

## *“Sinaitic Covenant, Law and Wandering” - Class 8*

### **A Walk Through the Old Testament - Class 8**

Exodus 15-20

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**Transcriber’s Note:** Before Jeff spoke, Don Maurer played and sang “Dancing Queen” and “Candy Man.” Jeff muted the keyboard and then muted the microphone.

**Jeff:** Before we began Don said, “Just you wait!” I asked if that was a threat. *(Laughter)* I had no idea there was such maliciousness upon your heart. *(Laughter)* We will pray for you. *(Laughter)* All right. You know, you point a guy, you take a guy and you show him the error of his ways, and look at what you get in return. *(Laughter)* Thanks, Don.

**Don:** Any time. I was going to play “The Backache Boys,” or “The Back Street Boys,” or whatever. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** All right. Well, we ought to run right there to prayer, now that we’ve heard that “the candy man can.” *(Laughter)* Why don’t we pray? Father in heaven, we are thankful for this day, for the time You’ve given. We’re thankful for the fellowship we have one with another. We’re thankful for our love for one another. And Lord, we’re thankful for You bringing us together the way You have and for knitting our hearts together like You do. And we pray, Father, that You would continue to do that. We pray that You will continue not only to cement our friendship and bond it together, but we pray as well that You will bless us in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving us remembrance as to why it is that we have such a wonderful bond with one another. Father, we pray that His name would be exalted in our midst. We pray that we would learn about Him and that we would grow in His likeness. We pray that as Your Holy Spirit reveals more of Your word to us we pray that we would learn about You, the triune God, and how You, Father, sent Your Son, the Only-Begotten into the world when we were yet sinners, that we might have life and have it abundantly through Him. Father, we pray that our faith would increase. We pray that in our faith increasing that our assurance would increase as well. And we pray that we would cling and hold fast to Your word as it is indeed Your word.

Father, we come before You today, also mindful that there are those who struggle and suffer among us. We think about our brother Sig and his wife Nancy. And we think about the battle that Nancy is engaged in. And we certainly pray that You will help her to overcome cancer. We ask that You will give her significant blessing, relief and healing. But Father, in the midst of it we pray that You’ll comfort their hearts. We do pray that the fellowship of which they are a part will minister to them greatly. We pray that the church to which they belong will reach out to them and encourage their hearts first and foremost. And then we pray, Father, that friends and men from this group will do the same. We pray that we’ll add our encouragements to their community of faith. And Father, we also pray that their family would be an encouragement to them as well. So we pray, Father, that You will bless them and strengthen them.

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Father, we pray for Su as well, and for this tragic accident that has happened to her. Our hearts ache and we pray that You'll make her well. We pray that You'll mend her body. And Father, we pray as well for Sandy and for her struggle with asthma. We pray that You'll make her to be able to breathe and to be well.

We pray for our brother Bruce and ask that You will bless him not only in his teaching as he has opportunity, but also for his battle with Parkinson's. We pray that he will overcome. But Lord, we know that in this life that the eschatology of this life leads to the inevitable, and that is to death. But in Christ there is life, and so we look forward to that time that we will all overcome the illnesses and the diseases that we face. And death still stings, though in Christ the stinger has been removed. And Lord, we look forward to that day when we will live forever with You. And we will be able to magnify and praise Your name.

Father, we also ask that You will bless us as we gather together to study. We know that in the study of Your word that You bring all kinds of good things into our lives. You stretch us and cause us to grow, convict us, challenge us and also uncover our hearts. And we pray that in this study that we're engaged in that You would do just that as You teach us Your plan of redemption from beginning to end. And Lord, we pray that You will do this not only for our good, but for the glory of Jesus Christ, for it's in His name that we pray. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen.

**Jeff:** All right. Well, today what we're going to be doing is making our way through the Old Testament again. We're in class 8 out of 26. I want to give you the statement for our class today. We understand that God is not ready to make another covenant with the people of Israel. And we need to understand how we need to think about these covenants. There is one covenant of grace. And the covenants that we find in Scripture are exfoliations of this one covenant, unfoldings of this one covenant that will climax in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ. So we have these covenants that are unfoldings of the one covenant.

