

The Great Story

Week 05 – The Ten Commandments and Wilderness (Exodus 15-40)

Bible Study

I. Entering the Wilderness

- a. After the Lord destroyed the pursuing army of Pharaoh, Moses took Israel into the wilderness.
- b. Not finding drinkable water after three days, the people began to complain to Moses.
 - i. They arrived in Marah (Hebrew for “bitter”) and found water, but it was undrinkable.
 - ii. Making intercession on their behalf, Moses prayed to the Lord.
 1. The Lord showed him a log and when he had thrown it into the water, the water became drinkable.
 - iii. Exodus 15:25b
 1. “Jehovah Rapha” – The Lord our Healer
 2. After all the miracles Israel had witnessed, shouldn’t trust in the Lord come easily?
 3. The Lord led them to Elim – 12 springs and seventy palm trees
- c. Manna from Heaven – Exodus 16:1-3
 - i. The Lord sent quail in the evening and manna in the morning.
 1. The manna was white and tasted like wafers made with honey (Exodus 16:31)
 2. Israel was instructed to gather only enough to eat each day – 1 omer
 - a. An omer was a small bowl
 3. When some people tried to gather more than what they needed to eat for the day, it rotted and bred worms.
 4. The Lord also instructed that on the sixth day that Israel should gather a double portion as there would be no manna on the Sabbath.
 - a. Ignoring the commands of God, the people did not gather a double portion and when they went on the Sabbath to gather food, they found none.
 - b. This angered the Lord, (Exodus 16: 28 – “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?”
 5. Moses instructed Aaron to keep a jar of manna so everyone would remember how the Lord fed them when He delivered them from Egypt.
 6. Israel ate manna for 40 years while in the wilderness
- d. Water from the Rock
 - i. Moving on the wilderness of Sin (a frontier city), Israel again found themselves without water.
 - ii. Not trusting in the Lord again, they complained to Moses

iii. Under instruction from the Lord, Moses struck a rock with his staff and water gushed forth.

1. How large was this fountain that it watered 2 million people and their animals?

II. Battle with Amalek

- a. The Amalekites took their name from Amalak (grandson of Esau)
- b. They sought to destroy Israel at Rephidim
- c. Moses told Joshua to go out and fight while he, Aaron and Hur (companion of Aaron) went up to the hill.
- d. As long as Moses held his hands aloft with the staff of God in his hands, the Israelites prevailed. When his hands lowered, the Amalekites began winning.
- e. Growing tired, they moved a stone in place so Moses could sit down. Aaron and Hur held Moses' hands up and the battle was won.
- f. Moses built an altar to the Lord and named it "Jehovah Nissi" – The Lord is My Banner

III. The Ten Commandments

- a. Moses took the people of Israel to Mount Sinai (Mountain of God)
- b. Exodus 19:3b-8
- c. The Lord told them to consecrate themselves and to wash their garments. On the third day, He would come down to Mount Sinai. He warned the people not to even touch the mountain as they would die.
- d. The Ten Commandments – Exodus 20: 1-17
 1. I am the Lord Your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.
 - a. This was a call for monotheism. God is not only supposed to be "before" any other gods, there are to be none others even recognized.
 2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath.
 - a. Forbidding art was not the issue here, but eliminating idol worship was.
 3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
 - a. This means the misuse of the Lord's name (broken oath) as well as mockery.
 4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 - a. The Sabbath is the 7th day – Saturday
 - i. Christians do not generally observe the Sabbath as Colossians 2:16-17 nullifies this commandment.
 - ii. This is the only commandment not restated in the New Testament.
 5. Honor Your Father and Mother that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
 6. You shall not murder
 - a. The intentional killing of another human being was strictly forbidden and carried a sentence of death. In the event of an

