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THE **BIG** PICTURE



CURRENT SERIES

Exodus

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I'm excited to be in this journey through the Bible. We're actually taking a 13-week route through the Bible from cover to cover and so in the next 35 minutes we're going to cover another big section of the Bible. And as we do this we

recognize that the Bible is the most significant piece of literature ever written by human hands. We understand the Bible itself says it's inspired by God. That God actually worked with human authors so that the message that we're receiving is not only from God, but it actually is a message that is true. It corresponds to reality, it's reliable.

And so if you're here today as a visitor and you're just kind of thinking that I don't really know that much about the Bible, but I came to find out – we're so glad you're here. You need three tools. The first one is you need a Bible and so grab a Bible, follow along with us. You also need one of our study guides, and so our Big Picture Study Guide walks us through what we're looking at. And you probably need a pen or pencil, something to write things down. I know we live in the electronic era, so some of you just need a keyboard and you've probably got that in your pocket. So as we make our way through this journey we're going to discover the basic flow and understanding of the Bible so that each of us will walk away with a clear understanding of this incredible book.

Now on page 4 of your study guide we actually are looking at what we are calling the Arc of the Bible. And each of these sections has a theme. And so last week we looked at The Beginning, the first section, and went through the



book of Genesis. Today we're going to be looking at the second one which is The Exodus and we're covering all of the book of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and

Deuteronomy in the next 30 minutes, okay? So if you believe that hang in there with me because we're going to do this.

So when we look at what we discovered last week we saw that in the beginning there were two key figures. In fact, one of the easiest ways to remember the



Bible is to just look at the main figures, kind of follow them, and it helps you through Biblical history. The first figure is Adam - Adam is created by God, but he sins and destroys God's original plan for man, so that's how it all got started the way the world is today that we understand it.

The second great figure is Abraham. Abraham is chosen by God to father a people to represent God to the world, and that is going to be the nation of Israel or the Hebrew people. And so we followed their journey last week through Abraham coming to the land and then having Isaac and Jacob, and ultimately Joseph who ends up in Egypt initially as a slave, but kind of through God's working in his life he interprets Pharaoh's dream, Pharaoh puts him in charge of everything, and then all of his brothers come there because there's a big famine in the land and they end up settling in the land of Egypt. That's where we pick up in our story today.



And so if you'll grab your Bible and look at Exodus Chapter 1, that's where we're going to start in Exodus Chapter 1. In Exodus Chapter 1 we see a long period of time has passed since Joseph, and as we read starting in verse 6 it says:

"Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly

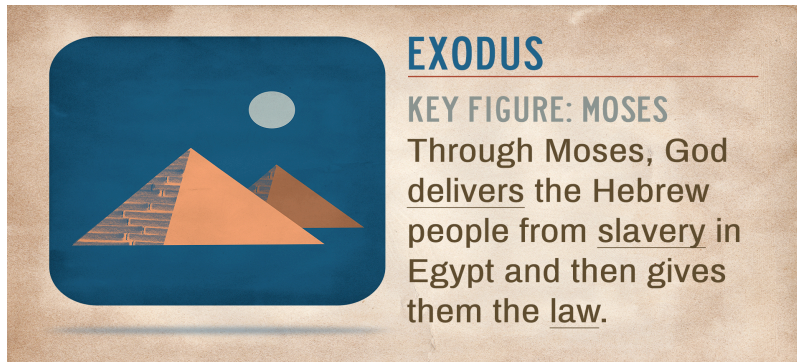
numerous, so that the land was filled with them. Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power."

So we're talking about roughly 400 years starting somewhere in there with Joseph and then all the way to where we're going to end up at the end of the story today. So a long period of time has taken place, the nation of Israel has continued to multiply, they've continued to live in the land, and look what it says:

"a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt. 'Look,' he said to his people, 'the Israelites have become much too numerous for us. Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, they will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.'" So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh."

So now we have the Egyptians bringing the nation of Israel or the Hebrews under captivity, they began to use them as forced labor to actually build some of the great cities and the great monuments in Egypt, and the more they oppressed the people the more they multiply. The story goes on to say, in fact they're multiplying and they're growing at such a rapid rate within the population that Pharaoh believes he needs to take more drastic measures. And so he makes a deal with the midwives to kill every male baby as soon as it's born. So as soon the baby breathes, starts to cry, kill the baby as soon as it's born. So as soon the baby breathes, starts to cry, kill the baby and that way we'll wipe out a generation to kind of slow this growth of the Hebrew peoples. Well the midwives are not going to do that and the Hebrew women are vigorous so they find a place to have the baby where nobody can get it. And so Pharaoh realizes he's going to have to enforce this by actually sending his soldiers in to kill the babies.

