be eighty years old before God even says that it is time to start.

I have to guard against this kind of mistake all the time. If you are as impatient as I am, you probably have the same problem. We are terrible about trying to do God's missions by using the world's methods.

The accounts in Hebrews and Acts interpret Moses' mission, God's dealings with him, the faithfulness of his parents, the nurture from his parents, and the worldly wisdom and knowledge from Egypt. Moses was trying to make some sense for his life of all that he knew.

Our predicaments are similar. We are stirring all together our skills, experiences, heritage, and Christian wisdom and knowledge and trying to make some sense of them all. Each of us has a different mix. It is like having a bucket and a paddle to stir it with, but you have all these different ingredients in it. Take for example Sam from Korea sitting here in the front row. He brings a whole new culture and background that are greatly different from ours. There are miracles in how he got here. A student from Thailand who is in my other class swam under water, under machine gun fire, in order to escape to America. Miracles are involved in all of these stories as well as in your own story. We stir our background and experiences all around, and what comes out of your mix is the ingredients for God's plan for your life.

All the ingredients in your mix are important. If you try to use a bucket or a mix that is not the bucket that God gave you, it will not fit your mission. Your job is to analyze your mix and then add or sharpen the needed knowledge and skills from these studies in order to do all you can for God.

You stir your bucket and use the intelligence that God gave you. Please be sure to add to your mix the new and continuous growing of God's precious Word in you so that you do not fall into pitfalls and make terrible choices.

The choice that Moses made was devastating to him. What he had done in secret was publicly known. The knowledge was spreading through the Hebrew grapevine and would be soon known by Pharaoh. Becoming an outlaw fugitive would prevent his being able to deliver anybody. Had he lost his call? He had to flee for his life. Would God give him another chance at fulfilling his call another way by taking a new direction?

Moses flees all the way to Midian which is on the other side of Sinai past the Gulf of Aqaba. Moses crossed over the Red Sea, the whole of Sinai, and across the Gulf of Aqaba. There are two great bodies of water between him and Pharaoh as well as the Sinai wilderness. Moses, after fleeing such a long way, lived in Midian forty years.

Jack: Can we infer from this that God does not intend for us to be active until a certain time in our lives?

V: No, God has His Own timing for each **task**. We are to be **continuously active** in our following the Lord in our daily ministries, such as worshiping, fellowshiping, serving, witnessing, and teaching that are on our paths. However, we should not get ahead of Him, but we should also not fall behind or off path.

I will give you an example of falling behind. The spies, after examining the Promised Land, came back and gave a fearful kind of report. Because of fear, the people decided not to do the task. After spending the night discussing the penalties for disobeying God, they decided to launch their attack one day later. But Joshua told them that their window of opportunity was past. The people ignored him and attacked anyway and were ignominiously defeated. The timing is both ways; it can be too early, or it can be too late. It is critical that we be right on God's timing.

Steve: What you are saying is that Moses was too soon. If he had not gotten ahead of

God, the exodus might have happened sooner than it did?

V: Perhaps, it could have. We just do not know.

Ted: The price was that Moses led them as an old man rather than as a younger man.

V: That was one of the prices. Another price was that there was a great deal of suffering by the Hebrews that continued during those forty years of Moses' exile.

Ted: His own family was included.

V: Yes. How many people suffer because of our goof ups?

Our Mission Application

Doing your God-given assignment may possibly be done in three ways. One way is in your own power. Another is under Satan's power. These first two ways may actually be one and the same. However, the third way is under God's power. When you walk in yoke with God, it is a double yoke. There is divine power added to the human will and skills!

Without being in yoke with God, you can jump out there and do a week's worth of human effort, and it amounts to hardly anything. But if you do a minute's worth of work under God's power, miracles occur, lives are changed, empires are rattled, the world is turned upside down, and great things are accomplished.

It takes wisdom to walk with God; it is not the easiest thing in the world. If there were a formula, I would give it to you. But there is no formula. Walking with God comes with wisdom, which is obtained from God as you labor in His Word with prayer, meditation, sacrifice, analytical thinking, and obedience. When you do not walk with God, you end up with the best of intentions, but walking under your own power. Not walking with God is very destructive because you burn out and begin to think that the journey is not worth the effort.

Not walking with God has a lot of downside to it. I confess that I relate well to those who tend to get ahead of God as eager beavers. I love those zealots out in front because I have those same tendencies. But the best relationships occur when they and I both walk with the Lord, not ahead of Him.

Beth: We need to give God our daily lives, i.e. how we live, love God, present ourselves in our jobs, and wherever we go. It is a work that is largely overlooked because we are waiting for a vocation. We overlook that everyday steadiness, consistency, loving God, loving our neighbor, and doing the ordinary kind of work. We miss those tasks because we are looking for the greater task.

V: Yes, and so we are standing around leaning on our shovels and thinking: “Surely He did not want me to be doing just this!”

God’s providence is larger than our rational understanding. God’s providence mixed with God’s sovereignty means that He can even bring good out of evil. Even when Moses messed up, that error was moved to Moses’ betterment so that the next time he was called, he was more cautious. He was more discerning, and he walked with wisdom and listening ears.

Our Kenosis

Before we get too far along, I want you to see the *kenosis* in Chart 2.1 because it is a worthy message. The Scripture reference in Philippians 2 says that Jesus was in heaven, but He emptied himself and came down and took on the form of a servant. He became a humble man. He became obedient even to the point of death on the cross. This is a downward, sacrificial move that Jesus did in His Life. The kicker is that God says, “Let this same mind be in you.” God means for us to follow a similar pattern!

God wants you and me to do the same downward move that Jesus did! He wants

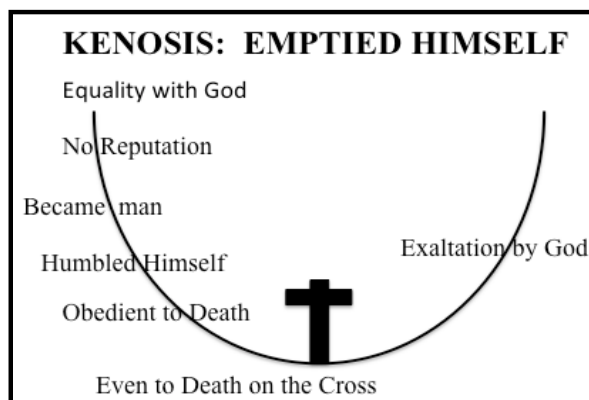


Chart 2.1

you and me to live the same kind of life that Jesus lived. Be humble, be obedient, and forsake worldly status and wealth in order to become pilgrims on a humble journey to heaven.

Now notice in Chart 2.1 that Jesus was exalted **after** death. The left side is the humble side, going down, down, down to the death. Then comes the exalting side on the right where He is lifted up and glorified so that all knees will bow to Him, and every tongue will confess Him as Lord.

Glorification shall be proportionate to the level of one’s sacrifice. It is mandatory that you understand this principle! Jesus earned His Lordship by sacrificing His Own Life to pay what He did not owe. He paid off our sin debts. He walked the perfect walk. He did this magnificent thing **for us** by leaving His first estate. He became a man, a servant, and He was obedient even unto death. Then He was exalted and named Lord before whom all will bow and confess Him as Lord. This downward life of sacrifice followed by an upward exaltation of Lordship is the pathway of the *kenosis*. *Kenosis* means that He emptied Himself. Likewise, we are to put away all of our statuses, all of our high positions, and all of our lusts for power and wealth. The *kenosis* is a path of emptying ourselves.

So, we sinners were in a pit hoping someone would lift us out. The Lord came to

rescue everyone of us who is willing to admit our faults and accept His help. Some of us have called out to Him, and He reached down and lifted us out of the pit and put us on safe ground.

Well, what do we do once out of the pit? Sadly, we tend to seek the world's status and wealth. The opposite of the *kenosis* (see Chart 2.2) is what we must fight against.

As ministers, we desire a good church, and then we desire a bigger church. We pursue status in the association. We steadily climb up toward the throne at the top of Chart 2.2 with the goal of sitting there as the

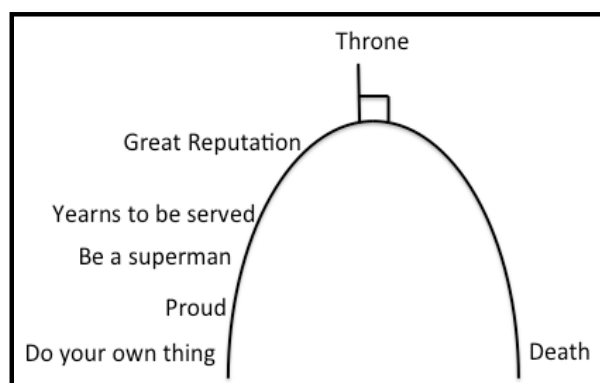


Chart 2.2

president of the whole convention. We love the applause and how the people desire to draw near to us.

The problem with this typical scenario is with what happens at death? Loss of eternal treasure in a reduced glorification is a serious problem: "The first shall be last." There is a great reversal of things in God's Holy Design. When you pursue your treasure here, you will have less in eternity. You will be last there, not first as you are here. However, the person who humbled himself and became last at the bottom of the *kenosis*, as depicted in Chart 2.1, becomes first in eternity.

Chart 2.2 is a reversal of the *kenosis* that Satan wants you to take in your pilgrimage. Be alert! Tomorrow morning, you are going to pray and say, "God, I want to be sacrificial,

I want to love You, and I want to walk with You." During your day, however, you will encounter many temptations to turn away from sacrifice and toward self-indulgence. Most Christians do not understand that the *kenosis* is absolutely essential for discipleship. So, please be aware that your temptations will come not only from the world but also from our brothers and sisters in Christ.

This upside down *kenosis* will dog your heels for the rest of your life. There is no escape from it. The reason is that it is what our flesh hungers and thirsts after. The *kenosis* is sacrificial, painful, and threatening to your flesh. The opposite offers indulgent self-satisfaction. There just is not any neutral ground in the Christian journey. You are either going through sacrificial suffering, or you are not.

Moses looked at his two options: Pharaoh's culture versus the reproach of God. He chose to identify with God's reproach. That same choice is what we are to make. However, many who understand the full requirements of discipleship will want to sample the two and choose the one that "feels" right. The long, hard path of the *kenosis* will not pass the "feel-right" test. Class, there are no short cuts! Moses demonstrates the *kenosis* very well in his choice of leaving his high estate and joining his brethren.

EXODUS 3: GOD'S CALL OF MOSES

The burning bush

Exodus

3:2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush [was] not consumed.

3:3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

3:4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here [am] I.

3:7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which [are] in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

There is a progression, and maybe a sermon, in the words: “seen, heard, and know.” So God saw His people, heard their cry, and knew their sorrows. What God does next is very interesting.

Exodus

3:8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

3:9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

3:10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

3:11 And Moses said unto God, Who [am] I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

In verse 8 God tells Moses the good news that He is come down to deliver His people. The hard-to-hear news is that God is going to accomplish the task by sending Moses to do it. This God-and-man team is the way God does things.

Christ is God and man joined together, the God-man. God is come down to deliver by a man. The God-man motif is current in our own journeys. We not only walk in yoke with the Lord, but also we have the indwelling of God.

Deliverance of Israel

God plans to use a man to do the deliverance. He says to Moses, “I will send thee.” God is joining His Power to a man’s will and physical obedience.

In the New Testament, we find that this scenario of God using a man is actually a command to each of us: “Take My yoke upon you.”³ To work with God is a God-man kind of thing. It is not a man thing; it is not a gifted man thing; and it is not just a God thing. If God wanted to, He could speak it done and not use His servants. But what a blessing it is for us to be His servants! How can you show your love to God without the challenges, the hurdles, and the sacrifices to go through?

This God-man thing is important. The way that God chose Moses is also the hunger of your heart. Each of us wants to hear God say, “Come now therefore, and I will send thee.” Even though it is a fearsome thing, even though it is going to cost you dearly, even though it is going to involve many other fears and many unknowns, this precious call of God has the opportunity for you to express your love that cannot be expressed in any other way.

“Greater love hath no man than that he lay down his life for a friend.”⁴ Walking the *kenotic* path is when you are expressing love of the highest order. The sentimental thing of gushing and goose bumps is not an expression of love in its highest order. The greatest love produces the greatest expression of sacrifice.

When God says to Moses: “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt,” He is telling him basically to do the impossible. He is

³ Matthew 11:29.

⁴ John 15:13.

supposed to go get that nation, all six million slaves, and bring them out of Egypt.

GOD'S CALL TO US

Now God is also telling each of you to do something that you cannot do—there is no way on this earth that you can do what God is calling you to do. Only God has enough power to do it, but He wants you to do it. Thus, when you join in partnership with God and go at His command, He then brings His Power into the situation, and miracles begin to unfold through you.

This book is all about God's sending His minister to rescue the people of God. Missions like this are wonderful challenges for us too. We do not want to miss our challenges. Moses might have messed up in some places, but he eventually met his challenge.

I want us to learn from this and bond together to understand what is happening here so that we will be edified in our walking in yoke with the Lord. We will strengthen each

other and help one another to see where to plan that next footstep, and we must not get in front of the Lord, nor do we want to lag behind. We want to be right in the middle of God's mission.

There are some special things happening today. God's hand is moving on his people. He is preparing you to minister as redeemers in the last days of the Church's slavery to Babylon. Even though the Church has not cried out for redemption from Babylon, God has issued His call to come out of Babylon.⁵

You are in the spotlight of history, folks. What a place to be! Fearsome? Yes! Awe-some? Yes! Impossible? Yes! But you are God's chosen people to accomplish His task of leading His people out of Babylon.

⁵Revelation 18:4.

Chapter Questions

1. How does the action of the midwives justify defying government rule by Moses' parents? How does it apply to us?
2. Describe the *Kenosis* in terms of how we should apply it to our lives.
3. How does this portion of Exodus teach us about our responsibility in raising our children?
4. Describe the opposite of the *Kenosis*, the walk that Satan wants us to take. Describe it in terms of the contrast to the *Kenosis* itself.

Chapter 3

MOSES ANGERS GOD

In our previous lesson, we discussed the call of Moses. We clearly know and believe that God uses man in His work, but we sometimes act like we do not believe it.

GOD WORKS THROUGH MAN

In Exodus 6:8 he said, “I am come down to deliver my people.” Certainly, we would be overjoyed with hearing God say that to us. However, two verses later in Exodus 6:10, He says, “Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people.” So in just three verses, He goes from “I” to “thou” in the huge task of delivering a nation.

God has a plan for our nation and world. He plans on using His people in every facet of His plans. You are His people, and you are part of the plan. God is going to use you.

Many times we think that if we will just pray, we can get God to deliver us. In answering our prayers, He may say that He is going to do the deliverance. To that, we say, “Amen!” But then the work starts, and He says to you, “Come along. You are going to do all the work.”

God’s methods are manifested in Jesus Who combines God and man together in His Personhood and His Works. God works through the man Jesus to redeem us. He also works through the redeemed in carrying out our parts in His continuing plans concerning redemption.

For our redemption, God said, “I will come down to man,” and then He sent His only begotten Son down to man. Do you see how the combination works? In Exodus we see that original picture in which God says that He is going to come down to redeem the Hebrews. Then He comes down and sends Moses to do the work.

Class, God is sending you everyday to do His daily tasks. Do them! Some of you will be called on to do huge special tasks. For our sakes and for the world’s sakes and for the Lord’s glory, please do them.

Moses Is that Man

Moses, though, has some questions. The first thing out of Moses’ mouth was, “Who am I? You are telling me to go deliver this whole nation out of Egypt? Who am I?”

Moses had already known that there was something about redemption in the meaning of his name. He already knew he was supposed to have a part in God’s plan, and therefore, he is asking again, “Does my name really mean draw out? Was I named for a larger purpose, or was it just for my own personal experience?”

Moses’ question surfaces because he has already tried one time to meet the larger purpose of his name and failed miserably. He has a right, really, to say, “Well, who am I to do this huge, bigger-than-man job?”

God confirms Moses’ understanding and implies that nothing is too big for man when God calls him to a task in which He says: “I will be with you.” Then God gives Moses a sign, and it is one of those strange, after-the-fact signs. I have received signs like this one, and it is not at all comforting until after the fact. This kind of sign is disconcerting because it is announced before the task but not seen until after the task. You have to wait until after you have completed the task to see the sign. You have to face your fears and obey only with the faith that God will be with you. Afterwards, God gives you the sign.¹

¹ With me, the promise is that God will be with me in His task, and the sign is that He will confirm that unseen presence via His ecstatic touch **after** I have

Thus, God tells Moses: “You will come back and will worship on this mountain—then you will know that I sent you.”

This kind of sign is tough. Moses is not ready to buy into this kind of sign. So he says to God, “Who are you?”

EXODUS 4: THE *KENOSIS*

Moses had questioned and doubted his qualification for going to the Hebrews to lead them out of Egyptian slavery. God answered him by saying that He Himself would be with him. Next, Moses complains that the Hebrews will not believe that the Lord sent him. Thus God meets that objection with a miracle which will teach us all about God’s call on our lives.

God Has the Power

Exodus

4:4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

God told Moses to throw his rod down. When he does, it becomes a snake. God then tells him to pick it up, and when Moses picks it up, it becomes a rod again. What do you make of that?

Henry: There are a lot of things here, but one is that He tells him to pick it up by the tail. I am thinking that Moses must have been awfully scared of God to pick that snake up by the tail because when you pick a snake up by the tail the snake will bite you. He must have been so scared of God that he would do exactly what God says.

Steve: He is teaching Moses faith: faith to throw it down and more faith to pick it up.

V: So, it signifies that Moses’ faith is

completed His task. In my ecstasy, I will look back at how the Providence of God put all the pieces together in order to achieve His outcome.

growing so that he can move from human strength into God’s strength.

When you have a human strength, it is not of value to God until it is cast down and picked back up in the power of God. Until that happens, you will be operating in the power of flesh, and you remember that Moses had already tried to redeem the nation by using his human strength to do so. Moses had to leave and spend forty years in the desert pondering and wondering how he managed to mess up so badly. It was because he did not throw his strength down. He did not sacrifice his human abilities for the purpose of God and take them back up in the power of God.

You have some strengths, and you can end up doing good at the human level. You can spend your life achieving at the human level, and it might even be an admirable achievement. But when you have just a little of God’s power, then you enter the miraculous realm of achievement. The challenge here is for us to throw down our gifts, power, native abilities, resources, and assets. Then our challenge is to face our fears and pick them up again in the power of God to use them all in His purposes. God wants to use every bit of you: your background, your resources, your gifts, your opportunities, your networks, your working place, your play, and your family, but to do that He has to have you as a clean vessel, totally possessing you in order to achieve through you on the miracle level.

Facing Your Fears

If you are not willing to cast down everything including yourself, you will fail. But also if you are not willing to face your fears and take them back up in God’s strength, you will have failed to accept God’s call on your life. The human power that is thrown down will become a serpent that engenders fear of God’s call. Taking up the serpent of your fears of

God's call will convert the serpent into the rod of God.

When we accept God's call in a timid, fearful, and over-cautious way we are going to be stuck at the human level. The human level eliminates our participation in the miracle level. The walk in the miracle level requires casting your fears down in sacrificial submission and then overcoming them by taking up God's will. Discipleship requires self-denial, taking up the cross, and following Jesus.

I do not know your backgrounds, your stories, or where you are in your pilgrimages, but everyone of us has something to cast down. We are required to prove the overcoming of our fears by picking up our crosses to follow Jesus in a great change of direction.

I do not know what you need to cast down in self-denial, but you have it to do. The next step is to take up that fearful cross as the possibility of death. The change of direction is to be established by the Lord Jesus Himself as He directs each of us on His assigned paths for us. This lesson gives us a high responsibility because God is saying to each of us right now to throw down something that gives us human power, observe the change in it, and then overcome our flesh by taking it back up again to use in His service.

When we leave this chapter, take this teaching with you on your pilgrimages. We have to face those things. What do we hold dear? What are we? Who are we? What do we have? Whatever it is, cast it down, face your carnal fears of loss, take it back up again in the power of God, and do your ministry.

Please be aware that your life of ministry will be God directed and empowered only as long as you hold God's staff. You are apt to change back to your old staff. If you are like me, then it is carefully hidden at home in your flesh.

God's staff is the cross that we are to carry as His disciples. First, we are to deny ourselves by casting our human power and assets down, then we are to pick up our cross by taking our gifts and assets back up again to be spent by the Lord as He see fit. At this point, we are equipped with divine power to proceed in the *kenosis*. There is no miracle power for us outside of the *kenosis*.

Beth: God did not have to put man through all of this. He could have lifted the children of Israel out of Egypt and transported them to the Promised Land by just speaking the Word. But no one's life would have changed. Each would have continued to be the exact same person as he had always been.

V: Yes, God has His reasons for His plan in each of our individual lives. However, that plan always involves the *kenosis*.

Moses' Unbelief

Moses brings up a valid point. He says to God that his speech is slow and not eloquent.

Exodus

4:10 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I [am] not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I [am] slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

And then the Lord answers and says that He would be with Moses' mouth (Ex. 4:12)! This answer is a repeat of God's statement that He would be with Moses. We should know that from this answer, our human limitations have no limiting influences on God's use of us. He uses our weaknesses to do His miracles. In this way, God's glory becomes manifested to all people.

This same objection by Moses stated in two different ways originates in unbelief. Moses angers God when he turns down God's call by asking God to send someone else (Ex. 4:13-14). If God calls you, and you say, "They will not listen to me," or "I am not a

good speaker,” or “I cannot do this or that,” and God assures you that He will be with you, do not object and ask God to choose someone else. Instead of calling into question God’s integrity and power, **face your fears!**

Fear versus Faith Is the Test

This is the point at which your will and faith are tested. You must face your fears! You have to take up the challenge and count on God doing what He says He is going to do.

Moses loses some of his blessing in this failure. God has been answering Moses’ failures and objections all this way. But in Exodus 4:13, Moses’ questioning of God’s integrity and power along with his rejection of the command is a willful act of unbelief and disobedience, not a dialog of reasoning together. These other objections are reasonable, and they invite God’s answers.

When Moses refuses to believe God, he gets God’s anger instead of dialog. So, God selects Aaron to take half of the call and be the speaker for Moses.

I am trying to tell you not to reject God’s commandments to you. You can reason with God; that is fine, and you should. That is what you do when you pray, but when it comes to disobedience or to disbelieving, those are illegitimate. Doubting that God will do what He said He would do is to call Him a liar. Never doubt or reject what He says. God’s Word will not return void. When you take It into yourself, It will perform that which He says It will perform. To doubt His Word puts you in jeopardy. In the case with Moses, God places Aaron in place of Moses’ mouth (Ex. 4:14-16).

We can all lose our blessings if we question the veracity of God’s Word. We cannot doubt whether God really means what He says. Also we cannot count on God’s redemptive grace that He gave Moses by supplying Aaron to him. God still used

Moses but at a lesser level. God kept him as a viable tool in His arsenal, but He added a supplemental tool, Aaron, in order to accomplish what He had in mind for Moses.

Ted: There is a possibility that if Moses had been strong enough to face his fears, he would not have slipped in the future.

V: It could have been possible. The molten calf incident came along under Aaron. Because Aaron was the mouthpiece for Moses, there was an additional layer between God and the people. With every layer between God and the people comes deterioration.

The Bible describes the new structure as God speaking to Moses, Moses speaking to Aaron, and Aaron speaking to the people. Whoever is speaking to the people is the prophet for the one relaying the message from God.

Remember that the prophet’s orientation is to face the people with God to his back. Moses is God’s prophet, His mouthpiece to the people. But Moses loses this honor, and God establishes a new relationship between Moses and Aaron. Aaron is the mouthpiece to the people for Moses. Moses must hear something from God before he can tell Aaron what to say. It is a relay system. God establishes a new structure, a hierarchy that became necessary **because of Moses’ sin of unbelief**.

We have the same problem as Moses. When we commit the sin of unbelief, we too may lose the opportunity to be directly involved with the people.

God’s Grace: Hope for Redemption

Wanda: I have noticed in my readings that Moses is more and more in the presence of God. He even starts speaking. Aaron decreases while Moses increases.

V: That is a good description of the redemptive process that God is working to get

Moses back onto his path.

There is always loss when you distance yourself from God by resisting His commandments. God demonstrates His graciousness in His approach to Moses' redemption. However, we must never presume upon His gracious redemption in our refusal to cast down our worldly lives and to take up our ministries under His direction. Always remember that Jeremiah was faced with losing his ministry altogether, not just a portion of it.

Wanda: This example of Moses gives us some hope that when we get weak and resistant, God will not give up on us.

V: Right, but please know that we cannot count on that to the point of abuse. To presume upon God's good will and gracious redemption in our choosing to sin is very hazardous. However, we know that we can always have **hope** in God's redemptive and gracious nature.

Bob: I have been nominated to be a deacon. I was shocked because some of the people in my church know my awful life. So, I have been unreceptive to the idea. I did not think that the request was from God. I got a call tonight asking why I have not responded. I need to know that it is God calling me because I could be resisting like Moses.

V: In decision making, the burden of proof resides on the change. We must stay on the path that God has us on until God redirects us.

You can be influenced by a lot of people, but you need God's direction. Certainly, you can get wise counsel from wise people, but the trigger for change must come only from God. Once you know that it is God's calling and not your flesh's calling, stop the doubting. Over cautiousness will kill your ministry and your usefulness to God.

Of course, your certainty that it is God's

voice that you are hearing² depends upon your relationship to God. A good relationship will enable you to hear His voice and sense a devastating loss looming in your turning aside to run from your fears. If you do not know that the call is from God (His voice), do not change your path. Wait until you do know by fasting and praying until you hear God's voice. While doing this, keep putting one foot in front of the other on your current path of ministry because Satan will entice you to decide to change too early or too late.

The Circumcision Incident

What do you make of the circumcision incident in Exodus 4:24-36?

Oscar: I get different answers from the different commentaries. One said that because his son was uncircumcised, God was not allowing Moses to go on this trip until it was accomplished. Another said that Moses was only partially circumcised because he was circumcised by an Egyptian method that was not kosher to Hebraic standards. Accordingly, God required his son's circumcision as a sacrifice for Moses.

Bob: It seems to me from my readings that this whole incident was to establish the objective leadership of Moses in his own family.

V: Good point, Bob.

Circumcision was given by God as a sign of His Covenant with the Hebrews. Moses married a Midianite woman, and she lacked understanding because Moses failed to teach her God's requirements and implement them in his own home. Since he is God's chosen leader for the entire nation, he has already failed in leading his own small family. It is do it or die in this important **covenant** issue.

Moses instructed her to circumcise the son, but she was apparently reluctant. His

² Jn. 10:27: My sheep hear my voice . . .

passivity must come to an end in order to continue living. He must take the spiritual leadership that he is supposed to take.

God was not going to put up with Moses' reversal of family roles. He is about to kill Moses because Moses was eliminating himself, his wife, and his son from the Covenant by not being spiritually strong enough to take the headship of his own home. God forces the issue. It is either do it right or die! At this point, Moses confronts the wife with the knowledge that his life is on the line. It appears that she reluctantly obeys under duress. She gives in. But she is angry, and she calls him a bloody husband because he brought this, hitherto unknown by her, terrible, strange ritual into their marriage. She had not bargained for this, and she was angry. She cast the foreskin at his feet, and said, "You are a bloody husband!"

Jill: In the Jewish rite, the child should be taken to the temple by the priest.

V: Yes, but there has not yet been the establishment of the Levitical Priesthood at this point. Later on after this incident, Aaron becomes the first Levitical Priest.

Moses was a weak leader in his own home. It looks to me like it was a reluctant concession on the wife's part. She gets the last word in anyway.

Joe: God is saying that we cannot lead His people if we are not the leaders in our own homes.

EXODUS 5: THE REQUESTS TO PHARAOH BEGIN

Notice the difference in how the requests are made. The first request is by word alone.

Moses' Complaint: His Obedience to God Increased the Peoples' Sufferings

Exodus

5:1 And afterward Moses and Aaron went

in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

Pharaoh denies this request and increases persecution of the people. Basically, Pharaoh reasons that if the Hebrews have enough free time to go out and take a three-day journey and worship and then three days back, then there is too much slack time. He means to reduce their idleness. So, he implements a withholding of the straw for the making of the bricks by requiring the Israelites to gather their own straw.

The Hebrews were fully occupied in the making of the bricks before this change. Now they were going to have to do double duty. Under the additional oppression, the people are going to complain to Moses, and he, in turn, is going to complain to God.

Remember God's plan. He said that Pharaoh was not going to let the Hebrews go. But Moses whines to God about being sent on a fruitless mission.

I see myself in this. I have obeyed in certain things in which I received much trouble. Each time I have ended up saying, "Why did you even send me if you knew it was going to be like this?"

Exodus

5:21 And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.

5:22 And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou [so] evil entreated this people? why [is] it [that] thou hast sent me?

5:23 For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

Moses proved his lack of understanding of

God's plan by complaining that the request to Pharaoh had caused more suffering for the Hebrews rather than their release. There should have been no surprise because God had already told Moses that Pharaoh was not going to let the people go.

EXODUS 6: GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

The Lord answers Moses by reiterating His plan. God declares that this is a contest between Him and Pharaoh and that Moses and the Hebrews are going to get to see God use a strong hand against Pharaoh.

God's Name

Exodus

6:2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I [am] the LORD:

6:3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by [the name of] God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.

6:4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

6:5 And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

The Scriptures of Ancient Hebrew were composed of only consonants without vowels. Thus the 4 letters in God's name are JHWA. The ancient Jewish Masorites later added vowels in order to preserve the pronunciations throughout history.

God's Name in Hebrew is Jehovah. Anglicized, it is shown to be pronounced "Yah-weh," but that is an incorrect pronunciation. The correct pronunciation is "Ye hovah." In the English version, the J is commonly pronounced as a hard J, but it should be soft like a Y. Also the W is commonly anglicized as a soft W, but in Hebrew, it is hard like a V, thus "Ye hovah."

The basic meaning of Jehovah is "I AM that I AM." That definition means ETERNAL BEING WITH AN UNCHANGING NAME, A MEMORIAL TO ALL GENERATIONS. In Exodus 6:14 God says that His Name is I AM. In the next verse, He says that He is The Lord God. The Lord God is Jehovah. Thus, I AM is synonymous with Jehovah, The Lord God.

God's Plan: Establish His People in Their Own Land

God clearly states what He is going to do. The problem that Moses, the people, and we ourselves always have is the assumption that God's plan will be easily accomplished.

Exodus

6:6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I [am] the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:

6:7 And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

6:8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I [am] the LORD.

6:11 Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

Nowhere in this plan is there a specific delineation of the problems that must be overcome. In God's Mind, problems to Him are insignificant. However, in our minds, they appear overwhelming at times.

God's Promise

Now we come to Exodus 6:16 where God is going to tell Moses the end goals of His plan. When the plan starts being worked

God's way, some objections by the people will surface.

I opine that not only Moses but also you and I hear what we want to hear. When things go contrary to the way that we "thought" we heard, then we begin to question God. You may not be ready to admit it, but we have these tendencies.

God tells Moses of all that He will give the people. Moses then assumes that there will be no work to achieve the goals. We do the same thing by bridging over the work to achieve the promises of God as if He were Santa Claus bringing us tons of goodies that have no cost.

Wanda: I so identify with what you said about opposition. When I am trying to do the right thing, I can't help but think, "Why is this so hard? God must not want me to do this."

V: Me too. I automatically begin to think that it can't be right if it is this difficult!

Pete: I wonder sometimes if God takes us along the hard path in order to slow us down so that we get the whole message and the training in discipline and perseverance. When it is clear sailing, I get way out in front of Him.

V: It is within God's will for the resistance to occur. It is within God's will for you to be exasperated when you hit the obstacles. However, it is not God's will for us to take the path of least resistance. Discipleship always involves the struggles of self sacrifice, cross bearing, and going where He goes (Lk. 9:23).

However, it could also be God's will to slow us down, move us in another direction, or cause us to use a different methodology. There is no simple formula here. Following the Lord will be the most difficult walk you can walk. There is going to be a great deal of resistance to that walk. You cannot just assume anything about God. Maybe it is not

to slow you down, but to build backbone, prayer, perseverance, or dependency upon God. It could be for the knocking down of your pride or for forcing you to ask the saints for some help in order to build community.

In God's plan, Pharaoh will not let the Hebrews go at the first request. Pharaoh's resistance sets up a test for the Hebrews. This test establishes for us and all ministers the paradigm for all the rest of history, i.e. we will encounter severe resistance, trials, and tribulations on God's path for us.

Bob: How do you know whether it is God trying to change your direction or Satan making resistance?

V: That is a tough one! And I do not have a pat answer for that question. The only absolute guidelines are the Scriptures.

Given the information from God about His plan, you would think that Moses would have understood when Pharaoh denied the first request. Moses did not remember God's instructions because Moses is very much like us when we hear only those parts we want to hear.

We do not hear about the fight and how difficult the task will be. We want to hear that we are going to be delivered out of our troubles without any struggles on our parts. We all think that deliverance is without trouble or tribulation, and that it is all going to be wonderful. Class, please be aware that we ministers also tend to think that our ministries are going to proceed smoothly and victoriously without resistance because we think that we are God's pampered ministers.

When God said that Pharaoh would not let the Hebrews go, Moses hears "Pharaoh does not want to let the Hebrews go, but he is going to." We interpret everything that we do in the same way that Moses did. God told Moses very clearly what His plan would be, and now we are going to see how Moses' own selective hearing affects him.

Carl: In the forty years before Moses left Egypt, Pharaoh was concerned about the reproduction rate. In the forty years after Moses left, did that get better? Is that why Pharaoh is suddenly resisting their going and losing his labor force?

V: I do not know, but I think that forty years of killing the male babies would make a huge dent in the perception of a Hebrew threat.

Steve: Pharaoh would realize how much of an asset the remaining Hebrew slaves were. If they were gone, there would be no labor for construction.

V: Good point.

Steve: One thing that the hardening of the heart of Pharaoh accomplished was to overcome Hebrew resistance to leave Egypt. If things had gotten better, not all Hebrews would have been discontent enough to go. God wanted all of them to go. He had to perform all those miracles to convince the children of Israel they had to go. Even when they reached the Red Sea, they still wanted to return to Egypt.

V: Reluctance to leave was more applicable for the Babylonian Captivity because of the Hebrews' prosperity, but the Egyptian captivity involved gruelling labor and the killing of babies which had to be heart breaking. I think that all the Hebrews were crying to God for deliverance. The desire to return to Egypt came more from the Hebrews' fear of death during their wilderness struggles.

At this point, Moses is going to ask God a reasonable question.

Exodus

6:12 And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who [am] of uncircumcised lips?

6:13 And the LORD spake unto Moses

and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

This is an interesting answer to how Pharaoh is going to listen to Moses when the Hebrews do not even listen to him. I think that the question is good and rational. However, God answers by repeating His command without justifying His command with an explanation of how He would do it.³

Exodus

6:28 And it came to pass on the day [when] the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt,

6:29 That the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I [am] the LORD: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee.

Moses tries again to dodge his assignment with another objection.

Exodus

6:30 And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I [am] of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?

Moses just does not give up his resistance. Now, he is repeating his original objection that has already cost him half of his blessing.

How do we ourselves resist? We probably say words like: "I am not worthy! I am not a good preacher! I do not have the education! There are others more qualified!" We must quit resisting God!

³ We should not expect God to justify His call to us. His call should be accepted on the face that He is the One doing the calling.

EXODUS 7: HARDENING THE HEART OF PHARAOH

Exodus

7:1 And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

This verse describes the new structure in which Aaron is the mouthpiece for Moses. God will provide the words to Moses who will pass them on to Aaron, and Aaron will tell them to Pharaoh.

Exodus

7:2 Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.

7:3 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

God chose Pharaoh to be a strong-willed opponent in order to reveal Himself and demonstrate His power to the world and especially to His people. Overcoming Pharaoh is done God's way. It is not done by just doing what is required. God's way shows Who He Is without meeting our demands.

Class, do you think that Pharaoh was obligated to obey God and that God just chose to harden him? Or do you think that Pharaoh had responsibility for his own decisions? Also is there some kind of progressive attainment of the reprobation, or was it automatically turned on like a toggle switch where you go from off to on?

Henry: Each time you move away from God, it becomes easier to take the next step.

V: Yes, reprobation is progressive! It is like an addiction which will never occur without the first step.

Bob: It seems like we might not be able to figure out what was going on in Pharaoh's mind, or what God was doing with Pharaoh.

But we can figure out what God is trying to do with us. We know that God causes all things to work together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purposes. Thus, I do not have to worry about why I am having opposition, but I do have to want to do God's will. Beyond that, regardless of what the struggle is, I do not have to figure out anything because He is working all things together in His plan. I must believe that He is going to accomplish His plan regardless of what kind of turmoil or bloodshed or death experience we go through. Like you said one time, we are purchased to be spent. If we are willing to be spent, then He will spend us, and it will not be pretty.

V: Excellent, Bob. God's plan is for His benefit, His glory, His will, His plan, His everything, *and for our good in eternity*. However, we must be *willing* to be spent. It seems that the more times I make decisions after thinking God's calls through, the more I lose out on being in the midst of miracles. I do best when I just do what He says without worrying about results. If I wrestle with the possible results, I am likely to decide against God.

It looks like God is purposely moving on Pharaoh, asking for decisions, and Pharaoh keeps saying no and moving further into apostasy. That is the hardening process.

Some people reject God, and then go through life as just normal people being good parents, good workers, and good citizens. They never get another chance because we never present another witness to them and ask for a decision. They have not made decision after decision after decision. Thus they are not hardened except by their achievement of normal human goodness without God.

When some Christians say "yes" to God, it comes from a tender heart. The person falls down and weeps for his wickedness, and he cannot help but wonder why God would even use such a worthless wretch.

On the other hand, some Christians get all stiff-necked and refuse God's yoke. The Christian who refuses to bend his neck to the yoke is a harlot, and he is progressing into apostasy because of his disobedience. Once

you move off path, your slide towards apostasy has begun, and God is going to take action. He will correct you, or He will harden you. The choice of which, however, is within your will.

