

The gospel invites all men and women to receive Christ and become sons and daughters of God. The call of the gospel is the answer to the Law.

God's throne is a throne of grace, not of Law. And we are invited to "approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that you may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Heb 4:16).

Jesus invites all men and women to "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt 11:28-29).

TALK ABOUT:

1. What is the difference between the Ten Commandments and the Book of the Covenant?
2. What was written in the Book of the Covenant?
3. Who went with Moses to the mountain of God (24:9)?
4. Who was Aaron?
5. How and why did God honor Aaron?
6. Where did Moses get the plans to build the Tabernacle?
7. What do you understand by the 'image' God put on men and women?
8. What happened to God's image in mankind when Adam sinned?
9. When Moses reviewed the Law with the people it covered every important part of a person's life __ True __ False?

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The Meaning of . . .

the LAW

VS

the SPIRIT

**Written by
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To the Reader: Keep your Bible open as you study these notes. Go slowly. Find each reference. Bible verses are quoted from the New International Version. Invite a friend to study with you. Talk over what you have learned from the study. Share what God is doing in your life.

THE LAW

Governments make laws. There are thousands of laws on the books of every developed country and new laws are being made every day. If you break one of these laws, you may find yourself before a judge. And ignorance of the law is no excuse. If you break the law, you are guilty and you might be punished.

There are natural laws also. If you break a natural law there are consequences. The consequences may cause you physical or emotional pain.

If you break a law of the country where you live, it may mean a long prison term. If you break a natural law, the hurt may last only for a few days or for the rest of your life.

Take the law of gravity for example. When I was a boy, I loved to climb trees. Once a branch of a tree broke under my weight and I fell out of the tree. I discovered that when you fall out of a tree you always fall down, never up! That is because the natural law we call gravity pulls you down. I broke a natural law and I suffered the consequences. When I hit the ground (or the ground hit me) I was severely shaken. If you happen to break your arm in a fall, the doctor will put it in a cast and it will take six weeks or more to heal.

GOD'S LAW vs. MAN'S LAWS

God's Law is eternal, unchanging and written in heaven. David expressed the divine description of God's Law in Psalm 119. He put the "word of the Lord" and "the Law of the Lord" on the same footing. The Law came from the mouth of the Lord. To David God's Law "was more precious than thousands of pieces of silver and gold" (119:72).

God gave Joshua the secret of success when He said, "Do not let the Book of the Law depart from your mouth, meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8).

GOD GAVE US HIS LAW

God's command was His Law. From the beginning, Adam lived under God's command. God gave Adam a command which was for his good. God's

Jesus Christ on the cross dying for him. Christ's death was his only hope. He must fix His eyes on Jesus Christ (Heb 12:2).

'I'm a slave to God's law of love,' he said to himself. 'I don't have to give in to this enemy any longer. Christ defeated sin and death for me when He died on the cross. I am a new person. I will not yield to my old nature.'

If you are "in Christ" no one can condemn you (Rom 8:1). If God says you are not guilty, who will charge you? Believers have God's promise, "I will remember their sins no more" (Heb 8:12). The Evil One may stand against you as a person, but he cannot threaten you with your past. In Christ, your past, present and future sins are washed away by the blood of Christ (John 1:29)! You are under the blood!

NOT JUSTIFIED BY THE LAW

Paul said, "We who are Jews by birth...know that a man is not justified by observing the Law, but by faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal 2:15). He told the believers at Ephesus, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph 2:8-9).

TALK ABOUT:

1. The marriage of man and woman is a picture of? (circle one)
the law Christ Church baptism
2. Paul said the Law showed him: (circle the correct answer)
he was a Jew he was a sinner God hates sin
3. What happens to the Christian's old, sinful nature (Gal 5:16-18)?

FREE FROM THE LAW

The songwriter said,

*"Free from the Law, Oh happy condition.
Jesus has died and there is remission
And bruised by the fall,
Christ has redeemed us, once for all."*

Believers are free from the Law's demands, but bound to righteousness and it is set out in the gospel. Paul wrote, "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the spirit of life set me free" (Rom 8:1-2).

This freedom did not give men and women license to sin, but freedom to follow Christ without the ceremony demanded under the Law.

The way of the Spirit is a new life of fellowship and service (Rom 6:14). This new way of "life in the Spirit" is just the opposite of the old way of life under the Law of Moses (Jer 31:31).