We've already encountered the Noahic covenant where God preserves the stage of redemption. We then encountered the Abrahamic covenant where God brings out His first characters onto that stage of redemption, so to speak. And now we're going to discover another covenant along the way. And this is the covenant that God makes with the people of Israel as He brings them out of the land of Egypt.

*Next week's texts.* I just put this up here so there's no confusion. Numbers chapter 10, and chapters 22-25 and Deuteronomy 12. And then Deuteronomy 17:14-chapter 20:27, and then chapters 27-31 and then chapter 34. I know that was hard to understand when I first threw it up.

The outline for today is that we're going to do some introductory stuff today. I want us to think about *the covenant at Sinai* for just a minute. I want us to think about *some highlights from the Ten commandments*. I'm not going to walk through all ten commandments, but I want to pull some things out from the Ten Commandments. And you may or may not agree with some of the things that I'm going to pull out. That's okay; I just won't take your questions. (*Laughter*) And the last thing I want to talk about is *the*

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*wandering years.* And we’ll probably hit those fairly lightly, as we have time. So those are the things I want us to look at. I don’t usually begin like this, but do you have any questions up to this point in the story line that you want to talk about before we get started? No? All right.

Okay. Let’s look at some things here. I want to revisit something. I want to revisit it because we skimmed right over it. And some of these things I just don’t think are good to skim over. But because of what we’re doing and the time frame in which we’re doing it, sometimes it requires us to just pass over it with a brief mention.

But I want you to think about the night of Passover, which was the plague of the firstborn. This is pivotal not just for the Exodus moment, but this is pivotal for the New Testament as well. I want you to think about what it was that the Israelites were experiencing. They had experienced nine plagues thus far. The pharaoh would not let the people of Israel go. Then he would decide he would, then he would change his mind, and so on.

And on this last plague God said to Moses, “You will be able to leave Egypt. And when you do you will plunder the Egyptians. And so here is what you need to do. You need to protect yourselves, because just like when there as darkness over the face of the land of Egypt but light in the land of Goshen, so I’m going to protect you now. But you’re going to need to participate. You’re going to need to do exactly what I tell you to do.”

And what was that? Well, they were to get a lamb, a lamb that was perfect, without spot or blemish. And they were to bring it into their homes. They were to inspect it, and then on the night of Passover, prior to that evening event, they were to kill the lamb. And they were to catch the blood in a basin. And then they were to take the carcass and they were not to break one bone. But they were to cook it and they were to eat it. And they were to eat it in haste. They were to take that blood and they were to paint the door frame of their house with that blood. And then they were to wait.

Now I want you to think about that for just a minute. I mean, can you imagine what that must have been like? You have your robe tucked into your belt. You’ve eaten your dinner in haste. You’ve not put the kids to bed. And the kids are saying, “Dad, what’s going on?”

And the father is saying to the children, “Well, son, tonight is the night that God is going to come to Egypt and redeem us.”

“Well how will we know, Dad?”

“We will know.”

And I want you to think about that first moment in the middle of the night, when the first cry of the Egyptians went up as a mom went in and discovered her firstborn dead. Can you imagine how that must have felt to the ears and to the hearts of the Israelites?

And then it was time to go. And they were able on that night to plunder the Egyptians, to ask the Egyptians for goods to take with them,--think about this!--which is how they receive the gold and the silver to make the tabernacle and all that they made in the wilderness. So they plunder the Egyptians and then they escape.

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Now I want you to remember a couple things. First of all Psalm 78:49 tells us how God did this. “*He let loose on them His burning anger, wrath, indignation, accompanied with destroying angels.*”

This part of Psalm 78 is about the Exodus. And here we find that this company of destroying angels goes about and does what? Well, on the homes that are not marked with blood, the firstborn is struck dead. But they pass over the homes that are covered by the blood.

Now what does that remind you of, if not Christ? Obviously this is an image of Jesus Christ, by whose blood we are covered, and the curse does not fall upon us. It falls upon Him instead. And this is just one reference to Jesus being our Passover. There are other references in the New Testament to the same. But the idea is that the Passover is a pivotal event in the life of the Old Testament church as is the Exodus that casts our eyes forward on Christ.

