

The Easy Bible®

Volume Four: Law and Grace

Days 94-124

Copyright © 2013 by Dwight A. Clough

All rights reserved. Scripture portions, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the *Dwight Clough Paraphrase of the Bible and Notes* (DCB). Some content taken from *Discoveries* by Dwight Clough. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The Easy Bible® text may be quoted in any form (written, visual, electronic, or audio), up to and inclusive of two hundred (200) verses and corresponding notes, without express written permission of the publisher, provided the verses quoted do not amount to a complete book of the Bible and do not account for 25 percent or more of the total text of the work in which they are quoted.

Notice of copyright must appear as follows on either the title page or the copyright page of the work in which *The Easy Bible*® is quoted: Scripture and/or notes taken from *The Easy Bible*®. Copyright (c) 2011, 2012, 2013 by Dwight Clough. Used by permission of Dwight Clough. Easy Bible® is a registered trademark of ET Labs. *The Easy Bible*® is published under a special agreement with ET Labs, and the content contained herein is not necessarily endorsed by ET Labs. ET Labs publishes a series of applications. Visit etdevlabs.com and biblepub.com for more information. For more information on *The Easy Bible*®, visit TheEasyBible.com.

When quotations from the easy bible text are used in non-saleable media, such as church bulletins, orders of service, posters, transparencies or similar media, a complete copyright notice is not required, but the words “The Easy Bible” must appear at the end of each quotation.

Easy Bible® is a registered trademark of ET Labs. *The Easy Bible*® is published under a special agreement with ET Labs, and the content contained herein is not necessarily endorsed by ET Labs. ET Labs publishes a series of applications. Please visit etdevlabs.com and biblepub.com for more information.

Over 99 percent of the Bible text contained herein is the original paraphrase by the author. In isolated cases we quote from other translations, including the King James Version or *KJV* (public domain). This volume does contain at least one quote from The Message (labeled as such). Scripture taken from The Message. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

Much appreciation ...

Many thanks to Richard Polcyn for his expert editorial assistance with this volume.

To order copies of this book, please visit:

TheEasyBible.com

*Hey, we do things a little differently here ...
The Table of Contents is at the end of this book*

Day 94: From Slavery to the Palace to Exile

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

Exodus 1-2

Israel (or **Jacob**), his sons and their **extended families** moved to Egypt, where **Joseph** was already living. In time, that entire generation died, but their many descendants were everywhere in Egypt. A new king took the throne in Egypt, who didn't know and didn't care about Joseph. The king said to his own people, "Look, these descendants of Israel are everywhere. We need to figure out a way to limit their numbers and keep them in their place. Otherwise, if there's a war, they might fight against us or run off and leave us."

So the Egyptians forced the **Israelis** into slavery, and oppressed them with cruel slave masters. They forced them to build Pithom and Rameses as storage cities. But their plan didn't work. The more the Egyptians oppressed the Israelis, the more they multiplied. The Egyptians were stunned. So they redoubled their efforts to make the Israelis miserable, forcing them to do the most backbreaking jobs on their farms and in their brick-making factories.

As if that wasn't enough, Pharaoh, the king, ordered the Israeli midwives—their names were Shiphrah and Puah—to kill all the baby boys as soon as they were born. But the midwives were far more afraid of offending God than they were of disobeying Pharaoh. So they let the boys live. When Pharaoh called them on it, they said, "The Hebrew women are stronger and quicker than Egyptian women. By the time we arrive, their children are already born." Because of this, the Israeli population continued to grow. God was pleased with the midwives and gave them families of their own. Then Pharaoh issued a decree to the Israelis: "If you give birth to a boy, drown him in the Nile River. If it's a girl, she can live."

A descendant of Jacob's son Levi married a woman of the same **ancestry or tribe**. They had a baby boy. They knew there was something unique and special about him. So they hid him for three months. When they couldn't hide him any longer, they put him in a basket, coated it with tar and pitch so it would float and set him adrift on the Nile River. His older sister watched to see what would happen to him.

Jacob See Days 74-86

Extended families About 70 people in all; See Exodus 1:5

Joseph See Days 80-86

Israelis Usually translated Israelites, children of Israel, Hebrews. They were the descendants of Jacob who was also called Israel. "Jew" and "Jewish" are terms used much later.

ancestry or tribe

Throughout much of the Bible, the descendants of Jacob identified themselves by the son of Jacob from whom they were descended. In this way, Israel was divided into twelve tribes.

Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile with her female attendants. When she saw the basket, she sent one of her attendants to bring it to her. When the princess opened the lid, there was a little baby boy, crying. The baby captured her heart. She said, "This is one of the Israeli babies."

Just then the baby's sister ran up to the princess. "Do you want me to find an Israeli woman to nurse this baby for you?" she asked.

The princess said, "Yes, I do."

So the boy's sister went and got his mother and returned.

The princess said, "Take this baby and nurse him for me. I'll pay you."

So his mom nursed him until he was older. Then she took him to the princess, and she adopted him. She named him Moses (Brought Out) because she brought him out of the water.

After Moses grew up, he went out to see how things were for his own people, the Israelis. He saw that they were being oppressed. When he saw an Egyptian beating up an Israeli, Moses looked around to make sure no one was watching. Not seeing anyone, he killed the Egyptian and buried his body in the sand. The next day Moses saw two Israelis fighting. When he tried to break up the fight, the one who was in the wrong said, "Who put you in charge? Are you planning to kill me like you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" *My secret is out*, Moses thought. He was afraid, and for good reason. Pharaoh found out and ordered his execution. Moses escaped, however, and traveled to the country of Midian.

Moses was sitting by a well when the seven daughters of Reuel, the priest of Midian, came along. They wanted to water their sheep, but other shepherds drove them away from the well. Moses sprang into action, rescuing them and helping them water their flocks. When they got home, their father asked how they managed to get home so early.

"An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds and helped us water our sheep," they told him.

"What happened to him?" their father asked. "Why didn't you bring him with you? Go invite him for supper."

Moses then stayed with this family, and he married Zipporah, one of Reuel's daughters. They had a son. Moses named him Gershom (Immigrant) because, he said, "I'm living like an immigrant."

Years passed. The king of Egypt died, but the new Pharaoh brought no relief to the Israelis living in slavery. God heard the cries of His people. He remembered His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God listened, God saw and God cared.

Discoveries: Watching from a Distance

His [Moses'] older sister watched to see what would happen to him. Pharaoh's daughter came down to the Nile with her female attendants. When she saw the basket, she sent one of her attendants to bring it to her. When the princess opened the lid, there was a little baby boy, crying. The baby captured her heart. She said, "This is one of the Israeli babies."

Just then the baby's sister ran up to the princess. "Do you want me to find an Israeli woman to nurse this baby for you?" she asked. Exodus 2:4-7 [Day 94]

I want to focus on the first sentence of this passage. The sister of Moses stood at a distance and watched to see what would happen. There comes a time in our lives when we discover that we do not have control over the things we care about most. These things are out of our hands. All we can do is stand at a distance and watch. But these are the times when the greatest miracles take place. When the events of our lives contain only God's signature and not our own, then God has room to show us who He really is. This doesn't mean that we design some circumstance to test God. Rather, when we trust God, we open the door for Him to show Himself trustworthy.

There is a great deal of oppression and injustice in this world. What is your response to it? What difference can you make? What difference should you make? (check the questions you wish to discuss later)

What do you think was going through the minds of Moses' parents when they put him in that basket in the Nile River?

Moses tried to help his own people, but his efforts were a disaster. Have you ever had your efforts to do good backfire? How did you handle that?

How has God proven Himself to you when you were in a situation that was beyond your control?

Your main take away from today's reading ...

Day 95: A Big Assignment

One day Moses left Egypt when he was about 40 years old. Now he was about 80 years old.

Jethro was also called Reuel

Mount Sinai (also called Horeb)

holy or set apart for the highest of purposes

descendants of Canaan

Or the Canaanite, Hittite, Amorite, Perizzite, Hivite and Jebusite. See Genesis 10:15-19 and see Day 65 including notes.

Yahweh (or YHWH or Jehovah) is a way of representing in English the Hebrew form for the name of God. Out of reverence for God, devout Jews would not pronounce the name Yahweh, and would write it without vowels, or substitute the word Adonai, which means "Master" or "Lord." In John 8:58, Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am," which many have understood to be a claim by Jesus that He is God.

leaders or elders

Exodus 3-4

One day, as Moses was taking care of the sheep that belonged to his father-in-law, **Jethro**, who was priest of Midian, he came to **Mount Sinai**. There Moses found a bush that was on fire, but the flames did not consume the bush. In the flames stood an angel of God. In awe, Moses stepped closer to investigate.

Then God said to him, "Moses! Moses!"

"Yes?" Moses replied.

God said, "Don't get any closer. Take off your shoes. The ground you stand on is **holy**." Then God said, "I'm the God of your father. I'm the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob."

Then Moses covered his eyes because he was afraid to look at God.

God continued, "I've seen the trouble My people are experiencing in Egypt. I've heard their cries for help. I know how much they are suffering. I've come down to rescue them from slavery, to take them out of Egypt and to bring them to a beautiful land of their own—a land currently occupied by the **descendants of Canaan**. I know how harsh and abusive the Egyptians have been. That's why I'm sending you back to Egypt to tell Pharaoh to release My people from slavery."

