

**EXODUS**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Exodus chapter 20 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we have seen so far, God has delivered the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. He has brought them through the depths of the Red Sea, destroying Pharaoh and 250,000 of his soldiers. He has brought them through various trials, teaching them lessons of faith. And now they have come to Mount Sinai in Arabia, the mountain of God and they will spend 11 months in this spot, receiving direction from God for the nation.

In our study tonight we will be looking at the Ten Commandments. Now I do realize that we are not under the Law, we are under Grace, so why should we even study this? Please understand this. The Law was *NEVER* given for a person's salvation – *NEVER!* You cannot attain righteousness through the Law. Paul put it like this in Romans 3:20, **“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”** Also, in Galatians 2:16a we are told, **“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law . . .”** You see, salvation always comes by faith, that is true today just as it was true back in the time of Moses and even the time of Abraham, the father of faith not the father of the Law! Notice how Abraham was saved by faith and not by works, not by the Law in Genesis 15:6, **“And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”** And Paul picks up on this verse in Romans 4:3, justification by faith and not by works back then and today!

The function of the Law was to show them their sinfulness and us! The Law is good, the Law is perfect, any only God can fulfill it, and man falls far short. Thus, the Law not only shows us our sinfulness, but it is there also to drive us to Jesus, the One who can cleanse us from all our sins and for the children of Israel, it was to drive them to the coming Messiah! Paul puts it like this in Galatians 3:19-26, **“What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”** Thus, we don't keep the Law for salvation but out of obedience, out of love for God because He knows what is best for our lives!

So are some of these Laws written for us to keep? Some yes and some no. You see, there are basically three types of Law in the Bible. There is *THE MORAL LAW* and this is a declaration of what God requires of man. We call these the Ten Commandments spoken of in Exodus 20:1-17, Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

In the New Testament Jesus summed it all up by saying in Mark 12:29-31, **“Jesus answered him, ‘The first of all the commandments is: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these.’”** The love for God focuses on the first four commandments, the first table of the Law and it deals with our relationship with God. It is only when that is established that man can fulfill the second table of the law or the last six of the commandments, man’s relationship with his fellow man. If your vertical axis is off, if your relationship with God is off, then your relationship with your fellow man, your horizontal axis will be off and the way you treat your spouse, your friends will also be off. And it will not be back in line until you first get right with God and it is only then that your relationship with your fellow man will be in line! (See also Matthew 22:37-40, Luke 10:26-28). But Jesus spoke of these commandments here in Exodus chapter 20 back in Mark!

Then there is ***THE CIVIL LAW*** or ***THE JUDICIAL LAW***, which dealt with how they were to function as a nation. How they were to live. Examples of this Civil Law can be found in Exodus chapters 21-23 and Deuteronomy 16-21.

And lastly there is ***THE CEREMONIAL LAWS***, which focus on the religious life of the people, instructions on the tabernacle, on the sacrifices, on the feasts, on the priesthood, on ceremonial purity, on dietary laws, and-so-on. You will find these Ceremonial Laws in Exodus chapters 25 and Leviticus and Deuteronomy 12-18.

Why did God need to do this? Because God was crafting a nation out of a people that was not a people - and their life revolved around their deliverance. "When God created a nation out of a family of slaves it took a unique methodology to achieve his purposes. It is fascinating to read Exodus from the perspective of crafting a nation and see how the declaration of law and the enforcement of the laws amalgamated the people into a great force by the second generation." (Steve Laug, Stepping Stones, pp 5-6) Because Israel was a people called out by God, a theocracy, there is some over-lap between the civil and ceremonial laws - there is not always a sharp distinction between religious and civil duties, and the moral law (or perhaps we ought to say "covenant") which under girds them both.

With that as our background, let's begin reading in Exodus chapter 20, starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word!

## **EXODUS**

### **VERSES 1-2**

1. God wants His people to remember what He has done for them. His great love for them so that as He establishes His Moral Law they will understand that these things are for their good. He is not some cosmic killjoy trying to ruin all their fun, but this is what is best for their lives! We are to do the same. Remember all that God has done for us, His great love that He shows us so that as He tells us what to do and not to do we will obey Him knowing that He loves us!