So let’s just think about a couple of things as we think about introductory things. I want you to think about *the Red Sea*. Oftentimes there are liberal scholars who say that God really didn’t pass over or have the Israelites pass through a substantive body of water, but probably had them pass through the Sea of Reeds, which was only a foot or two deep.

Did you ever hear the story about the little boy who was in Sunday school He was hearing his Sunday school teacher who had been trained in these kinds of philosophies and ideas, telling the story about how the people of Israel did not go through the Red Sea. But they actually went through the Sea of Reeds which was actually very shallow in depth. And the boy went home and he said to his mom and dad, “I learned just how powerful God is.”

And his mom and dad said, “What did you learn?”

And he said, “I learned that God destroyed all of Pharaoh’s army with just this much water.” (*Laughter*)

So anyway you get the idea. I actually think that it was a deep sea. (*Laughter*) And God actually drove back the sea with an east wind. And Israel passed through and Egypt, when they went to pass through, were destroyed.

I want to think about some events that happened before Sinai. I’m going to skate over these. I want you to think first of all about *the bitter waters made sweet*. Remember, this is when they come out of Egypt and they pass through the Red Sea. Miriam sings her song. And then in chapter 16 of Exodus they run into bitter water. And the Israelites begin to complain. And Moses takes a log. He throws it into the water and it becomes sweet.

Right on the heels of that story you find how manna is introduced into the life of the people of Israel. And so what happens is that God rains down this coriander-like bread from heaven. And every morning they’re supposed to eat, except for on the Sabbath. On Friday night they’re to gather enough bread for the next day which was Saturday, their Sabbath. And they were to take that into their homes according to their tents, and that would be enough. So manna is introduced here.

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And then there's the story of *water from the rock*, which seems to be a different story than the story that's told later in Numbers, which is the story we'll hear about later where Moses is disobedient, hits the rock, and so is kept from the Promised Land.

And then this is where they meet with the Amalekites. And the Amalekites are routed before Israel. And actually some of these guys who are into this new chronology, and some of the older guys who are into newer chronology before the new chronology was a new chronology, believe that the Amalekites actually bypass Israel and go into Egypt and become a series of Gentile pharaohs. But I leave that for you to decide.

And then we have this story in Chapter 18 about Moses' father-in-law meeting him in the wilderness. He meets him in the wilderness. He says, "You know, these people are so plentiful that they're going to kill you with coming to you for advice. What you really ought to do is to divide them up into groups. And you ought to have the elders of Israel answer some of the easier questions and then bring the harder questions to you." And so all of that happens before Sinai.

Now I want you to think about this. From the departure of Egypt to Mount Sinai is about three months. All of these things happen in about a three-month period. And then you arrive at Exodus 19. I am so dry this morning since I got out of bed. And you know, the coffee is just making me more dry. (*Laughter*) But in Exodus 19 you find the events at Sinai.

I want you to go with me to Exodus 19 for just a minute. I want to point something out to you before we leave the introduction.

In Exodus 19 we find God speaking to the people of Israel. And He says this. This is in verse 4. "*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. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.*"

Now I'll say more about this in just a minute. But the interesting thing is that if you were to go (and I'm not asking you to), but if you were to go to 1 Peter chapter 2, you would find that some of the things that God says about the people of Israel in that chapter are repeated to the church in the letter of 1 Peter. He says, "*As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men, but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*"

So there's a sense in which some of the terminology that's used to describe the Old Testament church under age is used to describe the New Testament church. And along the way I'll point some of that out and actually explain why I think some of that is. But for now I'll just leave it at that. And that brings us to Mount Sinai, three months after the exodus from Egypt.

So *the covenant at Sinai*. We need to remember that this is built upon the Abrahamic covenant. Remember, the Abrahamic covenant was "I'm going to make you a nation, I'm going to give you a land, and I'm going to make you a blessing." Now He has already made them a nation in the land of Egypt.