Chapter Questions

1. In Exodus 4:16 through the rest of chapter 4, God gives His plan. Describe God's plan.
2. What is God's staff?
3. What are Moses' objections and God's answers?
4. Why did God get angry?

Chapter 4

THE PLAGUES ON EGYPT

EXODUS 7

THE FIRST PLAGUE

The Hebrews' situation became worse after the first request because it was rejected, and Pharaoh, out of anger, gave them additional work. In turn, the Hebrews were frustrated, and Moses caught the heat from their anger.

When Moses took the Hebrews' complaints to God, He responded by telling Moses how it was going to be. The plan is that Pharaoh is not going to let the people go, and God is going to show the strength of His Own Hand against Pharaoh.

Rod to Serpent Miracle

In the second request, God performed the first miracle in which Aaron threw down the rod, and it turned into a serpent.

First Miracle

MIRACLE	Rod to Serpent
SCRIPTURE	7:10-13
ADVANCE WARNING?	No
IMPLEMENTED BY	Aaron
MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	Yes

Chart 4.1

In his meeting with God, Moses threw down the staff, and it became a serpent. Then God told him to pick it up, and it became a rod again. We talked at length about what that meant to Moses from his and God's perspectives. At this point, what does this miracle mean in Pharaoh's perspective?

Pete: It was a challenge because he called his sorcerers in to perform the same thing.

V: Does that event of sorcery mean that you can tell that something is from God by its supernaturalness?

A supernatural event could cause us to believe that something is from God simply because it is manifested under supernatural power. People have been fooled into believing error by seeing angels, by levitation, by channeling, by miracles of various kinds. Satan uses supernatural ways of deception, e.g. the temptations of Christ in Mt. 4. Not all miracles are from God; some are from Satan for the purpose of deception.

Aaron has, via his rod, power over nature. You would think that Pharaoh, after seeing Aaron's serpent swallowing the sorcerers' serpents, would know that God has power that is above any power that he knows. If Pharaoh had more power than God, then his rods would have swallowed Aaron's rod. The rational position for Pharaoh should have been to give due consideration to this request. It was obviously from someone with enough power to back it up.

At the beginning of this course, we made note of the fact that deliverance is a power-based move within the doctrine of redemption. Redemption is raising up someone who is weak and powerless so that they are able to stand free on firm ground. It is done by someone who has the power to do so. It does not always involve sacrifice, but it always involves power.

God, in effect, is saying, "Pharaoh, I want my people out of Egypt, and I am going to bring them out. I am going to show you step by step that I have enough power to do exactly what I want to do."

Waters to Blood Plague

In the second miracle, which was the first plague, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh the morning after the rod-to-serpent miracle and announced that because Pharaoh had rejected God's request to allow the Hebrews to go worship, they are going to smite the waters with the rod, and the waters will turn to blood. Then they did it in Pharaoh's sight.

Pharaoh has seen two miracles in a row. His sorcerers have duplicated in a smaller way the two miracles. Pharaoh's heart has hardened two consecutive times.

This plague is implemented by Aaron, it is matched by the Egyptians, and Israel is not separated.

First Plague

PLAGUE	Water to Blood
SCRIPTURE	7:14-25
ADVANCE WARNING?	No
IMPLEMENTED BY	Aaron
MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	Yes
ISRAEL SEPARATED	No

Chart 4.2.1

The second miracle is another example of God's power over nature, but it is being actuated by human agency. Let me ask you, do you think that the water would have turned to blood if Aaron had not smitten it with the rod?

Beth: No, because God told him to do it. It would not have happened if Aaron had disobeyed.

V: Human agency is essential in the work of God. God has power to make it happen by just His spoken Word. He could have just turned the water to blood, but He told Aaron to go and smite the water with the rod. A partnership of God and man is demonstrated here. It is essential that we understand this concept.

In many of our prayers, we move away from the concept of partnership. We want to sit by and be cheerleaders who pray and ask God to do all the work. But we are His partners. That partnership is what that take-my-yoke-upon-you¹ commandment is about. We are to be in yoke with the Lord as a necessity for an active Christian walk. That commandment means that there is something for you to do in all of God's work.

Even though God wants something done, it is not going to get done if you refuse to join Him in the doing of it. Hear me now! Even though God wants it done, He **honors** you by choosing you to do it and thereby to give Him honor and glory via your faithful participation. If you refuse to do it, it does not get done, and God is dishonored.

When we disobey, God may compensate by bringing in other avenues, other agents, other ministers, and other circumstances to achieve His eternal plan. This compensation comes under the doctrine of God's Providence. Via His providence, God may or may not work around your disobedience in a macrocosmic way to make up for what you leave undone. However, I believe that He plans no microcosmic work to witness to someone because we choose not to witness to them.²

It is essential for you to accept the partnership responsibility that you have with God. That is why the call is upon all. It is not just on the clergy. Every saint is called to minister. God uses every saint in a partnership ministry to reach that saint's family, friends, co-workers, and all the other folks in his network. It is essential that we receive and act upon our assigned partnership. Jesus provides the essential guidance and supernatural power in the partnership of ministry, but it is often neglected by our side of the yoke. The

¹ Matthew 11:28

² John. 20:23.

breakdown comes via our unbelief and disobedience.

God told Moses, and Moses told Aaron to smite the water in front of Pharaoh so that it would be turned to blood. Both Moses and Aaron believed God. So Aaron smote the water in the presence of Pharaoh, and it turned to blood.

The opportunity for you to be in partnership with God and to do the impossible exists right now for you. When you are in partnership with God and you are submissive to His will, all the power of God is released through your ministry. But when you are not in partnership with God, and you beg and plead with God, then, you see, nothing happens. When we pray and ask Him to save somebody without giving that somebody a witness or doing anything to help that person get saved, then we are violating the partnership principal that Aaron obeyed. If Aaron had not smitten the water, it would not have turned to blood. The work of God would not have been done. Please realize the importance of your direct participation with God!

Now there are going to be times when God bypasses human agency. But He decides when to do that. The one thing that He will not do is save others apart from human agency. God has given us direct instruction in the Great Commission. He has commanded us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.³ He is not going to preach it or send angels to preach the Gospel. That is a fact of life. The Gospel has been consigned to the Church alone, and I am not talking about an institution. The Church is a subgrouping of all Christians from all humans. What a responsibility we have. Like Aaron's smiting the water, we must propagate the Gospel, or it is not going to be done. We must believe and obey just like Moses and Aaron did in the water-to-blood miracle.

³ Matthew 28:19.

EXODUS 8 MORE PLAGUES

The second plague was Egypt's inundation with frogs.

Exodus 8:1-15, Frogs

The request was issued with a warning that if Pharaoh refused, Moses was going to smite all of Egypt with frogs. So, upon Pharaoh's refusal, Moses told Aaron to hold the rod above the waters, and frogs were brought up upon all of Egypt. The Hebrews suffered also with the frogs because they were not separated from the plague that extended across all of Egypt.

Second Plague

PLAGUE	Frogs
SCRIPTURE	8:1-15
WARNING	Yes
IMPLEMENTED BY	Aaron
MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	Yes
ISRAEL SEPARATED	No

Chart 4.2.2

The ability for the sorcerers or the magicians to duplicate these miracles was through the power of Satan. Have you ever wondered why they did not send the frogs away? They could make more frogs, but they could not send them away.

Steve: Bringing more frogs increased the problem, but it did not solve it. If they could have sent them away, the problem would have been solved.

Henry: The miracles performed by the sorcerers were supernatural, but they were only able to add to their own afflictions. The Lord may have been showing them that their wisdom was actually foolishness and that their power was confined to the negative.

V: Oh, that is good, Henry! These are clear statements that God is Lord of all and that He alone has the power to solve human problems. All of the Egyptian supernatural

powers accomplished nothing but add to their misery.

Carl: If all the water turned to blood, what water did the Egyptians turn to blood?

V: According to Exodus 7:24, the water below ground was still water. All the water above ground had been turned to blood.

Do you think that behind the scenes that Pharaoh asked his magicians to get rid of the frogs? I think that they tried in secret and could not do it. Then Pharaoh asked that Moses entreat his God to remove the frogs. In response, Moses asked when he wanted them removed. Amazingly, he wanted to keep the frogs the rest of that day and night.

Moses said, “Be it as unto your word so that you know that the Lord is God, but only the frogs on the land, not in the Nile, will be removed.”

The water that changed to blood lasted for a week—for seven days. Moses and Aaron came back one week after the blood miracle and did this frog miracle. The frog plague lasted for a day and a night. The next day the frogs were eliminated from the land. Because Moses chose to keep the frogs in the Nile alive, God did exactly that. The frogs that were on the land, in the houses, and everywhere but the Nile died, and they gathered them together and piled them in heaps and the whole land stunk.

Pharaoh’s bargain with Moses to entreat his God to get rid of the frogs was based on his promise to let the Hebrews go. He got what he wanted, but he did not keep his end of the bargain.

Some Christians do the same thing as Pharaoh when they bargain with God to get them out of trouble. When they do not make good on their promises, it is treachery. I cannot make a determination as to whether or not Pharaoh intended to really let the people go and changed his mind or whether he just said

whatever was necessary to get rid of the frogs. Either way, it was treachery

If Pharaoh was rational, he would have figured that a long-term frog plague would devastate his country. Thus, he could have meant what he offered, but just as soon as the frogs were gone, he may have thought that his letting the Hebrews go was no longer imperative.

Sybil: Governments do this all the time.

V: For sure, ours does this. However, Christians do this as well. Some of us make a bargain with God for deliverance, and when God delivers them, they revert back to their old position. In my opinion, that treachery is far worse than plain old rejection. Beware, it caused a hardening of the heart for Pharaoh.

God’s discipline is redemptive as long as you are alive. He is always reaching down to the saint in trouble in order to pull him up if he will just grab hold of His hand, i.e. repent. When a Christian finds himself in trouble, he should examine himself to see whether or not it is a discipline from God. If it is, then repentance is the called-for response. However, if the Christian repents and asks the Lord for relief, and the Lord gives it, then he is not to repent from his repentance. That is the “dog going back to its vomit” or “the pig going back to the mud.”

Ted: Treachery is trying to use God.

Beth: Do you lose your salvation?

V: You do not lose the justification part of salvation, but the second state could be worse than the first state⁴ as far as a hard heart. The more we sin, the more we build strongholds, and they can grow until we cannot even hear the Spirit of God.

There is a difference between the reasoning processes of the magicians and Pharaoh. The magicians who are practicing sorcery can

⁴ Matthew 12:45.

see their limitations more clearly than Pharaoh, who is supposed to be the spiritual leader of this nation.⁵

Exodus 8:16-19, Lice

Something progressive is going on, and I do not know whether lice/gnats are more difficult to create than frogs or whether Satan's power is limited to serpents, blood, and frogs. Excluding gnats, these plagues pertain somewhat to the future tribulation in the book of Revelation.

God's power extends throughout all of creation. A sorcerer, magician, even Satan received his power from God. They exercise their power, however, for demonic purposes. But we do that ourselves also. You use your free will, a power granted to you from God, in wrong ways sometimes. Thereby you glorify Satan and shame the Lord. Your freedom and gifts that are granted to you by God can be used in any way that you choose. Just make good choices!

Serving and glorifying the Lord is not automatic. It involves relation, struggle, and freedom. If it were automatic, you would be puppets, and He would be pulling your strings. That is not what God is all about. He receives His glory through you who have a free will to choose Him while free to choose against Him. When you choose against Him, you are exercising the power of a free will. The limitation of power, not choice, for the sorcerers is God defined. God has given Satan a lot of power, but its source is in God. Satan did not just stand up and exist all by himself. He came into being by God's power of creation. God created Satan.

Betty: God gives us the choice to do right or wrong.

⁵ Rom. 13:1-6 says that the government employees are God's ministers.

V: Right. Good choices come out of the meaning of love (*agape*). *Agape* is not sentiment! *Agape* is completely within the realm of one's will! Falling into love is sentiment, but *agape* is a unilateral choice to sacrifice in order to benefit another person, the object of that choice. God's love is by choice, and it is totally volitional. God tells us to love our wives. That is not a sentiment or an emotion; it is to choose to love her. In order to do so, we must become sacrificial, and our actions do not depend upon responses. We do it because God said so. That is unilateral, sacrificial, beneficial actions (*agape*) for the object of that love, the wife.

When we trade *agape* for the sentimental kind of love that has no volition behind it, it is just reactionary, i.e. what happens to you automatically generates your responses. If we use this definition of love, then we can easily fall out of love with her and divorce her. Thus the divorce becomes God's fault or her fault. It is thought to never be your fault because it happened to you, i.e. you did not choose to fall out of love.

When we are commanded to love with *agape*, that is an **unconditional** choice. We just do it! To love one another is something that you do, and it does not depend on the merits or responses of the other person or anything else. You just do it!

Third Plague

PLAGUE	Lice/Gnats
SCRIPTURE	8:16-19
WARNING	No
IMPLEMENTED BY	Aaron
MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	No
ISRAEL SEPARATED	No

Chart 4.2.3

In this plague of lice, God just implements it without request and without warning because of Pharaoh's treachery. God told Moses who, in turn, told Aaron to smite the dust with his staff and turn the dust into lice.

The lice covered man and beast throughout Egypt.

When the Egyptian sorcerers tried to match the miracle, they could not do so. They then told Pharaoh that the miracle came from the finger of God. To which, Pharaoh responded by hardening.

Exodus 8:20-32: Flies

Next, God told Moses to request again that Pharaoh let the people go sacrifice to their God. There was a warning attached to the request. If Pharaoh refused the request, a plague of flies was promised.

Fourth Plague

PLAGUE	Flies
SCRIPTURE	8:20-32
WARNING	Yes
IMPLEMENTED BY	God
MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	No
ISRAEL SEPARATED	Yes

Chart 4.2.4

Swarms of flies are created to cover the entire land of Egypt except for a designated land of Goshen where the Israelites lived. God said that He would separate the land of Goshen where His people dwelt so that Pharaoh would know that God is the Lord of the earth.

All of the plagues before this one have been over everything and everyone in Egypt. This time, an invisible barrier was placed by God between the land occupied by the Egyptians and that occupied by the Hebrews. Flies are everywhere except in the land of Goshen, which is occupied by the Hebrews. The separation proved to Pharaoh that there was no geographical limits to God's lordship.

God Himself implemented this plague. How did Pharaoh respond to this one?

Pete: He told them that they could sacrifice right where they are.

V: If the Hebrews had sacrificed where they were, who would have won?

Betty: Pharaoh.

V: Right. The people are under pressure to keep making their quotas of bricks. Their sending out work parties to cut and bring in straw was additional and preparatory work. Then they still had to do the regular work of making the bricks. They are exhausted under the strain of a daily quota of bricks.

Please visualize the strain and exhaustion. Wouldn't it be tempting to stay in place and sacrifice so that you would not fall at least a week behind in your quotas? See how your goal could veer away from God's goal? Instead of going a three-day journey into the wilderness and sacrificing, you could rationalize a victory out of obtaining a great concession from Pharaoh.

Jill: That would be a compromise.

V: Yes, but can you see the subtleness of that compromise? You lose the understanding of what it is that God told you to do and do something short of that! The compromise would mean that you have not accomplished what God told you to do. Deception lies in the subtleness of compromise.

When compromise comes our way, we have to be discerning. Do not trade out a long, hard road that God has sent you on for a short cut. God always sends you the long, hard way, and that long, hard way involves denying yourself, picking up your cross, and following Him. It is sacrificial, it is painful, and it leads to death. It is the long, hard way. It is not the way of the world, i.e. the way up, the reverse of the *kenosis*. It is the way down to humiliation and sacrifice. We can trade out the mind of God for that of the world, especially when we are racked with pain and exhaustion and suffering under a never ending obligation of making bricks. Be aware that compromise can be thought to be something

resembling a victory, but it is not the real victory.

I think that if Moses had fallen for the compromise, the people would have followed him. Thus our leadership responsibility is very high.

Joe: A split could have occurred between Moses and the people. If Moses rejected the offer but the people accepted it, God's plan would have been jeopardized.

V: That possibility, Joe, is interesting! A split could have further aggravated the anger and hostility of the people that they had for Moses already. You remember that on the very first request their pain of increased work was expressed as hostility toward Moses. Moses is still laboring under that hostility. The people demanded that Moses get them out of the predicament that he had gotten them into. Pharaoh's offer could have been seen as a way to do their sacrificing without adding to their burden.

What was the second offer of compromise?

Steve: They could go to the desert, not three-days journey, but just to the dessert.

V: It is getting tough not to compromise at this point.

Steve: What do you think of Pharaoh's request that the Hebrews pray for him?

V: I wonder if Pharaoh is admitting to the idea of God's power. The magicians certainly had seen it when they said, "This is the finger of God."

Pharaoh's rejection of God while asking for intercessory prayer to God for him is something that we sometimes do. To eat your cake and have it too is impossible. In Pharaoh's case, it is not so impossible because he is asking for the prayers from a righteous man, a third party.

Wanda: I think that Moses had grown in

strength because of all the miracles. If Pharaoh had made this offer initially, Moses might not have had the strength to reject offers of compromise.

V: Golly, that is good, Wanda!

Pete: Moses had seen the hand of God working. By this time, he knew that God would do what He said He would do. Thus, he had the confidence and the faith needed to do exactly what God told him to do.

V: What you have brought up tonight is terrific. Tonight's lesson has become a study on the growth of a minister. I think that this path is one that we all walk. There is growth in the discernment of compromises. To stand against compromise in spite of the people chewing continuously on you makes for growth. Standing firm under God's leadership and not yielding to subtle deception is a growth process.

You remember how Moses made God angry? God made his hand leprous and then reversed it. The rod incident followed the leprous-hand miracle. Then God said that He would be with Moses when Moses complained about his inability to speak. After all that, Moses suggested that God send somebody else. Moses was a wimp. Now look at him at this point. He has spiritual discernment, and he is strong.

God is giving choices to Pharaoh that would be reasonable to accede to if Pharaoh realized that it was God making the requests. At the first, he is told that God is making the requests, but Pharaoh does not understand Who God is. Thus, he resists on that basis until his sorcerers declare to him that God's finger is more powerful than all the power that they knew. Once he became acquainted with God's power, it became unreasonable for him to resist the request. Thus, it became a pure and simple choice between humility and pride. Thus, to choose against God on the

basis of pride is to harden. Hardening is based upon choices.

Foreknowing what Pharaoh was going to do, God told Moses that Pharaoh is not going to let you go. Furthermore, God informed Moses that He was going to pit Himself against Pharaoh until Pharaoh is finally going to let you go.

There are two apparent goals in God's plan. The ultimate goal is to get the Hebrews out of Egypt and into their own land. But God is going to achieve that as well as demonstrate His power to the world.

Jill: In God's overall plan, the Hebrews have to come out of Egypt. Then He has some even more difficult things for them to go through.

V: Yes, I know how God works with me. He does not tell me the whole deal when He calls me to a task. My following His orders would not be as bold if I knew about all the hardships and trials that lay ahead. Much of the joy of my fellowship has been borne out of ignorance. So I surrendered to His call to vocational ministry with the idea that He was going to take care of everything. That He did, but He used me to do it. He used my resources in combination with His Providential power to solve the problems and move me into laboring in my studies and ministry. This is one of those kinds of deals where you either say yes to God, or you are on your own. Now I am following the Lord, but I am doing it one step at a time. Only my next step, not the whole plan, is being revealed to me. I could not have handled knowing God's whole plan for me at the beginning.⁶

⁶ I know the mind of God for the *kenosis*, and I know how I fit into it. I know my path. But the one thing that I do not know is what problems lay ahead for me on my path.

God is calling every one of you to decisions of some kind. I do not know what kind they are, but every one of you is on a pilgrimage. Because of God's grace, He will not allow you to be destroyed in your reaching up from your bondage to Him. He will redeem you from your bondage, and then He will strengthen you in your initial steps. He will make you able to walk a little further, and help you progressively grow up to become a full-grown minister. I think that Moses is demonstrating this growth process.

Wanda: Pharaoh's offer is similar to the world's offer to today's Sunday-only kind of Christian. He is tempting the Hebrews to compartmentalize by doing their worship but without breaking any of their full commitment to their secular goals. Likewise Sunday-only Christians are being tempted to go and worship but come back in full commitment to the world. Compartmentalization takes the Christian's witness away from him by tempting him to lay up his treasure on earth. We must not love the world and the things of the world!

V: Well said, Wanda. In this case, Pharaoh is playing Satan's role; he is the tempter.

Notice also that Pharaoh said that he would let the people go a little ways, and asked Moses to petition God for him. As soon as the flies were removed, Pharaoh reneged again on his promise. Again there was a hardening via conscious choice.

EXODUS 9 MORE PLAGUES

The next plague will hit the Egyptians far harder than just the prior plagues of discomfort and torment. This plague will hit the Egyptians economically via death to their animals. This plague impacts livelihood and even survival.

*Exodus 9:1-7, Animal Plague***Fifth Plague**

PLAGUE	Animals
SCRIPTURE	9:1-7
WARNING	Yes
IMPLEMENTED BY	God
MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	No
ISRAEL SEPARATED	Yes

Chart 4.2.5

There is warning in this plague even after Pharaoh's treachery concerning the flies.

Israel is separated in such a way that not one of their animals is destroyed. The separation is not geographical. It is based on ownership. No matter where the Hebrew cattle are, they remain healthy. There is, then, a separation by God based solely on His knowing which cattle belong to the Israelites.

Please note that the book of Revelation reveals some future plagues of tribulation that are going to land on the people of the earth, but the Christian remnant will be separated from some of those plagues. However, some of the plagues will land on everybody including the Christians.

Perhaps we can learn from the Exodus experience what Christians should expect from future plagues. Exodus gives a preview about how God is going to work all through time. Today there are plagues that land on saint and sinner alike. There are also times when God exempts his saint(s). There are all kinds of miracles that lack natural explanations for how a person or a house was skipped over.

Homer: It seems like God is getting more and more precise.

V: Yes, God is getting more precise in His separation for His chosen people. Remember that holiness means separation (set aside) of a clean person unto God's exclusive use. Thus the Hebrews, while enslaved in Egypt, cannot be in God's exclusive use until

they are called out and separated from their bondage to Pharaoh.

Joe: This plague has long-term consequences. Reproduction is a slow process, and there is nothing to reproduce from.

V: I suppose that Pharaoh could do what our government does, i.e. confiscate the Hebrews' cattle.

God is God, but at this point, He is moving purposefully to be recognized as God of the Hebrews. He says in the book of Revelation that He will be our God, and we Christians will be His people. Relationship is based on choice.⁷

Exodus 9:8-20, Boils on Man and Animals

It is interesting that Moses, rather than Aaron, implements this plague. God changed His structure of ministry too. He spoke directly to both Moses and Aaron which indicates that Aaron was drawn closer by getting the Word directly from God rather than through Moses. God also changed the implementer from Aaron to Moses. Aaron participated in the fetching of the ashes, but Moses did the sprinkling for implementation.

Sixth Plague

PLAGUE	Boils
SCRIPTURE	9:8-12
WARNING	No
IMPLEMENTED BY	Moses & Aaron
MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	No
ISRAEL SEPARATED	Yes

Chart 4.2.6

⁷ Choosing and response to choice is like marriage. I preach evangelism in marriage ceremonies by proclaiming an offer from God that He wants a bride and has said: "I do" in His choice of us. To His offer, we, the bride, respond by also saying, "I do" to Him. Then the marriage is complete, and the relationship is set; He is our God and we are His people.

Moses was to sprinkle the ashes towards heaven in front of Pharaoh. Why did Moses not sprinkle them sideways or downwards? Certainly, he would have been tempted to sprinkle them in such a way that they would not come back down in his face, eyes, and hair. God told him to sprinkle them up, and I think that Moses did exactly that.

There is a precision required for obedience; he could have done it wrong by going off half-cocked like I am likely to do. I believe that if you do it wrong, something bad is going to happen. If I had been standing there listening to God with the casual image that formed in my head, I would have messed this assignment up. I have to be alert, when I am reading God's Word, to analyze the images that come into my mind. I have to make sure that they conform to what the words say. If I do not, there is no telling what I might do, but a wrong action could jeopardize the results.

If we read without giving attention to every Word of God, or if we preach with a callousness, or if we fail to listen intently and

end up getting an incorrect image or understanding, then the world laughs at us because of our misfires. We think we are doing it right. We think that we heard what we heard, but we did not get it right because we did not apply due diligence.⁷

My past experiences would have conditioned me to misinterpret this command. During sand fights as a kid in Florida, sand thrown upwards came down on everybody's eyes, hair, and clothes. Thus, if I were going to sprinkle ashes, I would sprinkle them downwards or sideways.

Be aware that human reasoning and past experiences could influence our interpretations. Reason, presuppositions, and prior experiences are where things go wrong. These are the gateways for subjectivity to enter. This one particular plague is one in which I see where I could trip up, not through intent, but through misinterpretation.

⁷ I think of the snake handlers as an incorrect interpretation.

PLAGUES CHART

Exodus 7—11

	SCRIPTURE	WARNING	IMPLEMENTED BY	MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	ISRAEL SEPARATED
Blood	7:14-25	No	Aaron	Yes	No
Frogs	8:1-15	Yes	Aaron	Yes	No
Lice/Gnats	8:16-19	No	Aaron	No	No
Flies	8:20-32	Yes	God	No	Yes
Animals	9:1-7	Yes	God	No	Yes
Boils	9:8-12	No	Moses & Aaron	No	Yes

Chart 4.3

Chapter Questions

1. Why were the Hebrews angry after the first request by Moses for Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go?
2. What was God's plan for the Hebrews removal from Egypt?
3. Would the water have turned to blood if Aaron had not smitten it with the rod?
4. How do we glorify the Lord?
5. What is the difference between falling in love and *agape*?
6. What is the difference between the plague of the flies and the plagues preceding that plague?
7. What did Pharaoh offer when he was requested to allow the children of Israel go a three-day journey to worship, and what was the temptation faced by the children of Israel?

Chapter 5

PHARAOH'S OFFER OF COMPROMISES

We started a chart in the last chapter, and we are going to continue that chart, but first I want to discuss another subject. This subject has to do with the hardening of the heart. There are eleven passages that deal with the hardening of the heart. I will list the Scripture references and make a statement of who is doing the hardening.

HARDENING OF THE HEART

1. Exodus 7:3: "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart."

God says that He will harden Pharaoh's heart.

2. Exodus 7:13: "And He hardened Pharaoh's heart."

God again is doing the hardening.

3. Exodus 8:15: When Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart.

Pharaoh is hardening his own heart.

4. Exodus 8:19: When the magician said, "This is the finger of God," Pharaoh's heart was hardened.

God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

5. Exodus 8:32: Pharaoh hardened his heart.
6. Exodus 9:12: The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh.
7. Exodus 9:34, 35: "And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder were ceased, he sinned yet more and hardened his heart."

It looks like Pharaoh is the one doing the hardening in verse 34, but in verse 35 is says, "And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened." This appears to be a combination of both God and Pharaoh.

8. Exodus 10:1: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, for I have

hardened his heart.

9. Exodus 10:20: The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart.
10. Exodus 10:27: The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart.
11. Exodus 11:10: the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart.

What is this hardening process? Who is hardening the heart? Is it a double responsibility? Is it a single responsibility with none accruing to the one being hardened?

God had a reason to do the hardening. If Pharaoh had easily relinquished the children of Israel, God would not have received any glory, and the children of Israel may not have willingly followed Moses.

Notice here that it says that He was hardening not only Pharaoh's heart but also the hearts of the officials under Pharaoh. This is a widening of the effect.

On the other side of the coin, God was building up and strengthening Moses to be faithful and obedient.

Ted: While I was reading this week, I saw my son with his hardened heart and God going to him and saying, "Let go of these drugs." Pharaoh was an addict too. His addiction was to his own power. Like him, our lives today come down to letting go of something.

V: That is a good point, Ted. Just as Pharaoh was an addict to power, we too have a stronghold on us that we need to break. We cannot break it with our own power. So, we need to submit our wills and let go and let God.

Someone who is entrenched in sin will not easily let go of it. He is deceived into believing that in his own power, he can control the

addiction. He thinks that he can stop whenever he wants to. He thinks that he does not need God or anybody else to tell him what to do.

Ted: This understanding of Pharaoh just became so real to me in the context of my son's refusal of worshiping and rejoicing with us. God is building us up in the process. He is doing a work in my son just as He did a work in Pharaoh. We just cannot see it yet. And Pharaoh, little by little, has to give up his authority until finally he submits. I see Pharaoh like an addict who tries to make a bargain with God. As soon as God gives him what he wants, he will say, "Thanks; I will take it from here."

Steve: It was also for the Children of Israel's sake that this happened. Once the Children of Israel were out of Egypt we do not hear about Pharaoh any more. The Children of Israel would never have gotten up and gone had they not seen all this power.

V: That is right, Steve. The continuation of their pilgrimage is within the context of looking back at what it took to get them out of Egypt.

Steve: The deliverance from Egypt is spoken of in the rest of the Bible. I even read about it in Psalms this week. It echoes throughout the Bible.

V: Now, I want to show you the doctrine of salvation that is manifested in the Exodus. It begins with the redemptive power of God to lift the new converts out of their bondage.

The candidate is, while in bondage to sin, reaching up to Jesus. He cannot get out of sin's grip and penalty by himself. Satan has possession of the person. In the picture of salvation, the Hebrews represent the candidate, Egyptian slavery represents the sin, and Pharaoh represents Satan.

In salvation, Jesus rescues the candidate by winning the victory over Satan. In the

rescue, Jesus pulls the candidate out of the grasp of Satan. He does not impose His Will on the candidate, but He imposes His power over Satan.

Now, if He said, "Child, I do not care what you want, you are going to get saved," then He would be imposing His Will over the candidate. However, if the candidate asks to be saved, and Jesus does so at the person's request, then their wills are both aligned but still free. In that case, Satan is the one who is not willing for the person to be saved. Therefore, the rescue battle is fought with Satan.

Ted: Pharaoh was different because Pharaoh claimed that he was the same as God.

V: Satan did that too.

Homer: Egypt was a world power, and by Pharaoh hardening his heart and being crushed by God, the entire world became aware that the God of the Hebrews was the one true living God Who is almighty.

V: Yes, this deliverance was a demonstration of who God is—general revelation to the world in the form of history. To Israel and to Christians, it is special revelation in the form of salvation history.

Homer: The Canaanites feared the power of the Hebrews' God when the people came into their land. Remember the spies and how Rahab said that their people were scared.

V: Because of her fear of God originating from the Egyptian story, Rahab was saved.

Is it not strange that the Canaanites feared God more than the Hebrews?

Sam: Unfortunately, the Israelites did not fear God as much as they feared the Canaanites.

Bob: We once had an old Hereford heifer with a calf and an Angus with a calf. The Angus died, and her calf began nursing on the Hereford. That Angus calf would suck that Hereford dry, and the Hereford calf was not

getting enough to keep alive. So, my boss would hit the Angus calf with a two-by-four every time it was time to stop nursing. That calf quickly became conditioned to stop nursing when we brought the other calf into the barn. Likewise, I think God was teaching the world that it was not Moses bringing the people out but God Himself. It was not the Hebrews that they had to fight but God Himself. Moses was just an obedient servant.

V: That is right; Moses cannot take the credit. God is sovereign. Neither Moses nor Pharaoh were sovereign. Pharaoh was only god to himself.

Henry: God was not only proving Himself to His Own people but to Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the entire world as well. God is witnessing of Himself as the God of all creation. He proved Himself to Egypt that He had all power and that their sun god had none. God denied all gods, whose existences were only in the Egyptians' hearts and minds. God manifested the absolute truth that there is only one true and living God.

V: Very well said.

Now, coming back to the issue of hardening, Pharaoh hardened his own heart by making choices. Even though God honored Pharaoh's choices, He hardened Pharaoh's heart by bringing circumstances calling for those choices. In Pharaoh's case, the circumstances were via requests to let the people go. In our cases, they can be in any form in which a decision becomes necessary.

The Bible declared several times that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. However, this hardening was not apart from Pharaoh's own volition. God hardens Pharaoh's heart by giving him the opportunity to choose to fight against Him. Pharaoh chose not to let the people go. In the choices, Pharaoh's heart was hardened. God called for a decision and gave Pharaoh full freedom to make it.

We do the same thing as Pharaoh. God

provides the circumstances, the opportunity for decision, and the freedom to make the choice. You choose either to submit or not submit to God. That is how God deals with you. He brings the circumstances into your life and asks you to choose to go with Him. When you choose not to go with Him, you are hardening your heart, and God is hardening your heart.

The hardening was not just for Pharaoh alone. God hardened the magicians' and the officials' hearts as well. All of Egypt was participating in some way. However, some of them woke up. They saw the evidence of the circumstances over and over again. If you are as smart as an Angus calf, you can figure out the situation after getting knocked to your knees about three times.

Jack: In one of Paul's letters, God states that He gave them over to a reprobate mind. That statement indicates that He allows us to make choices to our bad. He gives us opportunities to choose, allows us to make the choices freely, and the reprobate mind comes at the end of the continuous hardening.

V: Very good, Jack. Romans 1 shows that reprobation is a hardening process, not just an event. Apostasy always originates in a free decision. When you decide against God, you stand away from the cross. Because God is in the sanctifying business, He brings to us another chance at choosing rightly in the next circumstance. As we continue to choose to deny God instead of ourselves, we harden our hearts. In our increasing apostasy, we keep getting further and further away from true discipleship. Pretty soon, we look just like the world.¹

¹ My very first street witnessing was built upon asking the random person for their opinion on the difference between Christians and non-Christians. The Christians generally pointed to behavioral doctrines: "We don't believe in. . . .", and the non-Christians generally pointed to church attendance as the only difference. Seldom did anyone point to actual behavior. Both

Look at the church today. It is in the process of hardening. Pharaoh's story is repeating in my life and in your life. Some of you have been down that hardening road a long, long way, but you finally said, "Yes, Lord." That is why you are in this course.

Wanda: So in essence, God was gracious to Pharaoh.

V: Yes, over and over again, God gave him another chance, just as He does for us.

God wants everyone to choose to line up with Him. So He keeps bringing those opportunities to choose Him. God does not grab a person and set the person over in opposition to His Will. God allows the person to freely choose to oppose His Will. It glorifies God when the person chooses God's Will. It hardens the person's heart when he rejects God's Will. We are all spiralling up or spiraling down.

Pharaoh had every opportunity, and he had more evidence than any of us have. Even his wizards said, "Man, what is wrong with you, do you not know that Egypt is destroyed?"

Pete: Proverbs 21:1 says, "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; and he turns it wherever He wishes." (NAS). Did God decide for Pharaoh?

V: If the position is taken that inviolable free will does not exist, then evil originates from the heart of God. But the way that God handled Pharaoh allowed Pharaoh free choice in the midst of circumstances that were piling pain upon pain. God did not decide for Pharaoh; Pharaoh made his own decision to reduce the pain. Pharaoh could have moved determinedly to total destruction. As it was he capitulated to avoid the nation's total destruction. Can you see that his reluctance was

answers gave me a point of entrance for an evangelistic witness.

overwhelmed, but his will was not. The proof of this result is in his chasing after the Hebrews to re-enslave them.²

My position is that when I am walking down the path of righteousness, God is directing my footsteps by providing the path and enough light to put one foot in front of the other. I choose. So, when I am walking down the path of unrighteousness, I cannot blame that on God. I choose to reject the light that God provided. I cannot excuse my choice by saying that I was forced to choose evil or that God chose evil for me. The choice is mine.

Pharaoh was not forced to reject God's requests. If God makes our decisions, then we will have fatalism, and God comes under His Own judgment. In fatalism God would be deceiving us by making our decisions for us while making us think that we are making the decisions. Satan would like for us to take the fatalistic position because we then could do anything we want and blame God.

Pharaoh asserted his own will. Pharaoh is a person whom God is trying to turn. God is going to rescue His people, but Pharaoh set his will as a barrier against God.

Jill: In James 1:13-15, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath con-

² The book of Revelation warns that taking the mark of the beast is certain condemnation to hell. Thus, if pressure is brought to bear, we cannot take the mark claiming that duress of certain death forced us. No, that is claiming that your will was being forced. Do not be fooled! You can continue your refusal all the way to the death, e.g. Jesus' reluctance to be crucified versus His will to follow God's will into crucifixion. The human will is inviolable because God gave mankind that wonderful gift in His perfect design of creation.

ceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

V: Predestination of an individual at birth would violate that passage. There are two sides to God's sovereignty. God's will and man's will. God has sovereignly chosen to give man free will. When man chooses to align with God, then he can be turned this way and that way. When man chooses against God, he can go his own way. However, God, in His providence, can work all things together to make history turn His way even when the king opposes God.

Beth: God is always directing us to righteousness. Man decides in his heart not to go where God directs.

V: Right. And so God brings circumstances, witnesses, environment, history, the Scriptures, the apostolic tradition, and everything to bear in directing us toward righteousness. But by our self-willed bad choices, we depart from God and do the same things that Pharaoh did.

The great thing is that if you choose righteousness, no power in heaven, in hell or on earth can stop you. The only thing that can stop your following God is you yourself.

Now if we pit God's power against His love, then we encounter this theodicy: If God has the power to stop you from doing evil, and if He loves you enough, He will not allow you to choose evil. Now, since you have chosen to do evil, then either there is something wrong with His power, or there is something wrong with His love. Theodicy puts God on trial. If we shove evil into God's heart, then we have tried Him and found Him guilty. We are saying God is the author of evil. But we are the author of evil, and the evil is rooted in one's free will to choose. The choice is simple. You either follow God or you don't. If you do not, you have chosen evil. That is a step of apostasy in the hardening process that leads toward reprobation, if not reversed.

Carl: God has a master plan of sanctification. His plan is an upward maturing process all the way to glorification. He launches you on this path, and if you are willing, you can walk that path all the way to becoming the mature warrior that God has in mind for you. He will build you by directing circumstances and difficulties and things for you to choose to climb over in order to get to that final destination. God loves you and has the power to engineer all the world and bring those circumstances together so that you can choose Him and go to the top. The reason we do not get to the top is not because of God's shortcomings; it is because we choose sin. Everyday is filled with hundreds of choices we have to make. When we choose against God we drop below the line. But God takes where we are and starts reshaping and engineering all circumstances together in order to put you back up there as high as you could possibly reach. You can reach there if you will. God never gives up. He just keeps on keeping on. Sometimes we glorify Him, but sometimes we don't.