One particular family trying to figure out a way to save their baby comes up with this idea that we'll build a little boat, a little basket that floats, and we'll put our baby in it, take it down to the reeds along the Nile. We'll hide the baby in the water, our older daughter will stand watch over the baby, and we'll just see if God somehow saves this baby or protects this baby. And guess who shows up? Pharaoh's daughter shows up, hears the baby crying, sees the baby, realizes that it's a Hebrew baby, decides she wants to adopt a baby, so she adopts this baby and she names him Moses. Which starts this whole section of the Exodus story. She finds the baby, she brings him home, she names him Moses. So now Moses will be a Hebrew by nationality, but he will be raised in Pharaoh's household.



The Exodus. Here's the key figure is Moses. What we're going to see in the story today is through Moses, God delivers the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt and gives them the law. So the two things that happen, first of all is the deliverance from

slavery and the giving of the law. And we're going to look at both of those today. That's what we're going to be doing as we walk through the story.

So what transpires is Moses moves into the palace. He's raised in the palace. As he's raised in the palace he learns to be Egyptian nobility, but as people often do, the origin of his nationality haunts him. So one day as an adult he goes out to see what's happening with his people. And as he goes out there he sees how mistreated they are, and at one moment one of these slave masters is beating one of the Hebrews and he intervenes. And in the scuffle that ensues he ends up killing this slave master. Immediately he becomes a murderer and a criminal, and he's got to "get out of dodge." And so he just leaves, lays aside all of the good things in the palace and just flees. He goes to the Midian desert. There he meets a man, marries one of his daughters, they have kids, he's living this nomadic life, raising the sheep and moving from place to place. And so that's what we see taking place with Moses in the story. So he's moving from place to place and then something incredible happens. He runs into a manifestation of God, and God tells him "You are going to deliver your people from slavery." Now that manifestation of God is a burning bush, so for those of you who don't know the Old Testament story very well or the Bible when you hear somebody say, "Well I had a burning bush experience", that's where this comes from. Moses runs into this bush that's on fire, but doesn't burn up. In the desert, the dryness there, you'd think it burns up. So he comes in closer to investigate, and when he gets there a voice starts speaking to him and he finds out the voice is God. And the voice says "Go back to Egypt, tell Pharaoh to let my people go." And Moses says, "I can't do that. Like who am I going to tell? You know, who are you? Who would I even tell, you know, the bush that was on fire told me to come tell you Pharaoh to let my people go." And God said, "Listen, tell them this." Tell them Hebrew word, "Yahweh has sent you." The word Yahweh, the holy, personal name of God in the Hebrew means "I am" or "I am that I am. I am timeless, I am the one." That's why when Jesus in the New Testament says "I am the Bread of Life, I am the Light of the World," they recognized that he was claiming to be one with Yahweh. Moses says, "Well I don't have any power." And God says, "Well I'm going to give you power,

supernatural power to be able to show Pharaoh that I'm real." And he says, "Well I don't speak very well," and God says, "Well that's fine. Take along your brother, he talks pretty well." And so Moses runs out of excuses and so he goes back and he's going to have this conversation with Pharaoh about letting the people go.

And so we see the people are in bondage, they're in slavery. This is an actual Egyptian relief, and we see these all over in the ancient world. The picture of Hebrews serving in slavery. And in the midst of that he walked back in and he goes to Pharaoh, gains an audience with Pharaoh. And he says to Pharaoh, "God has sent me. Let my people go." And Pharaoh laughs and says "No." And what ensues after that are ten plagues. Each of these plagues, God does something supernatural in nature. And keep in mind that each of these plagues is a direct attack on an Egyptian deity. In the polytheistic world of the Egyptians they worshiped everything



from the Nile River to the frogs in the river, to the cattle and livestock. They worshipped everything all the way up to the greatest who was Pharaoh himself,

who was actually considered a god, or the son of a god. And so each of these plagues is a direct attack on the deity. So it's kind of like God – Yahweh against all of the gods of Egypt to see who will win. Now the drama of what takes place is hard to capture unless you just really see what it might look like, and so here's what one artist did to try to explain this in the film *The Bible*.

Video Begins *[Israelite Man to Moses] What should we do?*

[Moses] Sister, brother, all of you. Trust in God.

[Israelite Man speaking to Moses] Pharaoh is over there. If he didn't listen to you when you were six feet away, why would he hear you now?

[Moses] You'll see.

[Moses to an Israelite Man] Put your staff into the water.

[Israelite man walks over to the edge of the Nile River and puts his staff into the water]

[Moses raises his staff and directs the Israelite man to put his staff into the water. When the Israelite man puts his staff into the water, the water immediately begins to turn into blood.]

[Pharaoh was swimming in the water, which turned into blood]

[Pharaoh's servants] Come master. Come out of the water, it's blood. It's blood.

