

“That We All May Be One”

Series of lessons by the Elders (Bob Cooper/Dwain Stoops)

Bob’s first lesson – **Old Law**

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Intro

In the year of 1620AD 101 pilgrims crossed the Atlantic Ocean in a ship known as the “Mayflower” and landed in untamed territory commonly known by us today as the state of Massachusetts.

Because all passengers on the ship were not in agreement as to where their destination should reach its final landing point, 41 male passengers signed what is commonly known as the “Mayflower Compact”.

The Mayflower Compact was an agreement of self imposed regulations designed to help this group of pilgrims band together to survive in a land unsettled and unfamiliar to them.

Survival tactics by many animals in this world use this same strategy as the pilgrims – band together and be a part of the herd which provides protection from predators. Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem in his novel called, “The Jungle Book” that went like this: "Now this is the Law of the Jungle—as old and as true as the sky;

And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper, but the Wolf that shall break it must die.

As the creeper that girdles the tree-trunk, the Law runneth forward and back;

For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack."

Contrary to the belief of some, "laws are made to be followed and not made to be broken". Laws are designed to guide, protect and keep people functioning as one.

What was the reason God gave Israel the old law?

In Exodus the 20th chapter we read where God gave Moses the 10 commandments. **Exo 20:18** And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off.

Exo 20:19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

Exo 20:20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that **His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.**

God gave the people this written law to help them to know what sin was and to refrain from it.

Rom 7:7 What should we say, then? Is the law sinful? Of course not! In fact, I wouldn't have known sin if it had not been for the law. For I wouldn't have known what it means to covet if the law had not said, "You must not covet."

Rom. 7:12 Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

God's law is good because it enables us to know that **we are sinful.**

Well, why would anyone want to know they are sinful?

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. We will expound on the subject of the New Law at a later date.

Psa 19:7 The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

Psa 19:8 The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes.

Psa 19:9 The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.

Psa 19:10 More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Psa 19:11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward.

No doubt many a generation has been influenced to break God's laws because Satan convinces humankind they can improve on what God has given them.

During the 18th century "age of enlightenment" or "age of reasoning" many different philosophers took various paths with the common goal of progress, tolerance, and removal of abuses by church and state.

Ironically, the age of reason that promised to give solutions for the woes of civilization has given birth to an era of willful ignorance and indifference. Other philosophies to follow were Modernism and post

Modernism who believe that mankind cannot find absolute truth and have given up the search for it.

Prov. 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

In an article entitled POSTMODERNISM: WITHOUT LAW, “WITHOUT HOPE, AND WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD”

Christopher K. Lensch quotes

G. E. Veith who says, “According to postmodernists, words do not have a defined objective meaning. Rather, meaning is only a matter of interpretation.

People interpret words in different ways; therefore, words are incapable of communicating any kind of objective truth, as such. In practice, this “deconstruction” of language means that such texts as the Constitution and the Bible do not have fixed meanings, but are open to interpretation.

He concludes that, “If language has no meaning, there can be no perjury. And, we might continue, if there is no right and wrong, there can be no moral failure. [And] . . . if there is no truth, it is impossible to lie.”

Post Modernism is the recipe for anarchy. Sadly, this philosophy gives way to personal nihilism (the rejection of religion, morality, and customary beliefs) and contributes to social confusion. Post-modernism is the necessary product of a generation whose mind is darkened.

2Ti 3:1-7 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.

For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure

having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions,

2Ti 3:7 always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

After Moses led Israel out of Egypt (which was the most advanced culture of the day), the very large group of Israelites was to go on a three day journey into the wilderness and worship the one and only true God of the universe. As we know the story the Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he wouldn't allow the slaves to go. In Exod. 9:16 God told Pharaoh that all these signs and wonders performed on Egypt was to **declare God's name throughout the whole earth.**

For humans to perceive divine power supernatural events must occur and the 10 plagues certainly defied that which is natural.