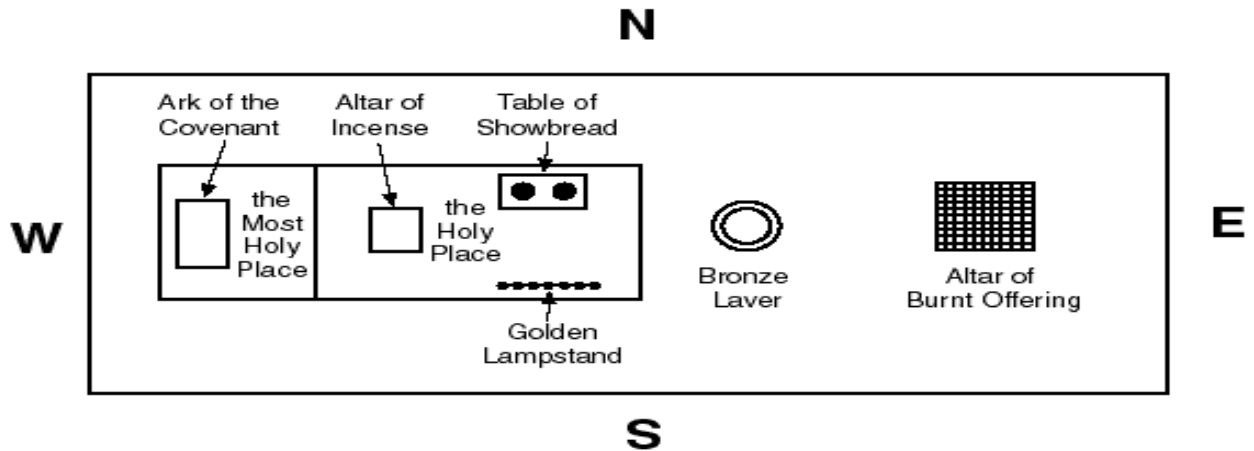
- accidental killing, the accused went to a city of refuge until the death of the High-Priest.
- b. Jesus said even if you are angry, you have broken this commandment.
7. You shall not commit adultery
 - a. The penalty for this was death.
 - b. This applies to both men and women equally.
 - c. Jesus said if you lust after another in your heart, you have broken this commandment.
 8. You shall not steal
 9. You shall not bear false witness.
 10. 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.
 - ii. The first four commandments are vertical (relationship with God), the last 6 are horizontal (relationship with each other).
 - iii. The Greatest Commandment – Matthew 22:34-40

IV. The Ark, the Tabernacle, and the Priests

- a. The Lord gave Moses instructions on how to construct and setup the Tabernacle. (Exodus 26) as well as what items to place inside. The Levites were to camp outside of the Tabernacle and guard it. They were to kill anyone who tried to enter the Tabernacle inappropriately. Even within the Levites, there were subgroups that were assigned particular tasks. If anyone except the appropriate people tried to do something they were to be killed.
- b. The Most Holy Place – The Holy of Holies was a 15x15x15 feet room that was separated from the rest of the tabernacle by a veil. The veil shielded worshipers from the presence of our completely Holy God. Only the High Priest was allowed beyond the veil and only once a year during the Day of Atonement. If anyone else entered this place, they died.
- c. Ark of the Covenant - The ark was to be made of acacia wood and overlaid in gold.
 - i. Mercy Seat – The lid of the ark known as the “Mercy Seat”. The Shekinah glory of God was above the ark and the tablets of the law were inside the ark. Blood from the sacrifice was sprinkled on the ark and stood between God and the Law.
- d. Altar of Incense – “And Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it. Every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it,⁸ and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations.”
- e. Table of Showbread – 12 loaves of bread separated into two piles with frankincense should be placed there by Aaron every Sabbath. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the LORD's food offerings, a perpetual due.
- f. Golden Lampstand - You shall make seven lamps for it. And the lamps shall be set up so as to give light on the space in front of it.
- g. Bronze Laver - You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. Then

they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die.

- h. Altar of Burnt Offering - You shall make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and basins and forks and fire pans. You shall make all its utensils of bronze.



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- i. Aaron and his sons were ordained as priests by Moses
 - i. The prophet of God (Moses) was still in authority over the priests

V. The Golden Calf

- a. While Moses was on the mountain, receiving the Law, the people below lost their faith. Moses had been on the mountain for 40 days, and in his absence, they ceased on Aaron and demanded that he make a god that they could worship.
 - i. There is no evidence that Moses had ever been gone even over night during his trips to the mountain.
- b. Aaron told them to remove all their gold rings and jewelry so he could melt them down and forge a calf.
- c. They attributed what God had done to the golden calf – Exodus 32:4
- d. Moses came down from the mountain and had the two stone tablets of the Law in his hands. In his Anger, he threw the Law to the ground and shattered it. God would later give him new tablets.
- e. He burnt the calf and then ground it to powder. He then put it in the water and made the people drink it.
- f. Moses said, “Who is on the LORD’s side? Come to me.”
 - i. The sons of Levi came to him and he commanded that they go through the camp and kill their brother, companion, and neighbor. Three thousand men died that day.
 - ii. Moses then said, “Today you have been ordained for the service of the LORD, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day”

VI. Conclusion

- a. The Lord commanded that they leave Sinai and travel to the Promised Land.
- b. Exodus 40:34-38

VII. Lessons Learned

- a. God wants a relationship with His Creation. He gave the Israelites the Law so they would know how to behave in relation to Him and to each other. The Bible allows us to have a relationship God.
- b. It is easy to fall back into old patterns and ignore God. There is always a cost associated with that however.

VIII. Sources

- a. *The MacArthur Study Bible*. Edited by MacArthur, John, Jr. electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997.
- b. Stuart, Douglas K. Vol. 2, *Exodus*. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006.
- c. Hamilton, Victor P. *Handbook on the Pentateuch*. Baker Academic. Grand Rapids. 2006.