PAUL'S OLD WAY OF LIFE

Paul used his own early life as an example of a person living under the law (7:7-13). Then he speaks of his present life as a Christian (7:14-25).

He said, "I would not have known what sin was except through the law" (7:7). The law was not neutral. When it said, "Don't covet," it made him want to covet (7:8; Ex 20:17).

The law was like a grass seed in Paul's shirt. It irritated and bothered him because it pointed to his sin-nature. And it stirred up his sin-nature to want to disobey God's command. And, without Christ, he had no power to control his sin nature. When the law says, "Don't look or don't touch," it makes us want to look or touch all the more!

TALK ABOUT:

1. Man's nature is spoiled by sin ___ True ___ False?
2. We always have this sinful.....to trouble us (Gal 5:17).
3. Paul called the law "the old way of the written code" (Col 2:14). What is the new way which is better than the law?
4. When is a wife released from the law of marriage (Rom 7:2)?
5. Does the law have authority over us after we die?
6. What 'law' or command did God give to Adam and Eve?
7. Did Jesus take away the Law's authority over us (Matt 22:37-40)?
8. How did Jesus Christ "fulfill the Law?".....?

A LIFE OF HOLINESS

Paul said, "The Law is spiritual; I am unspiritual..." (Rom 7:14). Paul was thinking of his old nature as opposed to his new nature in Christ (Gal 5:16-17). He contrasted "the written code" (Col 2:14), which could not help him, with the law of the spirit which God promised to write on the believer's heart (Jer 31:31-34). Paul called this "the law of the spirit of life" (Rom 8:2).

When we are saved, the old Adam-nature is not destroyed. Our old and new natures stand side by side, but they are not equals. We know from Paul's life that he starved his old nature so that it was soon dwarfed by a towering new nature (Phil 4:12).

Sin was like an enemy and Paul's life was like a battleground. He fought back hard. The spiritual man gazed at the ideal, Christ, but his natural self ran after sin. He did not want to give in to his natural passions, but they won again and again. His life was like a hell on earth.

"What a wretched man I am!" he cried out. "Who will rescue me from this body of death" (Rom 7:24)? Then Paul looked up from the battlefield. He saw

command to Adam was like a guard rail on a high bridge; it was there for his safety. By obeying God's command, man could enter into a relationship with the Creator of Life itself, a relationship of eternal happiness.

In the center of the garden stood the Tree of Life. It was a sign and a seal to Adam, assuring him that life and happiness would continue even to immortality through the grace and favor of his Creator. Of its fruit Adam could eat and live forever. Now to us Jesus Christ is the Tree of Life (Rev. 2:7) We can feast upon Him and live with Him forever.

Near to the Tree of Life stood the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen 2:14-17). God said to Adam, "You must not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Gen 2:17).

Adam and Eve were free to choose to obey God's command or not to obey Him. So God joined the obedience to the Law with Life which assured the man and woman that they could be forever in fellowship with Him. Or its opposite, disobedience and eternal death.

Later God gave the people of Israel His Law written by His own hand on tablets of stone.

You may think that you can break God's Law and not be punished, but you are wrong. Punishment for breaking God's Law may be delayed. But God said, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction..." (Gal 6:7-8). God also said, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 6:23). Adam and Eve were free to obey God's Law or not to obey.

When Adam broke God's Law, his conscience began to trouble him (Gen 3:8). And all his peace and happiness turned to resentment, struggle and pain.

God said, "The earth was defiled by Law-breakers (Lev 18:24-30), and it vomits out those who fail to keep the Law" (Lev 20:23).

TALK ABOUT:

1. What command (Law) did God give to Adam and Eve (Gen 2:17)?
2. Were they free to obey God?
3. What is a natural law?
4. Have you ever broken a natural law?
5. Do we suffer when we break God's Law?

GOD CANNOT WALK WITH SINNERS

God cannot 'walk' with sinners. He said to Israel, "Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save (Israel), nor His ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God, your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear (you)" (Isa 59:1-2).

When Adam and Eve sinned, God cursed Satan, the great adversary, and promised to send Jesus to be man's Deliverer or Redeemer (Gen 3:15). God's promise was veiled in words Adam and Eve probably did not understand, but it was the most important promise ever made to mankind.

God said to the great adversary Satan:

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers,

"He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel" (Gen 3:15).

Jesus Christ came as "the seed of the woman" (Gal 3:15; 4:4). He came to seek and to save Adam's fallen race (Luke 19:10). At the cross, Jesus crushed Satan's head (his authority, Heb 2:14-15), but not before Satan 'bruised' Him in His humiliation.

