

Deuteronomy 5:1-6

From Bondage to Bondage

How many here have read the entire Old Testament? In the Law of Moses, there are said to be 613 individual laws. Can anyone here remember all of them? Has anyone here fulfilled all of them? If you didn't answer, but are listening and thinking, "Yes, I've fulfilled them all," then you are sorely deceived.

First, you would have to know all 613 of them, which you don't. And secondly, many of them cannot be fulfilled today. It is impossible, because there is no temple and no sacrificial system, among several other reasons of varying significance.

But, if you are one of the people of Israel who has not come to Christ Jesus, or if you are one of the people who piously claims to adhere to the Torah, meaning the Law of Moses, you stand condemned for several reasons.

First, the law itself condemns you because of your failure to perfectly meet it, which is certainly the case. You cannot claim adherence to the law and, at the same time, claim atonement under the law. It does not exist.

Secondly, you have rejected the grace of God in Christ, having instead relied on works of the law. You cannot claim adherence to the law and, at the same time, receive the grace of Christ. The two are mutually exclusive.

Text Verse: "How can a young man cleanse his way?

By taking heed according to Your word.

¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You;

Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!

¹¹ Your word I have hidden in my heart,

That I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:9-11

The psalmist says that a young man can cleanse his way by taking heed to according to the word of God. That is true, but it is only true because the word of God anticipates the coming Redeemer. If a Redeemer is said to be coming, then it means....? Anyone? That there is a need to be redeemed.

How can that be for this psalmist, or for anyone in Israel? We see in today's verses that the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Elsewhere, that action is noted as an act of redemption, such as in Deuteronomy 7:8.

If they were redeemed, then why do they need to be redeemed? Didn't the one redemption take care of things? The answer is obviously, "No." How is that so? Well, stay awake and attentive for the next few minutes and we will discover exactly how it is so.

It is an important lesson which is clearly to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Covenant with Us in Horeb (verses 1-4)

And Moses called all Israel,

vayikra mosheh el kal Yisrael – “And called Moses to all Israel.” There is the sense of the lifting of the voice of Moses beyond the state it has been in. He has been speaking to the people since Deuteronomy 1, but now he calls out to the people. It is reflective of what we see in John 7 –

“On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” John 7:37, 38

Jesus was speaking to the people in a more general manner, but He then raised his voice for any and all to hear. This is probably the same thing Moses does here. He has been giving a general discussion of the events of the past, of the expectations for the people, and so on. But now, he lifts his voice and openly calls out.

The recording of that act, regardless as to how many people actually heard him, is its own call to “all Israel,” not just at that time, but for all time. When the reader comes to this passage and sees the words, *vayikra mosheh el kal yisrael* – “And called Moses to all Israel,” it is to alert them. It is to mentally call to their minds the importance of the words which lie ahead.

1 (con’t) and said to them:

vayomer alehem – “And said to them.” Rather than *davar*, or speak, it is *amar*, or said. As always, the change reflects a state of participation by the hearer. When *davar* is used, they are to listen as if a command is given. When *amar* is said, there is the sense of hearing and participating in the instruction. That begins with...

1 (con’t) “Hear, O Israel,

sh’ma Yisrael – “Hear Israel.” The words are in the singular only here. In the rest of the passage, they will be in the plural. Even if each individual is to hear, Israel as a single collective is addressed in order to hear and to heed.

The word *shama*, or hear, is not uncommon, but it should be explained. It means more than to simply “hear,” in such an instance. Rather, it implies attention and obedience is to be applied to what is heard. In this form, it will be used repeatedly in Deuteronomy – calling Israel to hear and to attend to what is said. In this case, it is to...

1 (con't) the statutes and judgments

ha'khukim va'eth ha'mishpatim – “the statutes and the judgments.” These are the main areas of subject matter which comprise the instruction to follow. The first is similar to written precepts that are to be obeyed. They are laws requiring the attention and obedience of the people. The second is a matter which is prescribed, as a legal decision by a lawgiver, and thus it is to be obeyed.

This statement is given just prior to the repeating of the Ten Commandments, but they are more logically connected to what will be said after the repetition of those Ten Commandments, meaning all of the general statutes and judgments which will be spoken out to the people later.