Moses said, "Why me? Ordering the most powerful person on the planet to release his slaves—that job is way too big for me."

God said, "I will be with you. In fact, when the job is done and My people are free, you will worship Me right here on this mountain."

Moses said, "If I go to the Israelis and tell them that the God of their ancestors sent me, and they ask, 'What is His name?' What will I tell them?"

God said, "I am who I am. Tell the Israelis that I AM sent you. Tell them **Yahweh**, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob sent you. This has always and will always be My name. Now go and meet with the **leaders** among the

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

Israelis. Tell them that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob appeared to you. Tell them I care about what they are suffering. Tell them I will rescue them from slavery in Egypt and bring them into a bountiful land, the land of Canaan. They will listen to you. Then you and the leaders are to confront Pharaoh and tell him that the God of the Israelis has met with you and that you must take a three-day journey into the desert to worship God. I know that he won't let you go unless he is forced to do so. That will create an opportunity for Me to display My power and do what only I can do. In the process, I will cause the Egyptians to want to help you. Each woman is to ask her Egyptian neighbors for jewelry, clothing and other items of value. In this way you won't leave destitute, but instead the wealth of Egypt will become yours."

Moses shook his head. "What if nobody believes me? What if they say, 'Who are you to get a message from God?'"

Then God asked, "What are you holding in your hand?"

"A **walking stick**," Moses said.

"Throw it on the ground."

Moses threw it on the ground, and it turned into a snake. Moses jumped back to get out of the way.

Then God said, "Reach out and pick it up by its tail."

Moses did as he was instructed, and the snake became a walking stick again.

"When you show them this, they will believe that I have met with you."

Then God said, "Put your hand inside your shirt."

Moses put his hand inside his shirt and pulled it out again. When he did, his hand was white with leprosy.

"Now put your hand back inside your shirt," God said.

When Moses did this and pulled his hand back out, his hand was perfectly healthy once again.

"If the leaders of the Israelis aren't convinced by the first miracle, the second one should persuade them. But if that doesn't work, take some water from the Nile River and pour it on the ground. When you do, it will turn into blood."

Then Moses said, "Please, Lord. I'm not a good speaker. I get tongue-tied when I have to speak in front of people. I always have."

"Who made your mouth?" God asked. "I make some blind, some deaf, some mute. I will be with you, and I Myself will make sure you have the words you need."

Walking stick or shepherd's staff

“Please, God,” Moses pleaded, “Can’t you find someone else?”

Then God became angry with Moses. “What about your brother, Aaron, a descendant of Levi. He’s a great speaker. What’s more, he’s on his way to meet you, and he’s excited about seeing you again. I’ll talk to you. You talk to him. I’ll make sure both of you know what to say. And he can speak for you. Now take your walking stick so you have it to perform the miracle I showed you.”

God said, “When you get to Egypt, you will perform miracles for Pharaoh to see. But I will make him stubborn, and he won’t let My people go free. Then you will give him this message from Me: ‘Israel is My firstborn son. Since you won’t let My firstborn son go free, I will kill your firstborn son.’”

God also said to Moses, “Don’t be afraid to return to Egypt, because the people who were trying to kill you are dead.”

So Moses went back to his father-in-law, Jethro, and said, “Please let me return to Egypt to visit my family.”

Jethro said, “No problem.”

So Moses, his wife and their sons set out for Egypt. During the trip, at an overnight stay, God confronted Moses and was about to kill him. But his wife Zipporah **circumcised** their son and threw the foreskin at Moses. “You are a husband of blood to me,” she said, referring to the circumcision. Then God let Moses go.

Meanwhile, God spoke to Aaron, Moses’ brother. He said, “Go meet your brother Moses in the desert.” They met at **God’s mountain**, where Moses brought Aaron up to speed on everything that had happened. Moses and Aaron traveled on to Egypt where they met with the leaders of the Israelis. Aaron told them everything that God had said to Moses. Moses performed the miracles God told him to perform. Then they believed God. Overwhelmed that God cared about them and their troubles, they bowed before Him and worshiped.

circumcised See note on Day 109.

God’s mountain Mount Sinai (Horeb)

Discoveries: Why Me?

Moses said, “Why me? Ordering the most powerful person on the planet to release his slaves—that job is way too big for me.” Exodus 3:11 [Day 95]

This is exactly where we should and should not be. You have been selected for greatness. This is true. But let’s get real. It isn’t because you’re smart, pretty and talented. There’s something much deeper, much better going on here.

Forty years of herding sheep in the desert had drained Moses of all his royal blood. He was no longer the savior, and he knew it.

How do we come to the end of ourselves? Like Moses, I started my adult life with great promise. I was smart, fo-

cused, energetic. And, more than anything else, I wanted to please God. But my dreams of success seemed to give way to poverty, ruin and failure. With each passing day, my talents and gifts seemed less and less relevant. It was a painful descent, but I'm glad I took it.

God could have put the burning bush in Egypt for Moses to find when he was still a royal favorite at the palace. But He didn't. He waited 40 years for the old Moses to die. Moses finally knew what he had to offer. He knew he didn't have the answers. He knew he didn't have the power, the brains, the wealth, the ability to do what God wanted done. Forty years earlier, Moses was so full of himself that there was little or no room for God. But now he saw who he really was, and how empty he really was on the inside. Now that Moses sees who he really is, God redirects his gaze away from Moses to the One who does have the answers, the ability, the power to do what He calls us to do.

God could have sent an angel, but instead He sent a man. He spent 80 years getting him ready for this assignment. In the same way, God sends you. No one else will quite do. He sends you because when you are filled with Him, nobody else can do what you can do.

In today's reading, God gave Moses his big assignment. What do you think God is asking you to do with your life? □

How had Moses changed since he left Egypt? In what ways have you changed in recent years? □

What significance do you see in God's name? □

No doubt the Israelites wanted release from slavery decades earlier. How do you explain God's timing here? How do you explain God's timing in your own life? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Day 96: Bricks Without Straw

Exodus 5

After meeting with the leaders of the Israelis, Moses and Aaron met with Pharaoh. They said, “The God of the Israelis has a message for you: ‘Allow My people to go into the desert to celebrate a worship feast in My honor.’”

Pharaoh answered them, “Who is God, and why should I listen to Him? I don’t know your God, and I’m not going to do this.”

Aaron and Moses said, “The God of the Israelis met with us. We need to travel three days into the desert so we can honor God with sacrifices. Otherwise, He might kill us or cause us to get sick.”

Pharaoh replied, “Moses and Aaron, you’re causing trouble. Get back to work, and quit distracting people from their jobs. I’m not going to let you organize a massive strike.”

Later that day, Pharaoh ordered his slave drivers to stop supplying **straw for brick making** to the Israelis. “They can find their own straw,” he said, “but don’t reduce their production quota. They need to produce the same number of bricks every day. Lazy! That’s what they are. That’s why they’re daydreaming about a vacation in the desert with their God. Make them work harder so they’ll stop listening to nonsense.”

The slave drivers carried out Pharaoh’s orders. As a result, the people scattered all over Egypt to search for straw, while the slave drivers kept pushing them to make their quota. When they didn’t, the Israeli foremen were beaten.

Then the foremen appealed to Pharaoh. They said, “We’re not given straw, but we’re expected to meet our quota. Your own people are to blame, but we’re the ones taking a beating.”

Pharaoh answered, “Lazy! That’s what you are! Lazy! That’s why you’re daydreaming about going off to do a worship vacation with your God in the desert. Now get back to work. You won’t get any straw from us, and you had better not reduce your production of bricks. The quota stays the same.”

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

straw for brick making

Straw may have made the clay easier to work with. It probably caused the bricks to dry faster, and it most likely was a binder to strengthen the bricks.

The Israeli foremen went back to their people to report the bad news. On the way, they saw Moses and

Aaron. The foremen said to them, “May God beat you. You’ve ruined what little bit of favor we had with Pharaoh. We’re dead meat, and it’s all your fault.”

Moses looked to God and said, “What’s going on? Why are you bringing all this trouble to Your people? And why did You send me? I went to Pharaoh. I did what You told me to do. But the people didn’t get rescued. Instead, they got into more trouble.”

Discoveries: Lazy?

Lazy! That’s what you are! Exodus 5:17 [Day 96]

Do you want to be a better Christian? Try harder.

This advice is ubiquitous, but where does it come from? Doesn’t it come from Pharaoh?

Pharaoh says, “Oh, you don’t like being slaves? Try harder. Supply your own straw for making bricks. Try harder. Don’t reduce your quota. Try harder.”

Sometimes people get God and Pharaoh confused. Here’s how you tell them apart. God is the One who saw that we were helpless slaves; God is the One who came to set us free.