Israel was to be a showcase to the entire world what God wanted from His created people. We understand this concept by words spoken in prayer by Solomon when the temple of God was built in Jerusalem (1Kngs. 8:43) **that God is to be known and feared.**

As we take a closer look at the law of God given to the children of Israel we need to understand its purpose, its boundaries and limitations.

For a social unit to survive and thrive a code of **rules or laws must exist and be upheld to keep a group united as one.** Jesus told those who accused Him of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, **Luk 11:17** But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, **Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.**

God made a proposal to Israel by way of Moses what God would do for them before He presented His compact with them.

Exo 19:4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

Exo 19:5 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;

Exo 19:6 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."

Exo 19:7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him.

Exo 19:8 All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do."

The compact or covenant which God established was a dual purpose document that listed their responsibilities to Him and their responsibilities to each other.

The first commandment was a keystone in the arch of national purpose.

Since the nations Israel would be replacing polytheistic worshipers in the land of Canaan God makes it very clear that this covenant will be under monotheism.

Exo 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before me. Anyone breaking this law was guilty of treason and condemned to death.

The second and third commands were similar in nature:

Exo 20:4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

Exo 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

Exo 20:6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Exo 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

To take the Lord's name in vain was to call upon Him as a witness to a promise or a vow that you didn't intend to keep. An example would be, "as the Lord liveth I will do this or that". Use of His name in any way that cheapens or takes away from its awesomeness would fit in this category.

The fourth command pertains to the percentage of time afforded their provider and protector. One day in seven was to honor two great events God caused to take place.

Exo 20:8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Exo 20:9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work,

Exo 20:10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

Exo 20:11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, **and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

Deu. 5:15 You **shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.**

Rm. 8:2 calls the Old Law a **law of sin and death**. Why is that?

- Under the law of Moses I found in Exod., Lev., and Deut. At least 14 different crimes punishable by death.
- Because the Old Law did not provide for forgiveness of sin and in lieu of what Rm. 6:23 says wages of sin is death/

1Jn. 3:4 sin is the transgression of the law/Rm. 3: 20 all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God

- James 2:10 says that if you commit one sin your guilty of all because whether you had one offense or 20 they all are under the penalty of death because the old law could not remove sin.

Laws 5-10 pertain to moral and ethical treatment toward one another.

Exo 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

Exo 20:13 "You shall not murder.

Exo 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery.

Exo 20:15 "You shall not steal.

Exo 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Exo 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

It is somewhat vague but most believe when God spoke to Israel that He recited the 10 commandments (Ex. 19:19/20:1;22). It seems somewhat confusing but by my calculations Moses went up and came down the mountain at least 6 different times.

(Ex.19:3/19:7/19:8/19:14/19:20/19:21;24;25/20:21/32:7/34:2/35:29

It should be noted that the giving of the law was an extremely fearful experience (Ex. 20:18-20) and it appears that under the Old law one was to obey out of sheer fear of death. There were only a few people who could dare come close to the presence of the Lord (Moses and the high priest).

When Moses went back up the mtn. in Ex20:21 that appears to be when he received the rest of laws which Moses later wrote in a book (Josh. 8:31) and also at the same time received the 10 commandment written on the

front and back of the two tablets of stone by the finger of God (Ex. 31:18/32:15/ 34:28).

Conclusion - A society without law is a society in a state of mayhem. The book of Judges can attest to that. (Jdg. 21:25) *In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*

God chose the seemingly insignificant nation of slaves known as Israelites and....

Brought them out from among the most powerful nation in the known world (Egypt)

To become the showcase for all the world to display the strength, power, and salvation afforded by the only true God of the universe

With these slaves the Lord went on to transform them to a great nation only after He made a compact or covenant with them.

As long as they obeyed God's law they would be blessed. But no matter how hard they tried they could not keep the law.

There will always be philosophies of men that attempt to make this world a better place but the end to their wisdom is death.

God's laws are pure, perfect and altogether right redeeming the soul to eternal life. Those that kept the old law with a pure and faithful heart would be candidates to have their sins removed with the blood of

Christ. Rd. Gal. 3:22-24 *But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.