

Bible Survey – Exodus Part 1

EXODUS:

1. Introduction:

- a. The Cain and Abel story “gives defining shape to all our lives.” [John Steinbeck]. If we were left to ourselves, our story would be Cain & Abel. Left to ourselves we are prone to self-interest, self-adoration, self-serving, etc. Left to ourselves we are locked into ourselves.
- b. The Bible says there is another story that transcends the tragedy of the Cain & Abel story and opens our lives up to new horizons of hope and purpose.
 - i. Exodus is God’s paradigm of freedom and redemption... The Passover it is the heart of the Old Testament and the defining moment for Israel from which they took their identity. The Passover was the key element in Israel’s redemption.
 - ii. In the Old Covenant, Exodus is the story of God sending His prophet to rescue His people from their slavery and oppression to Egypt.
 - iii. In the Gospels God’s paradigm of freedom and redemption takes new shape... Jesus sacrifice on the Cross on the Passover is the defining moment for all of humanity.
 - iv. In the New Covenant, the Gospel is the story of the Messiah-Jesus sent as the man-God coming to rescue humanity from their slavery and oppression to sin and death and reestablish direct access with God through the indwelling Spirit.
- c. God reminds His people Israel 125 times in Old Testament that, “I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.”
- d. The covenant making God of the Patriarch’s is now revealed as the covenant keeping God of Israel, where major new components of revelation and redemption are revealed... foreshadowing New Covenant Grace.

2. Significance of the Exodus:

- a. Shaped Israel’s memory
 - i. God directly intervening and fighting for Israel is literally *Jihad*... it is God fighting for man, NOT man fighting for God.
 - ii. Israel’s collective thinking was forever changed by this preeminent saving event, unprecedented before or after in history.
 - iii. This memory enabled Israel to sustain themselves through turmoil and tragedy, knowing that what God had done... He could do again.
- b. Forged the pattern for Israel’s history
 - i. Countless allusions to Moses appear in stories of Gideon, Samuel and David.
 - ii. Elijah was a type of deliverer in the pattern of Moses who rescued Israel in her darkest spiritual hour from the paganism [Baal worship] of Ahab and Jezebel, who themselves became a type of the worst of the worst of humanity.
 - iii. The many parallels between Elijah and Moses are intentional.
 1. Like Moses, Elijah received supernatural provisions of food [1 Kings 17:1, 6].
 2. After a 40-day fast Elijah encountered the living God at Horeb [1 Kings 19:8].

3. At the end of his life Elijah supernaturally crossed the Jordan on dry ground [2 Kings 2:7-14] before he ascended into heaven... at same area where Moses was shown the Promised Land before he died [Deut 34:1].
 4. Ministry continuation from Elijah to Elisha also awakened memories of ministry continuation from Moses to Joshua.
- c. Exodus focused Israel's hope for a future beyond exile.
- i. Metaphors of Exodus became the paradigm for Israel's revival and restoration during the exile.
 - ii. A "New Exodus" was prophesized about [Is 40-66] that would have greater magnitude than the original in the New Covenant... building on the past for a far more glorious future.
- d. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Exodus story.
- i. Moses prophesized that "the Lord your God will raise a prophet like me from among you... listen to him" [Deut 18:15].
 - ii. New Testament writers used Exodus imagery as a vehicle for interpreting and proclaiming God's redemptive acts in Jesus.
 - iii. John employs Exodus themes:
 1. "The Word became flesh and dwelt [tabernacled] among us, and we beheld His glory [reserved only for God] – John 1:14.
 2. John's gospel is shaped around 7 "I Am" statements... reflecting the Name God disclosed to Moses "I Am Who I Am" meaning Self-Existence independent of any other – Ex 3:14.
 3. John's gospel employed miraculous signs reflecting the signs of Moses... demonstrating the greater power and wonder of Jesus, including:

<u>Jesus:</u>	<u>Moses:</u>
a. Water to wine	water to blood
b. Raising of 1 st born [Lazarus]	death of 1 st born
c. Jesus is Passover lamb	use of the Passover lamb
d. At Jesus death – sky turned dark	9 th plague was darkness
- iv. Mark also employed Exodus themes:
1. Chapter 5 Jesus sails into Gentile territory... on the boat He calms the raging storm with a word demonstrating His own divine authority over nature. Moses raised his hand as instructed (Ex 14:21-22) demonstrating God's authority over nature.
 2. On another shore Jesus confronts the demonized man – demons are cast out into pigs and then into the sea. This destruction mirrors Pharaoh's and his men's destruction in the Red Sea. This is what the Jews hoped Messiah would do to the Romans. But instead of defeating the Roman enemy, Jesus defeated the ultimate

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enemy of humanity – Satan and his demonic horde... burying his army in the sea as Moses defeated Pharaoh's chariots.