2. There are many today who try to earn God's love. Folks, you can't earn it. God love is there for us to receive! In I John 5:3 we are told, "**For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.**" You see, you can't earn God's love by keeping His commandments, but in keeping His commandments you will find His love!

3. Now let's begin looking at the first table of the Law or the first four commandments that deal with man's relationship with God.

### VERSE 3

#### **1. THE FIRST COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME***

In the world at that time the people were polytheistic or they worshiped many gods. And here God makes it clear that He alone is to be worshiped! In Isaiah 44:6-8 we are told, "**Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them. Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.'**"

2. And please understand that the god's of the Old Testament are still being worshiped today. There was the god Baal or the god of power. There is the god Ashtoreth or the god of sensuality. There is the god Molech or the god of pleasure. There is the god Mammon or the god of wealth. You see, we tend to worship these same gods even though we may call them by different names! It is not that we worship Jesus plus these others gods, He is to be worshiped alone – ***YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME!***

#### VERSES 4-6

#### **1. THE SECOND COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL NOT MAKE CARVED IMAGES***

God does not want us to create an image of anything in which you will bow down and worship. Now in saying that some have taken this to the extreme and not the Biblical extreme. They don't believe we should have the carved dove on the stage and the cross may even offend some, they see this as a carved image. But if that is how you feel, then you must not have any pictures of animals, stuffed animals, no carvings of anything but again, that is not what God is saying here. We are not to make anything that we bow down before and worship as God. Thus, if you were to bow before the dove or the cross then that would be wrong, that is what is being spoken of here. The idea here is that our worship of God is to be spiritual and not material – not carved images!

2. Interestingly enough, in the Roman Catholic Church they bow down before the altar, statues of Mary, the priest and-so-on. Thus, how do they get away with this when they are disobeying what God has said here? Because they leave out this second commandment and then divide the tenth commandment into two, thus, still giving them ten! But it still does not make them right!

3. How can God be Jealous? I like the way that Redpath put it. He wrote: “God’s jealousy is love in action. He refuses to share the human heart with any rival, not because He is selfish and wants us all for Himself, but because He knows that upon that loyalty to Him depends our very moral life . . . God is not jealous *of* us: He is jealous *for* us.”

4. I don’t know how many of you heard some of the sports talk shows that were blasting the Green Bay Packers for wanting to make Bret Farve’s locker a little shrine. That my friend’s is idolatry! Now, because of all the bad publicity they have decided to remove the locker and give it to Bret to do what he wants with it. But how easy is it to bow down before an idol! In Isaiah 42:8-9 we are told, “**I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images. Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.**”

5. One more point here before we move on, and that is this idea of generational curses that are passed on – *FOOLISHNESS!* That is not what God is saying here in verses 5 and 6. You are not punished for the sins of your father and in Ezekiel 18:19-20 we see God tells us that very thing. We are told, **“Yet you say, ‘Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?’ Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.”** The idea here in Exodus is that the children carry on the sins of their father; these curses *ONLY* if they don’t love God, don’t follow after God. If they love God they will not be punished, and thus, we are responsible for our actions, we can’t blame our parents or whoever else people blame today! And thus - ***YOU SHALL NOT MAKE CARVED IMAGES!***

VERSE 7**1. THE THIRD COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN***

We are to honor the name of God in that His name represents all that He is, His holiness and-so-on. And the idea here is that we should not take the Lord's name in vain, which goes beyond profanity- cursing. Interestingly enough when someone hits their thumb with a hammer they don't curse Allah or Buddha because they are not real gods, there is only one real God and man tends to curse Him! Also, we are not to use the name of God in a foolish way or a superficial way, we are to honor His name, who He is. In Leviticus 19:12 we are told, **“And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.”** And in Psalm 139:20 we are told, **“For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain.”** Thus ***- YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN!***

VERSES 8-11**1. THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT: *REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY***

God set apart one day a week when they would rest, spend time totally devoted to the Lord and for Israel it was Saturday or sundown on Friday evening till sunset on Saturday evening, that was the Sabbath. And please understand that this was a special covenant for the Jewish people and not for us. How do I know that? Because in Exodus 31:16-17 we are told, **“Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.”** I think that is clear!