Christ's victory over Satan can be our victory. Now we can have the same fellowship with God that Adam and Eve enjoyed in the garden in Eden.

First we must embrace the Son, the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. We must receive His death on the cross as our substitute and ask God to forgive our sin and rebellion. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

MEN REFUSE TO BELIEVE GOD

Men refuse to believe or accept God's truth. Men are born rebels and grow up to rebel against God's Law. We all have the rebel nature of our father, Adam. Natural man has no hope of changing his sinful nature or of overcoming his moral depravity. God said, "There is no one righteous...All have turned away (from God)...there is no one who does good, not even one" (Rom 2:10-12).

For this reason, God told the Israelites to teach their children His Law. He commanded the people to "Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up...bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorposts of your houses, and on your gates" (Deut 6:7-9).

His promise to parents is, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Prov 22:6).

TALK ABOUT:

1. Who came to the garden in Eden and tempted Eve (Gen 3:1-7)?
2. Why is natural man a rebel toward God?
3. What did God say about a man's heart (Rom 2:10-12)?
4. Is it important to learn God's word?
5. God's Law was to be always before their eyes ___ True ___ False?
6. Why can't God 'walk' with sinners?

3. In love, Christ gave Himself for His Church and we are called to do the same ___ True ___ False?
4. Christians are called to resist sin and evil (Heb 12:4). Are you doing this?
5. Does it cost you much to live for Jesus?

THE APOSTLES AND THE LAW

Paul was a Pharisee. All his fellow Jews kept the Law of Moses. Paul calls them "brothers, men who know the Law." They had not converted to Christ, as Paul had hoped they would. They told Paul that he should keep the Law as God had given it on Mount Sinai.

He answered them, "The Law has authority over a man only as long as he lives" (Rom 7:1-4). We know that the Law, any law, has no authority over a person after he or she is dead.

The marriage law binds a man and a woman while both are alive. If the husband dies, the wife is released from "the law of marriage." She is free to marry again.

"So, my brothers," Paul wrote, "You also died to the Law, through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another...Him who was raised from the dead..." (7:4). "Your husband, your master, used to be the Jewish Law; but you 'died' as it were, with Christ on the cross; and since you are 'dead', you are no longer 'married' to the law, and it has no more control over you" (Rom 7:4 The Living Bible).

The Christian has 'died' to the Law, with all its rules and regulations. He is free to marry a new partner, even Christ. "By dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the Law....to belong (as a spouse does) to another" (Rom 7:4,6).

Once, Law was the believer's master. Now Christ is the believer's 'husband' and Master. Christ puts love in place of fear; grace in the place of rules, and freedom in place of chains.

SOLD AS A SLAVE TO SIN

"When we were controlled by the sinful nature, sinful passions aroused by the Law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death" (Rom 7:5). The Law was not bad, but the sinful passions it aroused were bad. Man's nature is spoiled by the sin he inherited from Adam. So that God said, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23).

Paul said, "We bore fruit for death." Our sinful nature could not produce anything righteous or holy. Why this bad fruit? Because sinful passions aroused by the Law work themselves out through our bodies. We rebel against God's Law and break it!

Paul called the Law "the old way of the written code" (Col 2:14). Released from the Law's demands, we serve in a new way of the Spirit. Life in Christ is called "the new way of the Spirit" (Rom 7:6; 8:2).

3. What is the “law of love?”
4. Where does the Holy Spirit ‘write’ God’s law of love (Jer 31:34)?
5. Are you living under the law of love?
6. What drove Paul to suffer for Jesus Christ (2 Cor 5:14)?

RESURRECTION TO A NEW DAY

What happened to the Old Covenant? It was swallowed up in the New Covenant sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ (Luke 22:19-20; Heb 10:10).

What happened to the Law of Moses? It died with Christ and was resurrected in the “royal law of love” which the apostles preached (James 2): God sends His Spirit to all who received the gospel and the Spirit writes the law of love on their hearts.

Those who rejected the Law, died without gaining the promised land. Those who receive the gospel “have a place in heaven reserved for them (1 Peter 1:4).

What happened to the temple which took forty years to build? It was destroyed and rose again in three days (John 2:19).

And what became of the worshippers? They rose up from among the people as the New Testament Church, gathered in small house churches and took the gospel of love to the world.