[Pharaoh stands up and is covered in blood. He runs toward the shore as his servants are yelling at him]

{Pharaoh's servants} Swim to us, come master.

[Pharaoh gets out of the water and his body is red from the blood.]

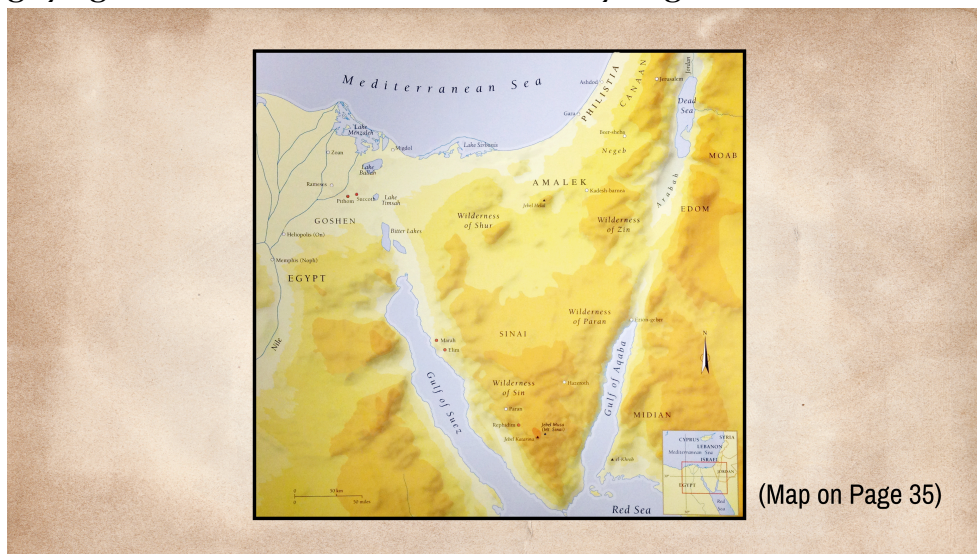
[God speaking through Moses] You are not a god. You are just a man. And you will set my people free.

[Pharaoh begins to wipe himself off} Move away. [Pharaoh yells] Moses!

Video Ends

You may be thinking to yourself, if that happened to me that would be it. Like I'd get these people out of here just as fast as I possibly could, but that's not what happens. So after that first plague where the god of the Nile that they worshiped was proven to be inferior to Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, Pharaoh continues down this path. Now what's interesting is when you look at the 10 plagues, the first 5 plagues – every time Moses comes and says “If you don't let my people go. If you don't free my people then these things are coming,” and each time they come the passage in the text says that Pharaoh actually hardened his heart. In other words, “I am resolved to not let this happen.” What's really interesting is starting with the 6th plague going through the 10th plague it says that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Now here's a lesson. Don't pick a fight with God because He will finish it.

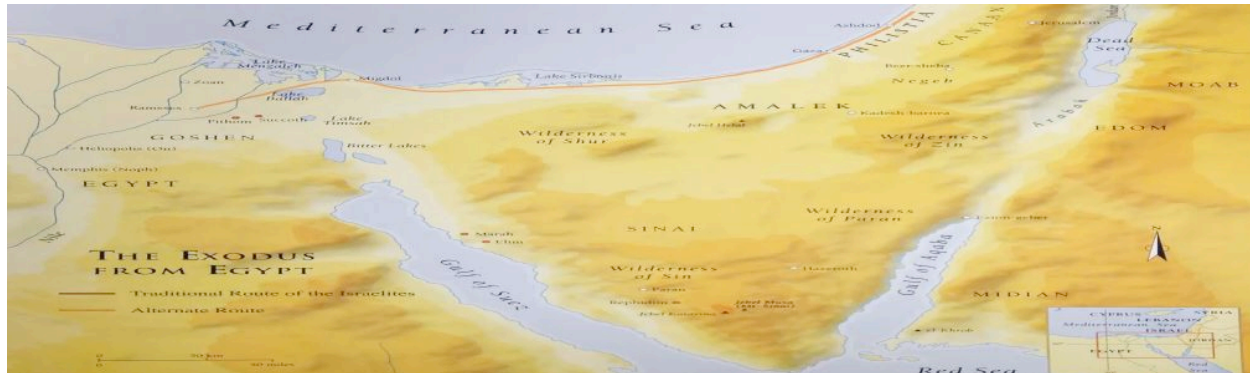
And so when Pharaoh got to the point where five of his gods were shot down, and he may have been willing at that point in time to say “I'm done.” God said “No. I'm going to put a stubborn streak in your heart because we're going all the way to the end.” Now the end was the final plague, and the final plague was the death of the firstborn. What God said to them is that “The death angel is going to Passover on a certain night and he's going to take the life of every firstborn son as a sacrifice.” And so the Hebrews were in the same situation – the death angel was going to come over the Egyptians and over the Hebrews, but the Hebrews had a way to get out of it. They were to take a lamb and to paint the blood of the lamb of the sacrifice on the doorpost of the house. So when the death angel came by and came past the house and saw the blood on the doorpost that death angel would pass over. That's where the Jewish festival or practice of the Passover comes from, and Jews are still celebrating the Passover even to today. All of the meal that's eaten, every aspect of that, is to celebrate this particular event and God's deliverance that night. So as the death angel went throughout the land, all the people with blood on the doorpost, their kid survived, but Pharaoh's didn't. So immediately, Pharaoh's in a situation where he's not God. I mean it's obvious that he's not God, and so he says, “You guys get out of here. Leave.” And they began to leave. Now as you look at the