1 (con't) which I speak in your hearing today,

asher anokhi dober b'azekhem ha'yom – “which I speak in your ears today.” To speak in the people's ears implies that they will then hear. However, it does not mean that they will assimilate, respond, and perform. But that is what the word *sh'ma* that Moses spoke calls for, and so...

1 (con't) that you may learn them

u-lemadtem otham – “and you may learn them.” The word is *lamad* which was introduced in verse 4:1. It signifies “to goad,” and thus to teach. The rod is used to instruct, and from that rod, instruction is remembered. That is reflected in Proverbs 10:13 –

“Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding,
But a rod *is* for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.”

The idea is that Israel is, at this point – and as has been demonstrated by their fathers – devoid of understanding. But in hearing and heeding the instruction which lies ahead, understanding will be attained, and wisdom can then be applied to that understanding. The understanding comes from the learning. The wisdom is found in its application, as is next seen...

1 (con't) and be careful to observe them.

u-shemartem laasotam – “and be careful to do them.” One might not know the law at all. This is a person with no understanding. One may know the law and fail to do what the law says. That demonstrates understanding, but a lack of wisdom. And, one can know the law and do what the law says. It demonstrates a person with both understanding and wisdom. This is what Moses is conveying to the people.

The reason for the need for this is found in the explanation Moses will now carefully remind the people of...

2 The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

Yehovah elohenu karat immanu berit b'khorev – “Yehovah our God cut with us *a* covenant in Horeb.” The word “us” speaks of the nation, Israel. It is the people who descended from Abraham, through Isaac, and then through Jacob. It signifies the tribes of Israel. It is this group, and none other, that Moses is referring to. That this was a covenant is explicitly stated in Exodus –

“And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, ‘Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: ⁴‘You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. ⁶And you shall be to Me

a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.” Exodus 19:3-6

The fact that this is its own covenant is repeated in Exodus 24, Exodus 34, and then into the book of Leviticus. It is even implied in Numbers when referring to the Ark of the Covenant. The ark was detailed and built at Sinai as a part of the instruction under the law. Thus, the Ark of the Covenant speaks of the covenant at Sinai (Horeb). Moses next continues to define what he is referring to...

³The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers,

lo eth avotenu kara Yehovah eth ha'berit ha'zot – “Not with our fathers cut Yehovah the covenant the this.” Who the “fathers” are is debated, but the debate is actually unnecessary. Charles Ellicott takes the “not” as meaning “not only.” In other words, it was with our fathers who were alive at Horeb and with us also.

This cannot be if the words include Moses himself, which they certainly do. He says, *avotenu* – “our fathers,” not *avotekhem* – “your fathers.”

Augustine says it refers to those who died in the wilderness. Calvin says it refers to the forefathers who dwelt in Egypt. Keil says it refers to Abraham.

It cannot be speaking of those who died in the wilderness. It is as obvious as the nose on one’s face that those people died *because* of the covenant at Horeb. They were under the law, they failed to believe the Lord, and they suffered the penalty of the law. With the exception of Moses, Joshua, and Caleb, all of them were dead since leaving Horeb.

Therefore, the term is speaking of any fathers who preceded those who were there at Sinai at the giving of the law. It includes those

who lived and died in Egypt, and it includes the fathers who were before them, meaning Isaac and Abraham. But it surely even extends to those before Abraham.

The reason for this is that no group of people, going all the way back to Adam himself, was included in the covenant that Moses is referring to. The importance of this is that this law has no bearing upon any people, anywhere in the world – and at any time to the present – except those of Israel who received it.

To understand this more completely, Paul speaks of the covenant to Abraham in Galatians 3. There he says –

“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ.¹⁷ And this I say, *that* the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.¹⁸ For if the inheritance *is* of the law, *it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.”
Galatians 3:16-18

Paul speaks of a different covenant, one of Promise, that was made with Abraham. He then notes that the law came 430 years after that covenant was made.

