



BAND of BROTHERS

FALL SERIES 2023 – WEEK 7

Exodus 18:1-24:18: Counsel, Commandments, & Covenant

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

– Romans 8:1-4 ESV

- **A song worth singing** – Exodus 15
 - While the people were complaining...
 - ...Moses was praising God
 - God's deliverance had not escaped him
 - Chapter 15 provides context

"I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."

"The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him." – Exodus 15:1-2 ESV

"Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" – Exodus 15:11 ESV

- News of God's glory would spread...
 - The peoples have heard; they tremble...*
 - ...pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia...*
 - ...the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away...*
 - Terror and dread fall upon them...*
 - ...they are still as a stone...*
- **A battle worth fighting** – Exodus 17:8-16
 - Moses' confidence in God was strong

- But the people were still struggling
- At Rephidim, they doubted His presence

And he [Moses] called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the Lord by saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?" – Exodus 17:7 ESV

massâ – “testing”

*...they **tested** the Lord – vs 7*

merîbâ – “contention”

*...they **quarreled** with the Lord – vs 7*

“Is the Lord among us or not?”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD Is My Banner, saying, “A hand upon the throne of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.” – Exodus 17:14-16 ESV

Yahweh-Nissi – “The Lord is My Banner”

- They had fought as God’s chosen people
 - o Joshua led the battle
 - o Moses provided intercession
 - o Aaron and Hur provided moral support
 - o But the victory was the Lord’s
- **Advice worth considering** – Exodus 18
 - Jethro (Reuel) comes to visit
 - Remember: The Israelites are in Midian
 - He reunites Moses with his family

Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, now came to visit Moses in the wilderness. He brought Moses’ wife and two sons with him, and they arrived while Moses and the people were camped near the mountain of God. – Exodus 18:5 NLT

- Jethro questions Moses’ leadership style
 - o He is spread too thin
 - o He is a lousy delegator
 - o He is the sole source of justice and judgment
 - o He has become their code of conduct

*“...the people come to me to get a ruling from God. When a dispute arises, they come to me, and I am the one who settles the case between the quarreling parties. **I inform the people of God’s decrees and give them his instructions.**” – Exodus 18:15-16 NLT*

*“**This is not good!**” Moses’ father-in-law exclaimed. “You’re going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. Now listen to me, and let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you.” – Exodus 18:17-19 NLT*

- All part of God’s unveiling plan
 - God speaks through Jethro
 - He establishes a judicial system for Israel
 - All in preparation for the Law
 - He is laying a foundation for the future

So Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. And they judged the people at all times. Any hard case they brought to Moses, but any small matter they decided themselves. – Exodus 18:24-26 ESV

- **Back to the future** – Exodus 19

On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God. – Exodus 19:1-3 ESV

- God had spoken of this moment (3:12)
- Sinai would be their home for the next year
- And it would change their lives forever
- At Sinai, they will...
 - ...hear their **calling**
 - ...confirm God’s **covenant**
 - ...be given His **commandments**
 - ...come under God’s **code of conduct**
 - ...and receive God’s **promise of conquest**

*“Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, **you shall be my treasured possession** among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and **you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**’” – Exodus 19:3-6 ESV*

- **A covenant worth keeping**

- If you will...then I will

- God was demanding...
 - ...complete submission and obedience
 - ...radical compliance to His will
 - ...behavior that mirrored His character
- This was a conditional covenant

*So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken **we will do.**"* – Exodus 19:7-8 ESV

- They were eager but ignorant

Enthusiasm without knowledge is no good; haste makes mistakes. – Proverbs 19:2 NLT

- How were they going to live as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation?
 1. They had to adhere to God's **conditions**
 2. They had to be **cleansed**
 3. They had to be **consecrated**

consecrated – *qādaš* - set apart, devoted
holy – *qādôš* - sacred, holy, set apart

- God had made them His **set-apart people**
- Now they would learn to live **set-apart lives**

- **Commandments worth obeying** – Exodus 20

And God spoke all these words, saying,

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

"You shall have no other gods before me." – Exodus 20:1-3 ESV

"When it came to how they were to conduct their lives, the descendants of Abraham would have a clear and uncompromising canon of divine regulations to guide them. No one would be free to do what was right in their own eyes. God was going to make His will known and put it in writing. And...the first command He gave addressed the ongoing problem of human autonomy and the desire for self-rule." – Ken Miller, *Devotionary™ on Exodus*

"You must not have any other god but me."