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And now He is giving them the land. He’s taking them out of Egypt, which we said is like a nation/incubator, and he’s moving them toward the land that He has promised to give them.

Now I want to say one thing to you that I think is important. I want you to keep this parallel in mind. I want you to keep the Adam parallel and the Israel parallel in mind, because the question is always this. *Why the law?*

Now you know that’s an important question for the apostle Paul , because the apostle Paul says that if the promise was given in Abraham, and it’s really a promise, then why the law? In fact, he goes on to say, *“Does the law actually nullify the promise?”*

I mean, just think about that. If I say this to you, if I say, “Caleb, I promise to give you my car next week,” okay? And then tomorrow I come to Caleb and I introduce a law to him and say, “Caleb, if you do this, this and this, I’ll give you my car.” Doesn’t that seem like I’m nullifying the promise to give him my car that I made yesterday? Doesn’t it seem as though I’ve introduced a law now that sounded good in order to get my car, and so it nullifies the promise?

And that’s exactly what Paul deals with in Galatians chapter 3. He says, “Does this law nullify the promise made to Abraham?” And he says, *“Absolutely not.”* And then he says this, *“Then why the law?”*

Why the law? The law is given to tease out sin. The law is given to make sin manifest. He says that in Romans 5; he says that in Galatians 3, two places. He says that the law is given to make sin manifest.

Now I want you to see this. God takes Adam and He creates him outside the garden. This is the garden of Eden. And He brings him into the garden. He gives him a law. And that law is “there is a tree in the middle of the garden. Don’t eat from it. The day you eat from it you will die, and death is exile from the garden, from the presence of God.”

Now think about Israel. Israel is not one man. But Israel is a nation, created outside of the Promised Land; this is the Promised Land. They are brought into the Promised Land and they are given what? Well, you guessed it: a law that if they keep, they will remain in the land. But if they disobey, they will be driven from it, exiled. You cannot help but see the parallel between the two.

Why? Because Romans chapter 5 says this. Okay, I’m going to draw this so we’re clear here.

**Don Maurer:** What are you drawing?

**Jeff:** I’ll tell you in just a second, Don.

**Don:** Okay.

**Jeff:** Give me a minute, Don. I have to get a marker here. *(Laughter)* All right, hold on a second.

**Bill Stolze:** Get one that we can’t see. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** I’m going to get one of these that you can’t see even more than the red one. *(Laughter)* How about this one? That’s a good one. All right. So I’m drawing a line, Don, a time line. So here’s Adam, and here’s Moses, and here’s Christ. All right. Even if you can’t see them, *(laughter)*, you know that this is Adam, this is Moses and this is Christ.

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All right. Now Romans chapter 5 says that “*death reigned from Adam to Moses,*” though the people who existed between Adam and Moses “*did not sin in the likeness of Adam,*” as did Moses. In other words, when God introduces the Mosaic covenant, He introduces a replication of the Adamic problem, which is just what we saw up on the board.

When Moses comes, everybody after him, or at least the people of Israel, sin in the likeness of Adam. But even though the people who exist between Adam and Moses don’t sin in the likeness of Adam in the way that the Mosaic folks do, they’re still under sin. So the question becomes, well, why the law? It is to make the sin that everybody lives under and is cursed for manifest. The law is to tease out sin, to make sin manifest. Why? So that we will have all the more apprehension for the need that we have of the Savior. Okay, does that make sense? Okay.

**Bill Obaker:** Why manifest? To be obvious?

**Jeff:** Obvious, yes, to put it on display, yes.

**Bill Stolze:** I heard it recently asserted that man understood that he could not keep the law. He could not stop sinning. And that’s why the law was there. They saw that they could not keep from sinning.

**Jeff:** Yes. God showed them that they could not stop sinning. How did He show them? How did Israel know that they could not stop sinning? Because he introduced the sacrificial system, sacrifices for their sin. So introducing sacrifices into the Israelite program said to them, “We cannot keep the law. We always need atonement because we will always sin.”

So think about that. Here is God giving them a law, but also giving them a means of forgiveness

**Don Bishop:** It’s all through the Bible—the covenant of works, the law. Christ fulfills all that. Christ fulfilled what Adam couldn’t fulfill.