What happened to the High Priest’s office? It was resurrected when Jesus Christ rose from the tomb, ascended to heaven and became our High Priest in heaven (Heb 8:1-2).

What happened to the offerings and sacrifices? They ceased because Christ made the perfect sacrifice once for all (Heb 9:12). His sacrifice set the pattern for ours (Eph 5:2).

What happened to the sins of the people which were ‘covered’ by the blood of sacrifice? They were rolled forward to the cross and borne away by the Savior, never to be remembered again (Heb 8:12; 9:15).

What happened to the ritual cleansing demanded under the Law? Believers were made clean by the washing of the word (Eph 5:26), and by the cleaning of the blood of Christ’s sacrifice (Heb 2:11; 1 John 1:9).

What happened to the temple ritual? It ceased and rose anew in praise and adoration as thousands of born-again believers worshipped the Lord from overflowing hearts (Heb 13:15).

What was one nation became a multitude which no man could number (Rev 7:9), called out of every tribe, tongue and people group on the earth.

TALK ABOUT:

1. What feeling is greater than the human emotion we call love?
2. Who fills our hearts with the love of Jesus Christ (Rom 5:5)?

7. What stopped God from hearing the prayers of the people (Isa 59:2)?
8. What promise did God make to Adam and Eve (Gen 3:15)?
9. Who won the victory over Satan?

GOD CHOSE A PERSON

When the world was dark with sin, God found a man of faith in Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram lived among people who did not know the living God. God spoke to Abram and said, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you...” (Genesis 12:1-2).

Abram obeyed God’s command. “Abram believed the Lord (God) and He (God) credited this faith to him (Abram) as righteousness” (Gen 15:6).

We are not told what made Abram’s heart open to hear the voice of God. But there must have been a hunger there for a spiritual dimension that was missing Terah’s family and in the city of Ur.

Ur was a great city on the Tigris River in Mesopotamia (present day Iraq). The great rivers Euphrates and Tigris watered the land as they flowed eastward into the Persian Gulf and earned the area the name “the fertile crescent.”

Abram lived with his father Terah, his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot (Gen 11:27). Terah did not worship the living God, he bowed down to idols like the moon god (Joshua 24:2). This may have troubled Abram.

Abram’s wife Sarai had no children. His brother Nahor and his nephew Lot, son of Haran, also lived in the family compound.

Later, God made a covenant with Abram. God told Abram, “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions” (Gen 15:13-14).

MOSES, THE MAN OF GOD

Moses was one of the most remarkable men who ever lived. He was born in Egypt at a critical time in world history. His people, descendants of Abraham, were in Egypt where they were forced to do hard work for the Pharaoh. He held them as slaves.

When the Pharaoh set out to kill all the baby boys born to the Hebrew women, Moses’ mother hid him. He was saved by the princess. The Pharaoh’s daughter raised Moses to be her own son.

God used Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. It took 80 years for God to prepare Moses for his life’s work. Moses guided two million people

through many trying experiences to a land God had promised their forefathers.

When the people of Israel rebelled against the Lord God, Moses pleaded with God to spare them (Ex 32:31-34). He spoke with God face to face and God granted his requests – all but one. Moses did not enter the land God had promised to Israel.

God called Moses “My servant Moses.” God spoke to Moses as a man speaks to his closest friend, “face to face.”

Moses proved himself as an author, a teacher, a Law-giver, a prophet, a prayer warrior and a mediator between God and the people of Israel. The Bible records more of Moses’ life and work than that of any other man.

Though Moses began his adult life as a prince, he died alone on the top of a mountain. God received Moses’ spirit and hid his body, so that the people of Israel could not worship their dead leader.

TALK ABOUT:

1. Who did God choose to be the head of a great people (Gen 12:1-2)?
2. What did God say about Abram (Gen 15:6)?
3. Who was Moses?
4. Where was Moses born?
5. How did God use Moses to deliver His people?
6. When the people sinned against God, Moses.....for them and God spared them (Ex 32:31-34).

THE ESCAPE FROM EGYPT

The Lord said to Moses, “Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of My mighty hand, he will let them (the people of Israel) go...he will drive them out of the land” of Egypt (Ex 6:1).

God worked many wonders in Egypt. He used His servant Moses. God spoke to Moses and Moses told Aaron what to say. When Moses went before Pharaoh, Aaron spoke God’s words to the king.

Moses told Pharaoh what God would do and God performed each miracle and wonder just as Moses said. And Moses used ‘the rod of God’ before Pharaoh and his court.