Why do you think Moses and Aaron didn’t simply tell Pharaoh that the Israelis were leaving the country for good? □

Moses and Aaron followed God’s instructions, but, instead of things getting better, they got worse. Has that ever happened to you? How did you handle it? □

Have you ever been criticized for doing what you believed God was telling you to do? What was that experience like? □

What, if anything, is wrong with “try harder”? What’s the alternative? □

Your main take away from today’s reading ... □

Day 97: Disasters in Egypt

buy you back or redeem, an important Biblical word. Slaves could be redeemed by paying for their freedom. In certain cases the original owners of land could redeem their land once they sold it by buying it back. They had the “right of redemption.”

land I promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

See Genesis 12:7 [Day 67]; 13:15, 13:17 [Day 68]; 15:7, 15:18, 17:8 [Day 69]; 24:7 [Day 73]; 28:13 [Day 75]. See also Genesis 26:3, 28:4, 35:12, 48:4. The promise of the land was deeply embedded in the identity of the Israelis.

I don't have any charisma Literally, “I have uncircumcised lips.” Probably a reference to stuttering.

disaster There were ten disasters (called plagues in most translations): (1) water to blood, (2) frogs, (3) gnats, (4) flies, (5) livestock, (6) boils, (7) hail, (8) locusts, (9) darkness, (10) firstborn. [See day 98 for the final disaster.] Most likely these disasters happened over a period of several weeks, possibly even months. Each disaster seems to correspond to a specific Egyptian god.

Exodus 6-10 selections, portions summarized

Then God said to Moses, “Now you’ll get to see what I do with Pharaoh. With My strength I will compel him to give My people their freedom ... Tell the Israelis that I am God. Give them this message from Me: ‘I will free you from the Egyptians. I will **buy you back** by doing what only My power can do. Then I will give you the **land I promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**’”

Moses delivered God’s message to the Israelis, but they were too discouraged to pay any attention.

Then God said to Moses, “Go back to Pharaoh and tell him to let the Israelis leave Egypt.”

Moses answered, “The Israelis won’t listen to me; why should Pharaoh? **I don’t have any charisma.**”

God told Moses and Aaron to take Aaron’s walking stick so they could throw it down in front of Pharaoh when he asked for a miracle. “It will become a snake,” God said.

That’s what happened. Aaron’s walking stick became a snake. Then Pharaoh called in his court magicians, and they managed to get their walking sticks to turn into snakes also. But the snake from Aaron’s walking stick swallowed the other snakes. Pharaoh was unimpressed; he refused to listen.

On another day, Moses and Aaron met Pharaoh by the Nile River where they delivered a message from God. “Since you won’t allow My people the freedom to worship Me, I will turn the water in the Nile River to blood.”

Then Aaron lifted his walking stick up and held it over the river. The water turned to blood. He did the same with cisterns and reservoirs.

But since Pharaoh’s magicians found a way to turn water to blood, Pharaoh remained unimpressed. Meanwhile, all the people had to dig holes in the sand on the river bank to find water.

A week later, there was a different **disaster**: frogs. Pharaoh ignored the warning that came before the disaster; so Egypt experienced an infestation of frogs—they were everywhere.

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

Again the court magicians performed a similar trick, but Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron, “Ask God to remove the frogs, and I’ll release the Israelis to worship Him.” The next day the frogs died. They were piled up in huge, stinking piles. But Pharaoh didn’t keep his promise; he didn’t let the Israelis go.

On another day, at God’s direction, Aaron struck the ground with his walking stick. After he did that, Egypt was infested with **gnats**. They were everywhere. This time the court magicians could not **duplicate** what God did. They said to Pharaoh, “This has God’s fingerprints on it.” But, as God predicted, Pharaoh stubbornly refused to listen.

The next disaster was an infestation of flies. As before, Pharaoh refused to listen to the warning, so there were flies everywhere in Egypt. This time, however, in the region of Goshen where the Israelis lived, there were no flies. Again, Pharaoh asked for relief, but when God granted it, he refused to let the Israelis go.

In the next disaster, after a warning that was ignored by Pharaoh, the farm animals belonging to the Egyptians died while those belonging to the Israelis were fine. But Pharaoh remained defiant.

Later God had Moses and Aaron take soot from a brick-making oven and throw it up in the air in Pharaoh’s presence. The result was that the Egyptians were covered with painful boils. The court magicians couldn’t even stand in the presence of Moses and Aaron because of their boils. **God made Pharaoh even more stubborn**, so that he refused to listen to Moses.

Later God sent this message to Pharaoh through Moses: “Let My people go so they can worship Me. If you don’t, I won’t pull any punches with you. You’ll experience My power so that you will know that I’m **not some neighborhood god**; I’m the real thing. Do you want to know why you’re still alive? One reason: so that by My demonstration of power everyone on earth might know who I really am. Since you want to pick a fight with Me, tomorrow Egypt will experience the worst hailstorm in its history. Tell your people to get themselves, their workers and their **farm animals** inside. If they don’t, they die.”

The Egyptian leaders who took God seriously brought their workers and animals inside. The others didn’t. Hail fell; the worst storm ever. People and animals died. **Crops were ruined**. Trees were stripped. But in Goshen, where the Israelis lived, no hail!

Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. “I’ve sinned,” he said. “God was right; I was wrong. Ask God to stop the hail; I will let the Israelis go.”

Moses answered, “When I leave the city, I’ll pray. The storm will stop. But

gnats also translated lice or sciniphs (small biting insects)

duplicate or counterfeit. The magicians may have been using illusions to mimic God’s power.

God made Pharaoh even more stubborn or hardened Pharaoh’s heart. God did this only after Pharaoh chose several times to make himself more stubborn.

not some neighborhood god or There’s no one like Me on earth.

farm animals and hail. Enough time had passed for the Egyptians to replace at least some of the farm animals that had died earlier.

Crops were ruined. Some crops were not yet ripe; they survived.

take God seriously or
fear God

I know that you and your officials don't **take God seriously.**"

locusts swarming, crop-
eating grasshoppers

The storm stopped, and Pharaoh once again chose to be defiant. He would not release the Israelis.

The next disaster was an infestation of **locusts**. The crops that managed to survive the hailstorm were ruined. Before the locusts arrived, Pharaoh's officials tried to talk him into letting the Israelis go; so he tried to get Moses to tell the Israeli men to leave their families behind in Egypt. When Moses refused, Pharaoh kicked him out of his court. After the locusts arrived, Pharaoh admitted he was wrong and asked Moses to pray for him. Moses prayed. God removed the locusts. Pharaoh still refused to release the Israelis.

darkness literally, "a dark-
ness than can be felt" or
possibly blindness

The next disaster was three days of **darkness**. Among the Israelis there was light, but the Egyptians couldn't see anything for three days. Pharaoh tried to work out a deal where the Israelis could leave, but they needed to leave their farm animals behind. Moses refused. Pharaoh became so angry that he threatened to kill Moses if he ever saw him again.

Discoveries: The Power to Believe

"When you show them this, they will believe." Exodus 4:5 [Day 95]

God offered Moses one of the greatest opportunities in history—the job of leading His people to freedom. But Moses doesn't want the job. It takes him out of his comfort zone. He raises objections, hoping God will give up and find someone else. "What if they don't believe me or listen to me?" he asks.

I guess he didn't realize that God has a lot of experience with people who don't believe Him or listen to Him. You know the story. A stick turns into a snake and then back into a stick again. Moses, still stunned, stands there staring at the stick in his hand. At that moment, God conveys one of the most important lessons of all of life.

Did you catch it?

God makes it possible for us to believe. If we lack the ability to believe, God will give us something in our experience that will give us that ability to choose faith. Again and again throughout the history of faith, God has given His people the power to believe. I know a man who was tortured for his faith. Terrible things were done to him, but in the worst moments, his eyes were opened, and he saw the glory of God. Sometimes God gives great miracles to encourage His people, but more often He gives little reminders—sunlight sparkling in the water, a field of blossoms dancing in the wind or a quiet voice inside that says, "Don't be troubled—it's going to be okay."

How would you explain Pharaoh's defiance? □

Why these disasters? What was God setting out to accomplish? □

Some people stubbornly cling to defiance. Others cling to faith. What makes the difference? □

What has God done to give you the power to believe? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Day 98: The Final Disaster

Exodus 11:1-12:30; 12:43-13:16 selections, portions summarized

God said to Moses, “I am inflicting one more disaster on Pharaoh and on Egypt. When this disaster is over, Pharaoh will be glad to see the Israelis leave. Here’s how you can get ready. Tell Israeli men and women to ask their Egyptian neighbors for silver and gold.” (God caused the Egyptians to respect Moses and want to help the Israelis.)

Moses delivered God’s message to Pharaoh: “At midnight, I will visit Egypt, killing every firstborn male, rich and poor, slave and free, man and animal. There will be mourning in every family, but I won’t harm the Israelis so you will understand that I, God, take care of My own people. Then your officials will bow with respect before me, and beg us to leave.” Then Moses, full of anger, walked away from Pharaoh.

God told Moses, “Pharaoh won’t listen to you. But his stubbornness will create an opportunity for Me to do even more miracles in Egypt.” (God had made Pharaoh stubborn; he refused to release the Israelis.)

God instructed the Israelis to observe a sacred meal called the Passover. They were to slaughter a year-old **lamb** at twilight, take some of its blood and apply it to the **door frames** of their homes. They were to eat the lamb along with bitter herbs and bread containing no yeast. When they ate it, they were to be fully dressed, ready to leave at a moment’s notice. The meal was to be eaten indoors with no one going outside until morning. God said that when He visited Egypt, He would look for the blood on the door frame. If it was there, He would “pass over” that home and not kill the firstborn within. God commanded the Israelis to observe the Passover every year so that future generations would remember that God spared His people from disaster.

