

**The Whole Truth**  
*Lesson 7*

**Review**

- Exodus serves as the theological centerpiece of the Pentateuch (five scrolls)
- Authored by Moses
- Israel in Egypt, Israel in the desert
- Today, Israel at Sinai

**I. The Law and the Sinai Covenant (19-24)**

**A. The arrival at the mountain (19:1-2)**

1. 3 months of traveling to reach Mount Sinai
2. Moses will ascend and descend this mountain often (see 19:3, 7, 9, 14, 20, 25)
3. They will remain here for 11 months

*On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on that very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. Exodus 19:1 NIV*

*On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle of the covenant law. <sup>12</sup> Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran. Numbers 10:11*

NOTE: The events of the Pentateuch span over 2,706 years, while only 11 months are spent at Mount Sinai — yet one third of the Pentateuch is a narration of the events at this mountain (Exodus 19:1-Numbers 10:10)

**B. The covenant at Sinai (19:3-25)**

1. Purpose of this covenant—opportunity for Israel to be God’s servant people by which He would communicate and transmit His redemptive plan (19:3-6)
  - a. God’s faithfulness first put on display (4)
  - b. The people’s responsibility is noted (5a)
  - c. The result of being set apart for a purpose (5b-6)

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.<sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 1 Peter 2:9-10, NIV*

2. People respond enthusiastically (8)
3. Preparations to meet God (10-17)
4. Presence of God draws near the mountain (18)
5. Particular instructions regarding who can approach the mountain (21-25)

**QUESTION:** In this text, what do we learn of God's character? What do we discover about how we should approach God?

### C. The Decalogue (20:1-21)

1. Another name—Ten Commandments (constitution of covenant community)
2. Purpose—protect individual and nation, prevent injustices and unfair treatment of others (see 20:20)
3. Uniqueness—demands monotheism (1-3), 8 of 10 prohibitions
4. Structure—vertical and horizontal (Great Commandment)
5. The Ten Commandments (3-17)
6. Moses is attributed as the mediator between God and the people (18-21)

### D. The Book of the Covenant (20:21-23:33)

*"Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people" Exodus 24:7 NRSV*

**NOTE:** Once again, Moses is viewed as the one who conveys truth not the originator of truth (22)

1. Apodictic Laws (20:22-26)—absolute but general commands
2. Casuistic Laws (21:1-22:17)—conditional—if ... then (see 21:20)—situational
3. Apodictic Law (22:18-23:19)
4. This section begins and ends with worship—worship in the right way (altar) and at the right time (festivals)
5. Promise of obtaining Canaan by God's hand is reaffirmed (23:20-33)

### E. The Ceremony of Covenant Ratification (24:1-18)

1. Moses communicates the words of the Lord to the people (3)
2. The people affirm their acceptance of and future loyalty to the word of the Lord (3, 7, see also 19:8)—short-lived loyalty (golden calf)
3. Moses constructs an altar and has appropriate people offer sacrifices (4-6)—blood on altar and people

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4. 74 men approach God (9-11)
5. Moses is invited to ascend the mountain (12)
6. Moses and Joshua make ascent up, elders remain with Aaron and Hur (13-14)
7. Moses waited six days, but God called Moses on the seventh day (15-17)
8. Moses will remain on the mountain for 40 days (18)

## II. The Tabernacle and the Golden Calf (25-40)

### A. Comments on the literary structure and placement of these events

1. Instructions to build (25-31)
2. Interruptions to building project (32-34)
3. Implementation of building project (35-40)
4. Sandwiched in between a picture of proper worship (25-31 and 35-40) is a narrative of improper worship (32-34)
5. Exodus begins with Israel being forced to build store cities for Pharaoh (1:11) and at the end they choose to build a portable place of worship where God may dwell in their midst

### B. The Tabernacle (25-31; 35-40)

1. Request a freewill offering or contribution from the people (25:1-7)
2. Purpose is to construct a sanctuary where God could dwell among His people (25:8)—see John 1:14

*Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. Exodus 25:8 NASB*

3. Exodus the place of worship will be created, while in Leviticus the instructions for worship will be provided
4. God is unveiling His redemptive plan for humanity—I will be their God and they will be my people—this is what it looks like
5. God will empower Bezalel and Oholiab with the Spirit of God to carry out the artistic designed laid out by God (31:1-11)
6. The Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place)

*Hang the curtain from the clasps and place the ark of the covenant law behind the curtain. The curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.<sup>34</sup> Put the atonement cover on the ark of the covenant law in the Most Holy Place. Exodus 26:33-34 NIV*

- a. Ark of the Covenant (25:10-16; 37:1-5)
- b. Mercy Seat (25:17-22; 37:6-9)
- c. The High Priest was allowed to enter only once a year on the day of Atonement (see Leviticus 16)
- d. Separated by a veil

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7. The Holy Place
  - a. Table of Showbread (25:23-30; 37:10-16)
  - b. Golden Lampstand (25:31-40; 37:17-24)
  - c. Altar of Incense (30:1-10; 37:25-28)
  
8. The Outer Court (27:9-19; 38:9-20)
  - a. Altar of Burnt Offering/Bronze Altar (27:1-8; 38:1-7)
  - b. Entrance Gate (27:16; 38:18)
  - c. Bronze Laver (30:17-21; 38:8)
  
9. Priestly Garments and Consecration

*The point, then, of the New Testament use of the tabernacle is twofold: the dwelling of God in Jesus Christ in the incarnation, and the dwelling of God in heaven. In both the believer is brought into proximity with God. —Victor Hamilton*

- C. The Golden Calf—Israel's Apostasy (32:1-10)
- D. Moses Intercedes and God extends mercy (32:11-14)
- E. Moses anger against Israel and their divine punishment (32:15-35)
- F. Moses' intercession continues—show me your ways (God's presence will go) and show me your glory (goodness passes by) (33:1-23)
- G. Covenant Renewal

1. Preparation to meet God (1-4)
2. God descended in the cloud (5-7)
3. Request for God's presence and to be pardoned (8-9)
4. Renewal of Sinai Covenant (10-26)
5. New tablets of stone (27-28)
6. Moses descends mountain and face glows—Moses reflected the glory of God to the people

*NOTE: All disciples of Jesus reflect God's glory ... A privilege once reserved for an extraordinary servant of God is now extended to even the most ordinary follower of the Messiah, in whose face God's glory shines.*

### **Conclusion**

- Exodus 40:34-38
- God longs to dwell among His people and will go to great lengths to make this happen
- God cares about details