3. Where Moses parted the sea and walked on dry land... Jesus walked on the water.

- v. These reflections of Moses' acts demonstrated that Jesus was not just the new Moses... He was vastly superior to Moses.
- vi. Jesus can command nature and the spiritual realm... but He will not force Himself on His people. The picture of the mustard seed and leaven in Matthew 13:31-33 is that prolific growth will prevail through the smallest of beginnings... meaning the advancement of the Kingdom of God is certain.
- e. Six 'Life Questions' are answered by the Exodus story – which provide a continuity between Israel-Old Covenant and the Church-New Covenant [1 Cor 10:11]:
 - i. Identity – who are we?
 - 1. Israel – Is “my son... my first born” – Exodus 4:22. Israel's destiny would be as children of God, not slaves of Pharaoh.
 - 2. Jesus – Is “My beloved Son... in You I Am well pleased” – Mark 1:11.
 - 3. Church – “are all sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ” – Galatians 3:26.
 - ii. Reality – what happened to us?
 - 1. Old Testament – Israel were slaves to cruel tyrants against whom they had no hope other than God – 1st was Pharaoh & Egypt; later captivity to Assyrians, Babylonians, & Persians; and finally, under Caesar & Rome.
 - 2. New Testament – Israel and humanity were slaves to Satan & sin and death – Ephesians 2:1-2.
 - iii. Value – what did God do to rescue humanity?
 - 1. 1st Exodus – rescued from a certain death at sea by escape on dry land, becoming a miraculous new creation God's treasured nation – Deuteronomy 4:32-34
 - 2. 2nd Exodus – rescued from Satan, sin & the grave from around the world – a cosmic new creation – Isaiah 49:20-22; 2 Corinthians 5:17.
 - iv. Purpose – where are we going?
 - 1. Israel – was liberated from Egypt so they could meet with and worship God... theirs was a divine destiny... a calling to be God's people as ambassadors of God to the world.
 - 2. Church – was liberated from Satan, sin and death so they could meet with and worship God... theirs was a divine destiny... a calling into intimate relationship with God as ambassadors to the world.
 - v. Fulfillment – what is our function in the world?
 - 1. Israel – a kingdom of priests and a holy nation ... if you obey My voice and keep My covenant – Exodus 19:4-6.

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2. Church – a New covenant... not of the law but of the Spirit... you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession – 1 Peter 2:9.
3. OC was 'if' meaning conditional, NC is 'are' meaning certain – the Cross has secured this gift of Grace forever.

vi. Humility & dependence – why is the journey so hard?

1. It seems that we humans only learn humility and dependence when we have reached the end of our own limits of control... we learn it in the wilderness – Deuteronomy 8:2-3; Matthew 4:3-4.
2. The Old Covenant convicted and condemned law breakers... but gave no ability for transformational godly living.
3. The New Covenant convicts by the Spirit, but when we respond there is no condemnation... and the Spirit provides the power and means for us to live a life that is pleasing to God through Jesus Christ our Lord and the indwelling Spirit.

3. Literary Outline of Exodus:

a. Parallel structure – Waldemar Janzen

i. The 1st Cycle – Anticipation – Moses

1. The salvation of Moses

- a. Israel in Egypt – 1:1-22
- b. One is saved – 2:1-25
[Moses with Jethro]

2. The Commissioning of Moses – Sign of the Burning Bush

- a. God calls Moses – 3:1-4:17
- b. Moses returns and confronts Pharaoh – 4:18-6:1
- c. God reaffirms Moses' call – 6:2-7:7

ii. The 2nd Cycle – Realization – Israel

1. The salvation of Israel

- a. Signs of judgment – 10 plagues – 7:8-11:10
- b. Passover & 1st born – 12:1-13:16
- c. Crossing the sea – 13:17-15:21
- d. Signs of Grace in the wilderness – 12:22-18:27
[Moses with Jethro]