At midnight, disaster struck the people of Egypt. Every firstborn male died, from the son of Pharaoh to the firstborn son of the lowest prisoner in the lowest dungeon. The firstborn farm animals died as well. Tragedy came to every home; the air was filled with the sound of mourning.

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

lamb A year old sheep or goat was acceptable.

door frames or door posts and lintel

But the Israelis were spared.

Later God instructed His people to **dedicate every firstborn** son and every firstborn male animal to God.

dedicate every firstborn

Some of those firstborn animals were sacrificed to God; others were redeemed or bought back by donating money. A payment of money was also required for firstborn sons. This was to commemorate God setting His people free and sparing the firstborn among the Israelis on the night He destroyed the firstborn of Egypt.

Discoveries: The Power of Your Story

“you will receive the power to tell others about Me.” Acts 1:8 [Day 62]

“ye shall be witnesses unto me.” Acts 1:8 KJV

What does a witness do? He tells what he saw, or, more likely, what he experienced. As we head into our world, we carry with us a powerful tool—the story of what we have experienced.

God means to be experienced. That’s one reason why life is so full of adventure. The waves rise. The thunder rolls. We sit in the bow of our little boat and start sliding down into the trough. Then we notice the hole in the hull. From there things go from bad to worse as we discover that the life jackets have been blown overboard. And (did I mention?) we don’t know how to swim. But, no matter, the sharks are circling the boat.

Adventure, of course, is just a fancy word for problems. Every time we get another problem, God is writing another story in our lives. We are His witnesses. We tell our world what we have experienced—how God showed up in the middle of our problems.

Like Jesus said, if we don’t speak up, the rocks will cry out.

No matter how obscure you feel, or how mundane you feel your difficulties are, God is fashioning in your life a story that will touch someone else for eternity.

What do we learn about God through His interaction with Pharaoh? □

How would you explain the significance of the Passover? □

The practice of dedicating the firstborn to God has a parallel among Christians today. We are each to present ourselves as a “living sacrifice” to God (Romans 12:1). What does that mean to you? (How) have you done that? □

How has God shown up in your life? □

Your main take away from today’s reading ... □

Day 99: The Sea Splits Open

Genesis	
■ Exodus	
Leviticus	
Numbers	
Deuteronomy	
Joshua	
Judges	
Ruth	
1 Samuel	■ 25%
2 Samuel	
1 Kings	
2 Kings	
1 Chronicles	
2 Chronicles	
Ezra	
Nehemiah	
Esther	
Job	
Psalms	■ 50%
Proverbs	
Ecclesiastes	
Song of Solomon	
Isaiah	
Jeremiah	
Lamentations	
Ezekiel	
Daniel	
Hosea	
Joel	
Amos	
Obadiah	
Jonah	■ 75%
Micah	
Nahum	
Habakkuk	
Zephaniah	
Haggai	
Zechariah	
Malachi	
Matthew	
Mark	
Luke	
John	
Acts	
Romans	
1 Corinthians	
2 Corinthians	
Galatians	
Ephesians	
Philippians	
Colossians	
1 Thessalonians	
2 Thessalonians	
1 Timothy	
2 Timothy	
Titus	
Philemon	
Hebrews	
James	
1 Peter	
2 Peter	
1 John	
2 John	
3 John	
Jude	
Revelation	

Exodus 12:31-42; 13:17-15:2a

That night Pharaoh said to Moses and Aaron, “Get out! Leave Egypt, you and all the Israelites. Take your farm animals and leave. On your way, **say a prayer for me.**” The Egyptians chimed in, “Please leave before we all die.”

So the Israelites left, carrying their kitchen supplies and bread dough with them. They also asked for and received **money** from their Egyptian neighbors, plundering their oppressors.

Six hundred thousand Israeli men plus women and children left as well as many others. The Israeli people left Egypt **exactly 430 years** after they arrived. God took them by an indirect route because the direct route would put them on a collision course with the Philistines. That would mean war, and God knew the people might turn around and go back to Egypt if they faced war. They also carried the bones of Joseph who had requested that his bones be removed from Egypt and buried in Canaan.

God led them as they traveled. He put a **column of clouds** in front of them by day and a **column of light** at night. They took a **zigzag** course to the **Red Sea**. God said, “Pharaoh will think you are lost. I will make Pharaoh obstinate about this, and he will pursue the Israelites. This will give Me an opportunity to show the world who I really am.

When Pharaoh figured out that the Israelites weren’t coming back, he and his officials said, “What were we thinking? We’ve lost our slaves!” Pharaoh assembled his army with more than 600 chariots. They chased the Israelites and caught up to them by the Red Sea.

Fear gripped the Israelites when they saw the Egyptians. They said to Moses, “Was it because there was no place to die in Egypt that you brought us out here to this desert death trap? Didn’t we tell you to leave us alone? Better a slave in Egypt than a dead body in the desert.”

Moses answered, “Don’t be afraid. All you need to do is stand still. God will do the work of rescuing you. This is the last time you will ever see these Egyptians. God will fight for you. Just be quiet and stay calm.”

Then God said to Moses, “Time to move from prayer to

say a prayer for me or bless me

money Literally, articles of silver, gold and clothing

exactly 430 years Scholars disagree as to when the 430 years started. It may have been when Joseph was taken as a slave to Egypt or when Jacob entered Egypt. Or it may have been an earlier time, perhaps when Abram (Abraham) went to Egypt. (See Genesis 12:10 [Day 67] and Galatians 3:17.)

column of clouds column of light Traditionally, pillar of cloud, pillar of fire

Red Sea or Sea of Reeds. The exact location of the crossing is unknown. Most Bible-believing scholars say it was somewhere along the Gulf of Suez, but some suggest it may have been on the other side of the Sinai Peninsula at the Gulf of Aqaba. Either location provides for crossings as short as 8-10 miles or 10-15 km. This is one of the most important events in the Bible.

see what I'm capable of doing. Or, gain glory for Myself

action. Tell these Israelis to start moving. Hold your walking stick up over the sea. Watch the sea split in two. The Israelis will cross on dry ground. The Egyptians will continue their pig-headed defiance. I'll make sure of that. They will chase after you. When they do, you and the whole world will see who I am and what I'm **capable** of doing.”

God's angel moved and the column of clouds moved to stand between the Egyptians and the Israelis. Throughout the night, the column of light blinded the Egyptians but allowed the Israelis to see, keeping the two groups away from each other.

As Moses raised his hand over the sea, God used a strong east wind to split the waters, allowing the Israelis to walk across on dry ground with water on each side. As morning approached, the Egyptian army pursued the Israelis into the path God created in the sea. God, observing from the top of the column of cloud and light, threw the Egyptian army into confusion, causing chariot wheels to jam and get stuck. When the Egyptians realized that God was fighting for the Israelis, they shouted orders to retreat. Then God told Moses to lift his hand up toward the sea. When he did, the waters returned, covering the Egyptian army, drowning horses and humans alike. No one survived.

The Israelis crossed the sea on dry ground with water on their right and on their left. God rescued the Israelis from their Egyptian oppressors. All that was left of the Egyptian army was dead bodies littering the shore. When the Israelis took in what happened to them, they stood in awe before God and chose to trust Him and His servant Moses. Moses and the Israelis sang a song: “I will sing to God because of His incomparable victory; the horse and its rider He tossed into the sea. God is my strength. He is my song. **He is the one who rescues me.**”

He is the one who rescues me or He has become my salvation.

Discoveries: Back Pay

They also asked for and received money from their Egyptian neighbors; plundering their oppressors. Exodus 12:36 [Day 99]

God did not want the Israelis to leave Egypt empty-handed. So He arranged for the Egyptians to become “favorably disposed” toward His people, and wealth was transferred from the people of Egypt to the people of Israel.

You can't call it theft. The Egyptians gave it to them voluntarily. You can't really call it a gift. The Egyptians had enslaved the people of Israel for four hundred years. They owed them. I prefer to call it back pay.

Trading people like cattle, making one person the property of another is dehumanizing to put it mildly. But nothing escapes the attention of God. And God sees the unfairness that you have had to endure. I don't know how long your trials will endure. But I do know this. God has already worked out the details. Back pay is coming.

Why was it important to God that the whole world see “who I am and what I’m capable of doing”? □

Imagine yourself as an Israeli living through these events. What emotions would you be experiencing? □

In today’s passage, we are reminded that God holds the power of life and death for people, nations and armies. Where does that leave you? □

Moses was told to move from prayer to action. How do you determine when you’ve prayed enough and it’s time to act? □

Your main take away from today’s reading ... □

Day 100: The Journey to Meet With God

Exodus 15:22-19:25 (selections)

Three days into their journey in the desert, the Israelis ran out of water. When they came to a spring, the water was unsafe to drink. But God instructed Moses to throw a piece of wood into the water. As a result, it became safe to drink. That's where God said, "Pay attention to Me and follow My instructions. If you do, you will not suffer any of the diseases you saw in Egypt. I am God who heals you."

Later in their journey, the people complained to Moses and Aaron because they were hungry. "Better dead in Egypt than starve in the desert," they said.