Therefore, the “fathers” of this verse in Deuteronomy first speaks of any of Israel’s ancestors reaching all the way back to the time of Abraham. All of them lived under Promise. By stating the time interval, Paul is demonstrating this. Further, in Romans 2, Paul refers to those “without law,” saying –

“For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law. Romans 2:12

By saying this, the words of Moses here then also extend to even those fathers before Abraham. Paul’s words show that the law only

applies to Israel and to no other people – ever. The law may be, and it indeed is, God’s standard as is revealed in Christ, but it is only applied to those to whom it was given, meaning Israel.

The “fathers” in this verse are all in the line of Israel, all the way back to Adam, who are before the time of the giving of the law. The covenant was not made with any of them...

3 (con’t) but with us, those who *are* here today,

There is an emphasis in the words. *ki itanu anakhnu elleh poh ha’yom* – “But with us – we – these here today.” The words here show that this is inclusive of the fathers who died in the wilderness. By stating, “us – we – these here today,” he is – by default – including himself.

As he was among the fathers, and as many of those with Moses now were at Sinai from birth up until nineteen years of age, it shows that Moses is referring to Israel – the people – as an “organic whole” (Keil). Though some had died, he refers to the people as a living unit – Israel. That is inclusive of...

3 (con’t) all of us who *are* alive.

kulanu khayim – “all of us who alive.” The words are actually an exemplary note of continuance. Because most of those who were alive at Sinai were now dead, it shows the binding nature of the covenant upon not only the children who were alive at the giving of the law, but even upon those who were yet to be born.

It is thus an all-inclusive statement which speaks of those who received it, and those who continue to receive it because of the agreement by their fathers. There is an almost tragic note to the words, however.

The law is binding upon Israel as long as Israel exists, and/or until the annulling of that law for the individual within Israel, or the annulling of the law for the collective who is Israel.

No person of Israel was exempt from the weight of the law, and the nation as a whole would remain yoked under the law until all is complete. For the individual of Israel, the law ends in acceptance of Christ as one's personal Savior –

“For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” Romans 10:3, 4

For the collective of Israel, the law will end in acceptance of Christ as their national Messiah –

“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:
‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
²⁷For this *is* My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.’” Romans 11:25-27

To more fully understand this aspect of the law, Hebrews 8 must be cited. There, the author says, while first referring to the covenant given at Horeb which Moses is now speaking of –

“For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸Because finding fault with them, He says: ‘Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— ⁹not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. ¹⁰For this *is* the

covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹² For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’

¹³ In that He says, ‘A new *covenant*,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.”

Hebrews 8:7-13

In this passage, the author of Hebrews first refers to the covenant at Horeb. He then, speaking to Israel – and no one else – cites Jeremiah 31 which speaks of a New Covenant, a covenant entirely different and separate from that which came at Horeb.

He then says that in this New Covenant, the first is obsolete. However, it is only obsolete so far as the New Covenant is accepted by those under the Old. Until that occurs, Israel remains under the Old. That is explained by the words “is becoming obsolete and growing old,” and “is ready to vanish away.”

If Christ’s work annulled it entirely, without regard to Israel’s acceptance of it, the author would not have written it in the present tense some 30 or more years after Christ completed His work. Rather, it is annulled for any in Christ, and it will be annulled for the collective body when they call on Christ as a nation.

The time of that occurrence, then, is referred to by Jesus Himself in Matthew 23. In that passage, Jesus speaks to Jerusalem, signifying the seat of power and authority in Israel –

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no

more till you say, ‘Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the LORD!’”
Matthew 23:37-39

Until this occurs, what Moses says here now in Deuteronomy 5 remains binding on this group of people – for all their generations, and to all of their people. The only way to have the burden and the yoke of the law lifted from them is to come outside the camp and to the cross of Calvary – receiving the work of Jesus in completion of this law.

As you can see, a few seemingly insignificant words, tacked onto the end of a single verse, can – and do – have the most important impact on the lives, future, and destiny of an entire group of people – Israel. It is a right, a responsibility, and it is a burden which began at a particular point in time, and it commenced with an awesome display being revealed to the eyes of the people...