V: Very well stated, Carl. The concept is infinite. We just cannot comprehend it except in principle. He is God.

The two sides to hardening are: (1) Choice. The will is asserted via choice. Pharaoh hardened his own heart by his choices, and (2) Circumstances. God hardened by bringing those circumstances that required choices.

There was a purpose for God's demonstration. God did all of these miracles in order to give recognition and understanding of Himself to Israel, Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the entire world.³

OFFERINGS OF COMPROMISES

We examined the first two compromises in the prior lesson. The first compromise was

³ Romans 9:17.

to stay in the land and do the sacrifice. This offer only partially fulfills God's will.

The second compromise, then, was an extension of the first compromise on location. Instead of staying in place for their sacrifices, the Hebrews could go just a little ways.

The Third Compromise

Now, we will continue with our examination of the compromises offered by Pharaoh and the lessons to be learned.

The third compromise begins in Exodus 10:8.

Exodus

10:8 And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: [but] who [are] they that shall go?

10:9 And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we [must hold] a feast unto the LORD.

10:10 And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look [to it]; for evil [is] before you.

10:11 Not so: go now ye [that are] men, and serve the LORD; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

This compromise deals with the participants. It is a men-only deal. It is also a partial meeting of God's will.

The offer was that only the men could go. They must leave their families. So, it is just the men and the sacrificial animals that can go.

The fourth compromise

Exodus

10:24 And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you.

10:25 And Moses said, Thou must give us

also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God.

10:26 Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we come thither.

10:27 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

In this case Pharaoh says that everybody can go, but they cannot take their herds.

We have the four compromises identified, and we shall list the four lessons that Christians need to identify with them. What is the lesson from sacrifices allowed in the land?

Ted: Pharaoh is trying to pacify them.

V: Yes, I think Pharaoh is trying to pacify them to get them to be satisfied without losing his workforce of slaves.

Ted: All four lessons are that partial obedience is disobedience.

V: Okay, the summary or over-arching lesson is that obedience has no compromise.

Ted: The lesson about compromise is that Satan wins, and you lose. You actually are not doing God's will.

Steve: Compromising is abdicating power to someone other than God. When you put a man in a position of authority between you and God, you are obeying that person's interpretation of God's instructions. Compromise is disobedience.

Henry: God's commands are explicit on purpose. He told Moses a three-day journey. God has a plan, and it is His purpose whether or not we understand the plan or His underlying purpose. A three-day journey of all the people and all the livestock requires Pharaoh and the rest of Egypt to risk a potential loss of valuable resources. Thus, they offered compromises.

Ted: If they had taken the compromise, then they could not have gone back to make another request.

V: It is critical that a compromise not be taken.

Ted: When our children were young, they would say why? why? why? when we told them to do something. Finally we would conclude that they would never understand the reasons. So finally, we had to tell them, "Because I said so." I see that same principle with God. We will never understand the infinite Mind of God or His big picture with all the little pieces that He will bring together way out there on the other side of the wilderness. I see Him saying, "Do this because I said so." We have to do it His way even though we encounter great opposition. He is building us up to obey Him while all the other pieces are unclear to us. His piece for us to do is just doing what He wants us to do. We do not have to understand; we just do it.

V: The test of faith connects to God as the object of faith. We pass the test when we do what God says even though He does not explain it to us. It may not make any sense. Faith in God glorifies Him because you are obeying Him because of Who He is, not because of your understanding. You do it just because He said so.

Lesson Number One: Holiness versus Political Correctness

Sybil: Pharaoh or Satan wants to keep us in the world, and we help Him by trying to live via a worldly understanding.

V: Amen. That is lesson number one. The compromise of staying in the land is not to be holy or sanctified or separate.

Pharaoh wanted the Hebrews to continue to be good old Egyptian slaves. Satan wants us to continue to be good old slaves to evil, sin, materialism, security, or whatever by staying in the land. It is okay with him for

you to go ahead and be a Christian and do your church thing. However, he wants your primary responsibility to be keeping on being a permanent citizen right here and doing what the government tells you to do. Political correctness is a compromise. Compromise number one is to be worldly (politically correct) Christians.

Lesson Number Two: Other Worldly versus Good Citizenship with a Little Spirituality

Compromise number two was to go a little way. This offer was for God's people to be spiritual but not too other worldly. Today, it would be to allow some fanaticism inside the church, i.e. you can sing your songs and do your church thing, and go around with a smile on your face. You can go a little way and still be a good citizen, but not all the way. If you go all the way, you are no longer a good citizen. If you go all the way, you will not be politically correct and compatible with acceptable social mores.

Bob: My employer must have gone to Pharaoh's school of management.

V: He says you can go a little way, but not very far. Here is the thing: just as Pharaoh was willing to compromise, Antichrist will be willing to compromise. This example is of God's people not taking that offer of compromise. Had they taken that offer to compromise, they would have been God's people still enslaved in Egypt. The result would be God's people worshiping God while behaving just a little differently from the Egyptians. In this case God's people turned down that offer.

I probably would have gotten nailed on this second compromise offer. If Pharaoh said to take your people, your children, your herds, take everything and go outside the county line, I would have said: "dadgum! we won! Let's go!" Especially with every one nipping at me, beating on me, and grumbling,

the offer would have looked better than it actually was.

When everybody is angry because my leadership has created extra hardships for them, I would be like a drowning man grabbing at a piece of driftwood for help. When they are giving me a lot of grief and eating me alive, and I am doing the best I can, desperation sets in.

In a church setting, discontent and anger erupts frequently. Many times it is your children nipping at you. While you are trying to battle Satan, and your children are over here kicking you in the legs by continuously begging to be like everybody else, and your spouse is griping at the self-denial requirement, it becomes very difficult even to get a good handhold to throw your flesh down. It is a continuous battle for the leader. After a while, in your desperation for some relief, you become susceptible to compromise.

I think wisdom comes in looking at the short term over against the long term, i.e. looking across the divide of the *kenosis*. There is no long-term good in compromise, but there is short-term relief that will end in destruction. Long-term good, in this case of the Hebrews in Egypt, is to hold out for the totality of God's demand.

Sybil: If they do not do it God's way, they will be in Egypt forever.

V: That is what I think too.

Sybil: Trusting in God and His plan is all that we are going to be offered by God. We had better take it while it is offered.

V: Exactly. This lesson right here is for me! I recognize my weakness that could manifest itself during my desire for relief.

I once had a student who went into politics after these classes. He did good in his studies and hung in there all the way to completion. He knew the truth. His answers were good. He did good on the tests, and he

did good in the class dialog. He was a leader. However, when he went into politics, he was forced to face Pharaoh. He did good honorable battle for a while. Then he encountered Pharaoh's blockade. Rather than sticking to his godly principles, he began accepting compromises.

Class, beware of being worn down. You are going to be faced with these same things. You are going to know the right answers, you are going to say the right things in class, and your heart is going to resonate with what we are talking about in here. You are going to admire Moses, but then you are going out to face these same issues. You must stand strong and set your face like flint to face even your death. When you do that, it looses the power of God into the situation. The whole world may come down on you in such a way that you just begin to ache and think that you have done the wrong thing. Your friends will abandon you, and you will be alone. You will begin to think that what the Bible said is not working right and that you must have taken the wrong path. You will entertain thoughts of changing course because you will be told that God does not want this kind of suffering for His saints. You will be wrestling in your heart. You will not sleep at night, you will roll and toss and turn, go to work, and struggle with the question, "Am I doing the right thing?"

All I can say to you is that when there is a clear issue of right or wrong, you must take hold of right with a death grip. Even if the world should beat you to death, you take hold and do not budge.

Moses rejected God's first offer to him to be the redeemer of God's people from their slavery. His excuse was that he had no power, and he could not talk good. Thus God gave much of His offer to Moses' brother. Aaron did the talking for Moses, and he bore the staff of power for Moses. The best that Moses could do was to relay to Aaron God's

instructions. However, one thing that was not forfeited by Moses was that he was required to make all the decisions. He had all the responsibility of guiding the Hebrews while they were chewing on him and hollering in agony about his causing them more pain. But Moses knew that God had come to deliver his people. And Moses knew that it required all the Hebrews and their herds to go three days into the wilderness to do their worship and sacrifices.

Friends, you know that much. You have a history of deliverance from sin's slavery. You too must obey God in every detail regardless of outcome. Even when the outcome is not deliverance out of physical persecution, you will be given an eternal level of glory that is respective of your persecution.

When the saints are burned at the stake, get their heads chopped off, tortured, mutilated, and spit upon, the Lord with tears on His cheeks declares, "There is one of my beloved saints who loves Me."

Do you want to be counted as one who loves the Lord? That opportunity comes when you stand against political correctness. You take hold of righteousness, and you do not let go. There can be no compromise. Set your face like flint. You do not have to be all apologetic, soft, loosey, goosey, and compatible with political correctness. You can say, "No!" Just like Moses, we have the same exact right. You parents have to petition for your children: "LET MY BABY GO!" Stand against Satan. Pray against Satan. You can tear down strongholds. You can loose God into any situation. There is nothing outside of God's control, and you know how to talk to Him. By sticking to His Word, you can fight the battle under His authority.

Beth: I think all of the prior failures helped prepare Moses for his stand against compromise.

V: Exodus shows a man maturing and learning his lessons and stepping up to the next level. He is not running from Pharaoh or giving in to the people. Can I not do the same? Do I have such a weak neck that Satan can come along and tap me on the shoulder and tell me to come with him? Here we are with the opportunity to be obedient to God, to set our face to righteousness, to quit compromising, and to be discerning.

The compromise is tempting when we are offered a majority of the points. What about when the offer lacks only one point? We will argue from our flesh that it cannot get better than that! If you are not going to get every point, then it is compromise. I admire Moses for not taking those offers!

Lesson Number Three: All Are Ministers versus Elitism

What do you think the men only compromise would be?

Sam: Elitism.

V: Yes, if Satan can convince the church that only the official ministers can do ministry, then he whacks off over 90% of the church's ministry. You have only the clerics doing the ministry, and to whom do they do it? They do it to those in the pews. Then Christianity becomes going to church! That is what present-day Christianity has become, i.e. we go to church to get ministered to. We are supposed to go to church to worship, fellowship, serve, preach, and teach.⁴ Certainly, worship, fellowship, and teaching are to be done inside the church, but our relevance to the world depends on our ministry to it. If we do not serve or preach the Gospel to every creature in all the world, then we are irrele-

⁴ These are the five facets of the Missio Dei. Two of the facets connect the church to the outside world. Those two are serving and preaching. The teaching facet prepares the Christian for his specific calling and also to serve and preach (witness) to the outside world.

vant to God's purpose to seek and to save the lost (Lk. 19:10). In other words, the salt will have lost its flavor.

Carl: There will be a growing gap between the body and the leaders. Divide and compartmentalize is a common practice every day for an idle laity. If we fall into the religion of the day, then we miss the obedience of individual ministry. To do so, will be tragic for our eternities.

V: That is right, Carl. I grew up in Florida and Georgia under the idea that the

women took care of the religion, and the men took care of the wars and politics.

Carl: Hey, it is like that now because there are a lot more women in church than men.

V: The first compromise was for worldly Christianity. The second one was for lukewarm Christianity. The third one was clericalism, i.e. only the clergy does the ministry. The fourth one we will do in the next lesson.

Chapter Questions

1. Who hardened Pharaoh's heart?
2. Describe the macrocosmic understanding of justification as demonstrated in Exodus.
3. Describe the first three offers of compromise and the lessons to be learned.

Chapter 6

LESSONS FROM THE COMPROMISES AND PLAGUES

COMPROMISES

The fourth compromise was for the people to go and do their worshipping, and to take their children with them, but to leave their herds and flocks (Ex. 10:24). Moses replied:

Exodus

10:26 . . . for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we come thither.

There is a mystery here; the Lord has told them to get all of their families and all their herds and go out to serve and worship Him. Moses suspects, then, that there may be a lot more in God's Mind about their worshipping and serving Him. Worshipping God requires obedience of separation as the *first step* in a long journey of service. It is dawning on Moses that they do not know everything that the Lord has in mind *before* they actually leave Egypt. All he knows is that they are going to leave.

Pharaoh's compromise was to let them all go the full distance to worship and probably even to take some sacrificial animals. Moses, however, had learned to take all of the Lord's Words into account. He demanded that all the people with all their herds be allowed to go all the way. His reasoning was that the Hebrews did not know what God was going to ask of them when they got to the assigned place.

Lesson Number Four: Stewardship versus Ownership

The compromise was to go but leave the flocks. What is the lesson in that? Total obedience is a repeating refrain that we have all the way through the book of Exodus. Total

obedience is what we need to home in on in these temptations.

Jack: Temptation is found where your treasure is because there is where your heart will be also. Pharaoh knew that if he kept their wealth, then the Hebrews could not concentrate on being totally faithful to God because they would remain tied to Egypt by the things they had left behind.

V: What would we call that temptation?

Jerry: Not being sold out.

V: Okay. So then it is a split allegiance, i.e. sold partly out to God and partly out to the world. In the *kenosis*, selling out to God is to be single minded emptying one's self to a singleness of devotion to God.

Is materialism playing into this temptation?

Henry: If they just took enough animals to sacrifice for now, then where would their stock be for future sacrifices?

V: Moses told Pharaoh that they did not know what God was going to require in their worship.

Henry: As long as their livestock was their livelihood, then they would always return. By taking their livestock, they might never go back.

V: So God was seeking a total separation.

Henry: It is like being tied to something you cannot get loose from. Pharaoh wanted them to have something to make them come back.

V: Right. In one case, it was to leave their women and children. In this case, it was to leave their herds.

The concept that I am homing in on in this compromise is materialism and how it divides your heart. Jerry mentioned a split mindedness. If they leave their flocks and go do their sacrificing, even with the right animals, where are they going to go next?

All of this has to do with the total devotion to God. Committing to God is giving not only yourself to God, but also your possessions, past, present, and future. God owns you and everything about you, and you do not know what He is going to ask of you next. You need to be a good steward over everything that He has placed in your possession, not so that you can indulge yourself, but so that you can obey and sacrifice to achieve God's next command. Stewardship is not abandonment; it is **proper use for God's benefit**. However, occasionally God may require abandonment, but it is very rare. Great discernment is required for the Christian to make the right choice concerning abandonment. When abandonment is required, then that decision would actually be good stewardship.

I think materialism is at play here. Pharaoh figured that the Hebrews could not cut their ties to all their possessions. Thus he was thinking from his own perspective.

Even though God's plans included not just the Hebrews but also their possessions, including their herds, He also knew that the Hebrews were emotionally tied to their possessions. In His perfect wisdom, God knew that the Hebrews were not ready to achieve a level of devotion that would separate the person from his possessions. Forsaking all of their material livelihood and depending on only the providence of God would require a spiritual maturity that these people were far from achieving.

For us, there is total ownership by God of everything that we have, everything that we are, and every thing that we will have. It is all His: your children, your spouse, your own

body, your gifts, your time, your purse, and your all. When He demands it, you must be willing to lay it all down in sacrifice to Him and follow Him on His specific terms. The more you have, the more difficult it is to sacrifice it to follow Him. The rich young ruler went away sad and unsaved because he could not bring himself to the point of giving it all.¹

Henry: God knows His people and is being realistic about their capabilities.

V: Moses has matured into a strong leader by this time, and I think that he is doing a terrific job. His beginning was shaky, but now here he is standing strong and walking tall.

The overarching lesson is that our path to victory is to be without compromise. "Lord Jesus, please bring this lesson to my remembrance when I am being tempted."

Pete: It seems like God is the one that is holding them captive until all the conditions are met.

V: If we think that Satan is holding us, we could possibly become embittered by frustration from the perception of continuous defeat. If we could see that God is always the one who is holding us in this position until all of His conditions are met, then we can be filled with hope. When we know that God is in charge, steadfastness and courage springs up in us.

When we see God's hand in our lives, then strength and courage help us to face our trials with a new hope and joy in our hearts. There can be an anticipation of victory that matches our faith in God. Awareness of God's involvement is very uplifting. It could change your life. It could actually make you skip in joy as you are approaching hard things in your life. If I am supposed to have joy, that

¹ Matthew 19:21-22. The *kenosis* describes Jesus as giving up all of status and infinite riches of heaven and even His Own Life as our example.

joy is robbed from me if Satan has me in a hold. But if Satan is nothing more than a tool in God's hand, I do not have to worry about Satan because he is just a tool. I can then turn my attention to God. I do not have to look at Satan. I can turn my attention to God, and I can know that I have victory because of God's providence, God's watch care, His sovereign power, and His love.

Class, think about that. You mix His total power and His total love, and that guarantees something good for you because if He loves you, He uses His power to help you. If He has the power to help you and He loves you, He will help you to achieve His Will.

But there are conditions for that help. They may not reside with you. They may reside with timing. They may reside in a higher purpose for impacting some one else. They may reside in many other things that are known only to God, but if we react wrongly and become embittered because we believe that Satan's got us, then there could be a destructive outcome rather than an uplifting, constructive outcome.

I think that the cause for the grumbling was because, the people could not see beyond man's power. They could not see that God was going to deliver them. When Pharaoh rejects their request, they are accepting of the idea that his is the only power over their lives. Faith in God's Power is required to overcome our temptations to compromise.

Ted: I see a connection here of God's absolute ownership of us with our freedom. We have to think about our circumstances and our freedom to obey God's instructions within those circumstances. God will use us and spend us in every circumstance. We may think that we are in helpless bondage in our circumstances because we cannot see God's purpose and involvement.

V: Yes, hopelessness prevails when we cannot see God's purpose and involvement.

Ted: By meditating on how God delivered the Hebrews out of Egypt and making our understanding of God's Providence a part of our conscious lives, then we can face life without compromise.

Ted cont'd: I think we have to go all the way back to why He took Joseph there in the first place. It was like another kind of ark where He preserved a remnant in order to raise a new generation of people.

V: I agree with you, Ted.

Remember, class, that the fact of God's absolute sovereignty means that Satan does not have you in a hold that cannot be broken. Our belief should not be limited to the "how" of God's deliverance. We should just believe that God can and that He will if we are willing to obey Him totally. The timing and how of deliverance, however, must fit within His providential purpose for all.

Homer: This scripture comes to mind: "He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it."² His work is far bigger than what we can imagine. If we just hold on to that scripture in front of us, then we can go through life's problems.

V: Look at how God is so totally sovereign over this situation. Satan, or rather Pharaoh, is nothing more than a tool for God to use in accomplishing something for the benefit of His people. God's chosen way not only redeems His people, but it gives us the faith in God for living within His will. That great faith in God would not have been accomplished if Pharaoh had not resisted.

Success handed to us on a silver platter creates pride and presumption. That describes us now. However, that silver platter is about to disappear, and we will be returning to enslavement like our forefathers in Egypt. America's Christians are of the mind that silver-platter success is evidence of the most

² Philippians 1:6.

holy kind of people that ever lived because no problems befall the holy person. That is what we are taught today. But what kind of backbone would that person have when the time does come to fight the war? Where is the character? Where is the integrity? Where is the backbone? Where is the stamina? Where is the perseverance? Where is the willingness to deny yourself, and take up your cross? It will not be there. The first little wind of trouble could cause us to collapse like limp rags.

MORE PLAGUES

Plague of Hail

In the plague of hail, there is a warning that it will come down on anybody left in the field. Persons and animals caught out in the open will be hit. However, according to the Bible, protection was available. You could get under cover and not suffer the hail's destruction. But if you did not believe the Word of God and stayed out in the open defiantly, then the hail would clobber you.

Exodus 9:21 says: "and he regardeth not the word of the Lord and left his servants and his cattle in the field." Verse 20 says "he that feared the Word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses."

There is protection for those who are obedient to God's Word whether they are God's people or not. Divine benefit comes to any person who obeys God's Word. If a person defies Him, he will receive destruction.

In verse 26, it says that only in the land of Goshen where the Children of Israel were, was there no hail. God did not allow the hail to come down on His people. He allowed the hail to come down on the Egyptians, but if the Egyptians listened to Him, they did not suffer. Their crops suffered of course, but their animals and people did not suffer if they listened to Him and believed His Word.

There was then a blessing for the Children of Israel in two ways: (1) God did not allow any hail to fall on them so even their crops stayed healthy, and (2) it proved their God by blessing the Egyptians who feared God's Word and cursed those who disregarded God's Word.

Joe: It says bring in your livestock. I thought all their livestock died from the boils.

V: I am thinking that not all the Egyptian cattle died but that all those that died were Egyptian. Also the Egyptians could have replenished their livestock through confiscation from the Hebrews and purchases from abroad.

However, I can accept the universal kind of "all" without accepting an error in the Bible. The Bible is inerrant, and either way we interpret "all" has no effect on its inerrancy. What it does show is that if there is error, it is in the way we harmonize a seeming contradiction.

Beth: The Lord always blesses the obedient even if they are not Christians.

V: Yes. Blessings avail in respect of action. Never forget that God is not a respecter of persons.

Jill: In verse 20 it says, "He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh. . . ." Are the servants Jews?

V: No. Those are Egyptian people.

Jill: So there were some believers among the Egyptians?

V: Yes. Because future laws deal with the non-Hebrew people that are adopted by God, it is commonly thought that some Egyptians left Egypt with Israel.

Jill: So, the salvation of Egyptians also ties in with God's purpose in His putting up with Pharaoh's extended resistance.

V: Remember the doctrine of election that we studied in the Romans class. God

elected the minority as the gateway into His plan of salvation for the majority. The specificity and precision of God's way makes for simplicity and clarity of understanding.

Jill: The Egyptians did not fear the Lord, but they feared the Word of the Lord.

V: Yes. The Gospel is the Word of the Lord. When we hear and fear the Word of the Lord, we then turn to the Lord Himself in fear of Him. But it always starts with the Word of the Lord. The believing Egyptians, at this point in the plagues, are just one step behind us. They are acting on the Word of the Lord but not turning to Him.

Jill: That helps us when we go out to proclaim the Gospel. All we have to do is proclaim the Word of the Lord. We are not charged with their response.

V: Yes, good point, Jill.

There were some significant changes in the implementation of this hail plague. God instructs Moses to request again that Pharaoh let the people go. Then he was also to tell him that God was sending the plagues against Pharaoh in order to show him and the world God's unmatched power for the purpose of God's Name being known throughout the world. God then indicted Pharaoh for exalting himself against God's people.

The implementer of this plague is Moses, and it is he who lifts up his staff of authority. It is very interesting that Moses is the speaker and the bearer of God's rod of authority. Moses has taken another step in his ministerial growth.

Pharaoh promises to let the people go if Moses will stop the hail. Moses replied that he would stop the hail by raising his rod towards heaven when he exits the city. Moses also clearly states that Pharaoh and his servants would not fear the Lord. Again, Pharaoh reneged on his promise.

Plague of Locusts

The plague of locusts is described in Exodus 10:1-20. Moses is the implementer of not only the hail but also the locusts and then of the darkness.

It is significant to me that the offers of compromise from this point on are more easily rejected by Moses. They are only variations of the first offers of leaving something behind. I believe that Moses' powers of discernment have grown by his handling of the earlier temptations. Again, I can see great spiritual growth in Moses as God's minister and a corresponding increase in his being used by God as His representative.

Is there something about the locusts that strikes you as strange?

Bob: The locusts had to fly over Goshen because Goshen's east of where Pharaoh is; it went over them to get to the Egyptians.

V: Yes, and none stopped in Goshen.

Ted: Pharaoh's officials had hardened their hearts earlier, but now they are supportive.

V: Yes, okay, now, in verse 7, "Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? Let the men go!" They believed that God would make good on His threat. They were afraid for the destruction that was sure to come if Pharaoh did not yield. You know how there was grumbling and a discontentment with the people of Israel against Moses. The grumbling was now being done by the people of Egypt. They are wising up, but Pharaoh is stubbornly continuing the fight.

The Egyptian princes recommended that Pharaoh let the men go, and Pharaoh followed their advice. So, they too were trying to retain their slaves by an offer to appease God.

What about verse 16? Does that strike you as being a little strange?

Sybil: Pharaoh confessed that he had sinned against God. He also implied that he has received forgiveness before.

V: If you hate that which you used to love, then your repentance means that your behavior changes even if you are not going to be caught for it. False repentance is where your behavior changes only to prevent discovery. Sorrow in false repentance originates in the penalty of discovery. Sorrow in true repentance originates from the sinful act itself whether or not you are caught.

I think that in Pharaoh, there is a hunger in the spirit that is not matching the hunger in the soul. His hunger in his soul was overriding the hunger in his spirit. When you get caught for acting on the hunger in the soul, then sorrow that is expressed switches, and you say, "Oh, I should have followed my heart (spirit), not my soul (flesh)."

Typically, there is the penalty that comes with bad behavior once it is discovered. Certainly, accompanying it will be sorrow with all the weeping and brokenness. However, the typical Christian will continue with the sin as long as he remains undiscovered unless there is true repentance.

When you truly repent, there is the refusal to continue in the sin regardless of whether or not you are subject to discovery. False repentance depends on the likelihood of being discovered because you are following the lust of your flesh. True repentance means that you have changed your mind and are lining up your behavior with your spirit.

Bob: Pharaoh warns them, "Take heed for evil is in your mind or before your face." What is that evil?

V: Pharaoh is saying that once the Hebrews get out away, they plan to take off and run for it just like I would do. To Pharaoh, the Hebrews had evil intentions, and he planned to stop those evil intentions by holding their women. Evil was being defined by

Pharaoh as anything that conflicted with his wishes.

Moses is now the speaker and the implementer. He is bearing the rod of God's authority.

Darkness

Moses implemented this plague without warning. After three days of darkness, Pharaoh offered to let the people go, but without their herds.

During the darkness, the light from the lamps of Egypt were overwhelmed by its thickness. The Egyptians could not get out of bed. They just stayed put in the darkness. But in the homes of the Israelites, light overcame the darkness, and everything went on as usual.

This reversal of natural law is strange. Why don't the candles work in Egypt? What is wrong? What is the contrast? What does it mean?

Class, you are the light in a world of darkness. The people have no hope unless you bring light to them. Their false hope lies in what they can see. Thus they continue to labor under the deception of materialism and hedonism; they are forever in the darkness. Their light does not work. They can go to science books, get college degrees, and gather great wealth and power, but still they have no light. Jesus brought light into the world, but men chose darkness. The chosen darkness only gets thicker because natural light does not dispel spiritual darkness.

We now come to the Passover. But first, let's look at the spiritual lessons.

SPIRITUAL LESSONS FROM THE PLAGUES

In the plague of /, there were no second chances given. The plague hit without warning. Warnings were basically chances to

repent before the penalties hit. God's grace was such that there were not two plagues without warnings in a row.

In the plague of gnats, the magicians acknowledged God. Even though they were practicing witchcraft, they had enough sense to recognize a much higher supernatural power.

The Plagues, especially the animal plague, proved that God is the absolute Lord of creation.

For the plagues in which Aaron was the mouthpiece, the Israelites were not separated from the plague. Please notice that when God uses His second choice, the people lose some protection by God from the plague.

Lesser goods are derived whenever God's chosen ministers reject their assignment. Even though His second choice is used, and good comes from it, that good is less than what it could have been. It is not just Moses that loses something, but the people lose something too.

In the plague of hail, even the unsaved people who obeyed God benefited. The lesson for us is that if you love them get them inside.

The Israelites, when they hear that God is going to rain this hail down on the people, and all people and animals left outside are going to get bashed by the hail, then they pleaded with their Egyptian friends to heed the warning. Of course, many friendships between the Israelites and the Egyptians had developed over time. Those friendships would cause the Israelites to warn their friends because they cared for them. Surely, they would go to their Egyptian friends and tell them that God had warned of the coming hail and that they must get themselves and their animals under cover.

There would be urgency if there were any love. Your immediate goal would be to get

them inside. If you had to shake them, you would get them to go inside.

Ted: There is also the watchman principle.

V: Yes, if we watchmen love people, then we will seek their good. If we love only ourselves and not the people, we will use them for our good, or just indulge ourselves and forget about them. Without the watchmen, there would be no benefit of warning that would accrue to the people. In the midst of the plague, the Egyptians would interpret the lack of concern and warnings by their Hebrew "friends" as inexcusable.

During Egypt's darkness, there was light available, but it was available only for God's people. Sorcerers can bring plagues, but they cannot remove them.

There is a correlation between the darkness plague and the darkness during Jesus' crucifixion. God's Truth provides light in the midst of darkness. Jesus is that Light, and after His death there is a new life. After the death plague in Egypt, a nation is born.

The Passover Plague

In the Passover plague, God will make the separation, and He will also use man in the implementation. Thus, shielding from this plague is a joint effort of a God-and-man team. Shielding from death is achieved by being in yoke with God.

God worked favor in the hearts of Egypt's citizenry for the Hebrews. The Hebrews were given much wealth by the Egyptians. God was preparing the Hebrews for the journey by supplying them with the things that they would need but could not obtain for themselves.

Exodus 12:8 says: "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it." What are the bitter herbs? What do

they represent? Why would God make them eat the bitter herbs?

The bitterness that the Hebrews have endured in Egypt all this time is symbolized as a part of the redemption meal. They are coming out of that bitterness, but they are not going into a bed of roses. Bitterness is an essential part of the Christian life of sacrifice and suffering. The question is for which master will you suffer the bitterness?

Betty: Bitter herbs create pain in the stomach. God's answer is not always happy and fun; it is sometimes painful.

V: Yes. In the book of Revelation, John was told to eat the small book that was taken from the angel's hand. The little book represents the Gospel, and eating it represents salvation. It was sweet in the mouth to eat, but it turned bitter in the stomach. The lesson is that Salvation is sweet in its beginning, but the walk between justification and glorification gets really tough and bitter. Many of us want to give up on that walk because of the bitter feeling in the stomach.

When we start comparing the book of Exodus to the doctrine of salvation, we deal with both the release from bondage and the walk towards the Promised Land. During the plagues, we are still at the point of escaping bondage, i.e. justification. The bitter herbs are pointing back to the bitterness of bondage and also forward toward the coming travails of sanctification. The parallel of Exodus with salvation is a significant part of our understanding of Exodus. If we do not get that, then this study becomes just another history lesson.

Why did God tell them to have their shoes on and to eat in haste?

Sybil: Readiness is required of God's people.

V: And why eat it with haste?

Carl: If they all sat down and ate leisurely, how long would it have taken to get them up and moving?

V: Okay, their loins were girded, their shoes were on, and their staffs were in hand. I get the feeling that they are standing up and eating.

Considering the doctrine of salvation, you want to get justification right now. Do not delay, but be ready and ever vigilant to get it as soon as it becomes available.

Basically, in the doctrine of salvation, when you are presenting the gospel, you are at the Passover. You want the person to grab the Gospel and eat it before the angel of death comes. What if the person did not have the Passover eaten when the death angel comes? You are aware of that potential problem. So, you want to get on with it without delay. Once we know what we are supposed to do, let's do it. Be ready.

Could God's calling the Hebrews out to begin their journey have been prior to morning? I think so. Since there are no parameters which govern God, they (and we) must be ready at all times. The Passover Meal sounds to me like it is a readiness issue of "hurry up and get the full protection." Do not lollygag around!

Jill: Your past is past.

V: Right. You are moving on.

Jill: It is also not a celebration.

V: That is right, it is not a celebration. It is obedient preparation.

Why does God tell Israel to sanctify their firstborn who survived the Passover (Exodus 13:2)?

Ted: God bought him. Thus God owns him and wants him to be set aside for His Own use.

V: Thus, the doctrine of sanctification applies right after the purchase. The doctrine

of salvation has the purchase and the dedication of sanctifying the person. Every Christian has been purchased by the blood of Christ and is to be sanctified for God's Own Personal use.

Exodus 13:3-8 speaks of the unleavened bread. Why is there such an emphasis on unleavened bread?

Mary: Leaven (yeast) is a symbol of evil that permeates society.

V: The emphasis is on purity. No leaven means no-entrance of the impurities or evils into the life.

Homer: Concerning the yeast, perhaps it was because it takes a long time for bread to rise. So if you had to stop on the way to let bread rise, you would never accomplish your trip.

V: That is a good point. This rule, then, would be for elimination of both evil and of a hindrance.

Jack: Leavening puffs up the bread and makes it more pleasant to eat.

V: Leaven would be just a fluff in that understanding. I don't know what leaven is.

Carl: You have not tasted unleavened bread, have you? It is awful.

Bob: It is yeast.

Wanda: Yeast is a fungus.

V: So does it create fluff-up?

Jill: Back when you could not go to the store and buy yeast, when a woman got married, she got some starter dough from her mother. She kept it for years, and she just kept adding to it because the leaven would live for years.

Henry: So it was a sacrifice to throw out that old leaven.

V: Then taste and sacrifice would be other issues concerning eliminating leaven.

In Exodus 13:17-22, we come to the first leg of the journey.

THE JOURNEY FROM EGYPT

Exodus

13:17 . . . God led them not [through] the way of the land of the Philistines, although that [was] near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt:

Why would God think that the Hebrews would not persevere through the Philistine resistance?

Ted: They had just come out of slavery; they were not prepared for war.

V: Good. I liken this to newly saved Christians who have just obtained justification. Spiritual warfare is tough. So, you teachers of the newly saved should guide the new converts through the treacherous paths by avoiding their having to fight big wars early in their lives. You should guide them into a longer but safer route. You can talk about warfare, and you can simplify warfare, but they should not have to go through it while they are yet babes in Christ.

God said that if the Hebrews saw the wars awaiting them, they would return to Egypt rather than fight the wars. They would run away from war and go back to Egypt. God's purpose was not to throw newly freed slaves into war.

Mary: Going through the sea was a form of baptism.

Ted: That baptism also destroyed Pharaoh's army and freed the Hebrews.

V: Once you have been redeemed which is signified through baptism, you must eventually do your warfare. God does the warfare of redemption, but after redemption, you do the warfare. Certainly, God helps you, but you do the fighting. The Hebrews must do their fighting, but God wants to grow them to

the point where they can do some heavy duty fighting. They are certainly not there immediately after baptism. They are still Egyptian slaves in their spirits and emotions.

Exodus

13:15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the first-born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.

13:16 And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.

Verse 16 speaks of a token on their hand and frontlets between their eyes. What do you think of that? Is there something visible there? Are you supposed to put something between your eyes and on your hand?

Carl: Is that the phylactery?

V: Apparently, this could be the first form of phylacteries which are to make them ever mindful of their being the firstlings to be redeemed from death. They belong to God, and they are to be ever mindful of it. The identification on their hands and between their eyes was a mark of ownership.

Beth: I am thinking that if you have the sign of the Lord on your hand, and your forehead there is no place for the sign of the beast.

V: That is right. So now the sign that God wants **you** to have, the sign of the Lord on your hand and between your eyes, is an understanding of your being owned. It is not a phylactery, not a decoration, not a penance, but a realization of who you are and who God is. It is a sign that you have been bought by Him.

In our course on the book of Revelation, I declared my position that the mark of the beast is being spiritually accepted in the present via thoughts and deeds. The physical mark comes later, but those with the spiritual marks of political correctness will be first in line to get the official mark.

God is saying that the firstborn who were redeemed must wear signs of His ownership between their eyes as frontlets or on their hands as a token. This differentiation is to teach us what redemption and being owned is all about. Thoughts and actions are what God is pointing to. The persons owned by God must think and act like slaves of God. It is not the inert visible sign that makes the difference; it is the thoughts and actions. The *kenosis* says, "Let this mind be in you."

PLAGUES CHART

PLAGUE	SCRIPTURE	WARNING	IMPLEMENTED BY	MATCHED BY EGYPTIANS	ISRAEL SEPARATED
Blood	7:14-25	No	Aaron	Yes	No
Frogs	8:1-15	Yes	Aaron	Yes	No
Lice/Gnats	8:16-19	No	Aaron	No	No
Flies	8:20-32	Yes	God	No	Yes
Animals	9:1-7	Yes	God	No	Yes
Boils	9:8-12	No	Moses & Aaron	No	Yes
Hail	9:13-33	Yes	Moses	No	Yes
Locusts	10:1-20	Yes	Moses	No	Yes
Darkness	10:21-29	No	Moses	No	Yes
Death of Firstborn	11:1-9	Yes, to Israel only	God	No	Yes, only if obedient

Chart 6.1

Chapter Questions

1. What is the fourth compromise?
2. What does it mean to be sold out to God?
3. What is the fifth compromise that Pharaoh offers?
4. What does the three days of darkness for the Egyptians but light for the Israelites mean?
5. What are the bitter herbs or what do they represent in Exodus 12:8 where it says, “And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it.”

Chapter 7

MURMURINGS

EXODUS 15: BITTER WATERS

The Hebrews have come through the redemptive experience of having the Red Sea parted for them to walk through on dry ground. After making it through to the other side of the sea, the sea closed back upon the Egyptians as they were giving chase.

On the other side of the sea, song and praises of victory began to be sung, and the Lord was being worshiped. Put yourselves in the Hebrews' shoes. What are we going to do now that we are out of Egypt? What is our destiny?

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, I want to view Exodus as the paradigm of salvation. What has happened in the Exodus to this point? What part of the paradigm of salvation has been demonstrated so far? I want to hear your thoughts as they come into your mind.

Bob: God, as their savior, has lifted Israel out of their bondage and sent them through the baptismal waters. He has set them free on the other side so that they are ready to start a new life.

V: Yes, that is a good summary of God's work. What is the work of God called so far in theological jargon?

Carl: Redemption.

V: Yes, redemption is the word that describes God's rescuing His people out of enslavement to someone or something when they are powerless to do it for themselves.

It was an impossibility for the Hebrews to come out of their enslavement by their own power or devices. Only God could redeem them by His divine power.

When you are powerless and recognize that you need God, only then can you be

redeemed by God. With Him, you can walk through the sea on dry ground. The Hebrews have seen the miraculous plagues, the parting of the sea, and the oppressor crushed. Everything is in place for the beginning of a new life for the Hebrews.