Moses said, "You're complaining against God."

When the Israelis looked out into the desert, they saw the awesome majesty of God in the cloud. God promised to rain down food. That night, quail flew in, covering the camp. In the morning, there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew dried, it left something behind that looked like flakes of frost. The Israelis didn't know what it was, but they called it **manna**. It tasted like crackers and honey. God instructed the people to gather just enough for each day. Some tried to hoard, but it spoiled overnight. On the sixth day, God told them to gather a double portion so they would have enough for the Sabbath day of rest. Some tried to gather on the Sabbath, but no manna appeared on that day. This was God's way of making sure the people had enough to eat.

As they continued to travel, they ran out of water again. The people grumbled, and Moses said to God, "The people are about to lynch me. What should I do?"

God said, "Take your walking stick and use it to hit a rock I will show you."

Moses did this, and water suitable for drinking flowed from the rock.

The people of Amalek picked a fight with the Israelis. Moses told his assistant Joshua to lead an army in response. Moses climbed a hill to watch the battle. When Moses lifted his hands, the Israelis were winning the battle. When he lowered them, Amalek prevailed. Aaron and Hur were with

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

manna may be related to the Hebrew word for food, or it may be related to an Egyptian word.

him. When Moses grew tired, he sat down on a rock, and Aaron and Hur held up his hands until sundown. As a result, Joshua and the Israelis won the battle.

News reached Jethro, priest of Midian and father-in-law to Moses, about what God had done for the Israelis. Jethro came to visit Moses. When Jethro heard the whole story of what God had done, he praised God, built an altar and offered sacrifices to God.

The next day Moses was tied up all day long resolving disputes and judging cases. Then Jethro said, “If you keep doing what you’re doing, you’re going to wear yourself out. Let me give you some advice: Delegate. Find men of character and integrity. Assign them to groups of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Let them do this work of judging. If the case is too difficult, they can bring it to you. But the easy cases they can decide on their own.” Moses listened to his father-in-law and followed his advice. Then Jethro concluded his visit and went home.

Three months after leaving Egypt, the Israelis came to Mount Sinai. Moses went up the mountain to meet with God. God told Moses that the people would trust their leader when they heard God speaking to Moses in a thick cloud. God also instructed him to put a fence around the mountain to keep people and animals away while Moses was speaking to God. If anyone crossed the fence and touched the mountain, they were to be killed.

Three days later, the mountain was covered with thunder and lightning. God came down to the mountain in fire and smoke. A loud trumpet blast sounded. The people stood behind the fence to watch God. Moses called to God. God answered him. Then Moses climbed the mountain to meet with God.

Discoveries: The Silence of God

Moses listened to his father-in-law and followed his advice. Exodus 18:24 [Day 100]

No one knew God like Moses. Moses spoke with God face to face; he had a relationship with Him unparalleled in his day. Yet God never told Moses how to organize a judicial system. He was silent on that point.

Why? Because God wanted Jethro to tell Moses. Jethro had administrative insight to bring to the table.

I’m glad that God has put Jethros in my life. One of the most important of these advisers is my wife. She has enough common sense to know when I’m way out in left field. God knows it too, of course, but He often leaves it up to Kim to tell me. God’s silence here is a great act of love. When we go looking for the answers that He graciously doesn’t give us, we validate the contribution of the many Jethros God has placed in our path.

What do you think God was teaching the Israelis about Himself through the provision of manna?

□

What does the meeting between Jethro and Moses tell you about God? □

Moses listened to Jethro's advice and accepted help from Aaron and Hur. How easy is it for you to listen to advice and/or accept help? □

Why did God instruct Moses to put a fence around the mountain? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Day 101: God's Law

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy
- Joshua
- Judges
- Ruth
- 1 Samuel ■ 25%
- 2 Samuel
- 1 Kings
- 2 Kings
- 1 Chronicles
- 2 Chronicles
- Ezra
- Nehemiah
- Esther
- Job
- Psalms ■ 50%
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah ■ 75%
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi
- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon
- Hebrews
- James
- 1 Peter
- 2 Peter
- 1 John
- 2 John
- 3 John
- Jude
- Revelation

The law When Moses met with God on Mount Sinai, God gave him a set of laws. A small but important portion of those laws became known as the Ten Commandments. (See Day 4, Exodus 20:1-17 or Deuteronomy 5:1-21.) The additional laws that God gave Moses fill up much of the Biblical books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The remainder of the Bible has many references to these laws. To understand the Bible, you need a basic working knowledge of these laws. Christians often refer to these laws collectively as "the law."

Romans 6:14

Sin can't tell you what to do because **the law** isn't in charge of you any more. Instead you **operate under the power of God's grace**.

operate under the power of God's grace

Christians sometimes say, "We're not under the law; we're under grace."

But this does not exempt us from moral responsibility. Instead, the new life we have in Jesus empowers us to live good lives. However, we are not compelled to follow some of the requirements of the law because Jesus fulfilled those requirements for us. That brings up the questions: What laws are we required to follow? And, What relevance do the other laws have for us today? Jesus begins to answer that question in this passage from Day 17:

Matthew 5:17-19

"I didn't come to delete everything God has done up to this point—His laws and His words. On the contrary, I came to fill in the blanks. The puzzle is being completed, and it will stand forever. So don't teach people to disregard God's standards. Instead, be an example."

Types of laws As you read the Bible, you will find:

(1) **Moral laws.** These are timeless requirements that reflect God's values. For example, it is wrong to murder. It's wrong to sleep with someone else's spouse. The Ten Commandments are moral laws with the possible exception of the Sabbath day-of-rest regulation. (Christians differ as to how the Sabbath should be interpreted.) Consider these examples.

Exodus 22:22-24

"Never mistreat a widow or orphan. If you do, and they cry out to Me, I will listen to them, and direct My anger toward you. I will bring your life to an end, leaving your wife a widow, your children fatherless."

Deuteronomy 6:5

Love God with all you have, inside and out—your desires, your intelligence and your very self.

Most of the book of Deuteronomy is the text of a speech delivered by Moses.

Moral laws invoke timeless principles usually in our relationship with God or with one another. No wonder love is considered the fulfillment of the law:

Romans 13:8b-10

What matters is this: Do you love? If you love, you've met the law's requirements. Some try to keep a long list of commandments. But here's the bottom line: Love others as you love yourself. Love harms no one. As a result, love fulfills the law.

(2) **Civil laws.** These laws governed the nation of Israel in ancient times. They often came with criminal penalties for various offenses. Consider this example of a civil law.

Deuteronomy 16:18

Appoint judges in each of the towns God gives you in your new land. Make sure they judge impartially.

This was a requirement for ancient Israel, but in our case this requirement is replaced by a directive to follow our own government. Because we live under a different government, we are exempt from the civil laws of ancient Israel and instead subject to the laws of our own countries. Justice or impartial judgment, however, is a timeless principle that God expects individuals and nations to observe.

Obey the law The exception, of course, would be specific laws that contradict God's requirements for us. (See, for example, Acts 4:19.)

Romans 13:1

Obey the law in the country you're in. Why? God Himself put governments in charge.

(3) **Ceremonial laws.** These laws created a system of worship and sacrifices. They also extended to diet, holidays, housing and health care. Christians believe that we are exempt from the ceremonial laws of sacrifice because Jesus Christ is our final sacrifice for sin. (More on this on Day 111.) Most Christians would say that we are exempt from other ceremonial laws for various reasons, which we will cover over the next several days.

Interpreting the law Just as attorneys today will argue law in court, so also people in Biblical times debated about how to apply different laws. On occasion, Jesus' opponents tried to drag Him into an argument on the law for the purpose of discrediting Him. Each time His answers revealed a deep and profound understanding of both the law and God's heart behind the law. (See for example, Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 10:25-37; John 8:2-11.)

When reading laws in the Bible, identify to whom the command was given, for what purpose, and for what time. The ancient Israeli people were commanded to build a tabernacle, that is, a tent with a specific design for worship. But you and I are not commanded to build a tabernacle.

Some instructions applied, not to the individual, but to the community. Some laws were specific to a time and culture (e.g., instructions for farmers using ancient agricultural practices). Some laws applied to persons belonging to a class or group. Priests were instructed to formulate a special type of incense; all other parties were prohibited from using that formulation.

While many laws may not apply to people of faith living today, some Christians choose to follow some of these laws anyway. For example, Christians of Jewish descent might celebrate the Passover as a way of honoring their heritage. Some Christians follow some or all of the dietary regulations for health reasons.

We benefit from studying these laws regardless of whether a specific command applies to us today. Their existence teaches us important principles about God's character and His way of teaching His people about Himself. We no longer follow instructions regarding the gathering of manna (Day 100), but we learn from those instructions that God expects us to both work and trust Him for provision. As we ponder these laws, we gather rich insights that help us in every aspect of our lives.

Psalm 19:7, Psalm 1:2

God's law is perfect, putting our lives in order. His commands can make anyone wise. [A good man] delights in God's law and ponders it day and night.

Discoveries: The Reasons Behind the Rules

[A good man] delights in God's law and ponders it day and night. Psalm 1:2 [Day 101]

As my children were growing up, I had rules for them. As they grew old enough to understand, I tried to explain the reasons behind the rules. I did this because I want my children growing up understanding and, hopefully, embracing the reasons behind my rules. Those reasons reflect who I am. In the same way, when we delve into the law, we delve into the very character of God.