**Jeff:** That’s right.

**Don:** He fulfills the covenant of works.

**Jeff:** That’s right. And He does it perfectly. If we go back to Adam and Christ, Christ is the second Adam, as 1 Corinthians 15 says. He keeps the law that the first Adam failed to keep.

But actually Christ does more, because unlike Adam, Adam did not have to bear the curse for anyone. Adam only had to offer obedience. He was no curse-bearer. Christ not only has to offer the obedience the first Adam failed to offer, but He’s got to bear the curse for Adam and all of his posterity. He’s a covenant keeper, but He’s a curse-bearer as well. Hence, the Passover. Go ahead.

**Don Bishop:** Which kind of follows the cutting of the covenant. Christ cut it on the cross.

**Jeff:** That’s right. Actually, when you think about Genesis 15 and Hebrews 10, remember that the animals are torn asunder. And Christ in His flesh is torn asunder. It’s not the veil of the tent of the Holy of Holies that’s in mind. It says that it’s the flesh of Christ that was rent. So actually Hebrews 10 is capturing for us that Genesis 15 theme of God being rent for sin. Okay.

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**Don:** Beautiful.

**Jeff:** All right. So that’s the Adamic covenant. Now why the Sinai covenant? Well I’ve already said it, but I want to give you a text in Scripture. Look at this. *“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘I am the LORD your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you live. And you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall follow My rules and keep My statutes and walk in them. I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My rules. If a person does them he shall live by them; I am the LORD.’”*”

He cannot do them. That’s why Moses said, “I have no doubt that you’re going to be driven from this land because you are a stubborn, disobedient people.”

Think about it. I want you to think about it. Think about the comparison of Moses to Noah. Everybody except this one righteous man and seven others in his family are destroyed. And he steps out of the ark and he can’t escape the sin that is in him. And he sins. He is only preserved from the flood by the grace of God, and not by his own merit.

And so the same is true with Moses. The only reason why the people of Israel remain in the land as long as they do is because of the grace of God, not because they obeyed Him.

**Brave Man:** What chapter is that?

**Jeff:** That’s Leviticus 18:1-5, okay? So God cuts another covenant, another exfoliation. Why? Why the covenant at Sinai? So that sin might be manifest. This is not an introduction of law into the covenant of grace so that God gives them one more chance to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and so obey. This is a covenant in a covenant of grace. And it is a covenant meant to tease out sin, to help them to see the reason why they need a Savior who is being foretold in this covenant of grace. That’s why.

The sign of the Sinaitic covenant in Exodus 31:13, 16 and 18 is the Sabbath.

**Transcriber’s Note:** Exodus 31:13, 16, 18, NKJV. *“Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.’ And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.”*

**Jeff:** Just like He did with Noah, God said, “Take the rainbow. That’s the sign between you and Me. Abraham, take circumcision, a sign between you and Me. Take the Sabbath. This is a sign between you and Me.”

So the sign of the Sinaitic covenant is the Sabbath, which is why the Sabbath almost seems to be magnified beyond every other of the Ten Commandments. They’re always in trouble for breaking the Sabbath. And it’s not just because they ought not to break the Sabbath, but it is because this is a covenant sign. And what they’re doing in breaking the Sabbath is that they’re indicating a breaking of the covenant with God. I already talked about that.

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Let me talk to you about *the division of the law that we find*. I hesitate to write. The division of the law that we find here is *civil, ceremonial and moral*.

Now let me talk to you just a minute about that. When you look at the Ten Commandments, what you find is that this is what’s called *the moral law of God*. It gives you the moral precepts of God. What does the character of God look like? It looks like these ten. What does righteousness look like? It looks like these ten.

Now what does righteousness look like for an Israelite nation? Well, that’s where you get into the civil law. These laws apply to this nation.

What about the ceremonial law? How are the first four to be kept in this administration of the covenant of grace? Well, they look like Leviticus 1-7—the sacrifices, and so on. And so this is how God is to be set apart, loved and worshiped, by these sacrifices. Now that will change as the covenant of redemption unfolds further, because with the coming of Christ what happens? You don’t need sacrifices any longer.