In your present salvation, the power of God has been brought to bear against your enemy, the devil, in order to redeem you out of bondage. He has enabled you to get on your own feet so that you can do a new something.

The plagues used by God to overpower Pharaoh and redeem Israel is called justification in the New Testament's doctrine of salvation. However, in the present reductionism, Christians have changed the word justification into the word salvation, but salvation also has two other parts—sanctification and glorification.

In our study of Exodus, we have arrived at the second part of the paradigm for salvation, i.e. sanctification. Sanctification is the part of life to be lived after crossing the Red Sea, i.e. after baptism. Christians have usually bunched all of justification, redemption, and sanctification under the word salvation and ascribed it to church attendance and avoiding the sins of commission.

Passing through the sea then would relate to baptism. The Hebrews have just come through the sea, and they have sung their praises. Now what? Is the rest of life to be spent sitting there on the sea shore singing praises?

Sybil: After justification is where we mess up.

V: That is right. There is a prevalent misunderstanding in the church today. The general perception is that salvation stops right

there on the sea shore to which you escaped. All you have to do is get to the other side of the sea, then there is the continuous celebration of singing, praising, and sitting. Sometimes, we add standing and praying to the mix. If sitting, praising, and singing is salvation, then what is sanctification? It has been reduced to going to church, putting your money in the plate, sitting, standing, praying, singing, and praising.

What does the congregation do in church? You sit, sing, and listen. You are passive during the whole time. Then you leave church, and go do your own thing

Jack: Salvation is when you accept God as your Savior, but these Hebrews have never been saved.

V: You are describing New Testament justification, Jack.

The Hebrews have been redeemed from slavery, adopted as God's nation, living a new life of freedom, and bound for the promised land. God is using the Exodus story to serve as a paradigm to foreshadow New Testament salvation. He is teaching all the world through this great historical paradigm all about the coming salvation, that you are describing, Jack. That coming salvation will be achieved by the Messiah, Jesus and His work on the cross.

Redemption of the Hebrews out of Egypt is the paradigm of the justification part of salvation; it is *not* salvation because salvation extends from justification all the way through glorification. Redemption is God at work rescuing His people by delivering them out of the clutches of the oppressor. That is the paradigm for justification. However, the faith in God sealed by circumcision that is required for Israel to participate in the promise of salvation has not been demonstrated by the Hebrews. Therefore, at this point of the Exodus story, the Hebrews are not justified in our New Testament understanding.

Jack: But what I have in my salvation is much more than what those Hebrews have.

V: You bet! However, I am trying to get you to see how God is teaching the *principles* of His future New Testament doctrine of salvation that you have. All the way back here in this Old Testament book of Exodus, He is teaching salvation under the future provisions of the New Testament by His dealings with Israel. The Exodus story, then, is a *paradigm* for salvation.

Do not be confused. By using the word paradigm, I am not saying in any way that the rescue of the Hebrews makes them Christians or makes them saved. I am saying that the rescue is a model; they have been saved from their enslavement, baptised into a new nation, and separated from the world so that God can use them in His Own special ways. That is the paradigm for salvation. Exodus is an Old Testament configuring of what the New Testament salvation would eventually be like.

Steve: Even though the Hebrews believed and feared God, we know that their history was much like our own where they were up and down in their walk of faith.

V: Yes. The walk after redemption is a serious issue, and it is an issue that needs some focus. We must start teaching the walk of sanctification in the churches because a great misconception has arisen concerning it. A tendency toward self-centered laziness gives birth in man's evil heart to the idea that God is supposed to redeem you and then worry over you, indulge you, and give you everything you ask for. He is expected never to require you to break a sweat or to allow you to have any pain, suffering, or struggle to come your way. If any of those things should enter your life, it would be attributed either to God's neglect or to sin in your life.

When we have that pampered-Christian concept in our churches today, we are following the same example of the Hebrews after

they got through the Red Sea. It will be seen in their murmurings and their questioning of God in their struggles. They do not want to have to do any kind of work or any kind of battle. They refuse to countenance any kind of deprivation. They just want to float along somehow and get to paradise without even breaking a sweat. It is amazing to see that after God has done all that He has done, that the people begin to murmur because of some hardships that are in their way.

The churches are the same way. We are quick to criticise Moses and the Hebrews in our self-righteousness. Yet, we expect God to take care of us by preventing all suffering, struggles, and warfare. As long as God pampers us, we think that we are great Christians because God is supposed to take care of us, right? We should not have to encounter bitter waters or be hungry out in the wilderness or anything like that. We should not have to fight any battles. God fights all our battles. So we just sit around and tell Him through our prayers which battles to fight next.

We will never do our assigned tasks with their accompanying battles and sufferings under that understanding of sanctification. It is amazing to me that the church cannot see the parallels. We are quick to criticize the struggles, bumbings, and failures of the Hebrews, but when we do the same things, we fail to see them as our own failures.

Wanda: Everybody in my church thinks like that, and until I started these classes, I thought like that too.

Pete: The reason that we think like we are prima donnas is because we are taught like that.

V: Yes, I think that we have been brain washed to think like that. The first thought that comes to our heads when trouble strikes is that God is mad at us. We should also know that when we do something right, Satan brings trouble our way. So, we need to be

more discerning to see that trouble can come from sin or from righteous works. Trouble also comes like the rain, i.e. it rains on the unjust and the just.

Betty: The churches, for years, have worked under the idea that if we can get them to walk from the pew to the altar, they will be okay. We are teaching in attitude even though we may not be saying it specifically. The attitude that is discerned by the congregants is that the pastor wants to get them up front, baptized, attending, and tithing.

V: The idea follows from that perspective, then, that all is taken care of. There should be no more struggles, and we will get everything we want here on earth and a mansion in heaven afterwards.

We will now look at the first encounter with trouble after the Hebrews' redemption and baptism.

The First Trouble

Exodus

15:23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they [were] bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

15:24 And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

15:25 And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, [which] when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

15:26 And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I [am] the LORD that healeth thee.

15:27 And they came to Elim, where [were] twelve wells of water, and three-score and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

The Hebrews had just barely started their journey when they murmured against Moses about what they would drink. Imagine their standing before the bitter waters and looking at how refreshing and blue they were while knowing that they were undrinkable. The people began to murmur, “What shall we drink?”

Murmuring comes at every trial. It began when Pharaoh imposed additional work at Moses’ first request to let the people go. Murmuring is a sign of unbelief. God has already shown that He has power over all creation. Now, they are looking at their problem as if God did not exist. The Hebrews lost sight of God as the One who turned the water in Egypt into blood not long ago. Purifying this water would be a snap for Him. Why not ask Him to do that instead of murmuring?

This struggle exemplifies those that everyone of you go through. You struggle with your own problems and with those of your family. You struggle with the problems of the people that you are trying to minister to. Trust God and praise Him. Count on His providence. We are marching on, and we are going in to take the Promised Land.

Just remember that while you are praising the Lord and faithfully trusting in His power, you will be surrounded by people who will be murmuring, “But we don’t have anything to drink! We are going to die out here. This is bitter water, and it is undrinkable.” While you are thinking that your group is going to take the Promised Land, they will be murmuring that the water isn’t any good and that they can’t go any further. You have already experienced this kind of murmuring, especially if you have been in church leadership positions.

What does the bitter waters and the tree in them mean to you as you look at the paradigm of salvation? In your own salvation what are those bitter waters and the tree?

Jack: The tree is the cross of Christ.

V: You bet.

Jack: The tree’s healing of the waters should remind the Christian that the cross of Christ can take all bitterness out of our struggles and sufferings.

Pete: God led them there. The cross means that when we run into bitter times in life, we are to turn to the cross. The mainstay in our lives is the cross and Christ’s work on it.

V: Every one of you has bitter waters in front of you in your life of sanctification. Those waters can be devastatingly destructive to you if you drink them. You must purify them first by removing the bitterness. You do that by seeing them as the next step in your sanctification. If they are not sweetened by your faith in Jesus’ continuing work in you, they will destroy your spiritual life. Never think that the sanctification is without the bitter waters of pain, suffering, struggle, and loneliness. But those bitter waters can become sweet in the midst of your sufferings as soon as you add your cross to your own discipleship.

The only way to become a disciple of Jesus is by denying yourself, **taking up your cross**, and following Jesus.¹ By doing that in every struggle, the bitterness of that struggle will be sweetened for you.

Every one of you who have come to those bitter waters and have drunk them after sweetening them with your taking up the cross of Christ have glorified the Lord. You have also given thanks to the Lord because you have been honored to have been picked to go to those bitter waters and go through those travails.

Class, please get this lesson. Suffering travails in the Lord’s power brings honor to the Lord. That understanding of sanctifica-

¹ Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23.

tion will turn those bitter waters into sweet waters. Do not think that the cross of Christ turns your path into one of ease and smoothness. The cross of Jesus does not remove any travails. It removes the *bitterness* of them. You will come through those bitter waters to the other side by sweetening them and drinking them. After you have suffered the pain and struggle of drinking the cup, you will be refreshed and enabled to proceed in your life's journey by rejoicing and thanking God that you were led by Him personally to those bitter waters.

Henry: A lady came by my office last fall and told me that she was suffering because her mother had moved in with her. We prayed that day, and she came back the following Monday and told me that things had changed. She said that God was taking all the bitterness of the problem away from her by showing her how to love her mother in spite of having been neglected by her during childhood.² It all boils down to the fact that she has forgiven God for all the misery in her life. I think this experience illustrates this passage on bitterness.

Wanda: If we do not have the bitter, then we do not have to depend on God.

Betty: And so when the bitter comes, you turn and ask God for help.

V: That is not all that we are supposed to do, Betty. Certainly, we ask God for help to face the trial, but also we have to look at the trial as an opportunity to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Jesus. The bitter can be a blessing, or it can be a destructive curse.

Betty: It depends upon how close you are with God, how you depend on Him.

V: Again, Betty, it is more than that. It depends upon your *adding your cross* to the trial. If you come to the waters wanting to satisfy yourself, it is destructive, and the bitter waters will kill your spiritual life. If you come to the same waters with a willingness to follow Jesus by denying self and *bearing your cross through them*, then you will experience sweetness in the bitter trial. Sweetening the bitter waters with your cross is the *kenotic* approach to life. If you are filled with the Spirit, you can see your suffering as glorifying the Lord. Bitter water will then become sweet water that will lift you up and make you stronger. Plus it will bring honor and glory to the Lord.

The same trouble can come to two different people. Depending on their reactions, one person will be embittered, but the other will be refreshed. The embittered person will not see the trouble as something that the Lord has entrusted to his willingness to go forward in the *kenosis* and bring glory to the Lord. The other person not only will bring glory to Jesus, but he will also be refreshed by adding the *cross* of the *kenosis* to the trouble. The same trouble produces two different results from two different approaches.

We live in a world with trouble all around. After we come through baptism and start our walk of sanctification, God is going to fill our pathways with some bitter waters. He is going to teach us through repetition how to sweeten them. As we grow into maturity, He is going to take us to His harder paths of warfare.

If you remain a baby, He may keep you on the bitter waters path, or He may take you down a very easy path where the bitter waters are only those of natural life's trials, and all warfare is skirted. It just depends on how tiny and dependent a baby you are.

God does not want you to die needlessly. Therefore, He is going to tailor your path to just exactly what is needed to build you up

² Her father was brutal, mean, and abusive both physically and emotionally. He beat both of them, and her mother failed in her responsibilities of motherhood to protect her daughter.

into a strong warrior. Nothing that you cannot handle will be put in your path. God is not seeking your destruction via your trials and sufferings. **You** make them destructive.

Jack: What you are saying is that when we come to the bitter waters, we bear our cross through them and draw strength from that?

V: Yes, you bear your cross through them, but you also give thanks for God's trust in you for allowing you to follow in His footsteps. If the trouble is in the path where you are going forward in following the Lord, then they are made sweet by denying self, taking up your cross, and continuing to follow Jesus. However, if you are just sitting idle and being flooded with fear, that is demonic. But if you are on path and moving forward, you will face the fear of drinking the Lord's cup. Certainly, you will have agony, suffering, and perhaps martyrdom, but those bitter waters can be sweetened (not removed) by the cross so that you can be refreshed and advance through whatever you are facing.

Here is how it works. I come to a bitter waters or perhaps, a war: "Okay, Lord, this trouble proves that I am following you. Therefore, for the prize of Your high calling of me, I am going to drink this water or fight this war and perhaps die as my opportunity to glorify Your Name." In this way, I have sweetened the waters by entering the war with hope of glorifying the Lord. If I survive, I know that a more difficult trial is just over the hill. Am I making my point?

Joe: There is a new spirit abounding in the churches in which ease conquers fear. Fear or suffering are seen to indicate a false move or a wrong path. Ease indicates that we are super saints. Trying to teach the *kenosis* in this new environment is almost impossible.

V: Yes, this new spirit began working again soon after the sixteenth century Reformation. The doctrine of the *kenosis* disap-

peared during the Dark Ages and then reappeared in the Reformation. It did not survive the Magisterial Reformation in which the magistrate was counted on to smooth the Church's path. However, it did survive for a time in the Radical Reformation in which God, not the government, was the enabler for the individual saint to suffer through the tribulations. Now, however, the *kenosis* has been absent from Christianity for several centuries.

Henry: Bitter waters are our opportunity to practice the *kenosis*.

V: That is right on the mark, Henry. If the bitter waters are not interpreted correctly, then the *kenosis* (see the left side of Chart 7.1) will not be implemented, and the waters will stay bitter and become destructive to spiritual growth (the right side of Chart 7.1). Any destruction of the spiritual life means hardening of the carnal life. Growth is going to occur either to the spirit or to the flesh depending on whether the waters are sweetened or not.

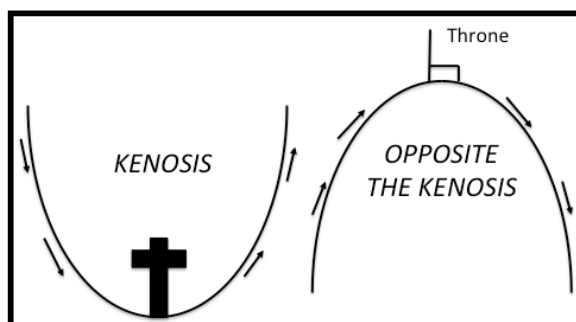


Chart 7.1

Henry: Moses grew in his own walk with the Lord. He demonstrated how to handle adversity. He turned the Hebrews from looking back to Egypt to looking forward to God's destiny for them.

V: I admire Moses. His accomplishment that you pointed out is a weakness in me. I am tempted to tell the murmurers to just go where they want to if they can't take it.

Henry: This trial allowed Moses to teach the Hebrews to rely on God.

Jill: I think that the Hebrews had to see an actual physical problem and its solution in order to learn.

V: That is right, Jill. Without visibility, no learning would have taken place for the Hebrews.

Henry: I like the part where it says that Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a specific tree to cast into the waters. Moses just obeyed, and obedience leads to deliverance.

V: Yes, there is no deliverance apart from our action. It works like power steering on a car. When you have an automobile without power steering, you turn the wheels with your own muscle power, but in power steering, there is power coming from the engine to supplement your muscle power. Even if your car's engine has 300 horsepower, the wheels will not turn until you turn the steering wheel. It may not take much effort on your part, but the wheels will not turn until you make a move. That is the way God operates in deliverance. If you sit idle and ask God to sweeten the bitter waters, with no faith in the form of active trust on your part, it will not happen. There needs to be with each of us something that moves our feet, that gets one more step and then another.

In the conquering of fear, you make a step enroute through the trouble. The issue is not to have the trouble removed, but to convert it into an opportunity to glorify the Lord. You glorify the Lord by denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Him through the trouble.

I was in downtown Atlanta where there was a motorcycle rally of an outlaw gang of motorcyclists. They had all gathered in an inner-city park. The Fishers of Men group went into the park to hand out tracts and witness. It was a scary place to be. They

were mean, and they were doing things that were not what normal people would do. Fear swept over me, and I thought that maybe I could not do this. I prayed; I asked God to take that fear away. He did not take that fear away. I had to decide whether I was going to do what I set out to do, or I was going to run. I decided to do what I set out to do. When I took my first step, the paralyzing fear was gone. I did not know whether or not I was going to survive or not, but I knew that I was going to go through whatever it took to do the task.

The same thing happened on a beach in Hawaii where I was with Arthur Blessitt who was carrying the cross. I was going from person to person; they were on the beach sunbathing, and I stopped at each sunbather and handed a tract to each in order to break the ice. Then I would ask "The Big Question." I had approached about 20 to 30 people like that, one at a time. At one point I was kneeling down finishing up a witness to the person on the sand. When I finished and stood up to walk to the next person, a terrible fear flooded through me. It was so bad that I staggered as I was going to the next person. I asked God to take the fear away from me. He did not take it away. I had to decide that I would do what I came to do. When I made that next step, the fear left. Fear must be faced and conquered by taking the next step! If you insist that the waters turn sweet "before you move," they will remain bitter and destructive, and your next step will not be forward, but backward.

The cross part of discipleship's three requirements of self denial, cross bearing, and following Jesus is your opportunity to sacrifice. The cross will turn the bitter into the sweet, it will turn the impossible into the possible, and it will make you able to go further. Without the cross of your willing self sacrifice to sweeten the waters, you are going to be paralyzed. The bitter waters will kill your spiritual life and make you ineffective.

They will turn you into what is the “typical Christian” of today who thinks that the bitter waters indicate that you are on the wrong path.

It is a personal pilgrimage that you are on, and the Lord is leading you on that path. As long as you are following the Lord, there are going to be bitter waters in your path. If there are not any bitter waters in your path either you are on the wrong path, or you are a baby that cannot handle the cross of discipleship. There is ***no exception*** to this principle!

Again, we are looking at the pilgrimage of the Hebrew nation to exemplify a paradigm for our sanctification pilgrimage. This pilgrimage of salvation is not just a new-birth experience, and then just sitting on the safe side of the Red Sea and singing praises for the rest of your life. There are walking, thirst, bitter waters, fighting, hunger, and all manner of deprivations and difficulties to be faced.

Steve: Did you say that the bitter waters are tests from God? I thought that they were indicators that direct our paths to avoid them. I am not sure how I should view them. Is everything a test, or is God using them to turn us into a better way?

V: Yes, they are tests from God of our willingness to implement the *kenosis* via self-denial, cross-bearing followship. They are not to be sought for their own sake. We are to follow Jesus through the bitter waters. Don't forget, the first requirement of discipleship is self denial. The ever-present temptation for us is to turn onto the easy path. Every step along the way is a test. Every task that we face in our path is at a fork in the road. One way is easy; the other is hard (see those two ways in Chart 7.1). The typical Christian thinks that God does not want him to suffer. The temptation, then, is to pamper your flesh and choose an easier path by **avoiding** the bitter waters.

Staying on path is the test of your willingness to trust God through your sufferings. It is an honor for you to be trusted by God to go through the sacrifices for Him. It glorifies God for you to drink the cup in front of you in your bearing the cross. It also is His divine provision for refreshing you. Refreshing occurs by His redeeming you in the midst of struggle by using the struggle to provide the refreshment. However, He does not sweeten the waters apart from your willingness to add your cross to the struggle.

Do you want to deny yourself, or do you want to indulge yourself? Everyone of us is tempted to seek after a temporal throne that enhances us in the eyes of our fellowman. Which path are your advisers going to recommend? Which is your spouse going to desire? Most likely, it will not be the left side of chart 7.1 which is the spiritual walk. The carnal walk on the right side of chart 7.1 will be the mostly likely choice.

Please know that Jesus Christ never took a shortcut.³ He went the long, hard way, the way of the *kenosis* (bitter waters) which is the downward way, the way of self-denial.

Oscar: Drinking the bitter waters without their being sweetened by the cross is destructive to your spiritual life. When that happens, you will throw down your cross and indulge yourself. The price of discipleship is the opposite of indulgence. It is to deny yourself and pick up your cross and follow Jesus. That is how the bitter waters of the *kenosis* become sweet.

V: That is correct, Oscar.

Making the wrong choice fills my heart with pain. My greatest suffering comes when I know that I have disappointed Jesus. That wrong choice is drinking the bitter waters reluctantly without sweetening them. That

³ Please see the 3 temptations of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry (Matthew 4:1-10). All 3 were bitter waters.

bitterness is far worse than the pain that the struggles would have been. For me, the pain and suffering of bearing the cross through trouble cease after the struggle is past. But the bitterness of seeing the struggle as a curse remains to poison all the waters that remain before me.

EXODUS 16: MANNA

Okay, let us go now to the next murmuring.

Exodus

16:2 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:

16:3 And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, [and] when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

16:5 And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare [that] which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

16:6 And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:

16:7 And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what [are] we, that ye murmur against us?

16:8 And Moses said, [This shall be], when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what [are] we? your murmurings [are] not against us, but against the LORD.

What does the manna mean to you?

Ted: Well, to me, I liken it to the spiritual food that God gives us at our time of need. No matter how much nourishment was given to us yesterday, He has refreshing sustenance for today: "Give us this day, our daily bread." We cannot depend on the past however glorious it was.

V: Yesterday's sustenance was strengthening, uplifting, and life giving, but it must be replenished again each day.

What does the passage say about the connection between obedience and spiritual food?

Mary: They had to gather it each day. They could not gather enough for three days and then rest for two days. We must seek Him every day.

V: Class, please see that without obedience there is no food. Christianity without the obedience is a *Gnosticism*.⁴ Knowledge can be condemning. To know the truth and not do it is sin. Knowing much Bible doctrine without doing it is not spiritually building and making alive and healthy. It is condemning instead. It becomes worm ridden, filthy, and stinky, and it actually puts you under judgment.

There is a linkage here that God is making with obedience. He says, "I am going to prove you." God means to test their obedience. The people were told not to gather too much, but they failed the test by gathering too much.

God caused the excess that was gathered in disobedience to spoil. Conversely, He told them that on the day before the Sabbath, they were to gather twice as much and store it up. This excess, however, was kept fresh by God for consumption on the Sabbath.

⁴ *Gnosticism* is a mystical religion of knowledge in which knowledge is salvific because it alone advances one up the hierarchy of aeons.

The Hebrews began disobeying immediately by gathering too much on the regular days. After learning that God would spoil the excess, they failed to gather two days' worth on the day before the Sabbath. They went out on the Sabbath anyway, even though God told them not to gather on the Sabbath. They found no manna. God produced no manna on the Sabbath days.

Wanda: There will be circumstances in our lives when we will have to make choices. Perhaps, we will make the correct choices because we have studied Exodus.

V: That is true only when what you have studied is truly learned by having been obeyed. Only when you link God's Word together with obedience, you see, will knowledge never become worm ridden and stinking. You can rely on it; it becomes part of who you are. Only the Scriptures that have been obeyed actually become assimilated within you like the manna gathered under God's directions.

The difference between the bitter waters episode and the manna episode is the difference between attitude and obedience. We must perceive the bitter waters through the eyes of the *kenosis*. That is a perception in which our adoption of the cross of Christ to our own lives, with the attitude of gratitude, will sweeten our bitter waters. On the other hand, the episode of the manna is one of disobedience. Following God's specific commands to the letter ensures our survival.

Trust in God's providence without our obedience is incomplete. Take for example, God's saying that He will rain manna down for you. You may think that you are going to be filled without the necessity of doing anything other than sitting there and eating out of your catch basin. That is wrong thinking because *God's providence requires both faith and works*. The only thing that requires faith without works is the justification part of salvation because the work was

done by Jesus. Everything after that requires both faith and strict obedience. Salvation is by grace through faith, not by works, but it is unto good works. It is the gift of life that issues into good works, i.e. sanctification.

Carl: God tells them at one point to store up an extra supply.

V: Yes. God was explicit in His command. That tells me that we must examine His Words thoroughly and follow them to the letter in our sanctification process. A hit and a lick is not going to suffice. Human reasoning can get us into trouble when obeying God. It is logical that if we are commanded to store some extra on the day before the Sabbath, that we could store a little extra on other days if we were willing to expend the energy to do so. But no, God is teaching us to rely on His provisions in His way for our daily bread.

Betty: Their efforts, then, to supplement God's providence corrupts them.

V: That is right because it is disobedience. If we get to that point where we think that we have arrived by having stored up a treasure trove of great knowledge and no longer need go out and get the manna any more, then our lives are ruined and stinking.

CHAPTER 17: CHIDING

The next murmuring advances into chiding. As you can see, there is progression in the murmurings. In Exodus 15 there was murmuring against Moses about water. In Exodus 16 the murmuring was against God about food. In Exodus 17 it moves to the next level—chiding.

Exodus

17:2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?

17:3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore [is] this [that]

thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

17:4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

Instead of the people growing, you see, they are getting worse. Moses is growing, but the people are not. This is an irony for me.

Exodus

17:5 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

17:6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

17:7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

Striking the rock and its providing the water is another piece of the paradigm of salvation.

The rock symbolizes Christ, and from Him comes forth the water of life. But the water comes only after the rock is struck. The death of Christ is required for the water of salvation. Christ prayed in the Garden, “if there could be any other way, Lord, take this cup from me.” But we all know that the wages of sin is death . . . thus, either the sinner or the Rock must be struck.

Ted: Numbers 10:11 is where God told Moses to speak to the rock. Is this the same story?

V: No.

Pete: The Numbers story is where Moses lost his right to go into the land.

V: Right. In the Exodus story we have obedience. The first event of getting water from the rock is via striking the rock. From that point on there is to be no more striking the rock because that would mean multiple deaths. Christ died once for all. After that He gives for the asking.

See, these people do not even know they have strayed into self centeredness. We have strayed also, and we, like them, do not know that we have strayed. It is a shock for me to find out when I have strayed. I always have a sense of deep, emotional pain in my heart when I have found myself off path. Instead of waking up from a nightmare, it is almost like waking up *into* a nightmare. It just staggers me to think how vulnerable to self centeredness I am.

Pete: We, or should I say I, think that the world revolves around us.

V: I think the pain is proportional to how much you know and love Him. However, after discovering your sin, redemption is available because of His gracious mercy.

Self centeredness is very deceiving. Many of us discern God’s path using the wrong criteria, like ease and temporal rewards.

Wanda: It is like driving a car on a straight highway. If you should set the steering wheel without making ongoing adjustments, you will drift off the highway.

V: Yes, corrections in us are required even for the straight path. However, we are also required to read and obey signs ahead. A slow-down-curve-ahead sign means that we must make some greater than normal adjustments to stay on path and avoid a crash.

THE WAR WITH AMALEK

After seeing water come out of a rock, the Hebrews must fight a battle in the wilderness.

Amalek and his warriors came to fight with Israel for the purpose of stopping their advancement. Moses told Joshua to pick some men to fight Amalek. Moses was to go on top of the hill, and in verse 11 it says,

Exodus

17:11 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

17:12 But Moses' hands [were] heavy; and they took a stone, and put [it] under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

17:13 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

17:14 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this [for] a memorial in a book, and rehearse [it] in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

17:15 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi:

17:16 For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn [that] the LORD [will have] war with Amalek from generation to generation.

How does this passage relate to the paradigm of salvation?

Homer: We are not an island unto ourselves; we cannot depend only on ourselves, but we must depend on other people.

V: That is right. We must have other people that will do something that we do not know how to do or cannot do.

So, if Moses had just sat there as a spectator and looked out upon the battle, and Joshua had won the battle handily and Amalek was defeated, God would not have gotten the credit. By Moses's holding his arms up brought God's power into the battle. How it did I do not know, but it did. When God's power entered the situation, Joshua began to

win, but when Moses lowered his hands, then Amalek started to win. It went back and forth. It was clearly evident to the warriors, Moses, and the people that it was the power of God not just Joshua's war skills that made the determination of victory. What does that tell you about yourself as a warrior?

Homer: If I win the battle, it is really God Who won.

V: That is right. Now, how else does this event connect with the paradigm of salvation?

Betty: Intercessory prayers by others for you brings in the power of God.

V: Yes.

Mary: What this tells me is that there are many observers around me every day because I have let people know who I am whether it is at home, at church, at school, or wherever. What I am doing is evident to other people. They can see God's power in me, or they can see me trying to do things in my own power. Non-believers and believers alike surround us and see us.

V: Now move your focus by placing yourself right there in the battle.

When we come to the paradigm of salvation, we must see that we will encounter hunger, thirst, and bitter waters. But we are also entering life and death warfare. We are going to be subject to actual death just like the Hebrews were. Only the learning and growing in discipleship equips you in advance for those battles. Equipped or not, you are warriors. If you are not in a battle, then you are about to be in one, or you just came out of one, and you are enroute to the next one. But you are going to be in battles, one after another.

Pete: The Hebrews were not warriors, but they were having to fight for their lives.

V: Just as Joshua picked his people for the fight, Jesus has picked you for the fight. Every one of you who are in this course are

being prepared to fight the Lord's battles. Everything that we have studied in Exodus is a paradigm for the doctrine of salvation.

Salvation does not stop at justification. Justification not only seals the deal, but it also commences the journey of salvation. The walk on salvation's journey begins after justification, and then it goes through bitter waters. It is going to involve great hunger and desperate thirst, and it is also going to contain spiritual warfare. We can die spiritually or physically at any of these places. Surely you can sweeten the bitter-waters struggles that you are in with your cross by seeing your glorification with the eyes of faith across the chasm of death. This vision will turn your sufferings into refreshing sweetness.

Have you ever wept from the pain and sacrifice while enjoying an intimate touch and nod from the Master? That is when you can give thanks to the Lord for the privilege of that experience. That sweet embrace from the Lord cannot be matched by anything in this world. It produces the sweetest water there is.

The next thing is the hunger. Certainly, you need to be nourished and strengthened in order to walk, run, work, and care for others. The Hebrew nation included the weak, young, and old people. The nation did not just take off and run at the speed of the warriors. They all moved together, and the old and young were brought along with the invalids. Every body had to do what they could to help in some way in a huge shared effort.

Hunger is assuaged by obedience. Jesus said that His meat was to do the will of the Lord.⁵ Therefore, our doing the will of the Lord will resupply our energy too.

Your strength and maturity are coupled to obedience. Only through obedience will you move into the next cycle of trouble. In it, you will need to be refreshed with the living

water, the Spirit of God giving you hope, giving you energy, giving you power, giving you knowledge and opening up, and giving you vistas beyond the visible. Then you will need bread to eat which you will again obtain via strict obedience. You come, after all of that, into the valley of the shadow of death, e.g. war, and some of you are going to die in the battle.

War is not a game in which you can fight to a tie, call time out, and then re-enter to fight until the clock runs out. People die in warfare. There is great penalty for your losing. Not only yourself but also everybody you are protecting are going to die. You are the strong man of the house. If the enemy knocks you off, he then will take over your house to rape, pillage, and savage your loved ones. You are not going to be there to protect them if you do not harvest the manna with unswerving obedience. You are not going to be there to protect your loved ones if you are not refreshed with the living waters. You certainly are not going to be there if you go into battle and get knocked off with the first volley of fiery darts. So, salvation is a maturing, growing process of responsibility in which there is more at stake than just yourself.

Administration Advice

When Jethro advised Moses to adopt different methods for administering justice, Moses' reaction revealed his nature. What was it?

1. It indicated a lack of understanding.

Moses was growing into a strong leader, but he missed the boat right here. Please note that this is the same boat that you are likely to miss too if you are extremely successful in your ministry. Superstar status tends to eliminate shared ministry.

Shared ministry is how you grow others into leadership roles instead of just yourself.

⁵ John 4:34.

Moses missed that, and many pastors today are missing it too. Superstar pastors do it all. I mean they work like dogs, and they do it all. They do it so well that the applause of the congregation ringing in their ears becomes addictive. Ironically, they are applauded for dis-serving the applauders. Instead of applause, you should hear the same words that Jethro said, “You are doing it wrong.”

2. Moses had pride before God.

This is the second of two very negative statements on Moses. These were two areas in which Moses needed to change. We also have areas in which we need to change.

The next four things are good things about Moses.

3. A willingness to accept advice.

4. A confidence in delegating authority.
5. A confidence in people.
6. A confidence in laws.

What Moses administered were the Laws of God. He had something to work with that was not from his subjective understandings or subjective nature or desires. That something was the Laws of God which were objective and permanent.

There was room for improvement even though Moses had grown and become a great leader. The same thing goes for us. No matter where we are in our pilgrimages, there is immeasurable room for improvement, and we are usually blind to those areas.

Chapter Questions

1. How are the bitter waters that we all encounter made sweet?
2. How is our hunger to be handled?
3. Is spiritual warfare optional? Explain the danger?
4. When Jethro advised Moses to adopt different methods for administering justice, Moses’ reaction reveals his nature. What things were revealed?

Chapter 8

THE MOSAIC COVENANT

EXODUS 19

INTRODUCTION OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT

The Mosaic Covenant is set forth very clearly by God. This covenant is called the Old Covenant (the Law for short) by those of us who are in the New Covenant.

Exodus

19:4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and [how] I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

19:5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine:

19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Moses, then, took those words from God to the Children of Israel and put them before the elders.

Exodus

19:8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

After all was said and done, the people were given a choice to accept or reject God's offer. The Hebrew people answered together that they would do everything spoken by God. When Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD, the covenant was agreed upon. All that remained was the sealing of the covenant with blood, and that was taken care of in short order.

I frequently encounter people who are trying to re-establish the Old Covenant in our

day as the basis of salvation in very much the same terms as we have here in Exodus 19. We need to learn the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

The Old Covenant is a paradigm of salvation based on works. Obeying the Words of God are the works that must be completed in their entirety.

Jesus is the only One who has completed the Old Covenant and by His works, has established the New Covenant. That New Covenant offers us the eternal life that is a part of the New Covenant as a wonderful *gift* to whomsoever will believe and receive it.

Now, if we try to earn eternal life by our own works, then we all have failed (Rom. 3:23) and will have to pay our own debt of death in hell (Rom. 6:23a). If we present the Gospel and couch it in Old Covenant terms, there is going to be the possibility that we will distort it in such a way that a person cannot get saved. That distinction must be made clear. "If, then" is a straight up and down condition. God says, "If you will obey me and keep my words, then I will make you My peculiar treasure, My Kingdom of priests and kings, and an holy nation." 1 Peter 2:9 says,

1 Peter

2:9 But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Peter is telling Christians that we have received the blessings that were promised in the Old Covenant. These blessings are repeated in Revelation.

Revelation

1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Jesus has given the promises of the Old Covenant to us as a free gift. Where every one of us has failed, Jesus alone has succeeded to fulfill the requirements of the Old Covenant. Because Jesus who owed no penalty of death died for our sins, then He will account that death to our credit if we but believe in Him.

The promises of blessings from the Old Covenant were earned by Jesus, not by us. Amazingly, He has transferred them to us so that we have all been blessed to receive the very things, the very words, even the titles that were stated in the Old Covenant.

Do you understand the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant?

Joe: The Children of Israel did not obey all of God's commands. They sinned, they did not take His word on faith, and they did not enter the Promised Land when they were supposed to. God sent His only begotten Son to complete the Old Covenant. By completing it and shedding His blood for a debt that He did not owe, the payment is applied to any who believe and receive under the wonderful New Covenant. The shedding of sacrificial blood by the Hebrews under the Old Covenant was only a temporary covering, not an eternal cleansing as it is now under the New Covenant.

Bob: The shedding of blood under the Old Covenant was something that had to be done over and over. It was an act that they had to perform to show their faith and obedience to God. Today we have accepted Christ who was the ultimate once-and-for-all sacrifice for our sins. We are saved (justified) by

grace through faith, not of works, but we are saved unto good works (sanctification).

V: Yes to both of you. In contrast to the repeated sacrifices under the Old Covenant, the New Covenant provides a perfect sacrifice to be done one time for all eternity.

Ted: The Hebrews failed to obey, but under the New Covenant, we still reap the Old Covenant's blessings (Ex. 19:5, 1 Pet. 2:4-9, Rev. 1:5-6).

V: Amen. The Old Covenant was fulfilled how?

Joe: Jesus accomplished it by living the perfect life and shedding His blood in perfect obedience to the Father.

V: So if Jesus did the "if," Jesus also gets the "then." How do we get the "then" of being called the "kingdom of priests and a holy nation"?

Carl: When we accept Christ.

V: So, when we are *in Him*, then we, too, receive those blessings?

Pete: In effect, we do because we are in Jesus. God looks upon the righteousness of Christ when He looks at us.

V: Right. Christ fulfilled the Old Covenant, and the blessings that come from that fulfilling come to Him. Those who are in Christ *inherit* those blessings as the body of Christ.

What is required for an inheritance?

Sybil: Becoming children of God.

V: That is true, but there is a prior requirement for inheritance. What is it?

Jill: God gives it to us.

V: That is true, but it is not getting to the necessary prerequisite.

Jack: When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we become adopted sons. We are adopted into that family.

V: That is true. We are adopted as sons. However, there is a prerequisite for becoming heirs? What is that essential event?

Beth: Death of the owner and a will.

V: Yes, the Testator has to die for the testament to be executed for the heirs' inheritance!

Oscar: Not only did He pay the price for our sins, but also He had to die in order to pass on to us, his heirs, all of His possessions.

V: That is right! We could only inherit the blessings upon His death. Without His death there would have been no inheritance. And so, if He had just completed the Old Covenant, you would still be lost.

Steve: The Holy Spirit is our guarantor of our inheritance.

V: Yes, that is good. At the death of Jesus the Spirit came to guarantee that you already have a piece of the inheritance. The Spirit marks us as a child of God. As such, you are an heir of Jesus. Jesus is the Testator who died and sealed His will and testament.

Jesus is the only one who could be King, Priest, and the Peculiar Nation because the ones it was promised to under the Old Covenant failed to do the "if" part. Someone had to come along to do the "if" part in order for the "then" part to become effective. But for the "then" part to be transferred to you from the One who earned it, there had to be the New Testament, the designation of you as heirs, and the death of the Testator.

Just because Jesus did a perfect work, you would still be on the outside looking in if you were not an heir. Becoming an heir is **still open** to anyone who will believe in Jesus. To become an heir of salvation requires nothing but a turning from your own self-sufficiency, confessing that you are a sinner, and asking for God's forgiveness in His Son Jesus.