(Map on Page 35)

map they're in Northern Egypt up in the land of Goshen which is up here (pointing to that area on the map). They are promised the land of Canaan

which is here (upper-right hand side of the map), and the journey, for those of you who are travelers, it seems like the shortest distance between two points is what? Kind of a straight line or because there's water here it's kind of a little bit of a curvy line here. (see red line at the top of the map)



But you would think that they would travel directly to Canaan. Keep in mind we've got 600,000 men that are able to fight, so we're talking about a massive number of people. That doesn't count the women and children. Big group of people. The easiest way to go is the most direct way. But I want to show you something that happens here.

If you'll turn over to Chapter 13 of Exodus, a very significant little turn of events here, and in this very significant little turn of events here a whole bunch of stuff is unfolded to us, both in the history and in the theology of what's taking place in the nation. It says in verse 17 of Exodus Chapter 13,

"When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter."

Or the text literally says he did not lead them by the way of the sea. And so he didn't take them to the Philistine country just as a direct route. He didn't lead them by the way of the sea even though it was shorter. In fact, it probably would have taken three to four weeks of a real steady paced march to get to the land of Canaan, and it's actually going to take them 40 years to get there. So why the detour? Look at what it says. It says,

"For God said, 'If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.'"

Interesting principle. Oftentimes we are more comfortable living in the bondage that we know, that we feel comfortable in even though it's painful. We would rather stay there than venture into freedom because the unknown of

freedom oftentimes is fraught with possible conflict. So why would I not just stay put? And that's human nature, that's the way we operate. And God knows that when they get to the Promised Land and they have to fight for it, they might turn around and go right back to Egypt and say "We would rather be slaves than be free men and have to gain our freedom."

So he goes on to say,

"So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt armed for battle."

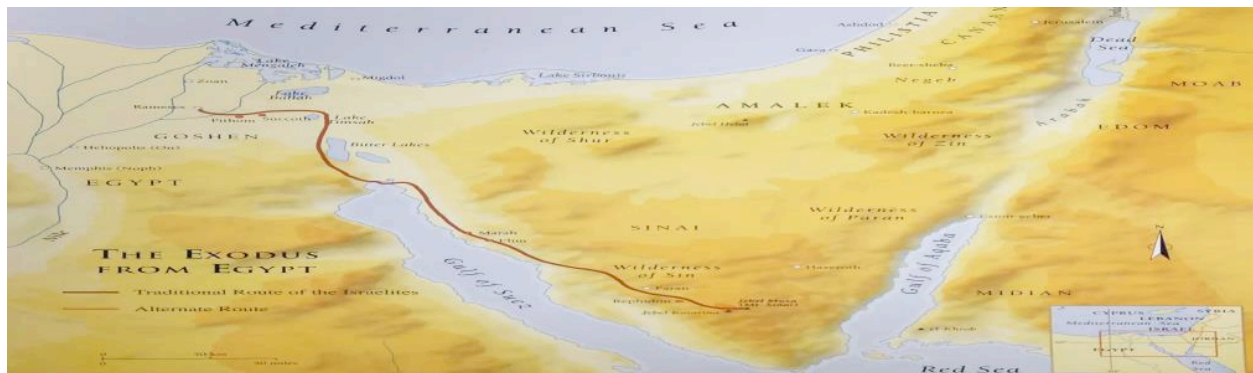
Kind of irony in the text. These guys are proud, they're armed for battle, but they're scared on the inside and so God doesn't lead them that way. God is going to lead them down into the desert because there's a whole bunch of things that need to happen.

The first one is to clearly, clearly communicate that God has delivered them and defeated the Egyptians. And so as they begin to make a southern route, there's going to come down and they're going to cross the Red Sea. Now the Red Sea becomes a barrier. As they're traveling they get to the shores of the Red Sea and all of a sudden realize that Pharaoh has decided, "What am I thinking, 10 plagues. That's no big deal. I lost my son -- I want these guys back." So he gets his chariots and his archers and his soldiers and they go chasing them, and the nation of Israel is standing there, they're on the edge of the Red Sea. They can't really cross very quickly. There's no place to really go around, and Pharaoh's breathing down their neck, so they begin to say to Moses, "Did you bring us out here in the desert to die?" Moses prays to God, holds his staff over the water, and God does a miraculous thing. God parts the Red Sea.