How would you describe the difference between living under law and living under grace? □

Why does God care so much about the needy? □

How does love fulfill the law? □

What does it mean to you to ponder God's law day and night. What does that look like in your world? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Day 102: Idolatry, Witchcraft & Justice

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genesis Exodus ■ Leviticus Numbers ■ Deuteronomy Joshua Judges 	<p>Leviticus 19:4</p> <p>“I’m God. Don’t make idols; don’t turn to substitute gods.”</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ruth 1 Samuel ■ 25% 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job ■ Psalms ■ 50% Proverbs Ecclesiastes 	<p>Deuteronomy 4:15-18</p> <p>You don’t know what God looks like. When He talked to you out of the fire from Mount Sinai, you didn’t see Him. So guard yourselves against corruption: Don’t try to reduce God to human or animal form by sculpting Him into an idol.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Song of Solomon ■ Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations ■ Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah ■ Jonah ■ 75% Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah 	<p>Idols and idolatry (the practice of worshiping idols) are condemned throughout the Bible. Sculpted or cast metal gods were such a part of ancient culture that the Israelis frequently reverted to the practice of idol worship and all that went with it, including pagan orgies, occult practices and child sacrifice. The Bible explains that the ancient nation of Israel was punished by God for her idolatry. Idols have come to mean more than just gods made of wood and metal. In our context, idols refer to anything that takes God’s place in your life. Money, sex, power, status, loved ones, possessions—all these things can be okay or can be idols depending on the place they have in a person’s life. In today’s reading, we’ve surveyed selected passages on idols covering a great span of time and history.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malachi Matthew Mark Luke John Acts Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians 	<p>Psalm 78:58</p> <p>God’s people made Him angry with jealousy when they turned away from Him to worship idols and engage in pagan rituals.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians 1 Timothy 2 Timothy Titus 	<p>Isaiah 42:8</p> <p>“I’m God. That’s My name. I don’t give away My glory. I don’t share praise with idols.”</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philemon Hebrews James 1 Peter 2 Peter ■ 1 John 2 John 3 John Jude ■ Revelation 	<p>Ezekiel 16:20-21</p> <p>“You murdered your sons and daughters—who belong to Me, sacrificing them to your idols. It’s bad enough that you prostituted yourselves to false gods. On top of that, you slaughtered My children by sacrificing them to your idols.”</p>	

Deuteronomy 18:9-12

Don't follow the disgusting practices of the people currently living in the land I'm giving you. Don't sacrifice (murder) your children. Don't practice witchcraft, tell fortunes, interpret omens, cast spells, consult mediums or psychics, or call up the dead. God hates these things. That's why He is driving out the current inhabitants of the land.

Ezekiel 5:8-9

God Who Is In Charge or
Sovereign Lord

This is what the **God Who Is In Charge** says to Jerusalem: "Because of your disgusting idolatry, I will punish you in front of the whole world with punishment that I've never inflicted before and will never inflict again."

Jonah 2:8

Those who cling to worthless idols walk away from the love God wants to give them.

1 John. Not to be confused with the Gospel of John, 1 John is a letter or epistle from John to the early church. This short book is found near the end of the Bible.

1 John 5:21

Dear children in the faith, stay away from idols.

Worshiping demons The implication here and in 1 Corinthians 10:20-21 is that worship offered to idols is in fact worship offered to demons.

Revelation 9:20-21

The survivors of these disasters refused to turn away from **worshiping demons** and lifeless idols made of chunks of rock, metal or wood. They remained entrenched in a lifestyle of murder, witchcraft, sex outside of marriage and theft.

Revelation 21:8

Those who let fear keep them from following God, those who would not believe, murderers, the sexually immoral, those who dabble in the occult, those who worship idols, and **all who deceive**—their end is the lake of burning sulfur—the Second Death.

Those who let fear keep them from following God or the cowardly

all who deceive or all liars. Satan is called “a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44). Deception keeps people from God. It is the basis of much temptation. God cares deeply that people know the truth.

Leviticus 19:26b

“**Stay away from witchcraft**, fortune telling and the occult. Don’t interpret omens.”

Stay away from witchcraft All forms of occult practices are condemned in the Bible.

Leviticus 19:31

“Don’t corrupt yourself by consulting mediums or psychics. Don’t try to make contact with the dead. I am God.”

Discoveries: Avoiding Idols

Dear children in the faith, stay away from idols. 1 John 5:21 [Day 102]

Where God is absent, idols abound. We are creatures created to worship. When God is absent, we will find someone or something to fill the vacuum. The best way to avoid idolatry is to replace it with something far better: God Himself.

How does idolatry show up in your world? □

Why is God so adamantly opposed to idolatry? □

Why the prohibition against all forms of witchcraft and related practices? □

What is the best way to avoid idolatry? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Day 103: The Calf Aaron Made

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

Exodus 24:1-18; 32:1-35 (portions summarized)

God invited Moses, Aaron, **Nadab, Abihu** and 70 leaders from Israel to meet with Him. But only Moses was allowed to stand close to God. This was a time when all the Israelis solemnly promised to obey God. Moses and his companions climbed the mountain and saw God. He was standing on something that was blue like the sky or like a **sapphire**. They ate a meal in His presence, and He did not harm them. God invited Moses to climb higher on the mountain for a **private conference**.

The remaining members of the company returned to the people. Aaron and Hur were to settle any disputes that came up while Moses was gone. Moses climbed up. God's cloud of glory covered Mount Sinai. To the Israelis camped in the valley, it looked like the top of the mountain was on fire.

God met with Moses for **40 days and nights**.

When it took so long for Moses to return, the people said to Aaron, "Make us gods to lead us. This Moses guy—we don't know if he's ever coming back."

Aaron replied, "Give me your gold earrings." After Aaron collected the gold jewelry, he melted it down and molded it to look like a calf.

The people said, "Here's the god who freed us from our Egyptian slave masters."

Aaron responded by building an altar by the calf and scheduling a holiday the next day to celebrate God. When morning came, the Israelis offered sacrifices. Then they put together a huge meal that quickly deteriorated into a pagan orgy.

God said to Moses, "Hurry! Go back down to the people. They have disobeyed. They turned away from Me and have become corrupt. They made and worshiped a gold idol shaped like a calf. They're giving that idol credit for freeing them from Egypt." God added, "Leave Me alone, and I will destroy every last one of them. Instead, I'll make you into a great nation."

Nadab and Abihu were Aaron's sons

sapphire or also translated lapis lazuli

a private conference The Israelis had heard God's voice, but were so frightened that they wanted Moses to meet with God for them. Apparently Joshua was on the mountain as well; whether he was in on the private conference, the passage doesn't say. (See Deuteronomy 5:23-33.)

40 days and nights While Moses was on Mount Sinai meeting with God, he received the Ten Commandments and many other laws. Moses neither ate nor drank during the 40 days he was meeting with God. (Deuteronomy 9:9)

Moses pleaded with God. “Please don’t. If you do, the Egyptians will say that You intended to murder the Israelis all along. Please remember the promises You made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—that their descendants would own and rule the land of Canaan.”

Then God chose not to go through with His threat to destroy the Israelis.

As Moses was coming down from the top of the mountain, he was carrying two stone tablets containing **God’s law with the words carved on both sides** by God Himself.

Joshua was with Moses. He said, “It sounds like the Israelis are in the middle of a battle.”

But Moses said, “It sounds more like a party to me.”

When Moses got close enough to see the calf idol and the people dancing before it, he got so angry **he threw the stone tablets to the ground**, breaking them to pieces at the bottom of the mountain. Then he took the calf, burned it, ground it into powder, scattered the powder on the drinking water and forced the Israelis to drink it.

Moses said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you to get you to lead them into such a huge sin?”

Aaron said, “Please don’t be angry, master. You know these people are corrupt. They wanted me to make gods for them because they didn’t think you were coming back. I took their gold, threw it in the fire, and out jumped this calf.”

By now the people were totally out of control because of what Aaron had done. They looked like fools to their enemies. Moses shouted, “Whoever wants to follow God, join me.” So the Levites rallied around him. At Moses’ instruction, the Levites armed themselves with swords and slaughtered the idolaters. They killed 3,000 people.

Moses said to the Levites, “At great cost **you followed God, by putting to death** friends, relatives and neighbors. That’s why you will have special standing with God.”

God’s law with the words carved on both sides or the covenant law, understood to be the Ten Commandments – possibly the letters were carved all the way through the stone.

he threw the stone tablets to the ground
When Moses returned to the Mountain to meet with God, God etched His words on two new stone tablets to take the place of those that were destroyed. (See Deuteronomy 10:1-5)

you followed God, by putting to death This needs to be understood within the context of the time and place. The nation of Israel was to showcase God’s ways to the world. If idolatry was tolerated at this early stage in that nation’s history, no distinctiveness would remain. The nation was, at that time, operating as a theocracy, that is, a nation directly ruled by God. As a result, “religious” infractions held a criminal penalty. This passage and others like it are NOT advocating that present day followers of God embark on some kind of holy war against those who do not follow God. Nor do such passages teach that followers of God should attempt to convert their nation’s government to a similar theocracy.