⁴The LORD talked with you face to face

panim b’panim dibber Yehovah immakhem – “Face in face spoke Yehovah with you.” The word “talked” is not appropriate. There was no back and forth conversation. The Lord spoke while Israel listened. Despite the closeness of the matter, seemingly almost personal, it was still a one-way communication. This is unlike what is recorded in Exodus 33 –

“So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.” Exodus 33:11

Rather than *panim b’panim*, or face in face, which is said here in Deuteronomy, there it said *panim el panim*, face to face. The difference between the two is immense.

The communication of the Lord to Israel was direct and “in their face.” The communication of the Lord with Moses was personal and as close as one having a dialog with a dear friend. And again, the communication to Israel was...

4 (con't) on the mountain

ba'har– “in the mount.” It speaks of the entire area where Israel was, represented by the mountain itself. None of Israel was near the mount, under pain of death. Rather, they were on the plain which surrounded it, and the presence of the Lord was atop it, as described in Exodus 19 and again in Deuteronomy 4:11, 12 –

“Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. ¹² And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire.”

That is again confirmed by Moses with the words...

4 (con't) from the midst of the fire.

mitok ha'esh – “from midst of the fire.” It is rather surprising to read commentaries on this verse and find words such as –

“...personally and immediately ... plainly and certainly, as when two men speak face to face; freely and familiarly, so as not to overwhelm and confound you.” Matthew Poole

This is completely the opposite of what was either intended or what is shown to have occurred. The Lord spoke in their face words of law. They were conveyed while accompanied with thunderings, lightnings, a thick cloud, the sound of a trumpet that was so loud the people quaked, smoke as of a furnace, and the actual quaking of the mountain. And along with all of this, the words were spoken *mitok ha'esh*, from midst of the fire.

The entire display was not free and familiar, and its intent was to completely overwhelm and confound the people. The voice from the fire in this manner was to convey to the people that the word of law was a word which consumes, even to absolute, complete, and utter destruction.

This is the weight, the penalty, and the burden of the law. It is the yoke which is heavy and wearisome upon the people. There is nothing light and friendly about serving under the law. But rather there is terror, anxiety, worry, and futility –

“Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood afar off. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.’”
Exodus 20:18, 19

This was the point of the display, and it is what accompanied the first ten of six hundred and thirteen laws which were eventually heaped upon the people. It was to terrify them concerning the nature of this

GREAT
AWESOME
TERRIFYING
JEALOUS, AND
HOLY GOD

The people feared, and rightfully so. And it is perfectly evident in the seemingly contradictory words which immediately followed...

“And Moses said to the people, ‘Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.’” Exodus 20:20

Moses told them “Do not fear!” No, the entire display is only a test so that you will fear (Him). He uses the verb and then noun form of the same word. First, *yare* – to fear, and next, *yirah* – a fear.

They were to have “a fear” of the Lord before them for a single purpose. And that is where the rubber of the action of man meets the road of the Law of God. “So that you may not sin” (man’s action) means “so that you do not break my law” (God’s standard).

Think of it! The law was given – a law which defines sin, and a law which brings forth sin in its very issuance, and the people are told that they were to fear the Lord so that they wouldn’t sin – which is what the law causes to occur. I pray – tell me please, how is this going to help?

*With the law there is death and condemnation
It is God’s standard, which no one can meet
Who is there from any people group or nation?
Who can claim that through the law, sin he did defeat?*

*Where can we go? This law stands against us
When we heard its words, death came through our door
O God! Please send the Messiah – send us Jesus
And through Him we shall live again, yes live forevermore*

*Only He can bring us to the Holy Mountain
Only He can bring us up to the very throne of God
From Him alone can come the cleansing fountain
So that for eternal days, in Your light can we trod*

II. I Am the Lord Your God (verses 5 & 6)

The words of verse 5 that we will look at today are actually chronologically – and most certainly – intended as a time marker coming after the words which finish this chapter and before the words which begin Chapter 6.

They don't actually belong there, but they identify the train of thought concerning the events which are being reviewed. They are perfectly placed here as a parenthetical statement.

The Lord spoke out the Ten Commandments, accompanied by the immense and terrifying display. After that happened, the people came and begged Moses, imploring him that the Lord would no longer speak directly to them.