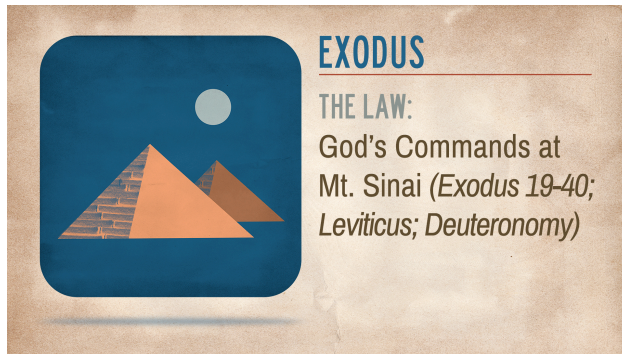
And as God parts the Red Sea, they're able to kind of travel right through the Red Sea to the other side. And when they get to the other side God brings the water back together on the Egyptian Army that is pursuing them through the sea. As God brings the water back together, the people, the people see their deliverance. In fact, the text says, Chapter 14, as they saw the bodies of the Egyptian soldiers washing up on the beach they believed God and they believed in Moses -- their conversion moment, when they put their faith and their trust in God.

So from there God's going to lead them on a new path. He's going to take them down into the Sinai Desert and he's going to lead them down to Mount Sinai.



Now there are a number of different scholarly opinions about which route they actually took, and since there's not a whole lot of population in the middle of the desert, sometimes it's a little bit harder to reconstruct that though we have people working on it, okay? Great archeologists that have been working on this. Some believe that actually Mount Sinai is on this side in Saudi Arabia, and the placed they crossed the Gulf of the Aqaba there, there's actually some pretty strong archeological evidence that that may actually be what took place. Unfortunately, we can't get in there because the Saudi government won't let us in there, but there's some really interesting stuff. So we continue to look to see as clearly as we can understand what transpired in this period of time.

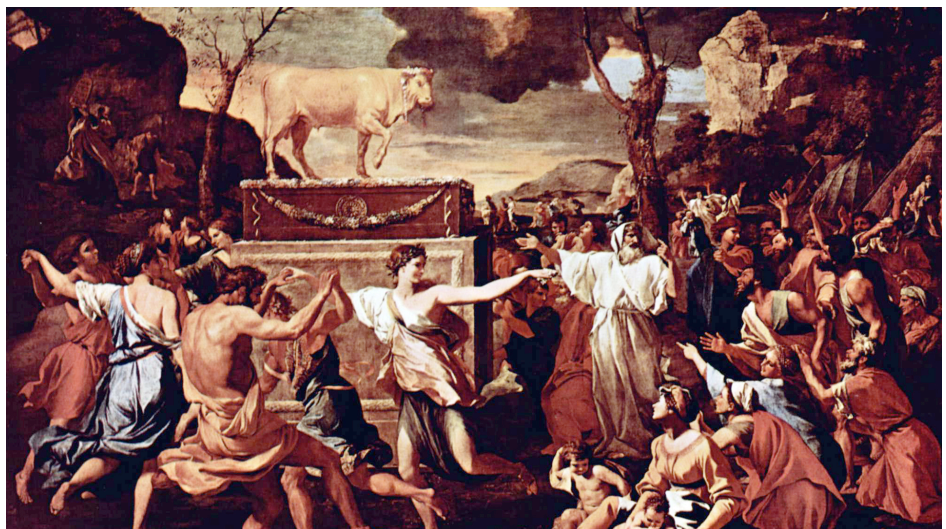
So God takes them down to Sinai. Now he's leading them. It says there's a cloud of smoke by day and a cloud of fire by night, and when the cloud moves the people follow. God provides for them, as they travel he gives them manna from heaven. So the manna falls every day for them to pick up and eat. God brings them water by using Moses to purify water in one area and to bring water from a rock in another area, and then they arrive at Mount Sinai.