So you see that God is teaching us through Israel along the way some lessons. And one of these lessons is that this is what a theonomy looks like. This is what a theonomic state looks like. And here’s what a theonomic state looks like that is ruled by God, according to the civil laws that He dictates, and so on.

But there is also the ceremonial law which says that this is how God is to be worshiped at this point in time in the unfolding of the covenant administration, okay? So there’s a threefold division. But the civil and the ceremonial come out of applications of the moral, in other words, where Israel happens to be at in the unfolding of the plan of redemption at the moment. Does that make sense? If it doesn’t, ask. Let me know what you’re thinking.

So let me put it this way. That means that when someone says, “Well, I think we ought to take all the civil laws of Israel, and we ought to deposit them today in America,” what that means is this. That means that a person has misunderstood the plan of redemption and the civil application of those laws at the moment they were given for Israel. They’re given to Israel to teach what a theocracy looks like under God at that moment. But those civil laws are not to be lifted out and just deposited in any nation.

Now that’s not to say that the general equity of the law is not to be applied to every nation. In other words, when a nation looks at the moral law of God, that nation is to take a look at the last six, how we love our brothers, and apply it to us as a nation. In other words, there is a general equity of the law of God that can be used to build the laws of nations. But to say that we’re going to take the whole civil law of Israel and say that everybody and every nation must follow this law is what I think is a misunderstanding of God’s unfolding plan of redemption. There are people who are like that; they’re called *theonomists*. I’m not one. That’s okay. And if you are, don’t ask me a question. *(Laughter)* Do you get it? Does that make sense? I realize it’s kind of heavy stuff. Any questions? Yes, Bill?

**Bill McCoy:** I think you used the term *theocracy*.

**Jeff:** Yes.

**Bill:** I think that’s commonly misused to say that we have a democracy and that we want to combine it with God. With God there is only a monarchy.

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**Jeff:** I totally agree with you.

**Bill:** Then people don't have to ratify His laws as we do in a democracy.

**Jeff:** Yes. I totally agree that we live under a theocracy now; God is the King. But in between the time of Christ's ascension and the time of the consummation, Romans 13 appears to say that any government, whether it's a human monarchy or a republic or whatever, seems to be under His rule and administration. I don't think there's an appointment of a theonomy in our present day. Okay. Anybody else?

**Bishop Rodgers:** If you're a theonomist, you'd have to kill a lot of people. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** Yes. Theonomy has a tendency to be a lot like the Crusaders. Yes, it does.

All right, *the Ten Commandments*. Two distinctions here. I should probably put this up first. When we think about the Ten Commandments, they are *apodictic*, general propositions. But then there's the *casuistic* aspect, which is case law. So how does a general proposition apply to this case? So if we were thinking about our last slide, we would be thinking about how does the law, the moral law of God, apply to the case of Israel as a nation at this moment? And then God unfolds that.

Or how do we love God and worship Him at this moment in Israel? Well, God's says it's through these sacrifices. That would be case law. Okay? So it's apodictic and casuistic.

So here are important points about the law that I'm going to really buzz through. Why so many sacrifices? For instance, look at Leviticus 1-7. Why so many sacrifices? The answer is easy. No one sacrifice can capture all of the dimensions of what Christ does for us. Why in Leviticus is there all this talk about mold and mildew and hairs coming in white spots, and so forth? It's because what we're learning is that there are so many dimensions to our sinfulness, that these dimensions of our sinfulness need to be atoned for by the many dimensions of sacrifices, which are captured in Christ.

So why so many instances or examples of sin? Why not just give us one example of sin? Well, it's to capture the multi-dimension of sin as well as the multi-dimension of atonement.

Exodus 24 is actually the ratification of the Sinaitic covenant when Moses sprinkles the people with blood. The sacrifice has been offered. Deuteronomy 12:32 is a regulative principle.