The Lord heard their words and agreed to allow Moses to receive and pass on the Lord's word to the people. And so, with that understood, even if stated out of chronological order, Moses continues with his next words.

They are words which the KJV and several other versions rightly place in parenthesis, except the last word of it. Verse 5 is, as I said, a parenthetical statement to introduce what follows it, up until a certain point. When that point is reached, the narrative will resume. That narrative is defined by the words of verse 1 –

“And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: ‘Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.’” Deuteronomy 5:1

From there, that narrative will begin again with the words which open Chapter 6 –

“Now this *is* the commandment, *and these are* the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe *them* in the land which you are crossing over to possess, ² that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.” Deuteronomy 6:1, 2

Those parenthetical words of Moses now begin with...

⁵I stood between the LORD and you at that time,

To stand between two parties means to mediate. Moses will act in that position now, but only in the sense of receiving the law, transmitting it to the people, and also passing the words of the people back to the Lord.

Though he performed some priestly functions which formally established the covenant, he did not perform the mediatorial roles of a priest *for* the covenant. That was delegated to Aaron and his sons after him. Such a role as Aaron's was an anticipatory step only, however.

He was restricted in his allowances in many ways, and he was bound by the same precepts of law as were the other people. However, even in this anticipatory step – looking forward to Christ – the role of Israel's high priest for sin, and of Moses for receiving the law, was what Job hoped for in his life lived apart from the law. As it says in Job 9 when speaking of God –

*“For He is not a man, as I am,
That I may answer Him,
And that we should go to court together.
³³ Nor is there any mediator between us,
Who may lay his hand on us both.
³⁴ Let Him take His rod away from me,
And do not let dread of Him terrify me.
³⁵ Then I would speak and not fear Him,
But it is not so with me.” Job 9:32-35*

Job felt the terror of God apart from His revelation of Himself at Sinai. Job knew that moral law existed, and he knew that in that moral law there was terror. How much more terror should there be

when that moral law is laid out in perfectly structured words which convey the nature of God.

When the people heard that law, they begged for relief from it. And so, Moses stood between the Lord and the people – acting as a mediator to hear and then convey what he heard to Israel. It was his job, as he says...

5 (con't) to declare to you the word of the LORD;

The word translated as “declare” is a common word, *nagad*. It comes from a root signifying “to front.” Thus, it signifies making something manifest or conspicuous.

The Lord has a word to convey to Israel. Israel did not like when that word was conveyed to them directly, but the word needed to be conveyed, and so Moses will make what is unknown open and conspicuous. He will do this because, as Moses relays...

5 (con't) for you were afraid because of the fire,

So, the fire scared the people. In fact, it terrified them. One must wonder how dull we are to assume that when the fire isn't visible, the Lord isn't threatening, terrifying, or angry?

The law says to not exceed 40 mph. It is first given to the people at a ceremony at the courthouse. There are police officers there with guns on their hips and uniforms ordained with handcuffs. Off to the left is the county prison. It is a sobering display of the law.

So, the people say, next time we pass a law, can we do it at the baseball field? And, instead of a judge, can we have Harpo Marx tell us what we are to do. The law is still passed by the same body, it is still enforced by the same police department, and its offenders

will wind up in the same place. So, does the significance of the law change because of how it is conveyed to the people? Not at all.

But this is how we perceive things. If we are on a road where there is a known speed trap that we are aware of, we will be sure to drive 40mph. If we are on a road that rarely has a speed trap, we may or we may not drive 40mph. And, if we are on a road that we are certain to have no speed trap, we forget what the words “speed limit” mean.

A fear of the Lord and of violating His law only comes if one believes in the Lord, and if they perceive that the Lord is actually watching over infractions of it. Moses standing between the Lord and Israel only deadens the minds of Israel further in many respects.

The same is true with grace unless we remember and carry with us *always* the thought of what that grace cost in order for it to be granted to us in the first place.

At the beginning of the law, the knowledge of the Lord was keenly on the minds of the people. They saw, they heard, they felt, and they were afraid. Moses reminds them of this...

5 (con't) and you did not go up the mountain.