The next day Moses said to the Israelis. “You have deeply offended God. But I will go and talk to Him. Maybe I can find a way for Him to forgive you.”

Moses went back and spoke with God. “These people have done something terribly wrong. They made gods of gold. Please forgive them. If not, then erase my name from your book.”

God replied, “No. Instead I will erase the names of those who have sinned against me. Now, leave. Lead the people into the land I promised. My angel will lead you. But when the time comes for me to punish, that’s what I will do.”

Then God sent an epidemic of illness on the people because of the calf Aaron had made.

Discoveries: A Picnic Lunch With God

Moses and his companions climbed the mountain and saw God. He was standing on something that was blue like the sky or like a sapphire. They ate a meal in His presence, and He did not harm them. Exodus 24:9-11 [Day 109]

I’m struck with how casual God can be at times. This is the same God who said, “ You cannot see My face, for no one may see Me and live.” Yet He invites Moses who will later disobey and strike the rock instead of speaking to it, Aaron who will turn around and make the gold calf idol, Nadab and Abihu who will dishonor Him by burning unauthorized fire, and the seventy elders who will fail to take a stand with Joshua and Caleb after the exploration of the land.

All of us believe lies deep down. Here’s one of mine: I have thought of God as aloof, as not really caring, as not being concerned or connected. But here He is, reaching out to the very people who will rebel against Him, inviting them up for a picnic lunch.

Years ago, I came upon the discovery that God likes me. That may seem unimportant to you, but to me it was absolutely life changing. I knew that God loved me, I mean, hey, that’s His job. But I never knew that He liked me. That He liked hanging out with me. That He liked quirky, eccentric, sometimes bold but often hesitant me.

God likes me. I’m still finding the edges of that discovery, if there are any. And, do you know something? I think He likes you too.

What would it be like for you to see God? □

How do you explain the action of Aaron and the Israelis? What do their actions say about their deepest beliefs? □

God chose not to carry out the action He had threatened? What do you learn from God's decision here? □

How does God feel about you? What difference does that make in your world? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Day 104: Marriage and Sex

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy
- Joshua
- Judges
- Ruth
- 1 Samuel ■ 25%
- 2 Samuel
- 1 Kings
- 2 Kings
- 1 Chronicles
- 2 Chronicles
- Ezra
- Nehemiah
- Esther
- Job
- Psalms ■ 50%
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon
- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel
- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah ■ 75%
- Micah
- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi
- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon
- Hebrews
- James
- 1 Peter
- 2 Peter
- 1 John
- 2 John
- 3 John
- Jude
- Revelation

Leviticus 18:6-23

A man must not have sex with any close relative, including his mother, step-mother, sister, half-sister, granddaughter, aunt, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law. A man must not have sex with both a woman and her daughter or her granddaughter. You may not marry your wife's sister while your wife is still living; sisters may not be **rival wives**. **Don't have sex with a woman during her period.** Don't have sex with another man's wife. Don't sacrifice children to Molech; that would dishonor God. A man must not have sex with another man. No human is to have sex with an animal.

A man must not Clearly these laws applied to men and women, but since men held more power in that culture, the focus of accountability fell with men. Nothing in these laws should be construed as blaming victims of incest, sexual abuse or assault; the blame goes with the perpetrator.

rival wives. Except for this provision, polygamy was not specifically prohibited in the Bible. However, the Bible gave many examples of polygamy resulting in sorrow or sin. See, for example, Genesis 16:1-12; 29:31; 1 Samuel 1:2-7; 1 Kings 11:4. See also Deuteronomy 17:17. Also Titus 1:6 is sometimes translated to read that a church leader must be the husband of one wife.

Don't have sex with a woman during her period. Also translated "don't uncover a woman's nakedness during her period." Some Christians have interpreted this as a moral law applying to believers today, while others have understood it as a ceremonial law relating to ritual purity. Leviticus 20:18 made the penalty for breaking this excommunication from Israel, while Leviticus 15:24 specified a seven-day time of ritual impurity for the man whose wife's period began during their lovemaking. In the first case, the act was deliberate; in the second, it was unintentional.

Deuteronomy 22:23-29

If a man has sex with a virgin engaged to be married to another man, and this happens in town, **put them both to death** by stoning. Kill the woman because she didn't scream for help. Kill the man because he raped the woman, violating a woman promised to another. Make sure this evil act is not tolerated in Israel. But if the same thing happens out in the country, kill only the man. The woman is innocent; she screamed for help, but no one was available to rescue her. If a man rapes a woman who has never been promised to another man, and the act is discovered, the man must pay the girl's father **\$500**. **He must marry her** because he took advantage of her. He may never divorce her.

put them both to death Here again, we have an example of a civil penalty in ancient Israel for the violation of a moral law.

\$500 or 50 shekels of silver. Evidently this was in addition to the dowry or bride price owed to the girl's father.

He must marry her This must be understood within the context of that culture. Because the young woman was robbed of her virginity, her prospects for marriage (and the financial security that went with it) were severely compromised. This was a way for the perpetrator to take financial

responsibility for his actions. However, if the woman's father refused to allow the marriage, the man was still required to pay the bride price. See Exodus 22:16-17.

<p>cannot remarry the first Marriage was to be taken seriously, and marriage partners were not to be passed from person to person.</p> <p>with respect to the first husband is not contained in other major translations, but may be implied by the context.</p>	<p>Deuteronomy 24:1-5</p> <p>In the case of a man who marries a woman and discovers something wrong with her, he can write out divorce papers and send her away. Then she is free to marry another man. But if the second husband also divorces her, she cannot remarry the first. With respect to the first husband, she is unclean. For her to remarry the first would be disgusting to God, and would pollute your promised land with sin.</p> <p>A newly married man may not be inducted into the army or charged with any other duty. He gets a year to stay home and make his wife happy.</p>
<p>religious scholars or Pharisees.</p> <p>trap Jesus They were trying to draw Jesus into a controversy that raged at that time between different religious scholars who held differing views on divorce.</p> <p>hard hearted. Some laws were written as a practical way of managing human behavior in a fallen world, but, in this case, Jesus restored God's original standard. In Malachi 2:16 God says that He hates divorce.</p>	<p>Matthew 19:3-9</p> <p>Some religious scholars tried to trap Jesus by asking, "Does the law teach that a man can divorce his wife for any reason?"</p> <p>Jesus answered, "Check the Bible. In the beginning, God made them male and female. This is why a man leaves his father and mother to become one with his wife. If God joins the two together, then no man should be splitting them apart."</p> <p>"But what about the instructions Moses gave us on divorce?" they asked.</p> <p>Jesus said, "Moses allowed divorce because you were so hard hearted. But that's not God's design. If a man divorces his wife and marries another, he commits adultery unless his first wife was unfaithful to him."</p>
<p>Sexual immorality is condemned throughout the Bible. Abstinence from sexual immorality is mentioned in Acts 15:28-29 as one of the few requirements from the Jewish law that Gentile believers were expected to follow.</p>	<p>Ephesians 5:3</p> <p>Sexual immorality, impurity and greed—these sins should never be found among God's followers.</p>

Discoveries: Steering Clear of Impurity

Sexual immorality, impurity and greed—these sins should never be found among God’s followers. Ephesians 5:3 [Day 104]

How do we steer clear of sexual immorality and impurity? I’ve seen many approaches to this, and most of them have some merit. But the bottom line is this: We must drink in the love of God. Accountability groups, twelve-step programs, great theology, Bible verse memorization, spiritual warfare, spiritual disciplines—these things have their place, but none of them can take the place of the love of God. When we have not received the love of God, we go looking for comfort in the wrong places—in places that will never satisfy. But the longer we bask in the love of God, the less power these temptations have in our lives.

We must allow ourselves to be loved by God. We must open up those hidden places in our hearts and allow the sunshine of God’s love to warm and comfort us. We must throw ourselves with reckless abandon into His arms, knowing that our hands are dirty, but also knowing that He will embrace us and make us clean.