"You must not make or worship idols or images."

"You must not dishonor or defame my name."

"You must maintain the holiness of the Sabbath."

"You must honor your father and mother."

"You must not murder."

"You must not commit adultery."

"You must not steal."

"You must not speak falsely about your neighbor."

"You must not covet."

- **Freedom with limits**

- They were not free to live as they wished
 - God's sovereignty trumped their autonomy
 - They bore His name
 - Now, they must bear His image
- The purpose of the Law: The revelation of God
 - Through the knowledge of His righteousness
 - The law was a reflection of His character
 - It provided insights into His priorities for man
 - It reveals His perspective on the human condition
 - And the exposure of man's sinfulness

*For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, **since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*** – Romans 3:20 ESV

*Why, then, was the law given? **It was given...to show people their sins.*** – Galatians 3:19 NLT

*...**it was the law that showed me my sin.** I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, "You must not covet."* – Romans 7:7 NLT

Ultimately, all of these commands point back to God. The inter-relational aspect they describe has far more to do with the Israelites' views of God than anything else. The manner in which they treated one another would be a direct reflection of their understanding of God and their relationship with Him. "He was calling them to a life of holiness that was intended to illustrate His own set-apart status. They were to be holy as He is holy. They were to reflect His character by valuing what He valued and holding in high esteem those things that were near and dear to His heart." – Ken Miller, *Devotionary™ on Exodus*

- **Discussion questions**

- Describe a time when doing God's will ended up displaying His character.
- In what ways do you see God's character revealed in the Ten Commandments? And how does God's Law help us to know Him better by exposing our sinfulness?
- Read Romans 8:1-4. What lessons are found in these verses concerning the Law as provided to the Israelites? What has changed?



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FALL SERIES 2023 – WEEK 8 HOMEWORK

WEEK 8 – Exodus 25:1-31:18: A House Fit for God

This week will cover God’s instructions for the Tabernacle. We will go into some detail regarding its layout and take a close look at all the furnishings and design elements that made this man-made structure unique and holy. The key theme will be the holiness of God and how this structure was to become God’s dwelling place on earth. It was in the inner recesses of the Tabernacle that God promised to display His glory. He was going to “tabernacle” among His people, providing them with His constant presence, power, and protection. We will take a close look at the doctrines of worship and atonement and see how they shed light on the modern-day church and the relationship between God and His covenant people.

- Read Exodus 25:1-31:18. What jumps out at you in these passages?
- Take time during the week to read through pages 253-332 in the Devotional™ reading.
- Chapter 25:1-7 contains God’s instructions for the construction of the Tabernacle. Go back and read Exodus 11:1-3 and Exodus 12:35-36. How do these verses support the idea of God’s sovereignty or control over all things?

Skip ahead and look at Exodus 32:1-4. If God had intended their treasure for the construction of the Tabernacle, what about this story reveals that the Israelites were out of touch with God’s will?

Read through the rest of chapter 25. What do you find significant about the various items it describes?

What do verses 7-25 teach about the holiness of God and how should that impact our conception of Him?

- Glance through chapter 26 and circle every reference to gold, silver, precious stones, fine fabric, and other expensive items. What do these items have to say about the glory of God?
- Exodus 27:1-8 describe the plans for the bronze altar. According to Exodus 29:10-28, what kinds of sacrifices were to be offered on this altar and how does this reveal the importance of this particular piece of furniture?
- What jumps out at you about the descriptions of the priests' garments in chapter 28? Why do you think they were so ornate and richly decorated?

What does He require of the people of Israel?

- Look closely at the items described in chapter 30. Write down what you believe their purpose to be and what significance they held?
- In chapter 31, Moses describes the commissioning of Oholiab and Bezalel. What do these verses teach us about God's equipping of those He commissions and what personal lessons could we take away?

Why do you think God brought up the Sabbath in verses 12-18? Why would it be important for the Israelites to keep His sabbaths in conjunction with the construction of the Tabernacle?

Why would it be wrong for the Israelites to violate the Sabbath in an attempt to complete the construction of the Tabernacle ahead of schedule?