These words, though still a part of the parenthetical thought, are intended to tell the people that it was Moses, not they, who received the law from the Lord. They were warned in Exodus 19 that they should not go up to the mountain, not even touch it, under pain of death.

At the end of the chapter, the Lord spoke again to Moses to ensure that was abided by. Moses was granted a special dispensation to ascend the mountain. They were not.

Therefore, the same Lord who terrified them by His display had conveyed His intent through Moses. Because of this, what is said after the giving of the Ten Commandments carries the same weight and authority as do those Ten Commandments.

This is the purpose of this statement. For now, the words of the Lord that Israel *did* hear from the Lord will next be introduced...

5 (con't) *He* said:

lemor – “saying.” The parenthetical nature of the verse ended, and this word stands outside of the parenthesis. In other words, taking verse 4 and connecting it with this, it would say –

“The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire, saying...”

With that understood, Moses now repeats what the Lord said to the people. The words of Deuteronomy 5:6 are word for word and letter for letter, identical to Exodus 20:2...

6 ‘*I am* the LORD

anokhi Yehovah – The words identify the Source of the terrifying display, and of the words being conveyed, as Yehovah, the self-existent Creator of all things. To more fully understand what the name Yehovah encompasses, you can go back and watch the sermon on Exodus 3:14. Suffice it to say that He is the One and only God, the true God, and yet despite that, He is not the only “god.” This is evidenced quite clearly in the next words...

6 (con't) your God

elohekha - Yehovah asserts the right to call Himself “your God” to the people gathered before Him – to Israel. They had agreed with their own mouths to receive Him as such in Exodus 19 –

"So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. ⁸ Then all the people answered together and said, 'All that the LORD has spoken we will do.' So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD." Exodus 19:7, 8

Though He is the Creator of all things and the Lord of all in reality, He did not push Himself upon Israel, nor has He done so to the people of the world.

Both the Bible, and the world around us – even today – demonstrate there are many “gods.” However, there is only One true God. Based on Israel’s words of agreement, Yehovah established His right to exclusivity over them, saying, *anokhi Yehovah elohekha* – “I am Yehovah your God.”

It was, and thus it is, an individual address to *each person* as much as it is to the nation collectively. The singular is to the nation, but the nation is made up of individuals.

From that moment Yehovah claimed authority over each person of Israel and the collective body known as Israel. They now have their God and He now had peculiar people reserved for Himself. It is He, for this very purpose...

^{6 (con't)} who brought you out of the land of Egypt,

The Lord claimed the right at that time to be their God, not because He created them, but because He had redeemed them. It was they who were in Egypt, and it was He who brought them out. In bringing them out of Egypt and to Sinai, He then said that it was...

*6 (fin) out of the house of bondage.

mi'beth abadim – “out of the house of slavery.” The word is *ebed*. It signifies slavery. Slavery signifies bondage. A slave bears a yoke, and the slave is in bondage. The three thoughts are all connected at one point or another.

Here, the Lord clearly tells the people that they were in bondage. Certainly, they were sold to sin and the worship of false gods. But even without that, they were under the oppression of the burdens of Pharaoh. They were unable to redeem themselves, and so the Lord intervened and redeemed them.

And yet, despite being brought out of the bondage of Egypt, they were actually brought into a greater and more terrifying bondage. What? How can anyone say that? Who would dare? In the New Testament, it begins with Jesus –

“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’”

³³ They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, ‘You will be made free?’”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’” John 8:31-36

At other times, the metaphor “yoke” is used. Jesus implored the people to take His yoke upon them. In that, they would find rest for their souls because His yoke, unlike the law, is an easy and light one. Peter understood what Jesus meant, calling the law a “yoke” in Acts 15 –

“Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹ But we

believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.” Acts 15:10, 11

Paul follows suit and repeatedly uses either the term “yoke” or “bondage” when speaking of the law. Israel had been brought out of one bondage, and they had been brought into another type of bondage.

Think of it! Who here fears when they fail the Lord Jesus? Who here wonders how upset He must be for the secret (or not so secret) things that you have done? Who feels the burden of his salvation slipping away because of the things you have done wrong?