Some of Pharaoh’s officials “feared the word of the Lord” (Ex 9:20). But Pharaoh’s heart was not moved. Every time he refused to let God’s people go, his heart grew harder and more stubborn. When we insist on going our own way, God may speak to us. If we do not repent, God may let us go. Moses repeated God’s demand to “let My people go,” and His wonders before Pharaoh, but nothing changed Pharaoh’s heart.

And amidst all the wonders, God made a distinction between His people and Pharaoh’s people (Ex 8:23). God’s people must be different from those

THE GREATER LAW OF LOVE

From the beginning, “God desired mercy, not sacrifice” (Hoses 6:6; Matt 9:13). And “to obey is better than sacrifice...” (1 Sam 15:22). As we obey, the Holy Spirit shows up the things in our lives that do not please God. And His grace helps us to put those things away.

The Law was “until Christ.” He gave us a New Covenant. Now love and commitment rule in the hearts of those who love Him (Matt 5:3-12). We obey the royal law because we love our Lord and want to please Him.

At the last day, our Lord Jesus will sit as Judge of the nations. “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, he will sit on His throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another...”

“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by My Father; take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me something to eat, I was a stranger and you invited Me in....I was sick and you looked after Me’...” (Matt 25:31-45).

This was “the law of love” demonstrated “to one of the least of these” meaning the sick, the orphan, the widow and anyone in need.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO . . .

Christ set down the law of love in the gospel (Matt 5:3-11). The Old Covenant of Law brought a curse and ended with a curse (Mal 4:6). The New Covenant began with a blessing. It is called “the Sermon on the Mount.” And ended with a blessing call “the Holy City, the New Jerusalem” (Rev 22:14).

In nine brief phrases, Jesus gathered all the Law of the Old Covenant and gave it a new birth (Matt 5:3-11). He spoke these words to Jew and Gentile alike. When they asked Him, “What is the greatest commandment, He answered, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength... Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:28-31).

Only the power of the Holy Spirit, living within the believer, can give a man or woman the kind of love God demands.

God’s Spirit ministers the love Christ to us. It is greater far than any human emotion. So the apostle wrote, “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God....This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers” (1 John 3:1, 16).

TALK ABOUT :

1. What title did Jesus use when He spoke of Himself (Matt 24:30)?
2. The Pharisee said no one should work on the Sabbath day. What did Jesus say (Matt 12:11-12)?

The Pharisees accused Jesus of not keeping the Law. Jesus kept the Law, but not the Pharisees' traditions.

On a Sabbath, Jesus and the disciples walked through the fields. The disciples were hungry and picked some heads of grain. They rubbed the grain in their hands, blew away the husks and ate the grain (Matt 12:1-14).

The Pharisees saw this and said to Jesus, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful (to do) on the Sabbath."

Jesus answered, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." He told them it was not breaking the Sabbath to eat, or to heal the sick, or to do necessary things. Jesus did not say He was above God's Law, but that men should not be burdened by their traditions.

The Pharisees said that picking grain was work and no work should be done on the Sabbath. They added hundreds of traditions to God's law, so that Jesus said to them, "You nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition" (Matt 15:6).

Jesus said the letter of the Law must be servant to the spirit of the Law. In Christ's teaching, mercy triumphed over judgment and love for God and neighbor was above all other laws. Paul said, "There is faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor 13:13).

THE GREATER LAW-GIVER

Jesus Christ is presented to us in the Book of Hebrews, not as a Law-giver, but as our High Priest in heaven and as "a Son ruling over God's house" (Heb 3:6).

Moses was faithful to God as a servant of the Law. Christ was faithful in fulfilling the Law's demands and going beyond what the Law demanded. "Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered and, once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvations for all those who obey Him" (Heb 5:8-9).

The challenge of the New Covenant is "to fix your eyes on Jesus, the apostle and High Priest whom we confess" (Heb 3:1) and to obey the law of love which He gave all Christians in Matthew 5.

The Holy Spirit writes this "the royal law" on our hearts and we obey because we love our Lord.

TALK ABOUT:

1. What name did Jesus use when He spoke of Himself?
2. Did Jesus keep the Law of Moses?
3. The Pharisees pretended to keep the Law and added their own t.....?
4. What did Jesus say about their traditions (Matt 15:6)? 5. What was the higher law that Jesus taught?

around them who have no faith and no Law to guide them in their conduct. God gave Israel His Law which would guide the conduct for the next 1,500 years. Moses received the Law from the hand of God on Mt Sinai.