Mary: The resurrection completed the ongoing requirement of the Old Covenant's demand for a High Priest.

V: You bet! The doctrine of the *Work of Christ* extends back through the Old Covenant all the way to the Abrahamic Covenant and forward into the New Covenant. Understanding the basis for the New Covenant requires an understanding of the Abrahamic and Old Covenants.

Because of our tendency to reduce our doctrine of salvation to justification, the doctrine of salvation loses much of its power, and the church therein loses its power. There is much that goes undone, and adventure is cut short. Well, it is the same with the doctrine of the work of Christ. We must back up to the prior covenants that are still in effect in order to comprehend the New Covenant.

There are literally thousands of books, papers, and scholarly research done on the work of Christ. Yet, it has never been explored to its total depth. There is much work yet to be done on studying the New Covenant in the context of the Old Covenant and its predecessor, the Abrahamic Covenant.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Genesis

12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

12:4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram [was] seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give

this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Genesis

13:14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

13:15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

13:16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then] shall thy seed also be numbered.

Look at the beginning of this Covenant and tell me what the “if” is.

Henry: If you will leave your country, your people, and your father. Abraham had to obey God first in order to receive God’s blessings.

V: God said, “If you will, then I will.” But what if Abraham had chosen not to obey, would God have been obligated to bless Abraham and his seed?

Henry: No.

V: So the Abrahamic Covenant was a condition. What was the condition?

Carl: If Abraham would leave. . . .

Mary: He had to leave and follow God to a land that was chosen by God.

V: What difference is that from the Old Covenant?

Steve: One was based on trust and the other was based on works.

V: Good insight Steve.

So now, see if you can pick up on what Steve is saying here and make the distinction because one is an earned blessing by works, and the other is a trust-oriented gift.

Hebrews 11:8

11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he

should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

11:9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as [in] a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

The Abrahamic Covenant was not an open-ended lifetime of obedience. It was one of simple choice to believe with a faith activated by stepping out in trust.

Galatians

3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Now I want you to see the difference between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants. God told Abraham to get up out of his country and go to a place that God was going to show him. Abraham believed God. Abraham’s response was a belief response in which belief is prime. Belief is faith or trust. It is standing not in your own strength to merit the blessing but rather in God’s strength to give you the blessing. Abraham believed God and stepped out on his journey. What Abraham did is what faith looks like.

The result of faith becomes a journey. The Abrahamic Covenant gives us a picture of the Christian’s journey. The journey had to begin with faith followed up by work as the result of the faith. The covenant of faith demonstrates one’s personal inability to achieve God’s eternal blessings without God’s providing them as a gift. That is nothing that you can brag about.

Please see the difference. The Old Covenant establishes a condition of open-ended obedience of whatever God should say. He did not tell them what they would be required to obey, but the people agreed to the proposition of total obedience. They lined up for the journey, but they failed to keep their end of the condition.

Jill: Abraham's act of obedience was completed, but the Hebrew's act was merely vocal.

V: Yes!

We need to be careful, however, not to discount the honest and full commitment to the Mosaic Covenant by the Hebrews. They said, "All that the Lord has said, we will do." That kind of commitment is real and open ended. Their commitment was real, but their achievement proved to be impossible for them.

Ted: Their commitment is to continuous obedience in action. Their faith was in themselves, in their being able to do whatever God said. Abraham's faith was, "I believe God enough to leave home, and then He will show me where to go."

V: That is a good distinction, Ted.

THE NEW COVENANT

The New Covenant is based on both the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants. The New Covenant builds upon both faith in the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant and also upon the complete obedience of the open ended Mosaic Covenant. Jesus is the only Man Who ever lived to have both been born under the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant and also to have lived in complete obedience of the Mosaic Covenant. Thus, Jesus succeeds as the only seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by which the promise may come through to whomsoever. Also Jesus is the only one to have earned the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant by completing all of its conditions.

Jesus then established a will and testament with God His Father that offers to provide all that He owns as an inheritance to whosoever will believe in Him. That will and testament is called the New Covenant.

The Gospel is God's announcement of the good news of the New Covenant that a share of all of Jesus' blessings as an inheritance to anyone who will believe in Him. The Gospel is couched in the promise given in the Abrahamic Covenant because the "if" is one of belief. But if we present the Gospel as a part of the Mosaic Covenant, then we can turn it into a Law presentation by making the "if" part a condition of total obedience. No one can be saved under the Law because we have all failed to completely obey.

Pete: Converting the Gospel into the Law is what the Galatians did when they were trying to add circumcision as a prerequisite for salvation. Abraham's belief was counted for righteousness, and Abraham was not circumcised. His faith was counted to him as righteousness.

V: That is a good observation, Pete. The Gospel is of salvation by faith (belief in God's promise) apart from works. However, for saving faith to be real, works must follow. If we wrongly take the works out of salvation altogether, then there arises a helpless, collapsing, do nothing, parasitical Christianity. We must keep good works of obedience in the doctrine of salvation, but we must keep them in the right spot, i.e. in the area of sanctification. If we get works in the wrong spot, i.e. in justification, then we have converted the Gospel into a Covenant of Law. There is no salvation in a works first justification.

Hebrews

11:6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

So there is no way you can even please God without faith first and then the works following. If your gateway into works is not faith, then your works cannot be through faith.

James

2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

2:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

The failure of the Mosaic Covenant is that it cannot pass on its blessings to anyone who has failed in keeping any of its conditions. You cannot get the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant apart from being in Christ and thereby inheriting those blessings. Becoming kings and priests through the Old Covenant is outside of our reach. The only way we can get them is by inheriting them. That inheritance comes through Christ's fulfilling the Old Covenant, receiving its blessing, making a testament, and then dying so that His heirs could receive the inheritance from the testament.

Hebrews

8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

8:9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

So, Hebrews describes the failure of the Old Covenant (The Mosaic Covenant, the Covenant of Law). The failure is not in the covenant; it is in the Hebrews' disobedience.

Whereas the Hebrews failed to obey God, Jesus did not fail. Jesus completed the whole covenant throughout His Life. Everyone else, including ourselves, failed in all parts of the Law, but Jesus did not fail. He went the distance even when every fiber of His being was in agony. He stayed with it; He went the whole route, all the way to the horrifying cross.

Jesus fulfilled the Law which has put under curse every other person that has ever been born. Through His obedience, Jesus received, then, all the promises of the Law. Through His death, He passed on all those promises from the Law to His heirs. His heirs are all who are born of His Gospel seed via faith in Jesus. Thus, we have become a peculiar nation. To be born of His seed is to be born again from faith's germination of the Gospel seed of Jesus and its taking root in our souls. God offers salvation to everyone who will believe in His only begotten Son (Jn. 3:16).

Since Jesus fulfilled the Law and imputed His righteousness to us, He is to be glorified by us who have received that righteousness. We do that by being His disciples: denying ourselves, taking up our crosses, and following Him (Mt. 16:24). In our discipleship, we begin to obey Jesus with the rest of our lives, living with the mind of Christ (Php. 2:5-11). When your body says, "I cannot run any more," you must keep on running. When you look death in the face, you must not turn and hide, but you will go on. When the pain and the loneliness hit you, you do not stop; you press on. You can bring honor and glory back to the One who did it all. You are going to build upon the foundation that He has laid. By doing so, we demonstrate how grateful we are for what He has done.

Certainly, our intentions will be like that of the Hebrews. They said, "all that the Lord has said, we will do." But like them, we too fail. However unlike them, our failure has been paid for, and our victory has already been won by the Lord Jesus Who has credited His victory to our accounts. Since He has already died, we have already inherited His eternal blessings.

The Hebrews of Exodus fully intended to obey God, but they fell flat on their faces. I think that we should not discount their intentions. They fully intended to do all that God

said, but they just never understood the depth of evil in man's carnal nature. We too have not fathomed how deeply evil we are in our old sin natures. The Hebrews were thinking that they were committing to something that they were able to do. We too think that we can do it, but we cannot. There is only One who can do it! He is the One who **has done it**. He is Jesus!

If you are going to keep the Law during your life of sanctification, you can only do so with Jesus' power. By submitting your will to Jesus, He is going to do it through you. That submission is when you bring honor to Him because giving up your own will is the hardest thing that you will ever have to do.

Now if it is Jesus Who is doing His ministry through you, guess how far He runs. Guess how long He runs. Guess how much He hurts. Guess how lonely He is. You do it right along with Jesus because you are in yoke with Him. You get to suffer the pain right along with Him, you see. You do not have to guess about the suffering because you will know it first hand.

Please notice the descriptions from the book of Hebrews.

The Testator	Hebrews 9:16
Blood of the Testament	Hebrews 9:20
The Law is a Shadow of Good Things to Come	Hebrews 10:1

Chart 8.1

Hebrews 7:19 says that the Law made nothing perfect. Jesus was already perfect before He completed the Law. The Law, however, does have the purpose of showing imperfection. Therefore by the Law, we can see that we have already failed and must have a Messiah, a Champion to do it for us.

If we refuse to acknowledge that we have sinned and come short of the glory of God and that we have earned the wages of sin, then we will stay lost.

Carnal Christians lose sight of our inability to obey the Law in our own power. In our carnality, we keep trying and keep failing, which is what has been happening to some of us. After years of beating our heads against the wall, we hopefully come to the conclusion that, "Hey, this is not going to work."

Galatians

3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

The hearing of faith is to hear and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God asks the Galatians how they got saved: by works of the Law or by the hearing of faith? The Galatians had been toying with the getting saved by the works of the Law, i.e. circumcision. Paul confronted them with the question: "How did you get saved, by circumcision or by hearing and believing?"

We must beware of couching an invitation for salvation in works. I have heard of sinners told to quit sinning if they want to get saved. No, asking for **obedience** as a condition rather than as a **result** of being saved is putting the Mosaic Covenant before the Abrahamic Covenant. When the candidate agrees to this conditional proposition to earn justification, then he has been led down the wrong path!

Repentance at the justification stage is not a change of behavior. It is a change of belief! However, after justification, come the works of sanctification which are changes of behavior. Repentance during one's life of sanctification is of necessity a change of actions. Repentance in the works stage of salvation is in works. Repentance in the belief stage of salvation is in belief.

We pervert the Gospel when we demand that a sinner quit sinning in order to be saved. Until we are born again, Jesus will not indwell us. Without His indwelling, we will not have His divine power. Divine power is necessary to break the bondage of sin. Therefore the power to turn from our wicked ways is a work of Jesus in us.

Since every person is enslaved to sin, as the Hebrews were enslaved to Egypt, a redeemer is necessary. That redeemer is God's Son. No one can redeem himself from sin's enslavement. Only God has enough power to do so. Thus, never demand a sinner to stop sinning in order to get saved because no one other than God has that much power. To do so is to set up a whole condition of the Law all over again. However, once the person is justified, then a demand to stop sinning is certainly in order because he now has the power to do it. All that he needs to contribute is his will.

If we do not return to the power of faith in God which results in works of sanctification, then we will continue in this dead kind of faith that is hindering the Christians' being the salt and light of the world. We need to make sure that our preaching content is rightly oriented within the great doctrine of salvation. Calling for lifestyle changes in order to be saved is salvation by the works of the Law.

Joe: When God proposed the Old Covenant, He wanted the Hebrews to agree?

V: Yes! He wanted the Hebrews to agree to His plan in order to show them and all the world that it was impossible to obey God in all that He says. It prepared the Hebrews for the Messiah. The Law did what it was supposed to do, i.e. it was to tutor all men into knowing that they cannot save themselves. We are without hope unless God redeems us from our predicament.

Sam: Later on, there were people living under the Law who accepted the fact that a Messiah was promised, and they were justified through their faith in God's promise.

V: Yes.

Joe: The Law is like a mirror. You can see yourself, but it cannot help you.

V: Yes.

Steve: Were any of these people before Christ saved?

V: No. The only way you can be saved is by the death of the Testator.

Steve: Everybody before Christ are still lost?

V: No, because they were still under Abraham's Covenant (Gal. 3:6-10). But even though they lived and died before Christ, their faith in God's promise of a Messiah kept them safe until the promise was fulfilled. Salvation had to be completed by the perfect life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Their belief in God's promise of the Messiah, which was manifested in their sacrifices under the Law, made them heirs with us under the New Covenant.

The Old Testament saints who believed God were given the righteousness of Jesus as a credit to their accounts, but their rescue from the paradise side of hades was not accomplished until the death of the Testator. So, they were in a safe holding position until the champion came, ran the race, completed the Law, then paid the penalty for all their sins. Then through the New Covenant, the inheritance came to them and to us after them.

Joe: Is that purgatory?

V: No, purgatory is a papal invention of the sixth century. It has nothing to do with the Old Testament saints. It deals with holding the partially saved New Testament Christians. Roman Catholics think that only saints of the Church's definition go directly to

heaven. All the rest of us go to purgatory until our measure of saving grace equals the amount of our sins. During this novel, so-called purgatory period, we reduce our sin debt by suffering and increase our measure of grace by receiving grace from the indulgences earned or purchased for our accounts by our loved ones still alive. When the accounts are balanced, then the Christian gets out of purgatory and finally goes to heaven. Purgatory follows a works-oriented salvation which is contrary to the Gospel and Galatians.

Galatians

3:3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

He is saying to them that salvation is by believing and that it cannot be improved upon by our carnal works.

Galatians

3:4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if [it be] yet in vain.

3:5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, [doeth he it] by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

So, you see, salvation is by faith alone. It is a trust. You must believe the words of God. If you believe the words of God, then that belief is the hearing of faith and not the works of the Law. There is a complete difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant in the way that you get started.

Galatians

3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed.

3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse:

Being under the curse is caused by seeking one's salvation by one's own efforts. That is the very thing that repentance is to be about. A member of the church could be working and persevering in doing his works of righteousness by obeying all biblical mandates but still be under the curse because no one except Jesus has perfectly obeyed the Law.

Galatians

3:10 . . . for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Please note that if you start your salvation via works, then you are cursed because there is no one who can run the full race. God said, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." That means that every one of us has fallen; there are no exceptions, not one of us. Anybody, then, that gets up off the ground and gets back in the blocks and starts running, no matter how good a Christian he may seem to be, is under the curse. That is why we are going to see a lot of really good people going into the lake of fire. It is going to be a terrible dawning of revelation at the Great White Throne Judgment because there are so many people that are depending upon their religion, their church attendance, their continued labor, their helping in society, and all their good works. When they parade those good works before the Lord, He is going to say, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

Mary: There are many who are deceived like that.

V: You are right. Satan is deceiving the people, and then he is keeping them busy and distracted from looking at the Law and how they have already failed. Just as I start to look at the Law, Satan says, "No, do not look at the Law; look at Jerry." I look back at Jerry, and I think, "Yeah, I am doing a lot better than

Jerry. I must be okay.” If he can get us to look at the imperfect as a measure for our own selves, then we will be easily able to justify our selves rather than ask Jesus for the free gift of justification.

Only when looking at yourself in the mirror of God’s Law can you see your real reflection. The first time I ever heard the Gospel message, I got saved because I heard the Gospel juxtaposed with the Law. I saw myself as someone who was going to hell because I was a Lawbreaker. In my desperation to prevent my spending eternity in hell, I recognized the Gospel message immediately. I grabbed hold of the gift of life that was offered by Jesus. After knowing one’s fate under the Law, only a blooming idiot, i.e. a fool, would not go to Jesus. Even today, it still shocks me when someone who is lost does not respond to the Gospel. It does not make good sense to refuse God’s gift of salvation.

Galatians

3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

“Continueth not” means that once you start, you must go the whole distance. You cannot be imperfect anywhere.

Galatians

3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, [it is] evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

Galatians 3:11 is a restatement of Romans 1:17 by which Luther was saved. “The just shall live by faith.”

Galatians

3:12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

In the Law is where Jesus was. He ran the whole race perfectly. If you are in Him, not only is His victory accounted to your credit,

but also you are expected to continue running the same race for the rest of your life.

Galatians

3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that hangeth on a tree:

3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

3:15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though [it be] but a man's covenant, yet [if it be] confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

So we have One Seed, only One. If Jesus had not completed the Law’s course, there would have been no other Champion for us. That One Seed had to be planted, and from it came forth a huge plant bearing much fruit.

Galatians

3:17 And this I say, [that] the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

3:18 For if the inheritance [be] of the law, [it is] no more of promise: but God gave [it] to Abraham by promise.

3:19 Wherefore then [serveth] the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; [and it was] ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

3:20 Now a mediator is not [a mediator] of one, but God is one.

3:21 [Is] the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

This passage speaks to the necessity of Christ’s death. By implication this verse is

saying that if Jesus was not required to die and if the Law could have saved us, then we should have been saved by the Law, and Jesus should not have had to die. If God could save you without the death of the Testator, and all you had to do was to perform the Law or do something else, then requiring the crucifixion of Jesus would be a cruel thing for a father to do to a beloved son.

Jack: It would have made Jesus a liar because He said, “No one comes to the Father but by Me.”

V: Jesus is the only way, period, final, no more discussion. Anyone who begins to start talking about alternative ways and that God could have chosen another way does not understand love, sacrifice, and the New Testament requirements of inheritance.

Jack: Jesus prayed, “God is there any other way?”

V: The argument by people who claim that God could have chosen another way because of His sovereignty falls because of that prayer by Jesus.

Steve: Jesus would not have been a beloved Son if there were another way.

V: Right, there was no other way!

Ted: Pharaoh hardened his own heart and God hardened Pharaoh’s heart. God gave choices to Pharaoh, and because of those choices, all of the other things happened. God’s giving of free will to us to make choices does not take away from His sovereignty and His order of things. Jesus had that choice, too, when He said that He would obey God.

V: Yes.

My thesis at the beginning was to compare the Old Covenant of Law as over against the New Covenant of Grace, and to see that there is an “if, then” in both covenants. If you couch your “if, then” of the Law in your Gospel presentation, there will be no salvation. But if you go too far on the issue of grace, then there is a loss of sanctification. Salvation is by grace through faith. Faith must be alive for salvation. Thus, the scope of salvation includes works as a **product** of justification in the ongoing sanctification. Justification does not include works as its **foundation**. There is a very precarious balance that you must maintain in your teaching, preaching, and witnessing.

Chapter Questions

1. Describe the “if” and the “then” of the Mosaic Covenant.
2. Describe the “if” and the “then” of the Abrahamic Covenant.
3. Describe the difference in fulfillment between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants.
4. When Jesus completed the Law, He gained all of its blessings. How did He pass on those blessings to us?

Chapter 9

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

THEOPHANY

Theophany means an appearance by the Lord or the manifestation of God in some visible way. In the last chapter we did not explore the theophany that occurred at the end of chapter 19, but we will now examine it and the one that is also in chapter 20. What type of theophany was involved when the Lord appeared on Mount Sinai?

Exodus

19:18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

19:19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

19:20 And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses [up] to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

Exodus

20:18 And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw [it], they removed, and stood afar off.

20:19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

It was obvious to the people who were observing the theophany that God was actually there. There was separation between the people and God, and the Hebrews wanted to expand that separation when they drew away in their fear. They had no doubt that God was manifesting Himself.

In Chapter 19, God spoke with a voice. God used the same smoke and fire manifestations as He did in leading the Hebrews out of

Egypt. However, in this theophany, He adds thunders, lightnings, quaking of the mountain, and a trumpet to His Voice.

The Covenant of Law has its source in God. Since the holiness of God means qualitative separation, then something sourced in God is accentuated by its *separation in kind*.

Smoke and fire identify the Mount Sinai theophany with the deliverance of the Hebrews out of Egypt. That identification gives tremendous authority to what is about to come. The hearts and minds of the people know without a doubt that what was coming would be something from God Himself. They knew of a certainty that it would be neither something generated by Moses nor something that they themselves conjured up. It would be coming directly from God, and His associated authority would be embedded in it.

Think of how clear the association is and how God is using theophanies to drive His authority home. As the exodus journey proceeds from this point into further tests, the possibility of doubts and excuses is absolutely eliminated. There would be no escape for anybody who disregards what has been delivered during the theophanies. God is establishing certainty and clarity to everybody there, even to the point that the mount quaked.

Ted: It reminds me of when Christ died: the darkness and earthquake.

Oscar: It reminds me of Isaiah's Theophany in which the Temple of God shakes. There was fear and shame in Isaiah when he saw God's theophany.

Carl: The people told Moses that they would rather hear from him than from God. It seems like not hearing from the source but rather from a mediator could lead to unbelief.

V: That is a good insight, Carl. I think it deserves some exploration. I would be interested to hear what the class's thoughts are on that.

Sam: I tend to agree that mediation is a factor through which doubt can enter. Accepting a third party's word instead of God's Word opens the door to error. I think that there is a possibility that the people could see the Law as sourced in Moses rather than God's exact Word to them through Moses.

Ted: I think that another problem is that when we no longer see smoke, fire, and demonstrations of great power and force we may no longer fear God's authority.

Carl: We may then begin substituting programs for God's Spirit.¹

Ted: The Hebrews said that they wanted to hear from Moses, not from God. I find myself to be just the opposite. I want to hear directly from God.

Carl: We have the Bible that is God's Word directly to man. We can read it for ourselves.

V: I think that all of you are correct.

¹ Dr. Vinson told them about how Carl's statement applied to him personally: "I was asked in my doctoral orals to trace the doctrine of the Holy Spirit throughout the history of the church. I took it from the book of Acts through the early church. Gifts of the Spirit and empowerment by the Spirit were covered. In the Middle Ages, I came to a point when my trail went cold, and I sat there and I wrestled with it and could not describe any more manifestations in the period. I picked up the thread in the Reformation's view of the Spirit-led man and spiritual warfare. It was easy for me to carry that same thesis into the present. I finally had to confess my inability to fill the gap within the Middle Ages. I feared failing my orals, but it turned out that I answered right. There is a gap in that period. During the Middle Ages, the Church replaced the Spirit, just like what Carl said. The Roman Catholic Church, as it progressed in its institutionalization of Christianity, enslaved the Christians. The Spirit no longer directed the people because the church had taken over."

Also I see a prevailing desire to hear somebody else tell us what God's Word says because we are lazy. This desire also leads us to move from church to church hunting for someone to tell us what we want to hear.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Let us try to interpret each of the commandments in our own words so that we understand them clearly. Okay, what is the first one?

The First Commandment

Thou shall have no other gods before me. Notice that the word gods is plural. What does the words "before me" mean?

Homer: I could see how additional gods could be rationalized as long as God was supreme.

Beth: I agree.

V: What does "No other gods" mean?

Sybil: God is the only God; there is no other god.

V: Okay, so is God saying that another god is something in our life that takes some control of the direction of our life?

Henry: Is that not saying that "no other gods" means nothing else in our life more important than He?

V: If the direction of your life is a value-based system, then those values can be anything. Nearly all of us baptize our pet values under our claim that God is most important.

Everybody has his own set of values. Those values form a hierarchy, and in every hierarchy there is a top and a bottom. Well, the top one is the most important thing in your life, and that determines the directions of your decisions. Our main problem occurs in the non-crisis situations that are normal to daily life. Somehow, we think that since our hierarchy has God on top, that our hierarchy has

God's approval, and we allow various values in our hierarchy to rule in our non-critical, day-to-day decisions. NO, NO, NO, God should rule in *EVERY* decision! If He does not, then we have another god.

Henry: Man's nature is that the top value may vary with what is happening in his life. God's control should not vary with the situations.

Jill: If you let the controller vary, then you have put another god there. It could be family, money, career, or anything.

V: Many things are put there that guide our lives in various situations.

Bob: All of these things will be taken care of if we put Him first in every situation.

V: Does this idea, about how the guiding principle in your life changes with the circumstances, speak to you?

Betty: Yes, I have used the guiding value of each category to make decisions on everything in that particular category.

V: So, the danger is that our will is surrendered to the guiding principle for each category, whatever it might be. When the will surrenders to a guiding principle, then God does not set the pattern for our life. Compartmentalization occurs then because God guides the religion part, and other things guide the other parts.

God is supposed to be in our mind when you wake up in the morning until the time we drop off to sleep at night. Anytime He is not enthroned in our mind, then there is a god there instead. Without God on the throne, we will wander off path. But with God establishing our paths and commanding our walks, we will go on a straight line because He alone knows where He wants us to go.

Pete: It is important to know that redemption is not necessarily physical. It could be from any kind of bondage.

V: Yes, we are bond slaves to whatever, or whoever, is guiding our decision-making.

Bob: The children of Israel are a good example because they followed God with the pillar of fire by night and the smoke by day until they got out of Egypt. When they reached the Promised Land, fear stopped their entering. They quit following God at that point.

V: Yes, we do that too, and when we do, it is a violation of the first commandment.

Bob: Instead of King Jesus, we take a political king. Instead of God directing us, worldly and political issues move us.

V: Anything that rules us is our extra god.

Pete: Christianity is moving off path today because the new catchword is tolerance. It is not accidental that our first commandment deals with idolatry.

V: Yes. It will also be the focal point at the end time.

The Second Commandment

Okay, let's turn our attention to the Second Commandment, i.e. we shall not make a graven image of any creature in heaven, on earth, or in the waters. How does it differ from the First Commandment?

Sybil: I think that the Second Commandment is strictly about physical things that you can see. The First Commandment could include physical images but not be limited to them.

V: This commandment has caused me to begin thinking about statues of all kinds, and I have wondered about messing up by having busts of important men.

Beth: We should not do anything to cause anybody to stumble. We have an image of an angel at our house because it is decorative. To someone else, however, it may be some-

thing else. The secular world today actually worships angels rather than God. If you have a statue of an angel in your house, and a secular person comes in and sees it while knowing that you are a Christian, then his perception could be very different than yours.

V: Yes, it could be assumed that worship of the statue is being affirmed.

We must identify and shed the idols in our lives. Those idols are not necessarily physical representations. The spiritual idol is a concept or value in your mind and heart. The physical idol is an object that stands over against you. I personally think that the First Commandment is presently the bigger problem of the two. However, the Second Commandment will be a terrible issue in the end-times tribulation when an image of the beast will be worshiped.

Please recall how Nebuchadnezzar had an image of himself to be worshiped. That image worship foreshadowed the end-times version.

The Third Commandment

Joe: “You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain” is the Third Commandment. I had not really looked at this commandment beyond cursing. Usually you think of people cursing and using God’s name that way, but it goes beyond that. It includes using God’s name lightly. The Holy Spirit’s or Christ’s Name would certainly be included also.

Ted: It is also like putting the name Christian on an action, thought, or attitude that does not live up to that name.

The Fourth Commandment

V: What does “Keep the Sabbath holy” mean?

Beth: It says you should not do things that you normally do. You should take that time for the Lord. You should not even talk in the manner you talk during the normal

week. It should be used in prayer, a time of really worshipping and being with God.

V: That is good, Beth. Holy means to be morally clean and set apart for God’s exclusive use. That would certainly mean then that you do not set it apart for self. You set the entire day apart for God. You keep yourself, your actions, and your property clean and completely set apart for God. That means then that your speech would be “holy.” Your actions would be “holy.” Everything that you do would be “holy.”

Henry: Is the Sabbath Saturday or Sunday?

V: Okay, what does Sabbath mean?

Homer: Seventh day.

Wanda: The day of rest.

V: Yes, for both!

Jack: The book of Hebrews talks about entering into His rest. It is like entering into the sheep pen for safety and security.

V: Yes, but the concepts of dedication and commitment must be included.

Now for the Christian to enter into the Lord’s Sabbath is to ***yield yourself to Him with no regard to the day***. To sanctify yourself to Christ means He becomes your Lord every minute of every day. When He becomes your Lord, He is your only value. He dominates your life and controls all other life values or principles.

Jill: The Lordship of Jesus fulfills the first three commandments.

The Fifth Commandment

The fifth commandment is to honor your parents. What does that mean?

Joe: Be holy, be pure in thought, and do not do anything to disgrace your mother and father.

Pat: Show respect to them.

V: Okay, there is the idea of respect and bringing honor to their name and not disgracing them.

Not only is this a requirement for social behavior outside the home but also it should be obeyed in how we relate to them person-to-person. Adult children can disagree with their parents, but we must still do it respectfully. It does not matter how old you are or what position you hold, you still have to do this commandment: honor your parents.

Joe: At the proper time, it means to obey them.

V: It sure does.

Steve: After you are an adult and out on your own, you do not necessarily have to obey them, but you still must respect them.

V: Yes, I think that until we have become in charge of our own lives, we must obey our parents.

Being in charge of our own lives means different things to different people. It is not an age-based thing, and it is not a smarts-based thing. It is when your responsibility and accountability changes from your parents' hands to God's Hands. It is hard to pinpoint when that occurs.

Homer: I think that this commandment includes any lifestyle that disgraces them even though you are not disrespecting them. They have raised you to be an honorable person, providing, of course, that they themselves lived holy lives.

Ted: In the Jewish mindset, when this was originally written, it is talking not just about your immediate parents but about your forefathers also. What He is saying here is to honor them by following the one true living God that they followed. This is saying, "Honor the God of Abraham," and that is honoring to your parents. We must teach our children that Jesus is Lord, and by doing so, we would be honoring our parents.

V: Very good, Ted. That idea speaks to why the traditions, festivals, and feasts were so important. It was through worship events that parents passed on understanding of what it means to have the God of Abraham as the God of the entire family.

Betty: I think that also we tend to read that verse in a child's state of mind. If we read it from our parent's state of mind, we take the responsibility on us that it is going to require us to act and behave a certain way so that our children will also walk in honor to the Lord.

V: Yes, there is responsibility on both sides of this thing—the children's and the parents'.

The Sixth Commandment

God says: "Thou shall not kill." Why would we put murder there instead of killing?

Beth: Ecclesiastes tells us there is a time to kill.

V: Okay. So, if God told the Hebrews to kill the lawbreakers and enemy warriors in contradiction to this commandment, it would lead to great confusion. There must be compatibility in the commandments of God. So, this commandment cannot mean merely not to kill.

I take this commandment to be about justice and freedom. Justice requires that some people be put to death. Freedom requires that wars be fought, and in war people are killed.

Killing cannot be for unjust reasons. Murder would certainly be unjust, but there may be other kinds of unjust killing. Jesus was killed unjustly.

The Seventh Commandment

Thou shall not commit adultery is the Seventh Commandment. What is adultery?

Sybil: I think that adultery is the breaking of the marriage covenant.

Pam: I think that it is sex outside of marriage. In the New Testament, divorce and re-marriage fall under this commandment.

Henry: Adultery begins in the mind and heart, and it becomes actualized in the act.

V: If you do not quench the fiery dart, then adultery has occurred even when the sex act has not occurred. Please understand that we cannot stop the thought from occurring because it is a fiery dart entering your mind from the outside, but it is imperative that we do not hold the thought. We are to quench those darts with the shield of faith.

I do not think that the legal definition of sex outside of marriage is the whole thing. I think that it includes improper relationships and harboring impure thoughts.

Betty: Yes, any time we give an intimate piece of ourselves that should be reserved for our spouse to somebody of the opposite sex, we are involved in adultery.

V: Adultery at the human level corresponds to which commandment on the spiritual level?

Beth: I am picking the First Commandment because it is putting yourself and your will above God.

V: I think that is a good reason for picking the First Commandment.

The Eighth Commandment

The eighth commandment is: "Thou shall not steal." What does stealing mean?

Wanda: I think it means taking something or someone unjustly. The same word was used when Joseph was kidnapped.

Pete: When I was in the military, we had to trust one another. Someone who would lie to you would also steal from you. Stealing is taking something or dealing falsely with another person. It does not necessarily have

to be something that is material, but trust and other things like that.

Mary: It would include stealing someone's reputation, ideas, or credit for something someone else did.

V: Could you live with this statement: That in every person-to-person Christian transaction, there must be a win-win result? Win-lose is stealing.

Jill: What if it is lose-win though—an actual sacrifice?

V: A sacrifice of lose-win is okay because it is required in both *agape* love and the *kenosis*. But if the other person negotiates a transaction in which he wins and you lose, what is it?

Jill: It is stealing.

Homer: Sacrifice is a win-win.

V: Yes, sacrifice is actually a win-win because your win comes in heaven.

In the secular business world, the bottom line measures success and good business. When you negotiate a transaction, the idea is to maximize your bottom line. That approach may drive the other guy in the transaction out of business. That, to me, is incompatible with holiness. It is stealing. I have to make sure that the person I am dealing with has a win too.

Sometimes the other business people make decisions that will bankrupt them, and my dealings with them cannot prevent it. But in my normal dealing with someone, I have to make it a win-win outcome. Say that I am selling my car, I should be happy with the price I get, and the buyer should be happy with the car's price. If I negotiate a deal where the buyer receives less value than the price he paid, then I have stolen.

Jack: When I was negotiating contracts for the Government, we were supposed to make sure that the contractor got a fair price.

We were to ensure, before we completed the deal, that he had enough to meet his overhead and a fair profit. It does not always work out that way, however, and people get hurt. But as a negotiator, fairness was my purpose.

V: That purpose should be in our dealings with each other and with the lost world, too. The lost world is going to do their best to put the screws to you. You must be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.

The Ninth Commandment

God says: "Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor." What does this mean?

Joe: Is this something like slander?

Sam: I think that it is more like lying.

Joe: Slander is lying.

V: False testimony against a neighbor is both lying and slander. Slandering falls under the larger concept of lying.

Traditionally, we have taken this commandment to mean the forbidding of lying. However, there is a bit of doubt in my mind about that understanding. For example, the woman in Jericho lied about the Hebrew spies, and she was counted as a godly heroine of the faith. If bearing false testimony against a neighbor means slandering rather than lying, then the apparent contradiction in the Jericho account would clear up in my mind.

The Tenth Commandment

Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's house, wife, manservant, maidservant, ox, ass, nor any thing that is your neighbor's. Is God listing specific objects, or is He giving examples in establishing a principle against coveting?

Steve: I think God is prohibiting our wanting something that does not belong to us.

V: Steve, that interpretation may be a little too broad. In business, we must want something that belongs to someone else before we will buy it.

Wanda: I think that is wishing you had it instead of the person who does have it.

Betty: Saying I wish I had what you have, not saying I wish I had one like yours.

V: Could it be an inordinate desire for something that would promote taking or stealing?

Pete: I think it is not being satisfied with what you have whether or not taking or stealing occurs.

Jack: I think that it is telling us to keep our eyes on God. Each one of our walks is different, each one of our needs is different, and God meets our needs as He sees fit in whatever circumstance we are. We do not need to be worried about "he has more than I have." We are supposed to stay focused on God without regard to what somebody else has.

Oscar: This sin could spin off into a lot of different directions—murder, stealing, adultery, self-pity, etc. Even though we may not normally do the things that can evolve out of coveting, it is the position of the heart that is in focus. A heart that is obsessing over a desire for anything is what I think it means.

Jack: It seems that obsessing over something that you do not have would separate you from God by becoming a cheap priority in life. If you are consumed with thinking about a desire, then you would not be able to be consumed with pleasing God.

Jill: The economic world revolves around teaching people to covet.

V: That is right, Jill! The secular ethic revolves around win-lose, not win-win.

Bob: There are four steps to stealing: you see it, you inquire about it, you desire it, and you take it. Coveting is in this process to sin.

Henry: Coveting is an evil desire to possess. A natural desire does not always rise to the level of coveting, but an evil desire does.

V: That is a good distinction, Henry. There are good desires and evil desires. Coveting is the evil desire. It is not confined to the win-lose category. It is any inordinate desire for something that is not yours. The class warfare that is being promoted today is splitting society via coveting. Our government is intentionally breaking this commandment.

Another Look at the Second Commandment

God is going to expound upon the Second Commandment. Given the fact of the theophanies and the fact of what we know is going to happen down the road, this commandment is going to become a major issue.

The Second Commandment says, "Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." Part of the commandment is neither to bow down to them nor serve them. So, I cannot help but wonder if making the image is okay if we do not bow down or serve it. This issue brings statues into question.

God equates worshiping images as hate for Him. Hate is a strong word. Bowing down to an image is considered as a demonstration of hate for God!

Furthermore concerning image worship, God declared that He will visit the iniquity on three or four generations of children of those fathers who hate Him. He also said that He would bless those who love Him. God made a clear distinction between love and hate in this commandment.

The New Testament says that love for God is not just lip service. You can even have lip service and goosebumps and tears and all surrounding emotions, and it is still not love unless it passes the obedience tests.

John

14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

14:24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

John

15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

15:14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Love of God is inextricably connected to obedience. Obedience is active, and the idea of obedience to God in John extends all the way back to the Mosaic Covenant in Exodus.

The breaking of this second commandment is exactly what we will see the Hebrews do enroute to the Promised Land. With this commandment ringing in their ears, the Hebrews are going to make the image and then bow down and worship it. That violation was deliberate.

We have a lot of passivity in our present Christianity. That is why the sin of omission has to be brought to the discussion.

The sin of omission is a hatred of God. Are you hearing what I am saying? If you do

not obey God even in the New Testament where you have been justified with the free gift from God, obedience is still the singular test of your love for Him. No love means no obedience, and no obedience means no love.

We do not bow, worship, and obey God because we are too busy with our own lives. We bask in the deliverance from an eternity in the lake of fire. We celebrate, sing, pray, attend church, and worship God, but the obedience issue is just considered an optional add-on.

We too have been brought out of Egypt, and we have created an idol as well, i.e. our top values. We covet, steal, and commit

adultery. We lie about not having any sins while we tell God that we love Him.

You have been brought out of sin, the baptismal waters have closed behind you, and you are not going back to Egypt. However, your idolatry means that you hate your redeemer. He will visit His wrath upon them that hate Him and upon their children. He will have mercy on those who love Him.

John says, "How do you know who loves Him?" Those who keep His commandments love Him. That love is a full and active love, not a sentimental love, not a goose-bump love, not a lip-service love, but an active love that is alive in obedience.

Chapter Questions

1. Define theophany.
2. What is the danger in a values-based system?
3. What is the difference between the First and Second Commandments?
4. When is the New Testament Sabbath?
5. What is the issue of the Ninth Commandment's prohibition against bearing false witness against our neighbor?