In the Leviticus 18:6-23 passage, a prohibition against child sacrifice was mentioned in the middle of laws governing sexual behavior. Why do you think that was? □

What or who was God seeking to protect through His laws on sexual behavior? □

Why was Jesus so opposed to divorce? What do you think God’s attitude is toward people who have gone through divorce? □

How will drinking in God’s love prevent sexual immorality? □

Your main take away from today’s reading ... □

Day 105: Money and Oppression

<p>different national, ethnic or racial background or also translated, foreigner, alien, or stranger</p>	<p>Exodus 22:21</p> <p>“Don’t mistreat or take advantage of someone with a different national, ethnic or racial background. Keep in mind, you were once an oppressed minority in Egypt.”</p>	<p>Genesis ■ Exodus ■ Leviticus ■ Numbers ■ Deuteronomy Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel ■ 25%</p>
<p>collateral or If he gives you his cloak as collateral, return it by sunset because that’s all he has to cover himself when he sleeps.</p>	<p>Exodus 22:25-27</p> <p>“If you lend money to a poor person, don’t try to make a profit; don’t charge interest. If he pawns something or gives you collateral for the loan, return the property to him if it’s something he needs. If you don’t, and he comes to Me about it, I will listen to his side of the story, because I am compassionate.”</p>	<p>2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther Job Psalms ■ 50% Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah ■ 75%</p>
<p>Create work or when you harvest your crops, leave crops at the edge of your field for the poor to gather so they will have food.</p>	<p>Leviticus 19:9</p> <p>“Create work that will allow the poor and the homeless to provide for their basic necessities.”</p>	<p>Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah ■ Malachi Matthew Mark</p>
<p>delay in paying or Pay your hired workers the same day they do the work.</p>	<p>Leviticus 19:13</p> <p>“Don’t rip someone off. Don’t rob anyone. If you hire someone, don’t delay in paying.”</p>	<p>Luke John Acts Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians 1 Timothy 2 Timothy Titus Philemon</p>
<p>Don’t dishonor my name is implied by the context.</p>	<p>Leviticus 19:35-36</p> <p>“When you buy and sell, use accurate weights and measures. Don’t cheat anyone. I’m the God who set you free from Egyptian slavery; don’t dishonor My name.”</p>	<p>Hebrews James 1 Peter 2 Peter 1 John 2 John 3 John Jude Revelation</p>
<p>One tenth or a tithe</p>	<p>Leviticus 27:30-33</p> <p>One tenth of your income or profit belongs to God.</p>	<p>Revelation</p>
<p>descendants of Levi or Levites</p>	<p>Numbers 18:21</p> <p>“Here’s how the descendants of Levi earn their compensation for taking care of the tent where I meet with My people: One tenth of the farm produce of the Israelis belongs to them.”</p>	<p>Revelation</p>

tent where I meet with My people usually translated the Tabernacle or tent of meeting. Sacrifices were brought to the courtyard of the Tabernacle. Only priests were allowed to enter the Tabernacle, and only the high priest was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place (or Holy of Holies) inside the Tabernacle once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).

<p>Numbers 18:28</p> <p>One tenth of the portion collected for the descendants of Levi goes to the priests.</p>	<p>to the priests literally God's portion for Aaron the priest</p>
<p>Deuteronomy 15:7-8</p> <p>If someone is poor, don't be stingy. Be generous. Lend that person what he or she needs.</p>	<p>someone or your fellow Israeli</p>
<p>Deuteronomy 15:11</p> <p>Someone will always be poor. So open your heart and share with your low human being in need.</p>	<p>fellow human being or fellow Israeli</p>
<p>Deuteronomy 23:15-16</p> <p>Suppose one or more slaves escape and come to you for asylum. Do not return them to their master. Grant them freedom, and do not mistreat them.</p>	<p>Grant them freedom or let them live in whatever town they wish</p>
<p>Malachi 3:8-12</p> <p>Can a person steal from God?</p> <p>It happens all the time.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>“You withhold the offerings I have commanded you to make. That’s why your whole nation is suffering under a curse. Bring the complete offering I have commanded so that the needs of My people are cared for. Here’s My promise to your nation—you can count on this—if you bring the complete offering, I will pour out so much prosperity you won’t have room to contain it. I’ll keep your crops safe from harm.” This is a promise from the God who commands the armies of heaven. Do this, and people everywhere will notice how God takes care of your nation.</p>	<p>pour out so much prosperity. This passage is sometimes taken to mean that if we give 10 percent of our income to God (to the church and/or to the poor), then we will prosper financially. Others take a different view. (This passage in Malachi was written hundreds of years after the earlier passages.)</p>

The tithe is a common and somewhat controversial topic in Christian circles. The first mention of the tithe (or a tenth, 10%) is in Genesis 14:20 (Day 68) when Abram (Abraham) gave a tenth of the plunder he recovered to Melchizedek after the rescue of Lot. In ancient Israel, the tithe was used to provide for the people who did God's work (the priests and Levites) as well as the poor and needy. (See Deuteronomy 14:28-29.) In addition, Israelis were commanded to be generous to the poor. Many Christians believe that they should give 10 percent of their income to God in the form of offerings to the church, to Christian ministries and / or to the poor. Others believe that 10 percent is commanded but additional offerings are encouraged. Others say that the percentage doesn't matter, rather it's giving from a generous heart that matters.

Discoveries: Part of a Family

Bring the complete offering I have commanded. Malachi 3:10 [Day 105]

Years ago, my job involved driving different executives and managers. One day I got talking with a young passenger about his faith. He told me that he didn't want to go to church because he was afraid the church would ask him to give 10 percent of his income to the Lord.

To be honest, I was flabbergasted. Here was someone making two to three times as much money as I was. He was single while I had a wife and, at that time, two children. And he was letting something as small as 10 percent of his income keep him from God. I was amazed!

So my question for you is this: Why does God care? Why does it make any difference to God whether we give or not?

Here's the answer: We're part of a family. By caring for one another in a tangible way, with our money, we demonstrate that God cares for us. We are God's representatives on this earth. How we manage our money is one way we show our world who God really is.

What can you do in your world to stand up for the rights of the oppressed? □

How does it feel to think about giving money to God? □

How much is enough? How much money should you give? □

Where should your money go? When you give money to God, who ends up with it? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Day 106: Moses Talks With God

tent not the Tabernacle that contained the Most Holy Place, but another tent, possibly Moses' own personal tent.

Exodus 33:7-34:16; 34:29-35

Moses pitched a **tent** some distance from the camp where he met with God. If someone wanted to talk to God, that's where they went. When Moses went to the tent, everyone watched from his own campsite. When Moses entered the tent, the column of clouds descended to the entrance of the tent, and God spoke to Moses.

When the people saw this, they would worship from their campsites. God spoke with Moses face to face like one speaks with a friend. After meeting with God, Moses returned to the camp, but his assistant, Joshua, stayed at the tent.

Moses said to God, "You've told me to lead Your people, but I don't know if You or someone else will be accompanying us on the trip. You've said to me that You are pleased with me, so please teach me how You want things done. After all, I'm leading Your people."

God said, "I'll personally go with you."

Moses said, "If You don't go with us, I would rather not go at all. Your presence sets the Israelis apart from every other people and nation."

God said, "I will do what you ask."

Then Moses said, "Please show me Your glory."

God said, "I will display My goodness to you, and I'll tell you about Me. I choose the people that will receive My kindness. But you won't see My **face**. No one can see Me and live."

God put Moses in a cave or opening in the rock. God put His hand over the opening. When God removed His hand, Moses was allowed to see part of God, but not His face.

God told Moses to cut two new stone tablets so God could write the words that were lost when Moses broke the original tablets.

The next day, Moses climbed Mount Sinai with the new stone tablets. God descended in a cloud and spoke with Moses. He described Himself as full of patience and mercy, slow to get angry, filled with love, forgiving sin, but not

Genesis
■ Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy
Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel ■ 25%
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms ■ 50%
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah ■ 75%
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Acts
Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude
Revelation

face God met with Moses face to face, but Moses was not allowed to see God's face. Perhaps Moses was meeting with Jesus who took bodily form. Perhaps Moses saw Father God in something less than His full glory. But it was clear that no one in this life is permitted to see God in His full glory. (See John 1:18, Day 8.)

excusing **those who persist in rebellion**.

Moses bowed in reverence. "Please travel with us," he said to God. "If You are happy with me, please stay with us even though we are stubborn. Please forgive us and claim us as Your own."

God said, "I'm making an **agreement** with you in front of all your people. I will perform miracles never before displayed. Your people will see amazing things. But listen to these instructions. I will drive out the people who currently live in the land of Canaan. Don't make any agreements or treaties with them. Your people are to destroy their sex-and-religion sites and their pagan altars. Don't compromise. If you do, you will fall into the same corruption that contaminated them. Don't intermarry. Don't hang out with them. You are protecting your relationship with Me, and **I care deeply** about that relationship."

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai carrying the stone tablets containing **God's agreement**, he had no idea that his face was glowing like light was shining through him. Aaron and the Israelis were afraid to go near him because of this. But Moses called them over and conveyed what God had told him on the mountain.

When Moses finished talking, he covered his face with a veil. He wore that veil when he was with the Israelis, but took it off when he met with God.

those who persist in rebellion or the guilty

agreement usually translated covenant

I care deeply or I am a jealous God

God's agreement or, most likely, the Ten Commandments

Discoveries: Every Path We Choose

Never mistreat a widow or orphan. If you do, and they cry out to me, I will listen to them, and direct My anger toward you. I will bring your life to an end, leaving your wife a widow, your children fatherless. Exodus 22:22-24 [Day 101]

Here is a warning. Every path we choose, no matter what it is, dead ends in God. There are those who run from God. There are those who ignore God. There are those who mock at God. And there are those who embrace God. All these choices, in the end, leave us face to face with the Almighty. We all have rope, but some of us will hang ourselves with it.

Here is a promise. God has heard your cry. He has seen what has happened to you. Salvation is not just a fuzzy theological concept. It's not just about heaven someday. Your prayers have been heard.

If you met with God the way Moses did, what would you talk about? □

How does God describe Himself in today's passage. What do those characteristics of God look like in your world? What do they feel like in your experience? □

Why was it so important to Moses that God travel with them? □

How do you protect your relationship with God today? □

Your main take away from today's reading ... □

Find the rest of this book at

<http://dwightclough.com/books2/dwight-clough-books/the-easy-bible-volume-four/>