Moses set before the people "all the words the Lord had commanded him to speak." All the people answered, "We will do everything the Lord has said." So Moses climbed the mountain again and took Israel's answer back to the Lord.

ISRAEL AT MOUNT SINAI

Israel camped at the foot of the mountain for that first year after they left Egypt. It was a busy year (Ex 19:1-8). Mount Sinai was the highest mountain in the region. It reminded the people that Yahweh, the God of Israel, was 'high and lifted up' above His creation. God is not in anything He created. He is above and beyond it. He is not in rocks or trees or rivers. God was not in the mountain called Sinai, but His glory and majesty came down upon it in the sight of all the people (Ex 19:16).

When Moses led God's people out of Egypt, they were a multitude of bedraggled, unruly slaves. A year later they left Mount Sinai with God's Law in their hands. The twelve tribes marched by tribe, each tribe in an order appointed by God and each tribe flying its own banner or standard.

TALK ABOUT:

1. Why did God send Moses to Egypt?
2. Did Moses do wonders (miracles) in Egypt?
3. After they left Egypt, where did the people of Israel camp for a year?
4. What did God give Moses at Mount Sinai (Ex 20:1-21)?

GOD CALLED TO MOSES

The Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud...the people will hear Me speaking to you and will always put their trust in you...Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow...and be ready on the third day...that day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people" (Ex 19:10-11).

On the third day there were dark storm clouds on the mountain with thunder and lightning and a very loud trumpet blast. God showed that He is Master of the elements. Everyone in the camp trembled. God's voice and the sight on the mountain was so fearful that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear" (Heb 12:21).

God always "comes down" to meet men and women, but how different His coming under the New Covenant. In Christ, God came down and lived among us (John 1:14). Man could not know God, if God had not made the first move – toward us!

Now God comes to our hearts by His Spirit (John 3:5,8). He speaks in our hearts to comfort and assure us. He waits until we are ready to listen. He speaks to each one individually and gently as we have need, to instruct and guide us (Ps 32:8). He guides the believer by His Spirit who dwells within.

TALK ABOUT:

1. Why did God come down on Mount Sinai in a dark cloud and with lightning and thunder?
2. Who did God call to come up and meet with Him?
3. God 'came down' to meet man. Man tries to 'reach up' to God, but he cannot. Why?
4. How does God speak to people now?

IMPORTANT THINGS HAPPENED AT SINAI

- While the people camped at Mount Sinai:
- God told Israel His purpose for them as His people (Ex 19:6)
- God taught Israel to fear Him
- God gave Israel His Law – The Ten Commandments
- Moses wrote the Book of the Covenant
- God gave Moses plans for the Tabernacle and furnishings
- Aaron made a calf idol; some of the people worshipped it
- God threatened to destroy the nation
- Moses pleaded for the people and God spared them
- Moses and craftsmen built the Tabernacle and furnished it
- Moses asked to see God' glory
- God revealed His nature and glory to Moses
- God chose Aaron to be the first High Priest of Israel
- Moses dedicated the Tabernacle and God filled it with His Presence
- God promised the Angel of the Lord to go with Israel to the Promised Land

TALK ABOUT:

1. What is the Book of Exodus about?
2. Who led the people of Israel out of Egypt?
3. Where did the people camp the first year after they left Egypt?
4. What did God give Moses to teach to the people?
5. Who prayed for the people when they sinned against God?
6. Of all the things that happened to Israel while they camped at Mount Sinai, which do you think was the greatest ?

- a ceremonial sanctity (ceremonial cleansing)
- a scheme of sacrifice and atonement (the blood atoned for sin)
- a purchased possession (the way God saw His people)
- a holy city (anticipated in the New Jerusalem)
- a throne of David (which pictured the eternal reign of Jesus Christ)
- a destiny of dominion (we will reign with Christ in glory)

“Were these ideas to be lost (when the Old Covenant became obsolete, Heb 8:13)? And was the language that expressed them to be dropped when the Gospel came? No! It (the Gospel) was the heir of the Law. The Law had prepared these riches and it now bequeathed them to a successor able to unlock and diffuse them.

“The Gospel claimed them all, and developed in them a value unknown before. It asserted itself as the proper predetermined continuation of the Covenant made of God with the fathers, the real and only fulfillment of all that was prophesied. The Gospel presents the same ideas which had before been embodied in the narrow but distinct limits of human effort to obey the written law. But in the Gospel those ideas are given spiritual, universal and eternal character.