Chapter 10

GOD'S CASUISTIC LAWS

CHAPTER 21

I want to explain the difference between apodictic law and casuistic law to you because it is confusing. *Apo* is from, and *dictic* is a decree-like statement. The Ten Commandments are apodictic laws. They are established by decrees from God. An example is: "Thou shalt not steal." That is an apodictic law because God decreed it.

On the other hand, casuistic laws are the kinds that originate from, and are refinements of, apodictic laws. They involve judges and courts in the interpretation of the evidence of the case within the context of the law. You have heard of case law. Casuistic means "in this case." In one case you do one thing, but in another case you do something else.

Casuistic law involves a court or some kind of trial. The case usually involves two parties in disputation (usually an offender and the victim). Each of the parties presents its side of the case. If it is found that the violating party did other than what the law prescribed, then he receives the penalty prescribed by the particular law that was broken.

If the perpetrator and the victim are both dealing with the "if" part of a contract, then the court decides who must do the "if" and who must do the "then."

God established casuistic law during the Exodus. It has formed the basis of the American legal system because America was founded by Christians determined to retain their Judeo-Christian heritage of religious freedom **and justice**.

The Constitution, you see, is apodictic just like the Mosaic Law. If the Constitution is apodictic, then it forms the platform for all case laws. Case law is supposed to directly relate to the apodictic law. Christians devel-

oped our Declaration of Independence and Constitution for the purpose of establishing the nationhood of America. It follows then that until recently, America has been considered to be a Christian nation under God.

Christians seeking freedom of religion founded America. In Europe the version of Christianity was established by the government whether it was Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, or Anglicanism. Freedom of Religion was not available anywhere. Every citizen of a country had to worship in the way that the government of that nation dictated.

The founders of America were seeking the right to form a Protestant church without government interference. After several struggles with various colonies dabbling in establishing their own Christian denomination for everyone living in that state (the European model), the Constitution was amended to allow people of different denominations to live in other states. So the American Constitution was quickly amended to provide ***A more perfect union in which freedom of all Christian denominations to be practiced in every state was a right that was formally recognized in the first amendment.*** In anticipation of immigrants from non-Christian religions, the founders broadened the amendment to be ***Freedom of all Religions.*** From this foundation, a legal system evolved that has two levels: constitutional or apodictic law and state or casuistic law.

The last lesson explored the ten components of God's apodictic law, i.e. the Ten Commandments. Before that was the Old Covenant from which the apodictic law originated. The apodictic law (the Ten Commandments) sprang from God's authority, and the nation of Israel readily agreed with God by

saying, "Whatever the Lord says, we will do." Now casuistic laws form the next expansion of the Covenant's apodictic law.

CASUISTIC LAWS

The appendix at the end of this chapter lists in summary fashion the casuistic laws delineated in Exodus.

At this point in the chapter, however, we will do more than just list them. We will discuss each of the laws. The first one has to do with slavery.

Slavery

The first eleven verses indicate that God allows slavery, but He has some legal safeguards for the slaves. Violators of these laws are subject to penalty.

The maximum length of time that a slave can be in debt to his slave owner is six years. However, if the slave decides he likes this situation, and he does not want to leave to be on his own, he can ask the owner to make it permanent. If his owner is willing, then the slave can bring his appeal to the judges. If everyone agrees, then a hole is drilled through the ear and an earring is inserted to designate him as a permanent slave who has willingly perpetuated his slavery. That is why I like for my wife to wear her earrings on her pierced ears (much laughter around the room).

Carl: How does that jive with verse 16 which says: "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death."¹

V: That law is about kidnapping. Kidnapping is not the same thing as God's kind of slavery.

Slavery is part of God's system of economic justice. In this system, God put special protections in place for protecting the slave's rights. The stealing of a man cannot

be considered "just" in any way. It is the kidnapping of an unwilling victim.

Slavery in the Hebrews' context was not like that of the Egyptian context, nor was it like the slavery that has been in this country's history. The kind of slavery that occurred in Egypt and this country was neither voluntary nor just.

God's kind of slavery protects the interests of both parties. For example, suppose I borrowed money from you for a business venture. If I am careless in my venture and fail in my business and lose it all, then you stand to lose too. In our system, I can walk away from the debt by declaring bankruptcy, and you are out your money. But under God's economic system the understanding that the possibility of slavery of the debtor is a part of the loan contract protects the innocent party.

These laws in Exodus are for Hebrew slavery in which others are enslaved to Hebrews as a part of economic justice. In Egypt, slavery was also economic, but it was forced enslavement over all Hebrews without any considerations of justice.

Wanda: Is Hebrew slavery like employee-employer.

V: Kind of, except that the slave cannot resign before the contracted time has been met. It is more like the army—when you enlist, you are in for the specified time. You cannot just say, "I do not like this, I quit."

Wanda: I have always considered slavery to be an evil thing.

V: You have been conditioned by recent history; it is difficult for you to understand God's beneficence in this law. Under the word slave in Exodus, God gives parameters that limit and further define the process. Whereas in the evil variety, there are no parameters; it becomes whatever the master desired.

¹ Exodus 21:16.

Justice under God in all things is what makes a nation strong. God intended to build His people into a strong nation.

God's justice is supposed to be maintained through the judgment of the courts. For example, if a thief stole something, then the court mandates that he must pay back five times that much. If the thief has nothing, then he pays it through slavery. Willingness of the slave is not a consideration for a lawbreaker.

Homer: In another class, slavery was considered to be identical with employment. It was a desirable employment because you could pick your employer. The employer was called master, and he was benevolent and had a reputation of being a fair person. In addition there were laws that protected a slave. The slave could not be forced to do more than what he would voluntarily do. I read, too, that it was incorrect to interpret these passages to say that God chose slavery.

V: What you heard and read is wrong. Just read God's Word. If justice was to be maintained, the innocent party had to be protected. Careless behavior could be devastating to an innocent party. The careless person could not just say oops and walk away because he was broke. Also if a slave got into a good situation, he could ask his owner to make it permanent, and if the owner was willing, the slave was awarded the earring.

I have been bought as a slave to Jesus, and I am proud of it. I want to be His permanent slave.

Sybil: In that sense, we are all slaves to sin or slaves to Christ.

V: Slavery was an important part of God's economic system. It revolves around justice for all. The evil slavery that comes to our minds in the mention of the word would fall under the capital offense of stealing a man. But in good slavery, as a necessity of justice, the judge can mandate payment via slavery if the violator has not enough money

or goods to make the victim whole. Slavery that is needed for economic justice is not a death offense like that of forced slavery via stealing a man.

Bob: What if the slave is disobedient?

V: The slave must obey or suffer some kind of penalty. Smiting of a recalcitrant slave was allowed, but permanent injury was not.

Jack: A man can also sell his daughter to be a female slave. In this case a daughter did not have a high value in the father's eyes. She would be more of a commodity. This is difficult for me.

V: Yes, it is difficult. The economic system is there to protect the daughter. The daughter has to be assured of some kind of security, and that should come from the father or it should come from the husband, or it should come from the slave owner. The daughter can be sold, but it does not go to the extreme kind of image that we have had in this country's history.

Jill: But she is never allowed to go free like the men can, so I am assuming that this is for marriage because it does not sound like he is taking her to wash the dishes. It sounds like he is taking her for a wife or something.

V: No, she can go free because the maximum term for slavery was six years. The slave was to be freed in the seventh year.

Pete: It was necessary to operate within their culture to bring about God's purpose for that nation?

V: I resonate about half way with you, Pete. The reason I do not go all the way with you is because of the culture-versus-religion philosophical debate. Today's debate is Christ over culture versus the Christ of culture. I cannot agree with anything that would impinge upon Christ's sovereignty over culture. Perhaps the resolution for us would be

that Christ uses culture to bring about His purpose.

Pete: The American Indians received a dowry for their daughters.

V: Yes, the father would negotiate with a suitor for as large a dowry as he could get.

Justice is what God is teaching, and it rejects a flippant approach to life in which anything goes because you alone are affected. No, you should be diligent in your life's effort. You should work, take care of your body, and not put yourself at risk. The welfare of the family is put at risk when the father puts himself at risk. Poverty resulting from his bad behavior could cost his own daughter's freedom in order for the family to survive. Also failure in a risky venture is certainly going to cost some family member his freedom.

Accumulating debt is selling your self into bondage. Bondage is waiting for you and the members of your family in those situations where you squander your assets. You end up working for some other man for a length of time, upwards of six years, set by the courts. The slavery institution is one that balances the scales of justice.

Ted: Our system, in its own way, is not as good as God's because justice for the victim in our system takes a back seat.

Henry: I do not interpret this law as just a man buying someone's daughter for his son or for himself. It may be a purely economic justice issue.

Sybil: Our system breaks down because of our sinful natures. I think both systems have their faults.

V: Concerning the Lord's system, faults are not from the Lord or in His system. Instead all faults lie with man's application of the system. We think that our system is so much better than theirs, but look at the mess we are in. Sinful man is the problem. Even

though our system is rooted in theirs, our government has polluted the whole system. By our repeated efforts of improvement, we have created a terrible, unrecognizable, tangled mess of injustice.

Back to the case of the daughter's being sold into slavery, except in the case of betrothal of marriage, the daughter can be redeemed at any time. If the father gets back on his feet, he can redeem his daughter by returning the sum of money or assets that are owed.

Now we will talk about personal injury laws.

Personal Injury

Exodus 21:12-14 addresses man slaughter and murder.

Exodus

21:12 He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death.

21:13 And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver [him] into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.

21:14 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.

There are two kinds of killing. One is where a man lies in wait for the person to come along in order to kill him. That is premeditated murder, and it requires the death penalty.

The other kind of killing is about the person who, in happenstance, kills a person. That is manslaughter. For this person, a city of refuge is nominated for his escape from the family of the victim. It costs the killer by disrupting his life. To stay alive, he must go to another city to live.

First-degree murder, the premeditated and intended murder, carries the death penalty, and that is in our law as well. As it speaks in

verse 14, the slaying of somebody using guile, deception, or advance planning means that the killer laid in wait for the purpose of killing. That is premeditated murder that operates under the wiles of the devil.

Guile is the father of deceit. In deceit you make the victim think that he is safe and that you have his best interests at heart. To murder this person is pure and simple premeditated murder. This killer can be removed from God's altar that protects someone from death.

The practice of deception is of the devil. The devil is the father of lies, the father of deceit. He is the deceiver.

Special Laws for Slaves

The death penalty applied also to masters who murdered a slave because the slave was entitled to the same protections as the non-slaves. If punishing a slave caused a permanent injury to him, then all remaining time on the slave's contract was cancelled as payment for the slave's loss.

Special Laws for the Unborn

If a pregnant woman suffers the loss of her unborn child because of a fight between her husband and another man, then the husband can bring charges against the other man. The court will decide his punishment.

This appears to me to be an accidental death that was not intended. If men are fighting and the brawl rolls into a woman and she loses the baby or miscarries, a penalty is assessed. But if the pregnant woman dies afterwards, a more serious penalty will be adjudged. I think the judges make the determinations by considering all the conditions. I also think that both kinds of death would probably be adjudged as manslaughter.

If, however, there is any continuing conflict, between the two men, then an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, life for life, and limb for

limb will be required of the man perpetuating the conflict.

Disrespectful Children

Children cursing their father was cause for them to be put to death. If they should smite either of their parents, they would be executed. Hebrew children naturally had (and still have) great respect for their parents, but this law assured it.

People Killed by Animals

The law requires that any ox that kills a human shall be put to death and its flesh not eaten. If it was out of the normal for that ox to try to gore, then the death is ruled an accident, and the owner is not liable.

But if the owner has an ox that has been observed trying to gore, and the owner has been notified of the ox's tendency, both the owner and the ox will be put to death if the ox should kill a human. The owner will have failed in his responsibility to take proper precautions to protect other people from being injured by his mean ox.

Today we do not do that. You can drive drunk, kill somebody, go to jail, and then come out to repeat the process. The rights of criminals exceed those of the victims in America.

A pit bull dog can maul and kill a child, and only the dog is killed. The owner who fails to take precautions for protecting other people from his vicious dog just walks away. There does not seem to be much demand for responsibility of pet owners in our society.

If the judges desire to set a sum of money for the ox owner to pay in ransom for his life, they can do so. The ransom amount varies over who was killed by the ox, whether the victim is male, female, or slave. However, if the victim was a slave the amount was set at thirty shekels of silver regardless of gender.

If an ox or mule is accidentally killed in a fall into a pit dug by a neighbor, the pit digger must buy the dead animal, and the price will be set at the value of the animal while it was still alive.

If a neighbor's mean ox kills a friendly ox, the owner of the mean ox does not get off scot-free. Neglect of protecting others from his mean ox makes him liable for the neighbor's loss. The oxen are swapped. The owner of the mean ox gets the dead ox, and the neighbor gets the live mean ox.

In general the laws require that every citizen take proper steps to ensure that his neighbor is not injured. Let us say that you have an ox that needs to graze. But you have no adequate grazing on your property. If you should make a break in the fence separating your neighbor's pasture in order to allow the ox to graze on your neighbor's pasture, then you would be liable. The neighbor gets to have equal amount from you that your ox ate, but he gets to select payment from your best crop.

There is continuous incentive in Hebrew law for just and responsible behavior. It applies not only to the economic system of slavery, but also to the economic system of animals and land. It goes on to apply to personal injury. Acts of negligence create loss and hardship to neighbors. Hebrew law calls for like penalties to be applied to the perpetrators.

Joe: Our system tends to ignore victim rights.

V: Yes, today, the perpetrator is treated as a victim. It is almost like the criminal has no will. The evil deeds that he commits are blamed on someone else or on misfortune.

EXODUS 22

V: God's laws contain some punitive measures too. For theft of a sheep or an ox,

the thief must pay back four sheep for one sheep and five oxen for one ox.

Homer: I see that God is teaching personal responsibility in justice.

V: If we cannot learn personal responsibility under temporal laws, how are we ever going to take personal responsibility for Christianity's eternal laws?

The judges make the determination of what is required for justice under casuistic law. Behavior that causes injury to another requires an evaluation. If one of two men who are striving together is a belligerent person who strives with everybody with whom he comes into contact, I imagine the judge is going to sock it to him. If there is just some kind of debate that heats up and becomes a fight between two men with good track records, then that damage would carry less serious penalties. The judges will make the two men restore justice to any person receiving loss, but the punitive portion would be minimized.

The Hebrews would have to know that every loss suffered because of another's behavior would be brought before the judges. Fighting, in the presence of other people, will likely cause property damage or personal injury, and the law requires restoration in all cases and penalty in some cases.

Ted: In those days, all life was honored, and justice was the basis of every law.

V: Law always concerns personal responsibility. Personal responsibility is controverted when the bad behavior comes from someone who can walk away from his responsibility because he is broke and has nothing to lose. Declaring bankruptcy punishes the person who loans the money. Hebrew law disallows the cavalier disregard of one's own behavior in the loss of another's money.

Ted: Our laws protect irresponsibility, but our courts and judges do it too.

V: Judges are responsible to interpret laws. Interpretation is the art of hermeneutics to be practiced by judges in casuistic law. The parties in each case present their claim and evidence to the court, and the judges evaluate the evidence in the context of how the law is interpreted. Their verdict is determined for the purpose of God's justice to be restored.

Rightful interpretation of the law and truthful evidence are the keys to justice. Our laws are inadequate, but when the judges disregard the objective meanings of the laws, we get injustice piled upon injustice. In our end times, all objectivity will be lost. The subjective law of a man's decrees will replace codified law.

Our nation was founded on God's law. The Declaration of Independence, the basis for the Constitution, establishes that God provides every man the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The United States Constitution is the guarantor of those God-given rights. Therefore, all subsequent laws must align with the Constitution or else justice is abridged.

Today, the Constitution is being circumvented in order to prevent its impeding the lawmakers from making laws from their whimsical desires. If the lawmakers fail in those efforts, the judges will guarantee their successes by using subjective hermeneutics.

What happens if your hermeneutic changes over time? The codified law can remain constant, but the law's subjective application can bring about strange verdicts. Even if the words of the law remain unchanged, the judges can easily say that they mean something entirely different.

Black's Law was the basis of my son's study of law enforcement during his college years. Black's Law was for centuries the law textbook that was based objectively on the Constitution. It was used only in conservative

colleges. However, Black's Law is no longer the kind of law textbook that is used in our colleges or in our courts.

Authorial intent was the determining factor for codified laws. Progressivism, however, makes the interpreter's intent the ruling factor today. Thus the Constitution is considered a living document in which its meaning is evolving as the culture "progresses."

The same thing is happening in theology today. The reader is considered to be much more informed and understanding of what Paul wrote than Paul was when he wrote it. Thus the same thing that is happening with the Constitution is also happening with the Bible.

The Progressives think that they know more today about what the Constitution means than its writers. They think that if we reverted to the writers' understanding, then we would be regressing instead of *progressing*.

Progressive courts and judges use the latest hermeneutics, which are also changing, to examine changing laws to find out what the new meaning is for today.²

The "man of lawlessness" is going to step up and assume that the law is whatever he wants it to be. The law will no longer be the law as we know it. The change from law to lawlessness is already progressing rapidly.

² At the University of Texas in Arlington I had to take a course in hermeneutics for my doctorate in theology at Southwestern Seminary. I went naively into that seminar thinking that the Word of God is the *unchanging* Word of God. I discovered that the professor and most of the students thought that Scriptures mean what the interpreter wants them to mean. Our lawyers and judges come from that context.

Appendix
CASUISTIC LAW

The Judgments—the application of “apodictic” law to special situations is casuistic law.

- I. SLAVERY (21:2-11)
 - a. Six years in duration (afterwards, the slave leaves with provisions).
 - b. An earring marked the slave as being permanent.
- II. HOMICIDE (21:12-14)
 - a. Provide cities of refuge for the manslaughter cases.
 - b. Death to murderers.
- III. OTHER CAPITAL OFFENSES (21:15-17)
 - a. Striking a parent.
 - b. Kidnapping.
 - c. Cursing a parent.
- IV. ASSAULT (21:18-19)
 - a. Fine levied that will make the victim whole.
- V. HOMICIDE OF SLAVES (21:20-21)
 - a. Smiting of slaves is allowed.
 - b. Beating to death is murder.
 - c. Incidental death costs the owner in his loss of slave (money).
- VI. ASSAULT PRODUCING MISCARRIAGE (21:22-25)
 - a. Payment for the baby is made as determined by the judges.
 - b. Death of mother is murder.
 - c. Proportional retribution.
- VII. ASSAULT ON SLAVE (21:26-27)
 - a. Freedom for the slave if he suffers permanent injury, e.g. loss of tooth.
- VIII. INJURY DONE BY CATTLE TO PEOPLE (21:28-32)
 - a. Death to the animal.
 - b. No punishment for the owner if “out of character” for the animal.
 - c. If the owner had knowledge that the animal was violent, death or fine to the owner.
- IX. PROPERTY DESTRUCTION (21:33-36)
 - a. If an animal falls into a man's pit, then animals are swapped.
 - b. If an animal falls hurts another animal that result in death, then both the live and dead animals are sold and the proceeds are split between the owners.
 - c. If the animal is known to be violent, and he kills another animal, then both animals go to be victim.
- X. THEFT (22:1-4)
 - a. Four sheep for one sheep.
 - b. Five oxen for one ox.
 - c. If there is death to the thief in the nighttime, there is no punishment for the killer.

- d. If there is death to the thief in the daytime, the law of blood takes over, and the killer moves to the city of refuge.
- e. Full restitution to be made by thief. He is sold into slavery when he cannot make the other man whole.
- f. If articles are recovered, there is to restore double.
- XI. LOSS VIA TRESPASS (22:5-6)
 - a. If the field is eaten, then the other man must forfeit an equal amount of his best.
 - b. Accidental fire, restore what was lost. Full restitution.
- XII. LAW OF DEPOSITS (22:7-13)
 - a. If trustee steals the deposit, he repays double.
 - b. If the trustee does not cause the loss, then the owner suffers the loss.
 - c. If there is theft while under control of the trustee, the trustee pays full restitution.
 - d. If the deposit is destroyed by beast, there is no restitution.
- XIII. LAW OF BORROWING (22:14-15)
 - a. All losses under control of the borrower are paid back.
 - b. Losses with owner controlling the borrowed item are not paid back.
 - c. If the item is hired and then lost, there is no payback.
- XIV. SEDUCTION (22:16-17)
 - a. Pay dowry regardless of whether or not they marry.
- XV. WITCHCRAFT (22:18)
 - a. Death.
- XVI. BESTIALITY (22:19)
 - a. Death.
- XVII. SACRIFICING TO FALSE GODS (22:20)
 - a. Death.
- XVIII. TREATMENT OF FOREIGNERS/WIDOWS/ORPHANS (22:21-24)
 - a. Oppression incurs God's wrath and pursuit with the sword.
- XIX. LENDING MONEY (22:25-27)
 - a. No interest charged to God's people.
 - b. Necessities, which are pledges, are to be returned when needed.
- XX. REVILING RULERS (22:28)
 - a. No reviling gods
 - b. No cursing your rulers.

* * *

The judgments continue, but we will stop listing them at this point.

Chapter Questions

1. Apodictic law is law by _____. Casuistic law is known as _____ law.
2. Constitutional law is (apodictic, casuistic) law. (mark out incorrect answer).
3. Explain how freedom of religion is assured in America.
4. How did Hebrew slavery differ from slavery as we know it today?
5. What was the purpose of a city of refuge?
6. What punishment was provided for children who disrespected their parents or who struck (smited) them?

Chapter 11

THE TABERNACLE

EXODUS 25: THE TABERNACLE

At this point, God is going to give structure to the Hebrews for their worship. First, will be the construction of the Tabernacle. The pattern, the materials, and the purpose is given by God to Moses. Next, He will call for the gathering of the materials. Finally, He will tell about the priests and give instructions for worship.

Unlike the future temple, the Tabernacle will be a mobile structure. The description of the Tabernacle and its accoutrements is in Exodus 25.

The Materials for Building the Tabernacle

25:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

25:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.

God is going to establish the Tabernacle by obtaining all the materials for every part of it from among His people. Please recall that God worked favor into the hearts of the Egyptian citizenry to give much wealth, supplies, and even gold to the Hebrews at the Exodus.

When God does these kinds of miracles, it is not for the purpose of self-indulgence. Certainly, we eat and supply our needs out of God's bounty, when He supplies it, but there are always other divine purposes that He has in mind for using the bounty that He puts into our hands. This is a lesson in stewardship, i.e. managing God's resources in such a way as to bring divine profit to His Kingdom and glory to His Name.

It is a great honor to be able to participate in any way with God. The Hebrews were allowed to participate by supplying all the materials for building His one-and-only Tab-

ernacle on earth. However, the test was about the willing heart. Is there such a thing as unwilling giving?

Beth: Giving just through obedience.

V: Okay, so it would be like duty?

Oscar: Well, you know the tithe is 10%. So you just do it.

V: God desired the people to give willingly with their hearts. What does that mean?

Jack: It means with eagerness, looking forward to it. You just cannot wait to do it.

Bob: Yes, it is a desire to give.

Pete: When you recognize that everything you have came from God, you become far more willing. If you think you have earned it, then you might be reluctant.

Wanda: Because of your love for the Lord, you want to give back to Him with a passion in the heart. The willing heart shows through your heart's desire that you truly love the Lord, and you appreciate what He has done for you.

Jill: It is an act of worship. God is trying to shift the emphasis more on the spiritual than on the material.

V: Okay, I really like what you guys are saying.

Now, let us explore a little further. You have the heart, and you have the mind. Can you give when your heart and your mind are not together?

Steve: Well, I think you can give when your mind tells you that you really cannot afford to.

V: So, where does faith come into this issue?

Steve: The widow's mite would be a good example of heart and mind coming together via her faith.

Joe: Her mind told her that she could not afford to give anything.

Jill: When you give from the heart, it is like a spiritual gift from the soul and spirit.

Henry: I think that Israel was poor and did not have a lot of wealth. God's asking for practically all that they had would be somewhat similar to the widow's mite. Therefore, faith would be significant in this offering.

Steve: Don't forget that they carried much wealth out of Egypt.

V: Class, let me see if I can redirect your thinking a little here. What you are saying is really good, but I want to explore in a new direction.

You can gain three different perspectives by looking at yourself, at God, and then at the gift. But what happens if you look at yourself and God together in one perspective? What if you look at God's purpose and how He is going to use *you* to achieve it? You see, there is a sense in which God is inviting them to join him in some kind of a new something here that is about to begin. Faith will have God's Will in view, and it is the act of worship to buy into it. Faith participates with God in His ventures by giving and doing what He wants.

If you will look at yourself alone, then you will likely not attempt something that is too costly or too difficult. But the providence of God enables the impossible. Faith enables us to give our very best because only are we then joining God in His purpose. That purpose, no matter how big or small it is, allows us to be in yoke with God to do something that He wants to do. Working with God does not require our knowing what the results will be. All that is required for faith is that we know that we are joining God in His work.

God gives you the great honor of letting you come along with Him and participate with Him in His doing of a work.

There are many different perspectives in this act of giving. Based on the maturity of the people, the person who is giving the particular gift might be looking at his giving from one perspective as over against another. There would be others who would be considering their giving from an entirely different perspective. Both would be willing, but their perspectives of their giving could vary from person to person. Some may not even remember the providence of God. They may look only at their own circumstances and think: "I cannot afford this, but I am going to give something because I want to avoid God's Wrath."

The providence of God is at work in a central way throughout the book of Exodus. It helps us to see that every child of God has not the same perspective even though their actions may be identical. God's saying "of a willing heart" has at its base the juncture of the mind and the heart coming together in faith to produce the act.¹ It is not just an act of the mind without the heart, not just an act of the heart without the mind, but a combination of the two that are joined by faith into the perspective of participating with God Himself in His work on earth. Participating with God is the willing heart.

There is something really wholesome that comes out of this passage. It expresses God's plan that extends all the way into the present. When you participate with God in giving of your life, your time, your talents, your resources, or whatever it might be, it follows the same pattern of faith expressed as a willing heart. There is something very special about this offer from God.

¹ Please recall the triangle of piety of faith, hope, and love.

Jack: The NIV says, “You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give.”

V: That prompting is the desire that you have when you receive the exhortation from the Spirit to participate with God in His ministry. To quench the Spirit is tantamount to flirting with death. To go forward is to live abundantly. The further that you go with it, the more adventurous it is, and the less you can do without it. You get to the point that the abundant life becomes the fire-in-the-bones that Jeremiah experienced.

The Ark

The description of the Ark of the Covenant is that it was a box that measured 2.5 x 1.5 x 1.5 cubits. It was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold. It had four gold rings at the lower corners fitted with two staves of acacia overlaid with gold.

The Mercy Seat (*Kapporeth*) of pure gold was the lid or covering. Two Cherubim with extended wings were on top of the box. Above the mercy seat and between the Cherubim was the “meeting place” of God and man.

Inside the Ark was placed the Testimony of God (the Ten Commandments) plus the budding staff and the manna (Heb. 9:1-10).

A cubit is supposed to be the length from the elbow to the tip of the fingers. I do not know if everybody’s cubit is the same or if some of the big guys have big, long cubits. I think the cubit is considered to be 18 inches. I do not know how the cubit is prevented from varying from person to person.

Joe: Mine is approximately 18 inches.

Carl: Look at Steve’s cubit; it is huge. (Laughter)

Joe: A footnote in my Bible says 18 inches, more or less.

V: I do not know what the proper pronunciation of acacia is except that in Hebrew, the emphasis is usually on the next to last syllable, like this: ah-cah-SEE-ah.

I think the rings at the corners would be built as permanent fixtures molded right into the box on the bottom corners. The two staves would be run through the rings for moving the Ark.

Kapporeth means top. Thus the *Kapporeth* was to be the lid or covering for the Ark.

The wings of the cherubim extended up and over the Ark, and the cherubim were looking down at the mercy seat. Their wings would be almost touching each other over the center of the Ark.

All was made with gold except for the wood, but the wood had gold overlay.

We know that Moses had a long discussion with God. I suppose that God also would have shown Moses how the Tabernacle was supposed to look. I think that even the elements within the tent were shown to him—you know like the boards and sockets, the panels, and the implements, i.e. the Ark, the table for the showbread, and the candlesticks. God is the architect Who conveyed His plans to Moses who would oversee the construction. I believe that Moses received God’s plans both orally and visually in order to maintain precision.

The meeting place was above the Ark, not in it. In the Ark are the Ten Commandments. Some other things will be added to the Ark’s contents, and they are described in Hebrews 9 where we will find the purpose of the tent sanctuary.

Hebrews

9:1 Then verily the first [covenant] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

9:2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein [was] the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is

called the sanctuary.

9:3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

9:4 Which had the golden censer, and the Ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein [was] the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

9:5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

9:6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service [of God].

9:7 But into the second [went] the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and [for] the errors of the people:

9:8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

9:9 Which [was] a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

9:10 [Which stood] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed [on them] until the time of reformation.

V: Now why is this Tabernacle a tent?

Ted: They had to carry it.

V: Okay, why did they have to carry it?

Ted: They were still enroute to the Promised Land.

V: Yes, they are not staying in one spot. The Tabernacle is a place of meeting, worship, and sacrifice. They needed to take that meeting place with them so that they could continue to meet with God. A primary difference between the Tabernacle and the Temple is in mobility. The Temple was to be built in a permanent and fixed location. When did the Temple come about?

Henry: Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem.

V: That is right. Under Solomon, the third king, the Hebrews had a permanent place of worship, and they had a king. The king is not associated with the Tabernacle. The king is associated only with the Temple. Is there any theological significance to these relationships?

Ted: King David decided at some point that it was not right for him to have a nice permanent residence and God not have a place. David wanted to build a temple to replace the Tabernacle, but God said that Solomon would get to do that.

V: So now in Christianity, is there any association with the Tabernacle? Is there any association with the Temple? Is there any association with both a tabernacle and also a temple?

Wanda: 1 Corinthians 3:16 says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

V: It strikes me that some big change is signified in the change from Tabernacle to Temple. For the Tabernacle, willing hearts were requested, and all the people were involved in its construction. Then there came a point when the Temple arises; it arises at a time after the people have rejected God as their king.

Wanda: It seems that every time God was close to man and spoke to him, that place became consecrated as a holy place. Abraham made an altar, a memorial, to mark God's presence and memorialize His speaking to man. An altar was made there for sacrificing to God. When the people settled in Palestine, God announced that He was going to dwell there with them.

V: God is not subject to a place. The place is subject to God. Within Wanda's mentioned concept, meetings with God occur

all over the place. Each meeting is significant, and man builds a memorial to mark the event, e.g. the memorial built to mark crossing the Jordan River on dry land.

Bob: God cannot be confined to a place, building, church, or temple.

Beth: Our body is a temple.

V: So, is tabernacle-ing excluded by our being the temple?

Beth: We are not permanent on this earth; we are sojourners. The Temple is permanent, but tabernacle-ing is moving along from place to place, recognizing God and worshiping Him as we go along.

V: Amen, Beth! That is what sanctification is all about. Now if justification is the whole of salvation, then we need just to do stationary temple worship. However, in order to follow the Lord in sanctification, we must have also a tabernacle understanding.

Beth: Regarding the tabernacle-ing idea, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in our body. Our body is a temple concerning justification, but it is a tabernacle concerning sanctification. Both are places where man can meet God. They differ in stages of worship.

V: Good analysis, Beth!

Bob: If we get our will and get our heart and mind in yoke, we have that holy place right there.

Mary: God did not build the altars Himself; man built them. So when we take God into our hearts, we have joined with God. We become participants in His plans.

V: When Israel had the Temple, there was the understanding that grew up among the nation that it could not be conquered by an outside nation because God dwelt in Israel's Temple. What can happen in Christianity is that you can begin to see yourself as protected no matter what you do. If the quality of your ongoing walk with God becomes less

important than *where* God dwells, then the stationary-temple idea has gotten elevated too high. Then, like Israel, you begin to think that you cannot be defeated by an outside nation (the devil) because God dwells in you.

There is great importance in this tabernacle-ing concept, not as the dwelling place of God, but in your relationship, walk, and worship of God that exists wherever you are. That concept has impact on the shaping of the world, the touching of lives, and the winning of victories. Just because God dwells in you does not automatically give you victory in your actions. Neither can you behave any way you want to and have God's protection.

Joe: It goes back to Jeremiah's warning against seeing the Temple of the Lord as a talisman.

V: Yes, Joe. When a Christian begins exalting the **place** of God into prominence, you see, his esteem for a place can escalate out of proportion. That situation, my Brethren, is idolatry. The same thing can happen to the Christian's view of himself if he should begin to view his actions being sanctified by an elevated view of his body-temple. When this happens, one's justification and sanctification can get out of sync, and your behavior is not considered to be critical any longer.

There are some things that happen in the transition from tabernacle to temple. The Tabernacle represents the journey, and the Temple represents arriving at the destination.

Tent meetings lack permanence. They speak of pilgrim, and that is what we are. If we begin to think in terms of temple, that is the final and permanent destination. Under this temple concept, our hearts and concerns will move into specific when's and where's. Thus, temporal things, materialism, status, and prideful things become the focus of life. That focus contradicts our being pilgrims who are sojourning with God *towards* the final

destination that will only be reached after death.

Temple-permanence is given in our justification which makes our bodies the temples in which God dwells. Journeying with God (sanctification, as described by tabernacle-ing) to His final destination, however, should never be de-emphasized by the child of God. Therefore in Christianity, we have both permanence and process. Justification is permanent and this idea is bound up with the Temple. On the other hand, process is found in sanctification, and this idea is bound up with the tabernacle.

Carl: Do you think that the Lord permitted them to build the Temple for the sake of man? In other words, do you think that God wanted the nation and the world to think of His dwelling place as a permanent location? Or was God accommodating man's mind, heart, and soul? Do you understand what I am asking?

V: Yes, I do. Let me see if I can come at your question from another direction.

I know for a fact that God did not want Israel to take a king. But once they demanded it, then He anointed the king to guide and protect His chosen people. God next instituted the office of prophet, as a spokesman from God, to give correction to the king. The prophet provided checks and balances against the king's power.

Instituting a king, in effect, marginalized God. This marginalizing is known as compartmentalizing. To confine God to a stationary temple was another step toward compartmentalization.

I see the king and people desiring a temple, just like the people desired a king. So, God allowed Solomon to build it. Here, then, is a movement that is within God's permissive will just as was the coronation of a king. I am inclined to believe that the Temple

is not God's very best choice for man just like a king was not His very best choice for man.

King, temple, and prophet accompany each other, and other things come along in consequence. Once you start down a path, you see, there are some consequences that are essential to staying on that path. Please also note, however, that God allows man to alter God's perfect choices. Once man makes a choice and moves out on the wrong path, God, in His providence, sets up a new best route that can maximize man's benefit to God's Kingdom from the new direction. This new route will take man from where he is on his wrong path to the best destination that can be reached.²

God does not sanctify bad choices, but He does provide a sanctified route as a new option after a bad choice has been made. Thus, when God permitted man to replace Him with a human king, God sanctified the king and the use of human government.³ Thus when God allowed the Tabernacle to be replaced by a temple, He sanctified the Temple. Never forget that anything or anyone that is set aside as a clean vessel dedicated to God's use is then a holy (sanctified) vessel.

Pete: Before the kings, God commanded the Tabernacle to be built. I think that when they built the Temple, God suffered them to do so. When Christ died, God ripped the temple curtain apart. Basically, He was restoring the Tabernacle process, which increased access to God by all peoples.

Henry: You have been describing the Children of Israel as foreshadowing our present day Christian lives. How does this fit with our building of worship facilities?

V: I think that at times our focus moves from process to status. Status implies static, and that connection will kill the church.

² Getting good out of a bad choice is called redemption.

³ God took man's bad choice and built a path of good choices that would lead to King Jesus.

Status can make the church extremely active in its own self-elevation, its rituals of praises to God, and all manner of religious activity centered around the church. But what does it do for a mobile pilgrimage kind of church, i.e. a pilgrim church? Pilgrims are what we are, and we should recognize that fact! If we drive our roots way down into this earth, then we become a fixed earthy entity that is focused on the worldly materialism of status.

Jill: This stationary concept is very interesting. Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to empower all the people to go preach. Even though the Lord told them to go preach to all the world, they would not go.

V: The idea of leaving *the holy place* and going to preach elsewhere is a pilgrim understanding. For example, in the midst of revival, Stephen was snatched up by the Holy Spirit and moved out into the desert to preach to the eunuch. I think that Stephen wanted to stay in the revival enjoying his ease, goose bumps, fellowship, and wonderful music.

Bob: The church fusses more today about their buildings and the little things of the church's history, e.g. where to place their table, flowers, windows, steeple, and family pews. Concerning deep roots, each church's roots are already deep and are the subjects of arguments and discords. Troubles in the church are about material things more so than about spirit-filled growth and winning souls.

Ted: Where our treasures are is also where our hearts are.

V: So if you start this stationary concept where you are driving your roots way down, then you are duplicating the sin of Israel as reported in Jeremiah: "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord."

Ted: We get into worship of the Temple instead of the worship of the Lord.

V: Yes, Ted. That is the definition of idolatry. Viewing God as in a place can

easily transition one's worship of God to worship of His place. We can avoid that sin by being pilgrims! We must worship 24/7 as we go on our life's journey, but that is not to be at the exclusion of coming together for corporate worship as the Body of Christ. The place of corporate worship is a holy place, but it is not God's place of residence. He resides in us.

When we know ourselves as pilgrims who are tabernacle-ing, then we view God as being with us everywhere, and we see ourselves as on mission wherever we go. When we are in the grocery store, in the gas station, at the job, on vacation, or at home, we are still on mission! But if we are under the temple emphasis, and that is the primary view today, then you do your living and then you go to church as your mission. Every part of living can be of your own choosing because your mission becomes temple centered.

Pete: Do you think that the Temple was man's attempt to get back to God? Do you also think that the Tabernacle was a mobile type thing that hinges on your need to be going and telling other people about God?

V: You are correct concerning the Tabernacle. It is God's invitation for man to worship Him and then take that worship to wherever they go in the world. Israel is the chosen nation to take the message of God to the entire world. They failed miserably.