Now Mount Sinai is significant for a number of things, but mostly Sinai is where God gives his commandments, he gives the Law to the nation of Israel. He gives the Law to the nation of Israel. In the giving of the Law they arrive at this mountain and God manifests himself on the top of the mountain. It's covered with smoke, lightening, loud noises. The mountain

shakes when God's presence is above it, and the people say to Moses, "Don't have God speak to us. It's terrifying to hear the voice of God. Just have him talk to you, don't talk to us, having him talk to you." Which I think is very interesting, because oftentimes in our arrogance today we'll make statements like this, "Well if God really wants to get my attention why doesn't he show up and talk to me himself?" Maybe you really don't want that. Maybe you don't really understand who you're dealing with here. Maybe you can't handle it. Maybe God's actually protecting you from that moment of face-to-face, when God shows up. And so they say to Moses, "Hey just you talk to God and you come tell us what he says." And so Moses goes up on the mountain and there he talks to God. And a significant period of time goes by. No word from Moses. Still a lot of noise coming from the top of this mountain. And up on the mountain God's given Moses the Law. He's recording it in stone, he's given him the tablets of stone, and Moses is on the top of the mountain while the people get more nervous and more nervous down below.

And finally they say to Aaron, Moses' brother, "Hey what if Moses dies up there, what's going to happen to us. We've got to do something. We need a god, we need a leader, we need someone to take us back to Egypt." And so they pool their jewelry and they make an image, a golden calf. They call it their god and they begin to worship it. They worship it in the orgy of the Pagan ways. I mean complete deterioration. And while they're worshipping, God says, "Moses, you better



get down there and see what your people are doing.” Moses, as he walks down and sees – he’s been in the presence of the glory of God, perfect holiness, walks down into this revelry that’s taking place around a golden calf. The calf that was defeated when God struck the livestock dead in the plague, and Moses in his anger takes those tablets and he throws them down the mountain and they break, symbolizing how people continually violate or break the law of God. And so there God brings down judgment, and God says to Moses, “Listen, just get out of the way. I’m going to kill all these people and I’ll start over with you. I’ll make a nation with you.” Moses begs God not to do that. God brings a plague among the people, there’s judgment, the people repent, and so now they are going to move forward again having repented.

Let’s talk about the Law for just a moment. So the Law itself is given in the books of Exodus, the last half, in Leviticus, in parts of Numbers, and then Deuteronomy is a restatement of the Law.

Deuteronomy really means the Second Law or the second giving of the Law. And when you look at the Old Testament Law and you start reading it, sometimes it’s hard to

make heads or tails out of it, so let me just kind of give you some categories to hang it on.



THE LAW

- Moral
- Civil
- Ceremonial

The first category is the Moral Law – that would be like the Ten Commandments. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness or lie. We get that. That’s moral principles. And let’s face it today – if I say to you, “You shall not commit murder,” you agree with that, right? That’s clear? I mean this week we experienced that. You get that, everybody gets that. The moral outrage. You shall not steal, you shall not lie or bear false witness. We get that stuff. Where did it come from? It came from the Old Testament Law. The moral values that most of us hold in a Judeo-Christian world, which would include all of western civilization, had its origins in these book, the Book of the Law.

There’s also some other parts of the Law, there’s the Civil Law. So property rights, inheritance rights, laws related to marriage, laws related to family, civil punishments for crimes. In fact, when you study the law of Western Europe and the United States you’ll find many principles were borrowed by the thinkers of government that fit right here from the Old Testament Law.

And then the last one is the Ceremonial Law, and the Ceremonial Law would be things like the sacrificial system. How to offer sacrifices, what kind of sacrifices, the dietary laws for the people, what you can eat and what you can't eat to remain ceremonially clean, the sacrifices themselves, the priests, the tabernacle, and establishing the tabernacle. And finally, we talk about the festivals that take place during the Jewish calendar. So it would be helpful for us western mind thinkers if they were put in order that way. Unfortunately they're not put in order - they're kind of mixed up based on topic. So as you read through there you just have to kind of in your mind go, which of these are ceremonial, which of these are moral, which of these are civil and that will help you a lot in explaining it.

For New Testament believers the ultimate purpose of the Law is clearly laid out in the New Testament. In other words, why did God give the Law to these Old



ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

- Knowledge of Sin
(Romans 3:20)
- Reveal God's Righteousness
(Romans 7:12)
- Lead Us to Jesus
(Galatians 3:24-25)

Testament people, these Hebrews, and what does that mean for us today. And there are three major things that the New Testament says.

The first one is, the New Testament says it reveals the knowledge of sin. In other words, if we didn't know what God's Law was we

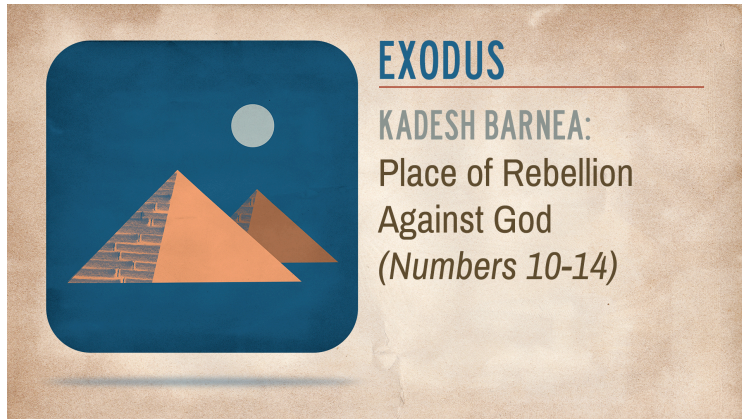
wouldn't know what was good, and if we didn't know what was good we wouldn't really know what was bad. And so the Law helps us understand that.