“The body of types according to the flesh died with Christ; and with Christ it arose again, a body of antitypes according to the Spirit. Those who were after the flesh (the unbelieving Jews) could not recognize its identity; those who were after the Spirit (the apostles and believers) realized and proclaimed it as *the law of love*.

“The change was as great, the identity was as real as in that mystery of the resurrection of the body...in which the earthly frame must lay aside the flesh and blood which cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, and must reappear; dead and raised again; another and yet the same (body): ‘sown in weakness and raised in power, sown in dishonor and raised in glory, sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body’.” (Bernard’s “The Progress of Doctrine.”)

TALK ABOUT:

1. Why did God create Adam and Eve?
2. Did God’s plan for mankind change when Christ came and fulfilled the demands of the Law for us?
3. What was Christ’s command to His disciples (Luke 24:48-49)?
4. Did they obey this command?
5. When did the Holy Spirit come (Acts 2:2-4)?

THE LAW OF LOVE AND SERVICE

Jesus used the title “Son of Man” when He spoke of Himself. He took this title from the Old Testament (Dan 7:13). He was both Son of God and Son of Man (Romans 1:3-4).

5. When did God bring in the New Covenant (Luke 22:20)?
6. How can we be a son or daughter of God (1 John 4:13)?

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and others gathered in prayer (Acts 2:2-4).

The Holy Spirit writes God's law on the hearts of believers and gives them power to obey its requirements (1 John 4:13). The Holy Spirit shows them the truth of God's word (John 16:13).

Paul contrasted the Old Covenant of Law with the New Covenant of law (2 Cor 3:4-18). He declared himself "a minister of the New Covenant – not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor 3:6).

Paul made the contrast between his ministry and that of Moses. Moses' ministry under the Law was glorious. But it faded like the glory that shone on Moses' face. The glory that came by the Law was replaced by an even greater glory that came by the Spirit which indwells the believer.

GOD'S PLAN FOR ALL MANKIND

God's plan for mankind did not change because God does not change. "He is the same yesterday, and today and forever" (Heb 13:8).

"Long ago, even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ" (Eph 1:4. New Living Translation).

When Jesus Christ died, the Law died and was buried. God brought in the New Covenant, the "royal law" of love (James 2:8). He "set aside the first to establish the second" (Heb 10:9). He will never go back!

The Law of Moses died and was buried. It rose again in the form of the Gospel. The Gospel is the heir of the Law; it inherited what the Law had prepared. We quote from a very enlightening article:

"The Law, on its national and ceremonial side, had created a vast and closely-woven system of ideas. These were wrought out and exhibited in forms according to the flesh

- an elect nation (the nation of Israel)
- a miraculous history (the history of the nation)
- a special covenant (the Covenant made with the forefathers)
- a worldly sanctuary (the tabernacle and later the temple)
- one place of worship
- a perpetual service (of sacrifices and offerings)
- an anointed priesthood (High Priest and priests who served God)

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

The people who came out of Egypt did not know the living God or how to worship Him. They were not all Israelites; some were Egyptians (Ex 12:38). For 400 years the idol-gods of Egypt had filled their thoughts and lives. True, they had seen the wonders God did in Egypt when He brought them out. They knew God had delivered them from the hand of Pharaoh, but they did not know who God was or who they were, nor where they were going.

At Mount Sinai God taught the people to fear Him and gave them the Law. The Law taught men that God is holy and just. They learned to respect the Lord God. Even Moses "trembled with fear" when God spoke to him (Heb 12:20).

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

God called Moses to come up the mountain at least seven times. Each time Moses slowly climbed to the top of the rocky crags. Each time God spoke to him and gave him a message for the people. Each time he climbed slowly down again and gave God's message to the people of Israel.

Moses was on the mountain alone with God when God gave him the Law, "two (stone) tablets of the Testimony... with words written by the finger of God" (Ex 31:18). The most valuable document ever held in a man's hands (Ex 20).

The Lord gave Israel the Law with thunder and lightning. The Law pointed to man's sin. Paul said, "the Law was put in charge to lead us to Christ" (Gal 3:24).