The Temple does not come into being until God is dethroned and human kings are instituted. I believe that there is some connection there with the Tabernacle to Temple change. I think that once the people have chosen the path of a human king, then there are some accompanying things that go with that evil choice, and the Temple is one of them. This is not to say that God does not sanctify the elements that accompany those sinful choices. In His sovereign providence, God redeems even the bad choices of His people to provide for the best possible out-

come after our bad choices. However, more bad choices in Christianity resulted from the Jewish king and temple choices. Their evolving temple worship transformed to the present day's institutionalism in which the church has become an idol.

Carl: When God instructed the Hebrews to build the Tabernacle, it was with the best that they had. It was the finest material, gold, and everything that was precious at that time. Nothing but the best goes to God, voluntarily, and with a drive from the heart. That same concept justifies some of the ornate buildings that we have today. Sometimes, however, they are not really to glorify God; they are for our comfort.

V: Remember this: God does not dwell in a temple built by human hands. The human heart is the temple in which He dwells now.

The Mercy Seat of the Ark was pure gold, but the other parts were wood with gold overlay. Wood with gold overlay depicts Christ to me. In Christ, deity and humanity come together just as the precious gold and wood connect together.

Wanda: The staves provide portability of the meeting place between God and man.

V: That resonates with my spirit and understanding, Wanda.

Now let us look at the other two Persons of the Trinity as depicted in the implements in the Holy place before the veil. In the Holy of Holies behind the veil, I relate the Ark with God the Father. The Mercy Seat of the Ark is where God comes and meets with man. In the Holy place before the veil, I relate the table of shewbread with the Son, and the candlestick with the Holy Spirit.

The Shewbread

The table of shewbread is not in the Holiest of Holies. It is outside the veil where man resides. It is a Holy Place, but yet it is not within the Holiest of Holies. It signifies a

preparatory stage before meeting with God the Father. It reminds me of meeting with Christ in one's salvation experience in preparation for the next meeting which is to be meeting with God, the Father, in the Holiest of Holies.

You meet God in Christ in the Holy Place, i.e. in the sanctuary of your heart. There is going to be another meeting in the future. That meeting place will be behind the last veil of death when you meet with God the Father Himself. That is depicted in Revelation when God comes after the final judgment and takes you and embraces you and wipes the tears from your eyes. He intends to dwell with His people for eternity, and He will be your God, and you will be His people. For that final meeting, one first must go through the first meeting in which Jesus becomes your Savior, Lord, Master, and High Priest Who offered His Own Blood to pay for your sins.

The first meeting in the Holy Place is very important. The High Priest goes into the Holy of Holies, but the priests stay outside in the holy place.

In the New Covenant, we are the priests who minister to the people in that first Holy Place, the place of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Christ, you see, is the High Priest, and He is the One that ministers in the Holiest of Holies. Your job is to bring the sinful people into this first meeting with the High Priest. Jesus forgives their sins by counting them paid for with His Own Blood that was sprinkled on the Mercy Seat.

Every Christian is a priest. We have that priestly ministry of bringing the sinful people to Jesus. Jesus is the bread of life.⁴

⁴ Bread is made from wheat, but wheat has to be ground up in order to be made into bread. That means that for Christ to be the bread of life, He suffered to become that bread; He had to be ground up in order to become that bread. He talked about how that the people had to eat Him in order to have life. He had to

There is going to be suffering in the Christian life, and that means that we cannot focus on the Temple in which we bask in the glory of God. Yes, we are holy people in the holy place, but that does not make our actions holy. Also just because we are in the holy place, there is no guarantee that we are ourselves holy. To be holy, you must have your own sins cleansed by the High Priest's sacrifice. Then you will be ready to go out and tabernacle as a pilgrim. In your pilgrimage, you are going to be ground up in sacrifice and suffering in order to bring life to others. If you resist presenting your own body as a living sacrifice,⁵ then you are saving your life in order to have it. But saving your life results in loss of it.⁶

The abundant life, i.e. the great adventure, comes only in the giving of your life to Jesus to use as He sees fit in His great mission of saving others from their sins. That means, then, that your life is not your own to live. You have to sacrifice it on the altar for the salvation of others. In our pilgrimages, there is continuous tabernacle-ing.

In the same way that Jesus is now the High Priest, we are now the Priests. We go among the people and manifest the presence and the providence of God. We intercede for them by taking their needs to God. We explain God's provisions that He offers them, and when they are ready to meet God, we take them to Jesus. When Jesus forgives their sins, then they become priests themselves.

Just like Israel is manifested today as the burning bush, you are manifested likewise. No matter what happens, no matter how much fire that Israel suffers through, Israel is still there. They are the burning bush that burns but is not consumed. You are too.

be ground up and die to be eaten. Your life also must be ground up. You have to surrender your own life in order for others to benefit from your Christianity.

⁵ Romans 12:1.

⁶ Matthew 16:25.

You bring the people to meet with and worship Jesus. By tabernacle-ing, you take that meeting place with you wherever you go in the world. The people are going to persecute you, kill you, oppress you, grind you, and crucify you. That is what they did to Jesus, and that is what they are going to do to us!

The whole world wants to get rid of the true church! Like Israel, we are still here, now, but God's Word says that the Beast is going to wear us out.⁷

The Candlestick

The Candlestick represents the light that is given by the Holy Spirit. Apart from the Holy Spirit there is darkness. We must have the Holy Spirit to bring light, understanding, and conviction, or else the things of God are nonsense and ineffectual to us. The world cannot come to Jesus without the understanding and conviction by the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

EXODUS 30: THE ALTAR

Incense

Exodus

30:1 And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: [of] shittim wood shalt thou make it.

God next commands the building of an altar for burning incense upon. He gives the dimensions of it and all of the other architectural descriptions of it.

God restricts the use of the altar by excluding certain sacrifices in verse 9.

Exodus

30:9 Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.

⁷ Daniel 7:25.

What is incense, and what is strange incense?

Betty: When I used to be Catholic, the priests burned little incense things that produced odorous smoke.

Joe: Incense connects with our prayers.

V: Revelation 5:8 identifies odors as our prayers.

Revelation

5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four [and] twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

In Rev. 5:8, smell is identified as the prayers of the saints. However, in Revelation 8:3, incense is associated with but separate from the prayers.

Revelation

8:3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer [it] with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

So, it seems to me that we have incense that is added to the prayers of the saints in order to make them acceptable to God. Thus, I must conclude that incense is the Holy Spirit's work to make the saint's prayer acceptable to God by aligning it with God's Mind and Will.

Prayer should be specific and spiritually sound. It should be concerned with praise and sacrifice. It is also to ask for divine help for something that is beyond your abilities. When you are in the Spirit, your will and mind are lined in harmony with God. At that point, your prayers are sweet smelling to God, and He says, "Yes, yes, yes" to those prayers.

I think that the prayers of the saints that are not in the Spirit are a little off target (perhaps from ignorance, carnality, or not knowing the mind of God). These prayers are

incensed by the Holy Spirit in order to make them sweet smelling and acceptable to God.

Misalignment of prayers could be from a whole myriad of things. They must be realigned with God's Will for them to be answered. Realigning those prayers by the Holy Spirit to be compatible with God's Will is the wonderful work of incensing by the Holy Spirit.

Carl: So, it is when the Holy Spirit is praying?

V: Almost. I am not equating man's prayer with the Holy Spirit's prayer. I am trying to show the function of the Spirit's incensing so that you can see what the incense is. The incense is the right-wising of the carnal saint's prayers, or it is the harmony with God's Will within the spiritual saint's prayer that is already right-wised at its origin. When the prayers line straight up and down with God's will, then God responds because He is responding to His own plan, His own will, His own desires. When you ask according to the will of God, then you get effective results. But if you ask contrary to the will of God, nothing that we asked for happens.

Let us just say for example that there are some things in our prayer that correlate in some points but without aligning fully with God's plans. The Holy Spirit will incense those parts to realign them, and then we get God's affirmative response on those parts that would not have had response otherwise. On those particular points, the answers may not be recognizable by us because the Spirit's incensing changed them from what we wanted to what God wanted.

Strange Incense

Now let us look deeper at strange incense.

Beth: If incense is holy prayers, then maybe the strange incense would be unholy prayers.

V: Okay, unholy people would most likely be praying unholy prayers.

Oscar: Forgery prayers.

V: Yes, or braggadocios prayers, prayers not meant for the ears of God but for the ears of man.

Homer: The end of verse 8 says that there shall be perpetual incense before the Lord throughout the generations.

V: So there is going to be that perpetual right-wising of our communications with God in order to make them holy. The Holy Spirit's incense means that when you pray, you need to pray believing that your prayers are going to get right-wised and thereby get through. If your prayer is right-wise as it comes out of your mouth, then the "prayers of a righteous man availeth much."⁸

Jill: Do you think that the incense can be mixed in with the sinner's prayer for salvation?

V: Yes, if need be, but I think that the sinner's prayer does not need right-wising. It is right when the convicted sinner utters it.

Carl: I think that God yearns to hear the sinner's prayer.

V: You bet!

Ted: Along with prayer, do you think also that the life of an individual before God could itself be an aroma for God because of the Spirit's directing his life? When the Spirit redirects a life, He is right-wising it just like He does in a Christian's prayers. The life you live before God, when it is empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, becomes a sweet smell.

V: I think that you are right on the money, Ted. That idea would connect with the scripture dealing with the "prayers of a righteous man availing much." The source of

the incense is the Spirit, and the Spirit is in you. If He is directing your life in righteousness, then there is a ton of incense there. But if you are busy running your own life, then there is no holiness in your carnality,⁹ and your prayers would need much incense from the Spirit.

Sybil: I do not know if you would go this far, but do you think that incense pictures Christ. The incense symbolizes Christ having to come in order to get your life straight.

V: I do indeed, especially when it concerns the unholy, unsaved, or vain person. It requires the incense of Christ's Righteousness in order for the unsaved person to become a right-wised person.

Bob: Where is the altar of incense placed?

V: It is in the holy place before the veil that separates it from the Holy of Holies.

Terry: How does the location compare with the New Testament?

V: Gosh, that is a good question, Terry, because that location means that the incense is in the preparatory stage of making our prayers acceptable to God.

The prayers are from the true heart. Jesus resides in the Christian's heart. Once Jesus has right-wised the sinner's heart via justification, the Christian resides in Jesus and looks just like Jesus to God the Father. Our personhoods are fit to enter the Holiest of Holies because they have been made permanently and perfectly righteous. However, our carnality prevents our prayers from entering the Holiest of Holies. Thus our carnal lives still need to be incensed by the Holy Spirit before Jesus, our High Priest, can take our prayers to the Father.

⁸ James 5:16.

⁹ The carnal Christian is holy in his personhood, but not in his thoughts, words, and actions

Our right living in obedience to Jesus is our personal incense. Only when our prayers and sacrifices are spiritual, can they be taken into the Holiest of Holies. So, we need Jesus to right-wise our persons and the incense from the Holy Spirit to right-wise our prayers and sacrifices. The Holy Spirit right-wises your prayers when He makes the groanings that cannot be uttered.¹⁰

Pete: At the end of Chapter 30, instructions are given for making the incense, which is referred to in another place as perfume. The incense is restricted from being used to adorn self. Anyone who should do so would be cast out of the kingdom.

V: Yes. Using what is holy for one's own self adornment is sin.

Notice that the people were required to make the incense and the altar upon which to burn it. Hands made the Tabernacle from materials of this earth.

In our New Testament salvation, physical things changed to things that are spiritual. We are both tabernacle and temple. As tabernacle, we are mobile and God meets with us in our physical lives of sanctification. This is when we use our hands in physical acts.

Concerning our being the temple, God resides in us as His permanent dwelling place. We then are Holy beings who are re-created by God. This act is done without hands.

Holy living, i.e. the walking in the Spirit, which is the process of sanctification, provides a sweet smelling aroma for God at their source within the heart's desires. On the other hand, when the prayers and acts are right-wised for a carnal Christian by the Holy

Spirit, then that is the adding of incense by the Spirit.

Strange Fire

Okay, now concerning strange fire, let's look at Leviticus.

Leviticus

10:1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

10:2 And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

Jack: Nadab and Abihu were priests who acted outside the will of God, which was specified in His instructions in Exodus. Only Aaron was allowed to burn the incense.

V: Yes, all of Aaron's lineage were priests, and Aaron himself was the High Priest.

This event relates with our unholy works being tested by fire and being burned up. It also connects with the unholy man being tested at the Great White Throne Judgment and cast into the lake of fire.

Okay, so what does this tell all of us who are now priests?

Wanda: It tells us not to replace holy living with religion or even sacrifice.

V: Yes, the replacing of holy living with religion or sacrifice is the use of strange fire.

Sandy: It is the difference between asking God to bless our endeavors when we should be praying, "God, what do you want me to do to bless you."

V: Yes.

Please remember the purpose of the priest. He is the one who takes the people's needs to God and sacrifices to Him. His focus is on sacrifices for sins. The New Testament priest sacrifices himself to minister to the people.

¹⁰ Romans 8:26 indicates that we are sometimes unable to pray the prayers that call for our own sacrificial behavior (the *kenosis*). It is at this point that the Spirit prays the prayer that we cannot utter. He groans because He knows that suffering and sacrifice will result for us from His prayer.

Jesus sacrificed Himself as **High Priest** and the perfect and eternal **Sacrifice** to pay for the sins of all people. We are the priests who sacrifice ourselves as imperfect and temporal sacrifices to bring the unsaved people to Jesus, the High Priest Who paid for their sin.

What is the Christian life all about, and why are we appointed priests? It is to take the people, their sins, and their needs to the Lord Jesus. Now if all of that is in focus, and if all of that is in place, and if God spends the whole Old Testament getting that focus in place to show you and me what we are supposed to do as New Testament priests, then our work must be pretty important. If we do not do that work, then we are not meeting our responsibilities and stand under God's judgment. The Old Testament is the larger part of the Bible, but it purposes to teach us what our jobs are.

What is our incense for? It is for making our Christian activity holy. If it becomes perverted so that it is for self-gain or some other kind of reason, then that is strange fire. Strange incense always appears when you are no longer thinking about the people, their needs, and God as the answer. It occurs when you are thinking about yourself and the applause of men. Strange incense and fire are exemplified in preaching for the purpose of gaining more offerings so that you can have more wealth for yourself and your church.

Strange incense and strange fire have to do with misalignment of our wills with the will of God. Gentiles were ignorant because they did not know God or what priests were. They did not know much of anything about Judaism except that the Hebrews went to the Temple to make sacrifices. If the priests brought the Gentiles into the Temple, that would be strange incense and strange fire for a priest because there is no place for an unholy person in the Temple.

However, if the priests went to the Gentiles and then took their needs to God, and

helped them to know that their highest need was forgiveness, then a conversion could possibly result. Conversion is made possible from good incense and good fire. Once converted, Gentiles could enjoy God's blessings by obeying Him but could not perform the duties of the priests. The office of priests in the Old Testament was a birthright, not something earned. Intrusion into the priestly duties would be strange incense and fire.

There is much more strange incense and strange fire going on today in Christianity than in the days of the Exodus. Our process has become temple-centered. Joining the church as a substitute for a God-centered conversion is typical today, and that perversion is strange incense and strange fire. The incense is strange because there is no right-wising of the person's life. The fire to consume the offering of the person is strange fire because the person is not sacrificing himself for **transformation** into a holy person. Instead the person is adopting Christianity via **conformation**.¹¹ The end result is that all unholy fakes will be cast into the lake of fire where the ultimate strange fire resides for eternity.

Ted: When the priest takes the needs of the person to God, God is the center of attention for the person, and the priest becomes secondary, and the temple moves out of the picture entirely. However, if the temple or the priest becomes central in attention, then . . .

V: . . . strange incense and strange fire result.

Ted: I was thinking about the prayer requests we had at the beginning of the class for certain unsaved people. If we do not pray for those people who do not know enough to pray for themselves, then who is going to go to God in their behalf. Prayers for the unsaved

¹¹ Conformation versus transformation is discussed in the book on Romans.

by holy Christians are critical for their salvation.

V: Amen! In the same way that Israel was on mission for God by being in yoke with Him, we are on mission for God by being in yoke with Jesus. Just like the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel who guided their people under God's Law, we are to perform the same functions under the New Covenant. To be team players, the saints of God must catch the vision of God's mission, i.e. to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).

The Old Testament saints gave of themselves and counted it a great honor to be in yoke with God. But somewhere this vision fell apart, and God's mission of winning the lost has become perverted and static. Christianity has become temple-centered and materialistic instead of Christ-centered and spiritual. We Christians have begun to applaud ourselves because we have God in the temple. We promote and serve the temple. We think that we are righteous because we attend worship in the temple. We are

repeating the sin against which Jeremiah fought during his entire life of ministry: "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord."

We do not fear being conquered by evil because we possess God in our temples. We feel compelled to get to the temple for making our sacrifices because we practice self-indulgence outside the temple in our daily lives. Likewise with ancient Israel's failure, right-wising our Christian lives has ceased to be our main issue. Instead, it is worship in the temple. Instead of laboring to join God in building His Kingdom, we labor to build our own local-church temple as an edifice to our idolatry.

Today, we build our church, and we are so holy in that place. We bring outsiders to the church so that they too can feel holy. Our lives of indulgence bring comfort and contentment at the cost of priestly sacrifice of self as incense and the true fire of God in the Christian's life. Strange incense and strange fire are widely prevalent in the Christianity of today.

Chapter Questions

1. Describe the Ark of the Covenant
2. Contrast the Tabernacle with the Temple.
3. Contrast incense with strange incense.

Chapter 12

DEFEAT SNATCHED FROM THE JAWS OF VICTORY

The Hebrews will allow fear to cause them to forget God's involvement with them. Amazingly, after seeing the many miracles that God had worked in redeeming the Hebrews from Egypt, they forgot His Power. God worked eye-popping miracles in plague after plague to secure the release of the Hebrews from Pharaoh. God then led the Hebrews by a column of fire by night and a column of smoke by day. He parted the Red Sea to give the Hebrews passage through it on dry land. He sealed their escape by drowning the pursuing Egyptian army by releasing the walls of water back on them. He miraculously provided life-giving water in the wilderness. He demonstrated control and victory in pitched battle between the Hebrews and the Amalekites who were barring the forward advance of the Hebrews.

The Hebrews forgot about those miracles that God had worked on their behalf. Class, please note that not only was faith in God's past demonstrations of His providential power forgotten, but God Himself was forgotten too. At their point of decision, the Hebrews never even looked to God or asked Him for directions. Instead, they looked only at the problem they faced and allowed fear to overwhelm them.

EXODUS 33

In this meeting between God and Moses, three requests are made in prayer, and a response from God is given for each. The three prayers follow consecutively in Exodus 33, and I want you to know all three prayers along with God's response to each of them.

Prayer #1

Exodus

33:12 And Moses said unto the LORD,

See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.

33:13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation [is] thy people.

33:14 And he said, My presence shall go [with thee], and I will give thee rest.

Moses prayer was: "Show me now thy way." God's response was: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

Does it seem to you that sometimes God answers your prayers like that? You say, "Show me something," and He says something entirely different. You are baffled and wondering about what He said in response.

Prayer #2

Exodus

33:15 And he said unto him, If thy presence go not [with me], carry us not up hence.

33:16 For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? [is it] not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that [are] upon the face of the earth.

33:17 And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

The prayer is about how Moses is going to know that he and the people have found grace in God's eyes. The answer is again baffling because God said that He will go with them and that He knows Moses by name. Moses still lacks certainty, but he does not give up.

He makes another request.

Prayer #3

Exodus

33:18 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

33:19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

33:20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

33:21 And the LORD said, Behold, [there is] a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:

33:22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:

33:23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

Moses prayed strongly and was persistent. He asked, and got a strange answer; he asked again, and he got another strange answer. Those strange answers did not stop him. He shifted from requesting proofs to requesting a look at God's Glory. Look at what the Lord did. He agreed to grant Moses' last request! God proceeded to show Moses a glimpse of His Glory from the rear by establishing a process whereby Moses would be protected from a fatal glimpse of God's face.

Moses is a strong, praying person. He is not going to be denied. He was puzzled by God's first two answers. Those kinds of answers may stop us, but they did not stop Moses. Even though Moses is having a hard time with the first two responses from God, he keeps at it.

There is a model here for us to adopt. When you pray, and you do not get the answer you think you are supposed to get, or you get an answer you have a hard time

understanding, that does not mean that you are supposed to stop there. You keep on plowing and pressing on. By wrestling with God, your faith will grow. Passivity and a fatalistic approach to life is not a faith walk. Faith is demonstrated by a confident approach to God. Certainly, you cannot be disrespectful, but you can keep approaching God. You can press God, and you can pursue God to get what you want.

You go after it. If you are absolutely certain that God is not distant, you will do that. If God is so distant that you think that there is too big of a gap between you and God, then you will become fatalistic. A fatalistic prayer is to shout over to God, "Oh, God, help me. . . ." When God does not answer that prayer then do not conclude thusly: "He is not helping me, so I guess He. . . ." That is not the faith approach. The faith approach is to go to God, get hold of His garment, hang on, and not be denied.

In the book of John the Phoenician woman provides a New Testament example of persistent prayer. She replied to Jesus that even the dogs get the crumbs from the table. That is strong praying because she argued her case in a way that showed that she was not to be denied. That kind of praying gets results.

Moses has given us a good example here. I want you to remember these three prayers and these responses. Look at the progression. Moses began with requesting information that would prove that he had understood and could trust God's Word. The progression ended at a request to see God's Glory.

God's Word is God Himself. Thus He will not bow to human desires for proof that He will do what He said. In His prior actions, He had already shown His trustworthiness. Giving another proof of His veracity beyond His miraculously extracting the Hebrews from the overwhelming power of Pharaoh was in no way needed. God was not going to bow to proving His veracity again to human indul-

gence. However, the third request was not about God's veracity being questioned but about His Own Personhood.

Moses had already seen the burning bush theophany. In that event, God had a conversation with Moses in which God had already told Moses that He was going to use Moses to bring the Hebrews out of Egypt to the Promised Land. When we question the veracity of God's explicit statements, we cannot expect to get the results that we are requesting because those questions are not from belief.

Look at your own life, and check your prayers. Every one of us is a praying person; every one of us has been in dialog with God. You have expressed your cares and your needs to God, and He has responded. Many of us are saying, "Well, that could not have been God; that is the wrong response." Or, "Why did He do what He did or not do what I asked?" You are puzzled. Do not let that stop you from praying. Just make sure that you are not questioning His veracity as expressed in His Word. If you are basing your prayers on His Word, then press on, grab hold of His garment, and do not be denied. Allowing yourself to be denied is a lack of faith.

Betty: I heard once that sometimes the answer from God could be no. God's no is implicit in the silence that so often follows prayer. Now my question is, if it is the will of God that the answer is no through silence, and I keep on praying, how can I know that the answer is no? Do you understand the question?

V: I think I do.

Betty: Because we are supposed to continue to pray.

V: There is a lot of communication back and forth, so you pray and pray. Many of us pray for God to do something that He has already told us to do. We are not hearing all that God says. This is the only time that

silence is God's *final* answer. God's Word may have already spoken to the issue. Do not expect Him to repeat Himself!

In some other times, silence is a test of your faith. If you pray, beseeching God, and He does not respond, that could very well be His testing your perseverance. Do not be fatalistic. If you know that God has not told you to do the thing that you are asking of Him (i.e. your prayer is a valid prayer), then do not take His silence for an answer.

Betty: Silence is not enough?

V: Silence is not enough when the prayer is valid because there is supposed to be some kind of an answer like with Moses. There is real dialog in prayer, similar to family dialog. It is the same principal that you would have with your child. No one would ignore the fervent and persistent request of one's child. A yes or no would be appropriate, but silence is not. So, pursue an answer when there is silence. Let me caution you, however, that you may not be listening intently enough to detect the answer.

Even God's no should contain some communication for you to understand His purpose. However, His no is sometimes a test as in the case of the Phoenician woman.

Lets compare the revelation of God in Exodus 34:6-9 against the intercession of Moses. Verses 6 and 7 are the revelation, and verses 8 and 9 are the intercession of Moses.

Exodus

34:6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

34:7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear [the guilty]; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth [generation].

34:8 And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

34:9 And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it [is] a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.

After Moses arrived at the assigned meeting place, God initiated the conversation by telling Moses His purpose concerning justice. Following that action by God, Moses' prayer is his response to God.

First you have the revelation of God concerning justice, and then you have the prayer of intercession by Moses. On the other encounters, there was first a prayer by Moses and then the response by God. This is a reversal because the revelation of God initiates the dialog, and then Moses responds to God.

In this dialog, God discloses His heart and His intentions regarding justice. Moses receives the revelation from God, and then he responds according to the revelation. His prayer now is shaped by what God has said. God has said that He is a gracious God and forgives sin or iniquity. Moses hears God clearly, and so he responds to what he had heard God say about gracious and forgiving. So Moses prayed: "If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin and take us for thine inheritance."

Notice how Moses included himself among those needing grace and forgiveness. Implicit in this request for forgiveness is the confession of sin. He is saying clearly here to God that "we are a stiff-necked people," and he is saying, "Would you please forgive our sin." This prayer of confession and need includes himself unlike what we sometimes do.

In a few lessons back, we had defined four groups of persons: God, the Moses group, the Aaron group, and the people group. The people group came up with an excuse. When we start excusing ourselves, God does not forgive. There has to be confession, and confession is built upon repentance. Repentance is agreeing with God. If you can agree with God, then you can see yourself as He sees you. If you cannot agree with God, then you see yourself from your own perspective, and that will generate excuses.

Most of the time, we all exalt ourselves because we think subconsciously that we are perfect. So, we cannot say, "forgive us of our iniquities." If we do, it is with a subconscious reservation.

This is good stuff on prayer. Moses prays and God responds. I am not doing it justice by a long shot because there is a lot here, and I am just skimming over the top. This would make wonderful sermon material. You could preach on the three prayers of chapter 33 and then follow it up with this one right here.

Joe: I think it is kind of interesting that Moses also asked the Lord to go along in their midst. It is like Moses is asking God to look upon sin and stay in their midst.

V: Granting that request is only possible, you see, when they ask for forgiveness. If they were self-righteous, they would still be stiff-necked and unforgiven. In this case, God would not be in their midst but would be standing over against them.

However, in answer to Moses' prayer of intercession, God provided a method of covering the sin and stiff-necks of the people. The Tabernacle, priest, and sacrificial system was how God provided for the temporary forgiveness of sin so that He could remain in their midst.

EXODUS 34

What follows is an after-deliverance

warning. Class, we have been delivered from the bondage and wages of sin. Thus this after-deliverance warning applies directly to us. Please understand it and heed it. Many of our ranks are falling into this temptation.

Exodus

34:10 And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou [art] shall see the work of the LORD: for it [is] a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

34:12 Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:

34:13 But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:

34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name [is] Jealous, [is] a jealous God:

34:15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and [one] call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;

34:16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.

34:17 Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.

Please note that Christians will also be drawn into whoring after the other gods in the land because they will be pilgrims in the land just like these Hebrews were pilgrims. The inhabitants and owners of the land, you see, are the ones who have all the false gods. God does not want you to be willing to be in yoke with these people. If you do, then you will love and appreciate them, and when they go astray, you will be tempted to go with them because of your unwillingness to break that bond of friendship. Your yielding to temptation will result in your giving your sons and daughters in marriage to them.

Beware! We are not to be unequally yoked! Light and darkness are not be yoked. Defying God's warning on this has caused great suffering, grief, and tragedy for many unwary Christians. Many sons, daughters, and grandchildren have gone to hell because they have been trapped in ungodly religions because of marriages outside of our faith. If you love your children warn them. Do not allow your *phileo* (friendship) to extend to accepting unsaved people's behavior. Love (*agape*) the unsaved people but hate their sin. Warn them of hell, but stay away from their ways. And above all, do not intermarry with them.

God commands the Hebrews to stay equally yoked within their faith, break down the altars of other religions, take heed unto themselves, and not go into any kind of image worship. The Hebrews have already been through the molten calf idolatry! They have shown their propensity for idolatrous absurdities.

We have shown the same propensities as the Hebrews. So, my dear brethren, do not be unequally yoked or tolerate other religions in your midst. It would be good to memorize verses Ex. 34:10, 12-17. I think that if you could just memorize and apply those verses, a great deal of heartache and loss of our children to hell would be avoided.

EXODUS 35

We have already talked about the willing heart in the building of the Tabernacle. At this point God mentions it again.

Exodus

35:21 And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, [and] they brought the LORD'S offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.

Please notice that the heart stirred up the person and his spirit influenced his will. First there is the emotion of one's heart. Emotion

resides in the soul, but it has influence on the will. The deciding factor on the will is the addition of the person's spirit. When the soul and the spirit align, the will is moved as the product.¹

I bring this up to show how the emotions initiate actions. These actions can be for good or bad. Thus, you should see how bad music, alcohol, drugs, environment, company, and entertainment can result in terrible decisions for people who lack enough spiritual maturity to withstand bad influences on the soul.

We will now go to Exodus 35:25-26, which deals with the connection of wisdom with work.

Exodus

35:25 And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, [both] of blue, and of purple, [and] of scarlet, and of fine linen.

35:26 And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' [hair].

Now, all work is not always wisdom. However, work towards God's goal is wisdom. These women are working towards God's goal of providing for the Tabernacle and clothes for the priests. Before worship according to God's prescribed form can begin, the things that go into that worship have to be made. So there is a goal for the work.

Sacrifice and giving are manifest not only in the offerings of materials but also in the labor that must also be provided. Providing the materials and putting hands to the task of crafting the Tabernacle is leading to the nation's worship of God. Wisdom must see the end goal of worship. Just blind offerings or blind work is not wisdom.

Here are two good verses about wisdom, and I think you can find some other state-

ments about wisdom and do a good sermon or a good lesson on nothing but wisdom. You can point towards the good of work. Instead of viewing work as an oppressive thing, it should be seen as an expression of faith towards God's goal.

Exodus

36:5 And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the LORD commanded to make.

36:6 And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.

Oscar: The people were giving from a willing, loving heart, completely unrestrained.

V: Yes, can you imagine a Baptist church trying to stop the people from giving?

The Hebrews are expressing love and gratitude to a gracious God. Notice that they are nomadic people, who have been self-centered, complaining, stiff-necked, and idolatrous up to this point. They have shown amazing aptitude for doing everything wrong! But at this point there are many willing hearts.

Applied to today, even the lowest common denominator of a church can be an unrestrained, carefree giver. Even the ones who danced naked around a molten calf can change into useful soldiers in God's army. It seems incongruous to see how God can use the worst sinners for His greatest work. Over the long haul, it is the one who survives God's chastening and turns to the work who is wise. Turning away from work as something detestable is unwise.

Please note that in the midst of much sin and faithlessness, the giving exceeded their needs. So Moses gave a commandment throughout the camp that the offering and work for the sanctuary be stopped.

¹ How the body, soul, and spirit interact is discussed at length in the course on Romans.

Before we go to Exodus 40, I want to show you my daughter's name in Chapter 38, verse 26.

My daughter is named Rebekah, but we call her Bekah. The word bekah is found in verse 26: "a bekah for every man." The Bible says that a bekah is only half a shekel. I am going to tease her with that when she gets home from college.

EXODUS 38 AND 40

Remember how in a prior chapter, we saw how Aaron had really messed up bad in his idolatry. We identified all the categories of players in his great sin. Now look at what God says in verse 12.

Exodus

40:12 And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water.

40:13 And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

40:14 And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats:

40:15 And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.

I am amazed at the graciousness of God. When Aaron had committed such a great sin, God is still willing to use him. God says, "Bring Aaron and wash him and anoint him and put on him the garments of the priesthood, and bring his sons and do likewise with them. They are going to do this ministry unto me throughout their generations." Our God is truly gracious.

Every one of us has betrayed God. As a result, some of us get into bondage and no-hope situations because it is hard to understand the depth of God's gracious forgiveness. Even when we have betrayed Him and

disappointed Him with the deepest, darkest, meanest, most treacherous behavior imaginable, God will still forgive us if we will repent! It even makes us nauseous to think about our betrayals. God will still use us; He will still use you! Can you repent and turn to God and ask Him? God will restore you just like He did with Aaron whom He called up before the entire congregation and said, "Wash him and anoint him, put the garments on him; he is going to minister unto me." There is always hope with God!

We all have participated in the hope that God provides. You have hope now because your studying this course is evidence that you have hope! You are equipping to minister unto God. This class is part of your putting the garments on. This lesson is your being anointed. You are being robed, anointed, and commissioned by God to minister unto God. This message is not just to you. It is not a private message, not at all, and it is not a message just for the clergy. It is a message to be proclaimed to all Christians because, you see, every saved person who bears the name of Christ is a priest unto God. Every Christian is to be washed, anointed, robed, and commissioned to minister unto God for eternity!

NUMBERS 13 AND 14: FAILURE

The Sinai Peninsula has the the Red Sea surrounding three sides of it. The Hebrews leave Egypt by crossing the Red Sea into the western shores of the Sinai. Then God leads them south in order to avoid the Philistines. As they travel south, the murmurings, bitter water, and the battle with the tribe of Amalek occur. At Mount Sinai in the lower part of the peninsula (in my estimate), occurs Moses' mountain experience and the molten calf incident.

From this point in which the tabernacle and priesthood have been established, the

Hebrews are going to be led on a direct path to the Promised Land. They are the same people, but they are now fully prepared by God to implement His Plan. So, the children of God turn north toward the land that God has appointed unto them.

When the Hebrews get close to Kadesh-Barnea, they are going to send some spies into the land of Canaan to see how to go in and take the land that has been promised to them. The spies are going to come back and give a devastating report.

There are two men who give good reports that are couched within God's perspective, but the other ten give reports that are based on the human perspective of human limitations: "We cannot possibly defeat the inhabitants. Those people are giants. They are secure, and they are stronger than we are." God is left completely out of their bad reports, and fear prevails over the people. The people leave Kadesh-Barnea, and they walk in circles in the Sinai wilderness until all the fearful adults die off.

Class, this is a picture of salvation! In our justification, we leave the land of bondage to sin. We cross the sea, baptism's demarcation. We murmur and face the hardships of life in the wilderness. We fight a battle with Satan's attempt to forestall our journey. We arrive in our freedom to the point in which we are ready to put our lives on the line in the full achievement of our goals. Carnal leaders instill their fear in us via their limited perspectives. So, we then plateau in our spiritual growth and achieve nothing for God. We spend the rest of our lives gathering manna and talking about our justification, baptism, worship in the Tabernacle, and manna. We just walk in circles and praise God for keeping us safe in our circles and wait until we grow old and die.

The Church is not taking any land. If the Church fights any battles, it is about maintaining its little circular path in the wilderness

(the geography that no others want). The only severe battles that the Church is willing to fight are among each other. The Church's testimony is one of impotence. It has quit serving God's commission to go into all the world in evangelism. Now, it is content to have all the world to come to the desert land in the Sinai and join the Church in circle-walking.

The Hebrews' crossing of the Red Sea was considered baptism. Baptism is the marking of God's people as a Holy People, a people cleansed and set aside for God's exclusive use. From the point of baptism, God's people are launched on a pilgrimage. That pilgrimage is sanctification! There are tests along the way following baptism.

War is not the first test. God led the Hebrews away from the short route that would have taken them right through Philistia. God said that the Hebrews were not ready for battle with the Philistines. He wanted to train them up by giving them some smaller tests. After the traveling tests with the provision of drinking water, God chose to take the Hebrews into their first battle with the Amalekites, a tribe that was much smaller than the Philistines. Plus, God also wanted to build some backbone in His people before they faced a large enemy.

These tests are faced by everybody because there is something for everybody to do, not just Moses and Aaron. Moses leads, but everybody walks along. Families have little ones to be cared for, baggage to carry, and chores to be done. There are many things to be done, and everybody must do their part. Some are sick, old, and crippled, but some are strong. The strong must help the sick get along down the road. There is much community effort here. Everybody plays a role; nobody is left behind.

In every large undertaking by a large group, there are some who will be dragged—kicking and screaming. In every meeting

there was whining and crying, but no one was left behind. There was a training process, and the leaders were being trained to be patient, to be thorough, to watch over others. The young dependent ones are being trained by example because they are going to assume those leadership roles. The differences in the tasks are suited to the abilities of the individuals. Some set up the tents and some took them down, some went out and fetched the food and water, and some distributed it.

Work was distributed over the group. Aaron's tribe was in charge of the Tabernacle and all the processes of worship.

There is training, leading, discipline, and judging going on. As the nation moved along, there would be squabbles among the people, and the judges were called on to establish and maintain justice.

Coordinating the movements of a large group is no easy task. We think that the Christian life should be easy, right? We have been conditioned to think that the Christian should be able to just glide along the primrose path because we are beloved children of almighty God. The children of God do not sweat and labor and put up tents and take them down, do they? These mundane things are done for them by somebody else. Wrong! Everything in your life has to be taken care of by you in your pilgrimage of sanctification.

God will help you, but you have to do the work and fight the battles. God will provide the miracles when He decides that they are needed in His Plan. He made the sun to stand still for the Hebrews in battle. When Moses' hands were up, Joshua and his warriors prevailed; when Moses' hands were down, the enemy prevailed. God provided water out of a rock! God turned the bitter water into sweet water. Miracles are embedded in the trials of sanctification. They will be there for you in your pilgrimage, but you must still align your will with God and do the work which will require self-denial, sacrifice, and suffering.

Without the alignment with God and its accompanying work, there will be NO miracles!

After the Hebrews have gone through all this work of cooperation in the simple journey, they finally get to a point where they are going to be tested in battle. This test is beyond the murmurings and the trials of thirst. They are actually going to be tested in battle! It is in battle where you face death. People on both sides are going to die.

Every one of us likewise will be tested. You will face some terrifying things. You can cut and run back into the wilderness, but you will die alone without God's miracles. You must fight to win for God. You may die, but you must die for God. You must force yourself to face the enemy in a fight to the death. Your desire for self preservation will be great, but you will know that turning your back on the enemy will invite death because you have no armor to protect your backside. In every battle, mental war over your will occurs in your mind.