Why do you feel this way? It is because of law, not because of grace! You have forgotten that your salvation was of grace, and it continues because of grace. By the law is the knowledge of sin. And by the knowledge of sin comes the penalty for sin.

If it were not so, there would be no need for such an awesome and terrible display on Mount Sinai. Rather, the Lord would have stood upon Mount Sinai in human form – something He is already recorded as having done in the book of Genesis.

And He would have come down from the mountain, maybe on a glittering fluffy cloud which radiated out the sound of birds chirping or little lambs bleating. And as He gave out the law, He might have tossed out sweet-smelling flowers and raisin cakes to the people –

“I am Yehovah. You shall have no other gods before Me (here is a carnation for you). You shall not make any images that represent Me, even though you can see Me now (here is a raisin cake). Be sure not to take My name in vain (listen to the little lambs bleating)...”

This did not happen. The Lord was making a point. He brought them out of the physically punishing bondage of Egypt, but He brought them into a new and terrifying bondage.”

The precedent was set. The Lord’s nature, and the display which came with the giving of the Ten Commandments, was revealed. It doesn’t matter a single iota that Moses later transmitted the words to the people.

The same Lord gave the words to the people, and His character remained completely unchanged, despite the mediatorial role of Moses. Remember, the symbolism given as He spoke out the law was of wrath and condemnation, not salvation.

What was implied is that the law that was to be introduced could never bring salvation. Even the true Israelite who loved God's law could never fully meet the strict standards of it. Not one could meet them perfectly.

Were it not for provisions within the law for atonement, the law would only bring wrath and condemnation. Therefore, the giving of the law was actually messianic in nature. For Israel, there is either complete obedience to the law – something only God could accomplish, or there was atonement from the guilt of the law – again something only God can accomplish.

Therefore, the law anticipates Christ, and in Christ is the end of the law. As all men are bound under sin, and as sin is of the devil, then all belong under the power of the devil. As only God can redeem man from sin, then it follows logically that Jesus must be God.

Jesus’ appeal to the people of the world, like the appeal here in the giving of the Ten Commandments, is based on redemption, not creation. Israel was redeemed from the bondage of Egypt. Jesus redeems from the bondage of the law – by which sin is imputed.

We are saved by a Savior and redeemed by a Redeemer. As this is so, then Jesus must be Yehovah – The Lord God. Paul says this in Galatians 4 -

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Galatians 4:4, 5

If the law was given to Israel who had been redeemed from the house of bondage, and as they were given the law based on that redemption, then why would those who had been given this law still need to be redeemed from the law? There are at least four major reasons for this –

- 1) To show us God’s perfect standard.
- 2) To show us that no person could meet that standard; all are unqualified without God’s grace and mercy being bestowed.
- 3) To show us how utterly sinful sin is to God. And,
- 4) To show us our need for something else – that grace which can only come by Someone fulfilling this law on our behalf. And as only God can do that, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ – fully God and fully Man – into the world to do so. It is the grace which we, as human beings, cannot do without.

It doesn’t matter if you are under law or not, apart from Jesus you will either perish apart from the law, or you will perish under the law. This is the bondage which man is under. The law only highlights that bondage.

Closing Verse: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” Galatians 5:1

Next Week: Deuteronomy 5:7-16 *To find a rhyme, I had to go to lengths hilariously, but I gotter done...* (Learning Vicariously, Hopefully! Part I) (20th Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

From Bondage to Bondage

And Moses called all Israel, and said to them:
Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments
-----which I speak in your hearing today
That you may learn them
And be careful to observe them, as to you I say

The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb
The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers
-----but with us
Those who are here today
All of us who are alive, and He spoke thus

The LORD talked with you face to face
From the midst of the fire, on the mountain was the place

I stood between the LORD and you at that time
To declare to you the word of the LORD, as I was led
For you were afraid because of the fire
And you did not go up the mountain. He said:

'*I am* the LORD your God who brought you out of the land
Of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; so you must understand

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them. ² The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. ³ The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who *are* here today, all of us who *are* alive. ⁴ The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. ⁵ I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain. *He* said:
⁶ ‘*I am* the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.