**Transcriber's Note:** Deuteronomy 12:32. *“Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.”*

**Jeff:** In other words, they are to worship God the way He specifies, not adding to it or taking away from it.

And then in Exodus 29 and Leviticus 9 there is something interesting. This is just to help you in your reading. In Exodus 29 you find that the priests are to be consecrated for seven days. It's the instructions about how Aaron's sons are to be consecrated.

In Leviticus 9 what happens is this. You get 1-7, all of the sacrifices. This is a description of the sacrifices. And then in 8 you start in the narrative. And in 9 it tells us where we are in the narrative. And it says, *“On the eighth day.”* And you have to say to yourself, “Why the eighth day? What does that mean?”

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And then you realize, oh! This is on the eighth day of the consecration of the priests. So what we’ve been led to understand is that once Exodus closes out, then the priests actually get consecrated for seven days. And in Leviticus 9 it says, “*On the eighth day.*” And so we’re to understand the eighth day of the ordination of these priests.

And then in Leviticus 10 we find that they crash and burn. What happens? Nadab and Abihu offer their censers before the Lord. And I don’t know what they do. I don’t know if they come back and they go, “This is so awesome” You know, the people all fell down and worshiped God. And they were all hyped up and they said, “We gotta keep this going.” And they go back and they get strange fire, fire that’s not appointed by God. Remember Deuteronomy 12:32, to worship God the way He appoints, not adding to it or taking away from it. They get strange fire, fire that’s not appointed by God. They offer it on the altar and ooohhh! God wipes them out.

And what does Moses do? Moses goes up to Aaron and says, “Now I know you want to cry right now, but don’t, because he who approaches God must approach Him as holy.” In other words, he who approaches God must approach Him as He has commanded. These guys offered strange fire. They approached Him as He did not command, and they’re paying the consequence. And that’s the idea.

So immediately you get the idea. On the very first day of their very first worship service they are down two pastors (*Laughter*) because of their disobedience! That’s the idea, right? The idea is that this people is a stiff-necked people who just can’t get it together. And they will never be saved by their own doing.

*The Ten Commandments.* I’m going to say a couple things to you here. The prologue is “*I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*” It’s a prologue that points to redemption. “I redeemed you. Therefore, you obey Me.”

The point that I would make is this. This highlights the graciousness of the Mosaic covenant. “I redeemed you. You didn’t redeem yourself. I redeemed you. Therefore, obey Me.” Okay?

*Highlights.* The Roman Catholics and Protestants have a different division of the Ten Commandments. Roman Catholics put 1 and 2 together. Protestants separate 1 and 2.

And that has implications. Why? Well, commandment 2 for the Protestants, we understand that to mean that we’re not to have images of God.

Now I just want you to think about this for just a minute. I personally believe that the Ten Commandments apply to the triune God. So for instance, when somebody says, “Jesus Christ!” in an expletive manner, we say that’s a breach of the Third Commandment, just as we would say that “Oh, God!” is a breach of the Third Commandment. And nobody has a problem with that. The Second Commandment applies to Jesus as much as it does to the Father and the Spirit.

Think about this brief syllogism. We are not to make images of God. Jesus is God. Therefore we are not to make images of Jesus. I think it’s a simple syllogism that tells us “no” to images of Jesus. Yes, Bill?

**Bill McCoy:** What about the nativity scene?

**Jeff:** Is it an image of Jesus, Bill?

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**Bill:** In the cradle.

**Jeff:** Yes. So put it up, but don't put Jesus in it. (*Laughter*) Yes?

**Bishop Rodgers:** How can you walk after the image of the incarnate Son if you can't have a picture?

**Jeff:** That's a good question. There are actually a couple of things that I would say to that. And again, you understand that I'm in the minority here. I understand that going into this. I'm just telling you what I think. I think that to create an image of Jesus—People will say, “Well, look. Jesus was human. So let's just create this human picture of Jesus.”

I have two problems with that. First of all, I would ask this. Do you have any representation of Jesus that would lead you to believe that anything that you drew is true? And you have to answer “No.” And so this image that you draw, you cannot say with any certainty that any part of it is a true image of Jesus. And I think it's dangerous to put that in front of people, because I follow Calvin on this. Our hearts are natural idol factories. And our hearts will chase that sort of thing.