God established a Covenant with His chosen people, His Laws were written, and His people were sanctified in a holy ceremony. All of that had been done. Then, there was the breaking of the Covenant by well-meaning people, the people who loved God and were grateful for His deliverance. God then established the Tabernacle, priests, and sacrificial process of worship to deal temporarily with the sin of breaking the covenant. But the pressing on of the journey continued toward the Promised Land. Trials and battles were faced in the journey, but finally the children of God arrived within striking distance of the Promised Land. All that remained was the taking of the Promised Land and living in it under the Kingship of God.

The taking of the land was to be a joint effort. The Hebrews would be in yoke with God in their pursuit of His promise to give it

to them. However, the Hebrews had to do what they had already been doing in their journey to this point. They had to prepare, cooperate, and actually fight the battle. Belief of God was all that was lacking. The lack of belief of God's Word and in Who He is caused the entire nation to hesitate and fail.

Likewise, you will be tested on your journey many times. These tests will be preparing you to believe God's Word and Who He is. All that you go through will be in preparation for progressively bigger battles that you must face. The preparation, leading the people behind you, continuous commitment, and the fighting must all be done. As you pursue the promise on the other side of death by fighting the enemy, God enables you to drive the enemies out from before you on this side of death. He does not drive them out while you stand back on the perimeter, and say, "Oh, God, drive them out, and I will occupy the land!" No, God does not do the work alone. Get your sword in your hand and enter the battle, and then God will drive them out through you! Get up off your duff and go, you warriors of God!

When you get to this point in your studies, you are supposed to be warriors. You are supposed to be ready and to have developed a trust in God because He has demonstrated Himself all through your process of sanctification. Now you are approaching the point of glorification. What happens to you if you just dump the final battle, stumble, and fall before you penetrate the Holy Land? You dishonor God by defying all your prior training to trust God. Glorification, you see, is going to come at the end of sanctification. Not reaching God's goal for you reduces the rewards that God has for you. God has for you more than you can imagine. Unimaginable rewards are being held by God just for you, but you must penetrate. You must go all the way. In order to do so, you must give yourself as a sacrifice to God for His use in His blessing the people.

To be a warrior against Satan and against all the enemies of darkness, you must go forward in battle by trusting in God and His Word. If you do that, you will be victorious. Even if you get killed in the battle, you will be victorious. Wield the Sword of the Spirit and yield yourself to the guidance of the Spirit.

If the Hebrews had not given in to their fear, they would have penetrated right into the Holy Land. God would have fought their battle with them and given them an earned victory. The unique thing about God is that when He says that He will give it to you, He does not mean that you are to just sit down and wait for Him to do all the work. He will not go out there fight the battle, win the victory, and then invite you to come share in the spoils (except in the case of justification). Everything in sanctification is always an in-yoke-with-God enterprise. It is taking God's burden on yourself. It may feel like you are walking up hill and carrying an overwhelmingly great weight. However, God is doing all the heavy lifting. If He took His hands away, the weight would smash you down into nothing. You contribute to the struggle your will and all your power and skill, and God provides the rest. He adds just enough to your maximum for you to achieve the impossible.

Now, if you go to church and listen to the majority, you may get these seeds of fear: "Oh there are giants in the land. Be careful. Our children will become a prey; they will eat our children." Please turn to Numbers 14:1-4:

Numbers

14:1 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

14:2 And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!

14:3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

14:4 And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

At the point of decision, the Hebrews let fear overcome them. They wanted to depose Moses and Aaron and elect a captain who would lead them back into Egypt.

They wanted to do the one thing that God could never bless. They wanted to return to the slavery from which God had turned the world upside down in order to free them. God had taken them out of Egypt, and He had made His Covenant with them. The whole world watched the journey of the Hebrews under the protection and blessings of God. Now, the Hebrews wanted to abort all connections with God and return to Egypt? I think that they were flirting with execution from God because His reputation for divine power, wisdom, and providence were at stake. Remember that God had threatened to kill them after Aaron's molten bull incident.

Amazingly, the Hebrews' second plea was, "Would to God we had died in the wilderness." To this plea, God said, "Okay, I can give you that; you are going to die in the wilderness! You are going to walk in circles until your carcasses fall and rot in the wilderness."

Numbers

14:31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.

14:32 But [as for] you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.

Every one of us is facing tests and failures. No matter how bad we have failed, there is redemption available at repentance. You can repent like Aaron did, you can be freshly anointed like Aaron was, and you can

go forward from where you are.

Accomplishing anything in ministry requires overcoming fear. It is up to you to cast fear out, to overcome fear with the love of God. Love Him so much that what they do to you matters less than disappointing God. Just go forward with all your might, and then God will manifest His great power, wisdom, and love to accomplish His plan through you.

Fear is what we are up against. Now we can yield to it and die in the wilderness. The Hebrews chose to yield to their fears, and God said, "Okay, I will take your children who were supposedly going to be eaten by the giants in the land, and I am going to use them to go in and take the Promised Land." These are the choices that we can make—face your fears or yield to them. If you yield to your fears, you may cut and run back toward Egypt, or you can stay where you are and walk in circles for the rest of your life.

Where are you in your life? Have you come through the murmurs, or are you still murmuring? Have you come to the bitter waters and sweetened those up with the cross? Have you gotten to the initial battles? These are training battles because the big battles are still ahead. Have you come through some training battles? Are you still leading your people forward? Are you caring for the little ones and bringing them along? Are you being their example? Are you sending your spies out and listening to the spiritual spy when they come back? Who do you listen to? Do you listen to the majority? Or do you listen to the one who stands up and says, "We can do it." The choices are yours.

The book of Exodus is a very good picture of the doctrine of salvation. It demonstrates salvation's process in macrocosm of God's redemption of the Hebrews.

That same demonstration now is individualized into your life, but it is also corporate in the church. The Exodus is an image of your

pilgrimage. You are to pursue God and press on past your fears and deprivations. Do not murmur, but do realize that when you are on manna, you have not achieved trustworthiness as a warrior for God but are just in the discipline and training stage.

When the Hebrews decided to go forward into the land, they did so by placing their fate in God's Hands. In this way their fears were conquered, and God's power was quickly manifested in His parting the Jordan River. When the Hebrews penetrated the land, they attacked in a series of three actions in a divide and conquer strategy.

However, the Hebrew warriors who overcame their fears failed in a different way. They failed to do "everything" that God told

them to do, and that was to annihilate those people. This failure resulted in the intermarriage of God's children with the surviving pagans in the land. Then the Hebrews went whoring after other gods. That idolatry cost Israel dearly. God allowed other nations to conquer His beloved people so severely that Israel, the northern kingdom went completely out of existence. The southern kingdom, Judah, lasted about a century longer than her sister, but she too was eventually conquered and taken into captivity by Babylon. There is a terrible penalty for violating God's rules because God establishes them as beneficent rules which are intended for our welfare.

Chapter Questions

1. Describe the revelation of God in Exodus 34:6-7 and the intercession of Moses in Exodus 34:8-9.
2. What is the message of Exodus 34:10-17?

CONCLUSION

Is it not amazing how much resistance the Hebrews put up against God as He answered their request for help in their enslavement to Egypt? What brought about such resistance? I think that the Hebrews wanted their rescue to conform to their own ideals. Never mind that the Egyptians were killing all the Hebrew male babies and oppressing the adults with bone-weary labor, they still wanted to be rescued their way.

Exodus teaches us about how God saves us. Because of Adam's fall, we fell with him into the devil's hands. We have been enslaved to sin and are in need of God's rescue. Our situation is very similar to that of the Hebrews' enslavement in Egypt.

When Israel cried out to God in their sufferings from enslavement, God raised up a deliverer in the person of Moses. God's providence was already at work by providing for Moses' rescue from the ongoing infanticide. Moses was raised to adulthood inside Pharaoh's household and, therefore, enjoyed all of the privileges of royalty. In God's deliverer, the Egyptian and Hebrew worlds were joined together within the personhood of Moses.¹ Moses' mission was to deliver Israel from its enslavement to Egypt. Even though his first attempt misfired because he used the wrong approach, God gave him a second chance.

Moses angered God when he allowed his fear of failure to gain the upper hand in his

submission to God. Fear versus faith was the test for Moses, and it is also our test as well.

Moses questioned God about his speech impediment. God told him that His solution would be His Own Personal Presence with Moses' mouth. When we reject God's solution as Moses did, we too will anger God and suffer a lowering of our involvement with God in His work.

When Moses made his first request of Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go, their suffering increased. Increased suffering should not be viewed as a strange and unexpected consequence of obeying God. Just as Pharaoh resisted God's plan for the Hebrews, Satan will resist God's plan for you. He will try his best to use increased sufferings to persuade you to give up your mission from God.

God's plan is to seek and to save all that is lost (Lk. 19:10). When you were added to His Kingdom, you were sanctified for use in His plan. He sets about to teach you, equip you, and grow you into the spiritual warrior who can accomplish your part of the never-changing plan. God takes care of everything, and all you have to contribute is your will. Your personhood was made perfectly holy when you were added to His Kingdom. That onetime event is called justification.

Your will is another matter because it is the determining factor for the rest of your life. Your ongoing life is composed of continuous decisions to obey or disobey God. In this period which is called sanctification, Satan, self, and others are in competition with God to sway your will. Satan's death-grip is broken upon justification, but he will launch a

¹ In Jesus, God and Man are joined together in his personhood.

campaign to ruin God's profitable use of you in His plan of adding others to His Kingdom. Satan will work through temptation and deception to reduce your profitability to God. Temptation is used against your flesh, and deception is used against your ignorance and immaturity.

Satan tempts and entices our flesh. He gives us pleasure in the moment of our obeying his suggestions. The terrible consequences of grabbing at that fleeting pleasure is a lifelong regret that is filled with pain, suffering, and death. The fleeting moment of pleasure appeals to our flesh, and the cost to our lives is not seen because of our ignorance and immaturity.

God does not entice; He commands. His rewards are based on the trustworthiness of His Word. He commands obedience now and promises rewards in the future. The time of receiving and enjoying those rewards is called glorification.

Our time of sanctification is composed of our choices. Are we mature enough to see the actuality of God's promises in the future? Are we able to deny ourselves the fleeting pleasures of the flesh? Are we mature enough to see through Satan's lies? Can we trust God's Word more than what we can see with our eyes? Jesus answered those questions with His Life in order to provide our justification as a gift. But He has more to share with us if we will but answer those questions the same way that He did. He says that if we will deny ourselves, pick up our crosses, and follow Him, we will be His disciples (Mt. 16:24). He has great and wonderful rewards for those who will do those things for the

remainder of their lives (Mt. 13:44; Lk. 12:33).

My dear friend, you are in the same role of the Hebrews who were rescued out of Pharaoh's hands. You are being taught and tested as you grow spiritually on your journey to heaven. God's plan is to develop you into a great warrior who can fight the enemy who is occupying God's land that He owns and has given into our hands. As we grow, we will be given leadership responsibilities similar to that of Moses and Aaron. Are you grumbling and complaining like the Hebrews? Have you forgotten the great and wonderful things that God has already done in your life? Do you believe that God will deliver what He has promised?

The doctrine of salvation is clearly shown in God's book of Exodus. Justification comes after the miracles that are used to defeat Satan. The redemption of the Hebrews from Pharaoh foreshadowed our redemption from Satan. The crossing of the Red Sea was the event of baptism which marked the Hebrews as a people who were dead and then arose in newness of life in which they had become a separate kingdom belonging to God. Our New Testament baptism does the same thing.

Sanctification is where the Hebrews fail. It is where we fail too. The reason for their failure and ours too is that it depends not on God alone; it depends on our choices. Our ignorance and immaturity causes us to make wrong decisions. We fail to obey God for myriads of reasons. Like Aaron who made the molten calf and worshiped it, we do similar idiotic things.

Satan will offer compromises to us for the purpose of getting us off God's explicit path.

Pharaoh offered the Hebrews many such compromises. Deception employs compromise by tempting us to take the easy way when God's way is always the long, hard journey. Compromise has the appearance of victory, and God's way has the appearance of defeat. Just look at the suffering of Jesus and His eventual death on the cross as a perfect example.

The immature are especially susceptible to the deception of compromise. Thus, deception is the area in which the pastors must lead the congregation through the pitfalls in order to stay on God's path. Obedience has no compromise within it. We either obey God or we do not. A partial obedience is not obedience. **COMPROMISE IS DISOBEDIENCE!**

Four lessons were taught to us by the offers of compromise that were made to Moses. Amazingly, Moses withstood these offers and obeyed God perfectly in his assigned task to rescue the people from Egyptian slavery. The four lessons are:

1. Holiness excludes political correctness. The Christian must buck the tide of government. Ideal government is described in Romans 12, but the destruction of the U.S. Constitution that has occurred on our watch has eliminated America's government from being ideal in any way. However, if the church should repent, our land would be restored back to the great land of freedom (2 Chron. 7:14).
2. Christians are otherworldly. We are citizens of God's Kingdom who live as pilgrims in our wilderness journey toward that Kingdom. We cannot be mere citizens of Satan's kingdom holding on to a

little spirituality while practicing good citizenship.

3. All Christians are ministers. We cannot allow elitism to diminish our ministries. God's plan for Christians is for the church leaders to educate and train them for personal fellowship of God in personal ministry. We leaders should get the hands of our trainees into the Hand of God and then get out of the way.
4. Christians must practice stewardship over ownership. Singleness of devotion is required in the *kenosis*. Materialism will compete for our devotion. Thus, we are managers, not owners, of all that God has put into our hands. When God wants it to be sacrificed, it must be sacrificed. Love of those resources which stems from the concept of ownership will pervert our ability to make profits for God.

Murmurings are a sign of self-centeredness. Every saint will encounter bitter waters in our travels toward the Promised Land. Will we sweeten those waters with the cross, or will we drink them as they are and poison our lives? The only way to sweeten them is by looking across the chasm of death to see the future exaltation that is found in the glorification that will come. If we will but take up that cross and follow Jesus, then the bitterness will be sweetened by that sweet knowledge that we are in yoke with Jesus and will share in His inheritance. The *kenosis* can be the sweetest life that one can possibly experience. All it takes is taking up the cross of self-sacrifice in unwavering obedience.

The New Testament delineates the New Covenant that has been initiated by Jesus. Jesus was an heir of the blessings of the

Abrahamic Covenant by His Birthright. However, the Mosaic Covenant, which serves to point out the failure of mankind's behavior, was also fulfilled by Christ in His perfect obedience of His Father. He then established the New Covenant (His last will and testament) with His Father that any person who would believe in Him would be made an heir to His Kingdom. With the death of Jesus, that last will and testament was concretized into an eternal covenant, the New Testament. Then with the resurrection of Jesus to serve as our eternal High Priest, our failures in our sanctification journey could be forgiven by His ongoing priestly work.

The Mosaic Covenant that is manifested in God's Ten Commandments serves to point out our failures. Those commandments are God's apodictic Law, and man's laws should be extrapolations from them. Other than Israel's government, the U.S. Constitution formed the only other country in the world to build its apodictic and casuistic laws on the basis of God's Law.²

In the Exodus, the Tabernacle was established by God in order to deal with disobedience. Later, it was replaced by the Temple. Are the Tabernacle and the Temple connected

with the Christian's pilgrimage of today? Yes, the Tabernacle is mobile and therefore is associated more with the journey of sanctification. The Temple is stationary and is therefore associated more with the permanence of justification. To emphasize one over the other is to run the risk of losing our balance in the full scope of the doctrine of salvation.

Well class, there you have the doctrine of salvation explained and demonstrated in the redemption of Israel as found in the wonderful book of Exodus. But a warning should be issued to you that to know it is never enough! We must DO it! The nation of Israel snatched defeat right out of the jaws of victory at the very last moment. All that they had come through was lost at the last moment. No, they did not cease being the people of God. But they lost the reward of living in the Promised Land. The same thing can happen to you. You can be a justified saint who is headed for the rewards of glorification, but you can lose those rewards by failing in your journey. Your new birthright of eternal life in heaven cannot be lost, but sharing in the rewards that Jesus owns is not a birthright. It is to be earned. Israel did not earn the rewards, and we must learn from their failure.

² God's Law played the major role in the formation of American law. Israel was a nation before it reached the Promised Land. America was not. The founders of America were Christians seeking a land where they could practice freedom of worship. Where Israel sought a theocracy throughout its borders, America's founders did not. Even though the Roman Catholic founders who came over with Columbus did want the

new land to practice uniform worship, the Baptists did not. Under God's providence, the earliest immigrants did not establish a nation. They established colonies of different denominations of Christianity instead. Under God's guidance, it was in the struggle for the American colonies to unite into a nation that was composed of different Christian denominations that freedom of religion was delineated within the Constitution of the United States.

ANSWERS TO CHAPTER QUESTIONS

Chapter 1

1. Why did the Egyptians oppress the Hebrews?
The Hyksos in 1800-1570 BC are the shepherd kings described in the Amarna tablets. These were rulers from foreign lands who had conquered Egypt, but were expelled by Ahmose in 1570 BC. A change of attitude toward the Hebrews occurred after the expulsion. The Egyptians feared Hyksos rulers who were friendly toward the Israelites whose rate of births and strength were growing. When the Egyptians resumed self-rule, they became anxious about the prolific birth rate and a possible alliance between the Hebrews and enemies of Egypt.
2. What are the three motifs in Exodus that emphasize a particular part of the office-paradigm for the work of God?
 - a. The Exodus (Chapter 1—15) emphasizes the kingly office.
 - b. The Wilderness Journey (Chapters 15—18) emphasizes the prophetic office.
 - a. The Sinai Wanderings (Chapter 19—end) emphasize the priestly office.
3. What is the Old Testament understanding of history?
It is God centered. God manages history; He moves it and limits it. History has its source in God and takes place for God. God is sovereign and the Lord of history. God uses history as the vehicle of revelation. It is a linear concept.

Chapter 2

1. How does the action of the midwives justify defying government rule by Moses' parent? How does it apply to us?
When the governor or government departs from God's Laws, God's people cannot join in the departure. We stay with God's Laws. We line up with God and take the hit from whatever comes our way. That is the cost of being politically incorrect. There is going to come a time in the near future when there is going to be a choice that you will be required to make. You will choose either being politically correct in order to live or being politically incorrect and getting your head cut off. This is called civil disobedience; Moses' mother as well as Moses himself practiced civil disobedience in a way that was appropriate to God.
2. Describe the *Kenosis* in terms of how we should apply it to our lives.
God wants you and me to live the same kind of sacrificial life that Jesus lived. Be humble by denying yourself, be willing to die to yourself by taking up your cross, and be obedient by following Jesus who will lead you to forsake worldly status and wealth in order to become pilgrims on your mission-filled journey to heaven.
3. How does this portion of Exodus teach us about our responsibility in raising our children?
We have responsibilities to God for raising our children, and God is going to do a reckoning with us for how the children are raised. Our coming judgment is going to be big-time serious. If you ever get to the point where you are teaching a Sunday school or you are a pastor, and you are not teaching God's babies to love God and to follow God as pilgrims in His chosen path for them, then a reckoning is ahead for you.
4. Describe the opposite of the *Kenosis*, the walk that Satan wants us to take. Describe it in terms of the contrast to the *Kenosis* itself.
We encounter many temptations for us to turn away from sacrifice and toward self-indulgence. Most Christians do not understand the *kenosis* that is absolutely essential for discipleship. So, please be aware that your temptations will come not only from the world but also from our brothers and sisters in Christ. As Christ lived His life in humility and sacrifice in order to save others, we are tempted to look after ourselves first and then others only when it is convenient.

Chapter 3

1. In Exodus 4:16 through the rest of chapter 4, God gives His plan. Describe God's plan. Your answer should include the following:
 - a. The Hebrews will beseech Pharaoh to let the people go on a three-day journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to their God.
 - b. Pharaoh will not let them go.
 - c. A contest will develop between Moses and Pharaoh.
 - d. God will defeat Pharaoh, and the Egyptians will eventually send the Hebrews out with their blessings.
2. What is God's staff?
It is the cross—the *kenosis* which is self-denial, sacrifice, and strict obedience. There is no miracle power outside of following Jesus
3. What are Moses' objections and God's answers?
 - Who am I to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt? God says that He will be with Moses.
 - I am not eloquent but slow of speech. God says that He will be with Moses' mouth.
 - Send someone else. God says that He will send Aaron with Moses to be his spokesman.
4. Why did God get angry?
Because of Moses' unbelief and resistance.

Chapter 4

1. Why were the Hebrews angry after the first request by Moses for Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go?
Because the request was rejected plus they got additional work.
2. What was God's plan for the Hebrews removal from Egypt?
The plan was that Pharaoh was not going to let the people go, and God was going to show the strength of His Own Hand against Pharaoh.
3. Would the water have turned to blood if Aaron had not smitten it with the rod?
Human agency is essential in the work of God. God has power to make it happen by just His spoken Word. He could have just turned the water to blood, but He told Aaron to go and smite the water with the rod. A partnership of God and man is demonstrated here.
4. How do we glorify the Lord?
Serving and glorifying the Lord is not automatic. It comes through relation, struggle, and freedom. If it were automatic, you would be puppets, and He would be pulling your strings. That is not what He is all about.
5. What is the difference between falling in love and *agape*?
Agape is not sentiment! It is completely within the realm of one's will. Falling into love is sentiment, but *agape* is a unilateral choice to sacrifice in order to benefit another person, the object of that choice. God's love is by choice, and it is totally volitional. God tells us to love our wives. That is not a sentiment or an emotion; it is to choose to love her. In order to do so, we must become sacrificial, and our actions do not depend upon responses. We do it because God said so. That is unilateral, sacrificial, beneficial actions for the object of that love, *agape*.
6. What is the difference between the plague of the flies and the plagues preceding that plague?
All of the plagues up to this time have been over everything. This time, God placed an invisible barrier between the land occupied by the Egyptians and the land that was occupied by the Hebrews. Flies are everywhere except in the land of Goshen, which is occupied by the Hebrew people.
7. What did Pharaoh offer when he was requested to allow the children of Israel go a three-day journey to worship, and what was the temptation faced by the children of Israel?
To allow them to worship just where they are. The temptation would be to do so because they could continue to make bricks and not get behind in their goal.

Chapter 5

1. Who hardened Pharaoh's heart?
God and Pharaoh worked in concert
2. Describe the macrocosmic understanding of justification as demonstrated in Exodus.
Justification is the redemption from enslavement to sin and its penalty. God's rescuing the Hebrews from Pharaoh's enslavement and abuse of them via power is a macrocosmic look at justification.
3. Describe the first three offers of compromise and the lessons to be learned.
 - a. The first one was to stay in the land and do their prayer and sacrifices. This is the temptation for worldly religion.
 - b. The second was to go a little ways to do their prayer and sacrifices. This is the temptation for a lukewarm kind of Christianity.
 - c. The third was for just the men alone to go all the way for prayers and sacrifices. This is the temptation for clericalism.

Chapter 6

1. What is the fourth compromise?
The fourth compromise was where the people are told to go and do their worshiping, and to take their children with them, but to leave the flocks (Exodus 10:24). Moses declared that they would not know what they would need until they got to the place of sacrifice.
2. What does it mean to be sold out to God?
To be sold out to God is to be one minded, emptying your self, singleness of heart and purpose.
3. What is the fifth compromise that Pharaoh offers?
Pharaoh offered to let the men and children go. The leaving of the women behind was a variation of one of the prior offers.
4. What does the three days of darkness for the Egyptians but light for the Israelites mean?
Christians are the light in a world of darkness; unregenerated people have no light unless you bring light to them. They have no light, but they can hope. They can work under the deception of a hope in their self-righteousness, but their hope is misguided. They could end up forever in the darkness. We have the light to show them the way because their light does not work. Their light is actually darkness. They can rely on education, wealth, and power, but still they have no light. As a matter of fact the darkness gets thicker. The more they work, the thicker it gets. We stand in the light, and we must share it with them to bring them to the Lord.
5. What are the bitter herbs or what do they represent in Exodus 12:8 where it says, "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it."
It reminds them of the bitterness of their sojourn in Egypt and the bitterness to be encountered in their journey of redemption.

Chapter 7

1. How are the bitter waters that we all encounter made sweet?
The cross of Christ must be borne by us through the bitter waters of life's troubles. When we see those bitter waters as a test of our commitment for steadfast obedience and the source of our laying up treasure in heaven, they become sweetened.
2. How is our hunger to be handled?
Jesus said that His meat was to do the will of God. Our meat, then, is to do the will of God also.
3. Is spiritual warfare optional? Explain the danger.
 - a. A lack of understanding.
4. When Jethro advised Moses to adopt different methods for administering justice, Moses' reaction reveals his nature. What things were revealed?
It is not optional because Satan intends to destroy every person that he can. If the person is saved, then Satan will employ every device at his disposal to destroy that Christian's spiritual life. If he is successful, then he will plunder and savage everything under that Christian's watch care and destroy the vulnerable family members, friends, and perhaps even his church.

- b. Pride before God.
- c. A willingness to accept advice.
- d. A confidence in delegating authority.

- e. A confidence in people.
- f. A confidence in God's laws.

Chapter 8

1. Describe the "if" and the "then" of the Mosaic Covenant.
God gives both the "if" and the "then". The *if* is: "if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant." The *then* is: "then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."
2. Describe the "if" and the "then" of the Abrahamic Covenant.
The if is: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." The then is "and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

3. Describe the difference in fulfillment between the Abrahamic and the Mosaic Covenants.
Abraham fulfilled the Abrahamic Covenant by his leaving his home country and going to God's chosen land. The Mosaic Covenant requires a lifetime of perfect obedience.
4. When Jesus completed the Law, He gained all of its blessings. How did He pass on those blessings to us?
Jesus died a death that He did not owe because He performed the Law perfectly. He accredited that death to our accounts. Upon His death, His testament was to make us His heirs. The death of the testator sealed the deal, and we share in His earned glory by going to heaven. He will even reward our sanctified life of discipleship by giving us additional rewards when we get to heaven.

Chapter 9

1. Define theophany.
It is the appearance of God in some visible manifestation
2. What is the danger in a values-based system?
We think that since our hierarchy has God on top, that our hierarchy has God's approval, and we allow various values in our hierarchy to rule in our day-to-day decisions. That system disallows God's ruling in every decision.
3. What is the difference between the First and Second Commandments?
The Second Commandment is about physical and visible things. The First Commandment could include physical images but not be limited to them. Other gods can be any physical or spiritual thing that guides your life.

4. When is the New Testament Sabbath?
Entering into the Lord's Sabbath occurs at salvation. It means that we are to stay morally clean and yield ourselves to Him without regard to the day. Sanctifying ourselves to Christ means that He becomes our Lord, 24/7. The Lord is our only value. He dominates our life and establishes and controls all other sub values.
5. What is the issue of the Ninth Commandment's prohibition against bearing false witness against our neighbor?
Traditionally, we have taken this commandment to mean the forbidding of lying. However, bearing false testimony against a neighbor could mean slandering rather than lying. Lying is a larger concept than slandering.

Chapter 10

1. Apodictic law is law by decree.
Casuistic law is known as case law.

2. Constitutional law is (apodictic, ~~casuistic~~) law. (Mark out incorrect answer).
3. Explain how freedom of religion is assured in America.

Government in America does not establish a state-approved church or religion. That means that a church, synagogue, temple, mosque, can be organized without interference by government or other religions. A person may choose not to be involved in any organized religion as well.

4. How did Hebrew slavery differ from slavery as we know it today?

Hebrew slavery was a form of voluntary slavery, limited to no more than six years unless the slave himself chose to make it permanent. Bonded slavery was an asset of last resort in an economic system that was built around justice. One of its purposes was to recompense the master for a debt or loss. Slavery

today is not voluntary; it has no limits, and the slave has no choice. Frequently today, girls are kidnapped and forced into sex slavery.

5. What was the purpose of a city of refuge?

A city of refuge was provided for a person who killed another person accidentally (manslaughter). As long as the person who did the killing (the slayer) was in the city of refuge, the family of the slain person could not act in revenge. This was punishment for the slayer in that his life was disrupted.

6. What punishment was provided for children who disrespected their parents or who struck (smited) them?

Death.

Chapter 11

1. Describe the Ark of the Covenant

- a. Box $2\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits.
- b. Made of Acacia wood overlaid with gold.
- c. Has four gold rings at lower corners fitted with two staves of acacia overlaid with gold.
- d. The Mercy Seat of pure gold was the lid or covering (*Kapporeth*) upon which God would meet with man.
- e. Two Cherubim with extended wings were on top of the box.
- f. Above the Mercy Seat and between the Cherubim was the "meeting place" of God and man.
- g. Inside the Ark was placed the Testimony

of God (Ten Commandments), Budding Staff, and Manna.

2. Contrast the Tabernacle with the Temple.

The Tabernacle is a mobile worship center. In it resides the Ark with its Mercy Seat. God did not reside in the Tabernacle, but He would meet with man on the Mercy Seat. The Temple was stationary, and God resided there. In it was that same Ark, and God would meet man at the Mercy Seat.

3. Contrast incense with strange incense.

Incense is the right wising of prayers and life that is done by the Holy Spirit. Strange incense is artificial right wising of disobedience via the pretense of formality.

Chapter 12

1. Describe the revelation of God in Exodus 34:6-7 and the intercession of Moses in Exodus 34:8-9.

God revealed Himself to Moses and declared that He was merciful, gracious, and longsuffering. He would forgive iniquity, but He would not overlook the guilty. He would visit the penalties for sin upon several of the father's following generations. Moses quickly

interceded for the Hebrews by asking God for mercy and forgiveness for all the Hebrews based on God's Own Words.

2. What is the message of Exodus 34:10-17?

Destroy all the pagan altars and do not intermarry with them. If you violate this rule, your children will go whoring after the false gods and end up worshiping molten idols.

GLOSSARY

Abhorred: regard with disgust and hatred; detest, hate, loathe, despise, execrate, regard with disgust, shrink from, recoil from, shudder at; formal abominate.

Accouterment: additional items of equipment, or other items for a particular activity.

Agape: a unilateral choice to sacrifice in order to benefit another person, the object of that choice

Amarna Tablets: written in the 15th century BC by the Hyksos. These tablets are clay tablets which look like small loaves of bread shaped like little bed pillows. They are round (fat in the middle), but they taper down to thin on the side; they are almost oval in shape around the middle. They would write on them by scratching into the clay

Animosity: strong hostility.

Apodictic law: from speech. *Apo* is from; *dictic* is to say. *Apodictic* law is law from decree. It is a law that is established by decree (constitutional law).

Apostasy: the abandonment or renunciation of biblical doctrine.

Ark of the Covenant: the wooden chest that contained the tablets of the laws of the ancient Israelites. Carried by the Israelites on their wanderings in the wilderness, it was later placed by Solomon in the Temple at Jerusalem.

Assuage: make (an unpleasant feeling) less intense; satisfy (an appetite or desire).

Candlestick: in the Tabernacle, it represents the light that is given by the Holy Spirit.

Carnal: relating to the flesh.

Castigate: reprimand, rebuke, admonish, chastise, chide, censure, upbraid, reprove, reproach, scold, berate, take to task.

Casuistic law: case law. It is based on a condition, i.e. if, then. If you will do this, then I will do that. They originate from, and are refinements of, apodictic laws.

Chide: scold or rebuke.

Circumcision: the removal of the foreskin of males.

Confiscation: the action of taking or seizing someone's property with authority; seizure.

Controvert: deny the truth of (something); argue about (something).

Cubit: the length from the elbow to the tip of the fingers

Defame: damage the good reputation of (someone); slander or libel.

Deliverance: the action of being rescued or set free.

Disputation: debate, discussion, dispute, argument, arguing, altercation, dissension, disagreement, controversy; polemics.

Ecstasy: a trance or trance-like state in which an individual transcends normal consciousness.

Religious ecstasy: a state of consciousness characterized by expanded spiritual awareness, visions or absolute euphoria. Ecstasy (philosophy), a term used to mean "standing outside of oneself."

Exemplify: be a typical example of; give an example of; illustrate by giving an example.

Glorification: When you die, there will be the judgment of your works during your lifetime. Good works will add rewards; bad works will remove rewards. This event marks the end of sanctification and the beginning of your glorified life in God's Kingdom. It will be your coming home to your Promised Land, your fulfillment of hope.

Guile: sly or cunning intelligence.

Hedonism: the pursuit of pleasure; sensual self-indulgence; the ethical theory that pleasure (in the sense of the satisfaction of desires) is the highest good and proper aim of human life.

Heresy: dissension, dissent, non conformity, heterodoxy, unorthodoxy, apostasy, blasphemy, freethinking; agnosticism, atheism, nonbelief; idolatry, paganism.

Hyksos: rulers of Egypt from 1800 to 1570 BC. They were the shepherd kings described in the Amarna tablets. These were rulers from foreign lands who had conquered Egypt, but were expelled by Ahmose in 1570 BC.

Incense: In the tabernacle it is the prayers of the saints. It is also the right-wising by the Holy Spirit of a carnal saint's prayer.

Iniquity: wickedness, sinfulness, immorality, impropriety; vice, evil, sin; villainy, criminality.

Justification is an event, an instant in time in which the person made righteous by the Lord Jesus' imputation of His Own Righteousness.

It occurs when the person realizes that he is a sinner, and that he deserves and is bound for hell. He admits to God that he is a sinner and wants forgiveness. Because of his repentance and belief in Jesus, God forgives him and gives him the gift of eternal life.

Juxtapose: place side by side in order to compare and contrast.

Kapporeth: top or lid.

Kenosis: emptying oneself. We are commanded to have the mind of Christ Who emptied Himself of his deity when He came to earth to demonstrate to man how God desires man to behave—Philippians 2:5-11. Christ did not stop at lowering Himself to become a man, but continued that downward walk by giving up His reputation, by humbling Himself, by become a servant (slave), and becoming obedient to God by dying on the cross to be the perfect sacrifice to pay for our sins. Exaltation occurred after death.

King: In Christianity, we function with God's authority to rule as a manager of the resources in our hands.

Macrocosmic: the whole of a complex structure, esp. a nation, contrasted with a small or representative part of it, i.e. an individual.

Manslaughter: the crime of killing a human being without malice aforethought, or otherwise in circumstances not amounting to murder

Matrix: an environment in which many factors fit together in a relationship that is descriptive or causative of a norm. An organizational structure in which two or more lines of command, responsibility, or communication may run through the same individual.

Mercy Seat: the meeting place of God and man. Known as the *Kapporeth*, it was the pure gold lid of the Ark. Two Cherubim with extended wings were guarding it from above.

Oppression: prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control; the state of being subject to such treatment or control; mental pressure or distress.

Ordinance: an authoritative order or decree; a prescribed religious rite.

Paradigm: a typical example or pattern of something; a model; a worldview underlying the theories and methodology of a particular doctrine.

Parameters: measurable factors forming the limits

of a system or setting the conditions of an operation. The general limits or boundaries that define the scope of a particular process or activity.

Parity Covenant is a covenant between equals. The parties can negotiate and come to an agreement on the terms of the covenant.

Perpetrator: one who carries out or commits a harmful, illegal, or immoral action.

Perpetuate: make (something, typically an undesirable situation or an unfounded belief) continue indefinitely; preserve (something valued) from oblivion or extinction.

Pillage: rob (a place) using violence, esp. in war-time; steal (something) using violence, esp. in wartime

Political correctness. To be lifted up as a model of integrity for both Christianity and also citizenship by following the civil behavior that is declared proper by the government. It usually means to stop the behavior commanded by Christ in order to follow the demands of human government.

Predicament: a difficult, unpleasant, or embarrassing situation.

Priest: A person who takes another person or his needs to God.

Propagate: spread and promote (an idea, theory, etc.) widely.

Prophet: a proclaimer of the will of God to the people.

Providence means providing in light of foresight.

Quench: extinguish the fire of the Spirit's urging.

Redemption: the action of saving by lifting the person out of their helplessness. It is pictured as lifting the person out of a hole from which he cannot extricate himself; being saved from sin, error, or evil: the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt.

Refuge: a condition of being safe or sheltered from pursuit, danger, or trouble; something providing such shelter.

Reneged: go back on a promise, undertaking, or contract.

Repentance: agreeing with God and acting like it.

Reprisal: an act of retaliation.

Reprobate: an unprincipled person who is in such a state of apostasy that he loves evil above that which is good and not only wishes to do evil himself but wants others to do so as well.

Retribution: punishment that is considered to be morally right and fully deserved.

Sanctification is the life-long process that follows justification. It is your life's walk as a new-born Christian. The sanctification part of the doctrine of salvation terminates with another event that is called glorification in which the Lord Jesus gives out rewards to each saint for what the saint accomplished during his life of sanctification.

Shewbread: bread that is placed in the holy place of the Tabernacle.

Sin: transgression against divine law; disobeying God by an act of commission or omission.

Sorcery: any form of witchcraft.

Strange fire: fire to consume the offering of the person is strange fire because the person is not sacrificing himself for transformation into a

holy person. Instead the person is adopting Christianity via conformation rather than via transformation. Fake Christianity in today's church.

Suzerainty Covenant: a covenant between unequals.

Testator: a person who has made a will or given a legacy.

Testimony of God: the Ten Commandments.

Theodicy: the vindication of divine goodness and providence in view of the existence of evil.

Theophany: an appearance by the Lord or the manifestation of God in some visible way.

Transgression: disobedience, nonobservance.

Veracity: truthfulness.

Zenith: the highest point reached; the time at which something is most powerful or successful.

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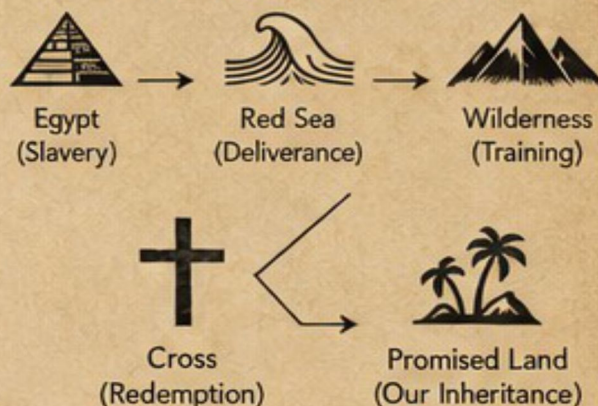


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