2. Now in saying that I also believe it is important for us to have that day we rest in the Lord, taking a break from our normal work to be refreshed in Him. I do realize that there are some out there who think we need to keep the Sabbath day, that we should worship on Saturday and some go as far as saying that if you worship God on a Sunday you are going to Hell! Well, the early church was in trouble then because they gathered on the first day of the week, which is a Sunday, the day Jesus rose from the dead! But it really doesn't matter what day you want to worship God, just worship Him!

Paul makes it very simple when he tells us in Colossians 2:16-17, **“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”** You see, the substance is Christ and the Sabbath was a picture of what we have in Christ, ***REST!*** It doesn't matter what day you worship God and the reality is, we should worship Him every day of our lives and not just one day specifically. But as a body of believers, whatever day you gather to worship Him, don't neglect that time! Thus - ***REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY!***

3. For those of you who think the week of creation spoken of in Genesis chapter 1 took place over millions of years and not six literal days, evening and morning were the first day and-so-on, you are wrong. God tells us here that He did create the earth and all that is in it in six literal days and He rested on the seventh, giving us a pattern to follow, to work six days and rest in the Lord on the seventh. And if you really think about it, God did not say to work for six million years and rest in the seventh million! That would make no sense.

4. Those are the first four commands on the first tablet of stone, written by God and they deal with our relationship with God, the vertical axis. Now, in the last six commandments we will be looking at man's relationship with his fellow man or the horizontal axis and apart from Christ, we will never be in line with our fellow man!

5. Also, when you look at what these next six commandments say you may wonder why God has to tell us these things, how we should treat others. Do you know the reason? Because apart from God's Moral Laws, we would be out of control, we would do whatever we want. Even with these Moral Laws man still rebels and we reap the consequences of that rebellion. We need to remember that they are there for our betterment, if we would only obey!

## VERSE 12

### **1. THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT: *HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER***

Why is honoring your parents so important to God? Because a society that has lost respect for the older generation, when there is a breakdown of the family unit, the foundations of a society will be destroyed! Now listen to how severely God took this in Exodus 21:17, and he does not give them a time out! We are told, “**And he who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.**” Also, in Proverbs 20:20 we are told, “**Whoever curses his father or his mother, His lamp will be put out in deep darkness.**” And in Leviticus 20:9 we are told, “**For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood shall be upon him.**” This does seem harsh, doesn't it? Yes, it does but we also need to understand that if there is no respect in the home there will be no respect for authority *PERIOD!* And we see that today in our country. Now keep in mind we are not talking about a little child but a young adult who should be doing what is right and if it is not happening in the home it won't be happening outside the home and the Lord wanted it dealt with!

In the New Testament Paul picks up on this in Ephesians 6:1-3 where he tells us, **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’”** My wife changed this a little and would say, “Obey your parents lest you die!” I guess it is the same idea here. And a life that is lived in rebellion is a life that is shortened many times, just as God has told us.

2. Notice what the Scribes and Pharisees did and how by their traditions neglected the commands of God. In Matthew 15:1-6 we are told, **“Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, ‘Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.’ He answered and said to them, ‘Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God commanded, saying, “Honor your father and your mother”; and, “He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.” But you say, “Whoever says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God’ — then he need not honor his father or mother.” Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.”** They were to take care of their parents but instead of caring for them they ignored their parents and said that they dedicated everything to the Lord, which wasn’t true but they looked good and they were out of the responsibility of caring for their parents but not in God’s eyes! Thus - ***HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER!***

VERSE 13**1. THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL NOT MURDER***

Now this is important for us to understand because some twist this Scripture to justify their cause. Some say that capital punishment is wrong or going to war is wrong because the Bible tells us that we are not to murder. That is wrong, we are not to murder but there are times that there is legal justification for putting a person to death. But in murder there is no justification for it. Murder and killing are different! And as we move on we will see God speak of premeditation and that it is a capital crime if you commit it.

2. Jesus takes this a step further and in Matthew 5:21-26 we are told, **“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.”** It is more than the outward action; it is a matter of the heart! Thus - ***YOU SHALL NOT MURDER!***

VERSE 14**1. THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY***

How much clearer can God be – He is condemning extra marital affairs and yet man makes all kinds of excuses for his sin. “God has brought us together!” Give me a break! “My wife doesn’t understand me!” That sounds like you are the problem and not your wife and an affair is not going to change that! “We are in love!” No, you are not in love you are in lust! Let me show you what I mean, how we can justify our sin. There was a Christian singer by the name of Michael English who was involved in an adulterous affair and he not only lost his marriage but he lost his record contract also. But, instead of repenting, this is what he learned through it all. “Maybe God allowed this to happen to make me see I needed some freedom.” My, how we can justify our sin! It is as Proverbs 6:32 tells us, **“Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so destroys his own soul.”** Yes, and it does affect those around them also! You see, the home is to be the foundation for the family and society, and thus, the enemy tries to destroy it, don’t let him!