The Law is recorded here as Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1-17), but God's commands covered much more. God also gave Moses regulations which covered all aspects of the lives of the people. These regulations are called "the Book of the Covenant" (Ex 24:7-8). The tablets bearing the Ten Commandments are also called "The Testimony" (31:18), a word used for both the Ark of the Covenant (27:21), and the Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting (Num 1:50; 11:10). The law was holy, righteous and good (Rom 7:12).

The Ten Commandments are the basis for our present legal code. It is God's Law and so comes under constant attack from anti-God forces.

God's Law began with the words, "You (Israel) shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol... You shall not bow down to them (idols) or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God" (Ex 20:3-4).

When Moses read the Law and all its regulations to the people they responded, "We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey."

TALK ABOUT:

1. At Mount Sinai what did the people learn about God?
2. Why did God show Himself to Israel in such a frightening way?
3. Who went up the mountain to meet with God?
4. If Israel obeyed God's commands they would be His..... people (Ex 19:5-6)?
5. What did God mean when He told the people to "consecrate yourself"?
6. A clean body and clean clothes were a picture of a clean heart. God wants His people to be 'set apart' for His use ___ True ___ False?
7. God speaks to His people now by His **W**.....and His **S**.....(Heb 1;1)?
8. Who wrote the Ten Commandments on stone tablets (Ex 312:18)?

THE LAW OF MOSES

God's Law was then and still is a unique document in the history of the world. After three thousand years, nothing has taken its place in defining what God requires of men and women.

The Law was enshrined in an elaborate system of ritual and sacrifice and made with a promise or Covenant. If Israel obeyed God's commands, they would be for Him "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). A nation He could have fellowship with and use for His own purpose.

Israel lived under the Law for more than fifteen hundred years. In all that long time, God offered them grace and blessing if they obeyed His commands. But Israel did not trust God's promise and failed in every point to keep the Law God had given them. God found fault with the people "and turned away from them" (Hebrews 8:7-9).

Because no man could keep the Law, "for all have sinned and fall short..." (Romans 3:23), God promised to give men and women the Law in a new form. He demanded the same standard of righteousness, but the means of producing the holiness God sought in the hearts of men and women would be different.

THE IMAGE OF GOD IN THE LAW

God provided an 'image' of Himself in the Law He gave to Israel. The Law was a picture of the holiness of God. This is set out in His command, "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy" (Lev 19:2).

Moses reviewed what Israel's life under the Law would be like in:

- Family relationships (Lev 19:3-31).
- Worship (19:4).
- Sacrifice and offering must be done in God's way (19:5).
- Social responsibility (19:9, 16, 32; 33-36).
- Integrity – be honest in word and deed (19:11-15).

- Morality (19:20-22).
- Care of what God has given (19:23-25).
- Physical health (19:26-30).
- The occult (19:31).
- The Law set a standard for righteous conduct and proved that natural man was a failure (Jas 2:10-11).

God offered mankind blessing upon blessing, but man rejected God's blessings and turned to his own ways. The more man tried to satisfy his own desires, the deeper into sin and immorality he sank.

THE LAW IN MAN'S HEART

God said, "The Law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming - not the realities themselves" (Heb 10:1). The people were weak and broke the Law often. "For if there had been nothing wrong with the first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people and said, 'The time is coming when I will make a New covenant with the house of Israel...It will not be like the first covenant I made with their forefathers...because they did not remain faithful to My covenant, and I turned away from them.

"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel...I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts..." (Heb 8:7-10).

The promise of the law "written on the hearts of men and women" was spoken most directly through the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 31:31-34). The law would be written on receptive hearts by God's Spirit.

Under the Old Covenant the Law was hard, cold legal demands. Under the New Covenant the law was written on the warm, soft flesh of the heart and taught by the Holy Spirit.

When the time was right, God sent the Holy Spirit to make the law an internal, personal instructor to those who receive Jesus as their Lord and Master (John 16:14). By a miracle of God's grace, the Holy Spirit would not only instruct the believer in what God required, but minister power to enable him or her to obey. This event would mark the triumph and consummation of the Kingdom of God in the world (Isa 11:6-9; Ezek 16:59-63).

Just before He left them, Jesus told His disciples and followers, "I am going to send you what the Father has promised; but stay in the city (Jerusalem) until you have been clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:48-49).

TALK ABOUT:

1. How can we know what God wants us to do (John 16:13)?
2. Why should we obey the law of love written on our hearts by God's Spirit?
3. Why was a New Covenant needed (Heb 8:8)?
4. God wants to forgive our sins ___ True ___ False?