I once had a lady tell me that her picture of Jesus helped her through her husband's death. I just think that we have a natural propensity to do that.

I think secondly that it is a violation, the Nestorian heresy. Nestorius tried to figure out how it was that Christ had two natures in one Person. And he ended up saying that there were two persons in the one Person. So Nestorius was kind of like a circus robe. You unzip the horse and two people jump out.

And if you say, “Well, I can represent Jesus as to His human Person,” then the question I'm going to have for you is how do you capture the divinity of Jesus in that human representation? Because, obviously, Jesus (*unclear*.) And “*we esteemed Him not.*” He wasn't much to look at.

But I'll tell you this. There are accounts in the New Testament where He just stands there and they say, “We're looking for Jesus of Nazareth.”

“I am who you seek.” And they all fall backward. There's something in the humanity of Christ where the Deity comes through. How do you represent that in the picture? I don't know how you do that. That would be my answer.

**Don Bishop:** The only representation we have right now is through revelation.

**Jeff:** Yes, and here's the thing. That's a great point. Think about what Deuteronomy 5 says. He says, “Be careful, because you only heard a voice and you didn't see an image when I spoke to you on the mountain. You only heard a voice. You didn't see an image.” So you take that however you want it. But let me go on.

I already said something about Commandment 3. It applies to all the Trinity. What about Commandment 4? Is it for today or not for today? I think it is for today. I think it's part of the moral law of God. When you think about Commandment #4 and you hear about all the Sabbath stuff in the Old Testament, I think you have to understand that the Sabbath stuff that you hear is oftentimes about the Israelites' breaking of the covenant, as the Sabbath is a covenant sign.

But compare Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 for a minute. Compare them and notice what you find in the Fourth Commandment. In Exodus 20 it says that we are to obey the Sabbath because the Sabbath day is rooted in creation. In Deuteronomy 5 it says that

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we’re to obey the Sabbath day because it’s rooted in redemption. It’s interesting that it’s the same list of the Ten Commandments. But the justification for the Fourth Commandment is not just rooted in Israel’s redemption from Egypt. In Exodus 20 it’s rooted in the creation ordinance. In other words, we ought to obey the Sabbath not because we’re Israelites. We ought to obey the Sabbath because this is something that God put in creation from the very beginning.

Now the day has changed. It’s not Saturday anymore, it’s Sunday. but that’s because of the Resurrection. It’s the day of the Lord, and so on.

So when we went through Hebrews I gave you some argumentation for this very thing. But that’s my understanding of it. A lot of people say that it’s not mentioned in the New Testament. I think it is. It’s not mentioned as it is in the Old Testament. But it’s certainly mentioned as “*the first day of the week*”, “*the day of the Lord*”, and so on.

**Bill McCoy:** Is “Thou shalt work six days a week” a command?

**Jeff:** Well, Grove City thought so when they made us take six days of classes. (*Laughter*) And our wives think so when they make us work on Saturdays. (*Laughter*) So I guess.

All right. *The wandering years*. I’ll tell you what I’ll do. I think I’ll just reserve this for our introduction for next time because I think you’ve had a lot. Do you have any questions?

**Don Maurer:** What about the second table?

**Jeff:** What about it? I’m just kidding, Don. (*Laughter*) Do you have a specific question about it?

**Don:** No.

**Jeff:** I think those are kind of straightforward.

**Don:** Right. I just didn’t want you to neglect it.

**Jeff:** Yes, right. Thanks for mentioning this, Don. If you want a nice ten-point hermeneutic on how to handle the Ten Commandments, the Westminster Larger Catechism question 99 says that this is how you are to read the Ten commandments. And then it gives you ten hermeneutical principles that you apply to the Ten commandments as you read them. It’s really helpful. Okay?

Let’s pray together. Father in heaven, thank You for this day and the time You’ve given us. Lord, we pray that You’ll bless us. Magnify Yourself in our midst. We pray that You’ll do this for the glory of Jesus Christ, for we ask it in His name. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen. (*Applause*)