2. Again, in Matthew 5:27-28 Jesus makes this issue a matter of the heart also and not only an outward action. He said, **“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”** Outwardly we can be self-righteous but God looks at the heart and apart from Christ, we are dead in our sins! Thus - ***YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY!***

VERSE 15**1. THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL NOT STEAL***

This seems so obvious, doesn't it? We should not steal and yet, have you ever taken a pencil from work, or even a paper clip? Do you steal time from your boss? And what about stealing from God in regards to your tithes and offerings? As a new creation in Christ these things should not be a part of our lives. Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:28, **“Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.”** Thus - ***YOU SHALL NOT STEAL!***

VERSE 16**1. THE NINTH COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS***

In other words, we are to be honest, we are not to bear false witness in telling tales and-so-on. Listen to what Redpath has to say regarding this sin of bearing a false witness. He wrote:

“Slander . . . is a lie invented and spread with intent to do harm. That is the worst form of injury a person can do to another. Compared to one who does this, a gangster is a gentleman, and a murderer is kind, because he ends life in a moment with a stroke and with little pain. But the man guilty of slander ruins a reputation which may never be regained, and causes lifelong suffering.”

He goes on to tell us that, “Talebearing . . . is repeating a report about a person without careful investigation. Many, many times I have known what it is to suffer with that. To repeat a story which brings discredit and dishonor to another person without making sure of the facts, is breaking this commandment . . . How many people, especially Christian people, revel in this, and delight in working havoc by telling tales about others. To excuse the action by saying they believed the report to be true, or that there was no intention to malign, is no justification.”

Now, what about inappropriate silence? He continues on and tells us, “When someone utters a falsity about another and a third person is present who knows that statement to be untrue but, for reasons of fear or being disliked, remains quiet, that third person is as guilty of breaking this law as if he had told a lie.” Thus, let us not go down that path, God has warned us!

2. Now, in the New Testament we are told in Colossians 3:8-11, **“But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.”**

Folks, Satan is the father of lies, thus, don't be a spokesperson for Satan but speak the truth and be a spokesperson for God! Again, Redpath tells us, "How very strange that we have ever come to think that Christian maturity is shown by the ability to speak our minds, whereas it is really expressed in controlling our tongues. . . . What a startling revelation it would be if a tape recording could be played of all that every church member has said about his fellow members in one week!" Something to think about! Thus -

***YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS!***

### VERSE 17

#### **1. THE TENTH COMMANDMENT: *YOU SHALL NOT COVET***

The word, "**covet**" means "to pant after." I think that hits the nail on the head, don't you? You see something someone has and you want it, you have to have it, and you are not content in what you have. You will even go to the extreme wishing they didn't have if you can't have it! Look at our society today and it truly is based on covetousness or panting after what others have. We call it "keeping up with the Jones's!" And the reality is, we don't just want to keep up with them, we want more than they have! Is there satisfaction in that? Absolutely not! Paul, in Hebrews 13:5 tells us, "**Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'**"

Also, in I Timothy 6:6-12 Paul tells us, “**Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.**” When you rest in the Lord, you will be content in what you have. Money, possessions are not the driving force in your life, at least they shouldn’t be, God needs to be and in that there is great contentment because He has given to you just what you need. If you are not there, then heed the warning of Jesus in Luke 12:15, “**And He said to them, ‘Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.’**” May we take heed to what the Lord has said!

2. In Romans 7:7 Paul tells us, **“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, ‘You shall not covet.’”**

The Living Bible puts this verse like this, **“Well then, am I suggesting that these laws of God are evil? Of course not! No, the law is not sinful, but it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known the sin in my heart-the evil desires that are hidden there-if the law had not said, ‘You must not have evil desires in your heart.’”** I think this was an area that Paul struggled with; covetousness and we will look at that but let me say this first.