Secondly, it reveals God's righteousness. By looking at the commands, the positive things that we're supposed to do, and the negative things that we're supposed to avoid, it gives us a glimpse of God. By looking at the intricacies of what it required for a worshiper to approach God, it reveals to us that God is incredibly holy. He's not to be taken lightly. He's not to be trivialized.

And finally, Galatians 3:24-25 says that the Law actually leads us to Jesus. The purpose of the Law is actually to lead us to Jesus Christ. Because you see, as we begin to understand the Law we understand that none of us by good works could ever keep it all. And so the Old Testament person, the Hebrew, had a sacrifice every year to pay for the sins that they had committed. A substitute. Well we have a sacrifice too. His name is Jesus Christ, God's Son. And when he

died on the cross he was the sacrifice for our sin. So the Old Testament Law shows us that we're sinners and we're in need of Jesus. So it ultimately leads us to Jesus.

From here, they leave Mount Sinai and they travel up to Kadesh Barnea. And when they get to Kadesh Barnea they are ready to go in. When you think about



it, they've got their tabernacle, they've got their law, they've got their leader. They have all of these incredible experiences of God's power. You would think now we're ready for battle. Now we believe. Now we're prepared, now we are a nation, we're now sophisticated, we're ready to do this. They get to Kadesh Barnea on the edge of the land

and watch what happens. Kadesh Barnea becomes the place of rebellion against God. If you'll turn over to Numbers, Chapters 13 and 14 Moses tells them this.

"Pick a spy from every tribe, 12 spies, and we're going to send them into the land to check out the land to find out what's there. Because we've heard rumors, one that it's good land, good stuff there, and also that there are people living there that we need to deal with." So they go and they look, and sure enough they come back with a mixed report. The first thing they say is "Absolutely it's a good land." In fact, the produce of the land is so incredible that the text in Chapter 13 says that they cut down one bunch of grapes and it required two men to carry it, there



was so many grapes on that cluster of grapes. Good place to go. The bad news is there are already people living there and they don't look like they are just going to give up the place easily. They have fortified cities and they're large. They have iron, and so we're going to have to fight these people. And it's going to be really hard." And so when asked to receive advice two of the spies said, "Let's do it. Like I mean, Red Sea, these people will be nothing compared to that.

Let's do it." Joshua and Caleb said "Let's do it." The other ten said "There is no possible way. We'd be idiots to go," and the people believed it. The people accepted it. In Chapter 14 of Numbers, reading in verse 1 it says:

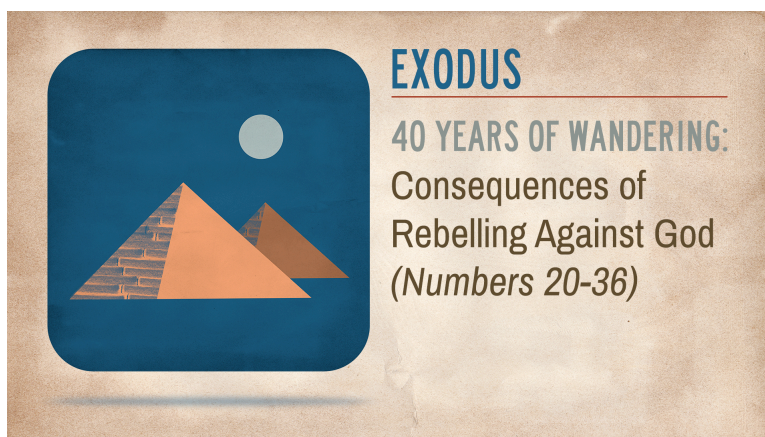
"That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, 'If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Would it be better for us to go back to Egypt?' And they said to each other, 'We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.'"

Whoa! Moses and Aaron, they've been through this before, right? Golden calf, they've been through this before. They say to the people, "Don't do this, don't do this, don't rebel against God like this." Notice what happens in verse 10, it says:

"But the whole assembly talked about stoning them. Then the glory of the Lord appeared at the Tent of the Meeting to all the Israelites. The Lord said to Moses, 'How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them? I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they.'"

So here's the second time he's saying, "Get out of the way, I'm going to wipe them out and I'll make a nation just from your family." And again Moses begs God. And God sends judgment among the people, but he spares them. And then God says this, he says, "Every single adult male that is alive today will not

enter the Promised Land. We will wander in the desert until every single adult male, except for Joshua and Caleb, dies." And here we have the 40 years of wandering. The consequences of the sin at Kadesh Barnea.