The Law shows us that we are sinners, it exposes our sins. By the time of Jesus the Jewish Rabbis had come up with 613 commandments. Of those 248 were positive and 365 negative. They sought to be righteous before God by outward actions, keeping the Law but the reality is, it is a matter of the heart. What a heavy burden the Law became upon the Jewish people, all those rules and regulations, what kind of relationship with God did that bring? It was a horrible one! Can you imagine a marriage relationship like that, based upon 613 commandments? Of course not! Then why do we try to have a relationship with God by the Law through works?

Paul, in Philippians 3:3-6, speaking of his life before he was saved, said **“For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”**

That is how Paul felt but then I believe God was working on his heart as he began to see his failure in keeping the Law, he saw it more than just being external, it was internal. Thus, he saw how he began to covet and thus he was guilty of breaking the Law that he once prided himself in keeping. It was the work of the Holy Spirit beginning to break Paul.

Of this Charles Hodge wrote: “The law, although it cannot secure either the justification or sanctification of men, performs an essential part in the economy of salvation. It enlightens conscience and secures its verdict against a multitude of evils, which we should not otherwise have recognized as sins. It arouses sin, increasing its power, and making it, both in itself and in our consciousness, exceedingly sinful. It therefore produces that state of mind which is a necessary preparation for the reception of the gospel . . . Conviction of sin, that is, an adequate knowledge of its nature, and a sense of its power over us, is an indispensable part of evangelical religion. Before the gospel can be embraced as a means of deliverance from sin, we must feel we are involved in corruption and misery.” Thus - ***YOU SHALL NOT COVET!***

3. So the Law is God's perfect standard, which is impossible for any of us to keep and like I have said, it points us to Jesus, our Savior! If you try to keep the Law for your salvation, you are a fool. James tells us in James 2:10, "**For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.**" Thus, if you keep 612 of the 613 commandments, you only blow just one, you are guilty of all of them, all 613! God is looking for perfection, not almost perfection! And that can only be accomplished as the righteousness of Christ is imputed into our lives by faith!

#### VERSE 18

1. They saw the holiness of God, the sounds of thunder, the flashes of lightening and it did not draw them closer to God, but it pushed them farther away from God. That is the Law, it shows us our sin, but it is Grace that draws us to God!

#### VERSE 19

1. At this point they had a clear picture of what the Law was all about and they saw their own sinful condition. Thus, they stood afar off from God and they wanted to hear from Moses as God spoke to Him, they were afraid of dying if God spoke directly to them. Sadly, as time went by they came to the conclusion that by keeping the Law they could be righteous, they lost that fear of God and His righteousness and their sinfulness. Paul expounds on this in Philippians 3:6, "**concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.**" As a Pharisee, he saw that by his work, his actions, the keeping of the Law he was blameless, even though covetousness ate at him! It wasn't until he came to Christ that he saw himself as a sinner!

2. Moses, in a sense, is the mediator between God and the people. For us today, we too have a Mediator between God and man, and that is Jesus Christ as I Timothy 2:5 tells us.

#### VERSES 20-21

1. God wants us to obey Him, out of love but if we don't do it out of love, then do it out of fear! Again, tragically, they will lose the fear of God and they will sin in just 40 days making a golden calf to worship God by!

#### VERSES 22-23

1. Where does God start in regards to the giving of the Law of sacrifice? He begins with the heart of worship because if the heart of worship is corrupted then it will affect all parts of our lives!

#### VERSES 24-26

1. Why were these altars of worship so plain? Because you cannot add anything to the sacrifice that was being made, you cannot add to the work of salvation? Peter tells us in I Peter 1:18-21, **“knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”**

Thus, adding anything to the finished work of Christ is meaningless and it will only cheapen it, it won't make it better. You see, the focus is not on the beautiful altar but on the Sacrifice, Jesus! The focus is not on the legs of the men but upon the God-Man, Jesus Christ! It is as Paul said in II Corinthians 4:5-7, **“For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”**

2. As I close this evening let me leave you with these words from Jesus in John 4:24, **“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”** God wants us to worship Him in Spirit, not in the flesh! God wants us to worship Him in the truth and not by deception or feelings! May we not forget that. God's Law is perfect, it is there to guide us in our daily lives - may we listen and obey!