Now if you read through the rest of Numbers you'll see what takes place as the people live in the Judean Desert for 40 years. Until every male 20 years and older dies. The desert literally becomes the burial place for these people as they wander and wander around.



At the end of 40 years, God tells Moses to lead the people to the edge of the land, and Moses leads the people to the edge of the land, and when he gets to the edge of the land God says, "Okay Moses. You brought us here, but you're not going to take us in." Early on in the travels Moses disobeyed God. He struck the rock to bring forth water when God said to speak to the rock, and because God said "I will not let one of my leaders dishonor me before the people." God said, "You can take us to the Promised Land, but you're never going to get us in." Which proves again, Adam cannot do it. Abraham cannot do it. Moses, as great as he was cannot do it. The hero of the story of the Bible will come when Jesus Christ arrives. And so Moses goes up to the top of the mountain, and there, the greatest prophet of the Old Testament, the man that is revered by literally billions of people on the planet today, there he looks over the land of Canaan and sees it with his eyes, and then God takes him. Takes his life and he doesn't lead the people in.

Now that puts us at the end of this section. So at the end of the book of Deuteronomy they're standing on the edge of the land of Canaan, and the new hero that's going to come into the scene is going to be Joshua. We'll pick up the story with the conquest next week. But before we leave this, there's some things I want us to stop and think about. What is the significance of all of this



SIGNIFICANCE

- We need God's deliverance.
- Our good deeds always fall short.
- Blessed people still rebel.
- We have consequences of sin this side of the Promised Land.

for us? The first thing I would say to us is that we need God's deliverance. We need God's deliverance. The supernatural intervention of God in the lives of people is required, and if The Exodus tells us anything it tells us that we need God's deliverance.

In addition to that, we also need to recognize that our good deeds will always fall short. Our good deeds will always fall short. The whole system of the Old Testament Law, which laid out the moral standards that nobody ever lived up to so that they had to bring the sacrifices. Something had to die because the wages of sin is death should be a screaming testimony to us today not to go back to the failed system of thinking that somehow we can do enough good deeds to earn our way into the presence of God. Adam did one thing wrong and violated God's holiness and was kicked out of the garden. Moses failed to lead at one point, and did not get to enter into the Promised Land. If you truly believe that God is perfect and that God intends for us to live out that perfection, and he shows us what that looks like in the Old Testament Law, you know that you need a savior. And so quit trying to earn your way into God's favor. We get into God's favor by accepting his sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who paid for our sins. And by humility, turning from our sin, repenting, embracing Jesus, believing in him, trusting in him, that's where we get forgiven.

Third, this was a hard one for me. Blessed people still rebel. Blessed people still rebel. How many times do you have to see the glory of God before you quit having a rebellious streak? Obviously 10 plagues, parting the Red Sea, manna from heaven – like that's not enough, right? And some of us are thinking, "God if you would just fix some things for me then I would quit rebelling. If you give me enough money, if I could get the girl or get the guy, if somehow my boss quit treating me like he does or my health got better, then I would be obedient."

The final one, which is really significant is, we have consequences of sin this side of the Promised Land. The nation of Israel was promised the Promised Land and they will get there. In the same way that people who put their trust in Jesus Christ are promised heaven and you will inherit it. You will get there if you're really trusting him, you'll get there. But that does not mean that you will not have consequences in this life for the sin you commit. God is gracious and loving and merciful, but the Bible makes it clear that there are consequences for what we do that is immoral, that is hurtful, that is damaging. Sin creates death, and so those people who think, "You know, I got my ticket to heaven so it doesn't matter what I do. God's gracious so it doesn't matter what I do." You haven't read these passages. These passages make it clear that as flawed as we are and as much as we need a substitute, we need to rely on Jesus daily to be obedient to his will. We need to rely on his power daily because if we don't and we just get into willful sin, we will experience consequences. And some of you would say "Amen" to that because you're experiencing them and you have, and you know that they're there. And you'd say, "Boy if I could just go back." Well, I challenge you to just go forward with the commitment to be obedient to Jesus and rely on his power daily.

Exodus
Tim Hawks, HCBC Lead Pastor
April 21, 2013

I encourage you to go back and take some time to read these four books. You'll be overwhelmed, not just by the story, but by the content there. You'll get a picture of God's holiness. You'll get a picture of God's graciousness, and you'll get a picture of God's salvation.

Let's bow our heads for prayer. Father in heaven, we just praise you, praise you that you have been working in the history of the world and we get to be recipients of the truth that we learn from these things. May we incorporate them into our experience. May we rely on your word, and may you change us to make us more like Jesus. For we pray these things in Jesus' name, Amen.

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