2. The Commissioning of Israel – Sign of Mt Sinai burning

- a. Theophany at Mt Sinai – 19:1-25
- b. Ten Commandments – 20:1-17
- c. The Book of the Covenant – 20:18-23:33
- d. Covenant ceremony – 24:1-18
- e. Instructions for building the Tabernacle – 25:1-31:18
[How God wants to be present with His people]

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- f. Golden Calf worship – 32:1-33:6
[How Israel wants God to be present with them]
- g. Building of Tabernacle – 35:4-40:38
[Israel accepts God's presence on God's terms]
- b. Chiastic Structure of Exodus – 1:1-13:16 – David Dorsey... [review Chiasms and the interpretation of these structural elements of Biblical communication in the AuthenticDiscipleship.org segment on 'Interpreting Scripture – Hermeneutics'].
- A Enslavement & attempted decimation of Israelites in Egypt
 - Pharaoh's plot to kill Israelite male babies to control population
 - New king arose
 - Small total number of Israelites who came down to Egypt – 70 people
- B Moses – an Israelite male child escapes death from Pharaoh – 2:1-10
- C Egyptian strikes an Israelite – Moses strikes down an Egyptian – 2:11-22
- D Call of Moses – standing on Holy ground – 3:1-4:17
 - God makes distinction between Holy and common – the ground Moses stands on
 - Topics: sign, Israel's 3 day journey
- E Moses returns to Egypt – 4:18-31
- F Brief encounter with Pharaoh – 5:1-5
- Central thought: X Commissioning of Moses and Aaron – 5:6-7:7
 - a Promise to deliver by strong hand and mighty acts of judgment
 - b The people doubt Moses
 - a' Promise to deliver by strong hand and mighty acts of judgment
 - b' Moses self-doubts
- F' Brief encounter with Pharaoh – 7:8-13
- E' 1st cycle of plagues – 7:14-8:19
- D' 2nd cycle of plagues – 8:20-9:12
 - God makes distinguishes between His Holy people and common Egyptians – the land on which they stand
 - Topics: sign, Israel's 3 day journey
- C' 3rd cycle of plagues – Egyptians are struck down – 9:13-10:29
 - Warning – God has not yet struck Egyptians
 - Action – Now God will strike – hail strikes down Egyptians, flocks & crops
- B' God will kill Egypt's 1st born males – 11:1-10
- A' Freedom of Israelites from Egyptian slavery and increased population – 12:1-13:16
 - God decimates Egyptian population by killing their 1st born males

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- Pharaoh arises to mourn decimation of Egyptian people
- Large total number of Israelites leaving Egypt – 600,000 men

4. Inter-textual Cohesion of Exodus in Scripture – Note the Summary of the Shape of the Texts:

- a. With the Genesis Sagas of “primeval history narrative & wilderness journey”
 - i. Both creation & flood epics along with Red Sea miracle demonstrate God’s power over creation [sea].
 - ii. Miracles begin with the wind [spirit] moving/blowing over the sea.
 - iii. In both flood & Red Sea stories the ‘wind’ dries the land.
 - iv. In the creation story – God divides the waters ‘between’ above [atmosphere] and below [sea] – in the Red Sea story God divides the waters so that people can walk ‘between’ the waters.
 - v. In both Flood & Red Sea stories God creates ‘dry land’ in the midst of the sea.
 - vi. In both flood & Red Sea stories God uses the waters to destroy His enemies while protecting His chosen people through the same destructive forces.
- b. With the Abraham and Exodus Sagas
 - i. Both migrate from Canaan to Egypt because of famine.
 - ii. Both Sarah and Israel are wrongly detained by Pharaoh.
 - iii. God brings great plagues upon Pharaoh’s house to release His chosen.
 - iv. God breaks Pharaoh’s resolve because of the plagues on Egypt and Pharaoh’s house.
 - v. Pharaoh is exasperated and gives orders for them to ‘Go’ [*lek* – Abraham; *leku* – Moses].
 - vi. The Egyptians enrich both Abraham and Israelites with wealth as they leave Egypt.
- c. Exodus within the Pentateuch
 - i. A ‘central transaction’ has been initiated and completed in Exodus – it is a fundamental change of masters. Where Pharaoh proved a false and abusive master, God emerges as the One True Master of all of Creation, the Universe, and the Spiritual realm. He has rescued Israel from slavery and now reigns in the midst of His loyal people. Where Israel had been building structures for Pharaoh and their false gods, now Israel is building an earthly place of meeting with the Living God.
 - ii. Outline of literary movement in Exodus to Pentateuch:

<u>GENESIS:</u>		<u>EXODUS:</u>		<u>LEV, NUM, DEUT:</u>
Joseph	<=	Israel in Egypt		
Jacob’s sons	<=	12 Tribes	=>	
Gen 1 & 12	<=	People multiply		
God of patriarchs	<=	God of Israel-Yahweh	=>	
Promise to Abraham	<=	Promised land	=>	Num, Deut, Joshua
		Moses	=>	Num, Deut
		Aaron	=>	Lev & onward

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		Joshua, Phinehas, others	=>	Lev & onward
		Wilderness march	=>	Num 10:10ff
		Revelation at Sinai	=>	Lev, Num
		Laws of Covenant	=>	Lev, Num, Deut
Creation – Garden	<=	Tabernacle	=>	Lev, Num, Deut
Fall	<=	Golden Calf	=>	Deut

5. Birth and Salvation of Moses – Exodus 1:-2:

a. Situation in Egypt

- i. Hebrews were not the only Semitic population that posed a threat to the Egyptian rulers. During the 18th to the 16th centuries, ethnic groups [Hyksos] from Canaan had infiltrated Egypt and gradually taken political control.
 1. By 1720 BC the Hyksos were in control of the eastern Nile Delta area and established their capital at Avaris... gradually Semites replaced Egyptians in administrative offices. The Hyksos occupation was a shameful humiliation for the Egyptians and had a profound effect on the Egyptian national identity.
 2. Queen Hatshepsut [1480-1469 BC] referenced the ‘ruination of the country’ in the temple she built at Speos Artimedos – the inscription recalled the ruination of the country caused by ‘Asiatic’ influences.
- ii. The building program inaugurated by Ramses II required an immeasurable amount of bricks – more than 24.5 million for the construction of pyramids at Dahshur].
 1. It is estimated that more than 2,000 bricks a day were required from the conscripted laborers.
 2. An Egyptian historical document referred to these brick makers as being ‘dirtier than vines or pigs from treading mud for bricks. Their clothes were stiff with clay, and his leather belt was going to ruin. He is miserable... exposed to the high wind and weather elements his body ached and his arms are destroyed by his work. He eats the bread of his fingers and washes only once a season. He is simply wretched....’
 3. In addition to making bricks, the Israelites were responsible for seasonal Nile flood clean-up, clearing of the dikes and canals, and maintenance of the irrigation ditches.
- iii. The Egyptians maintained their identity and separation from other nationalities – they were segregationists preferring not to intermarry with foreigners. Israel presented a pressing problem:
 1. Exodus 1:1-7 – the small band favored by a previous Pharaoh has become a multitude that was despised by the current Pharaoh. They were incredibly fertile and prolific in producing offspring.
 2. Exodus 1:8-14 – Pharaoh had a plan ‘A’ to resolve the Jewish problem:

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- a. 1:8-10 – harsh servitude would thwart fertility.
 - b. 1:11 – storage cities needed to be built... interesting that Joseph had originally employed the temple granaries for food storage against the 7-year famine, now his offspring were building new storage areas for their new masters.
 - c. 1:12 – harsh treatment only caused greater fertility!
 - d. 1:13-14 – Israel fell out of favor with the entire population which deepened their servitude and separation.
3. Ex 1:15-22 – Pharaoh came up with plan ‘B’ for the Jewish problem:
- a. 1:15-16 – reduce the population through the use of the mid-wives.
 - b. 1:17-19 – the mid-wives didn’t comply and disobeyed Pharaoh.
 - c. 1:22 – Pharaoh’s vengeful solution is to drown 1st born males – ultimately God would revisit Pharaoh’s judgment on his own people – as the 1st born males were killed miraculously by God’s angel, and Pharaoh’s army was drowned in the Red Sea.
- b. Summary – the greatest monarch of the world’s greatest superpower of the era, could not thwart God’s Will and promise. Interestingly five women are used to accomplish God’s purposes in the first few chapters of Exodus... including Pharaoh’s own daughter. Pharaoh decrees that the first sons of Hebrew women are to be cast into the Nile to die, to reduce the growing internal threat of the Hebrew nation.
- i. Pharaoh’s chosen instrument of destruction [the Nile] was the means for saving Moses... and is how he got his name – Moses means to either to ‘draw out’ as out of the Nile, and ‘water-son’ as son born out of the water. The imagery is that the Nile gave birth to Moses.
 - ii. The daughters are allowed to live, but they purposefully thwart Pharaoh’s plans.
 - iii. Moses’ mother saves her son through faithful providence – instead of drowning her son, she places him in God’s care in a reed bassinette floated out into the waters.
 - iv. A primary member of Pharaoh’s family saves the very person who would later rescue Israel and destroy the ruling dynasty.
 - v. A bold Hebrew girl gives Pharaoh’s daughter advice, and she heeds it!
 - vi. The mother of Moses gets to care for her son and is compensated for it!
 - vii. Moses is educated as a Prince of Egypt in the inner-court of Pharaoh for 40 years. He received the best Egypt had to offer – providing the basis for the leadership skills he would need to lead the Hebrew nation. Moses had a personal wilderness experience in 40 years of shepherding in Midian.
 - viii. Moses name [to draw out] is a prophecy for what God will use him for regarding his people.

6. The Call of Moses and God's Self Revelation – Exodus 3:1-4:17

a. A foreshadowing of Sinai as wondrous sign – a burning bush... led to an amazingly wondrous sign – Theophany [God speaking directly to man].

b. The question of identity:

i. Moses 1st objection... “who am I?”

1. Moses spent 40 years as a prince of Egypt – learning all he would need to know to become a leader of men.
2. Moses spent 40 years as a shepherd in Midian – learning all he would need to know to become a servant of men.
3. Moses would spend 40 years as the prophet-leader of the nation of Israel.
4. God introduces a theme that runs counter to all of humanity... that of the servant leader, which runs throughout Scripture and culminates in Messiah.

ii. God's response... “I will be with you.”

1. God promises that Moses will not be alone in the task assigned to him.
2. The fact that Moses had struck and killed an Egyptian who was beating Hebrews showed that Moses cared for the people he would be used to rescue.
3. God's reassurance that He will be with Moses to protect, support, and encourage him until the task is completed... this is more than mere presence, it is active intervention and help.

iii. Moses 2nd objection... “who are You?”

1. Moses question to God “What is your name?” this is more than a mere formality... Moses is asking about God's identity... specifically God's character revealed behind the name. In other words, Moses is asking for “the reason I should trust you.”
2. In the Ancient Near East [ANE] the ‘name’ of a god was usually a noun as with people, and it had a specific known meaning – Baal meant ‘master’, Shamash meant ‘sun’, Anu meant ‘sky’, Yam meant ‘sea’. The name said something descriptive about the god or person.
3. ‘Nabal’ means fool – 1 Samuel 25:25. ‘Cain’ comes from the word to strike, in context for forging metal... hence a ‘smith.’ ‘Able’ means vapor or fragile due to his short life. ‘Seth’ means restitution, etc.
4. Often people were purposely renamed to indicate a change in their calling – Abram becomes Abraham, Simon becomes Peter, Saul becomes Paul, etc. In Revelation 2:17 we are promised a white rock with a new name on it. These names and name changes are about our identity in God.

iv. God's response – “I AM.”

1. ‘I AM WHO I AM’ uses a verbal stem ‘to be’ which is outside the customary name designations. This indicates that there is something mysterious and other worldly

about this 'God'. The verb indicates a God of action, the mystery indicates that He will not be confined to merely human categories.

2. 'I AM WHO I AM' in Hebrew the verb tense here is present and future... so it equally means 'I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE' [unlike English verb tense being past, present, or future]. The present tense affirms the present acting nature of God, the future tense speaks to God's eternity... the result is a dynamic statement about who God is... eternal and unchanging. Thus, He can be trusted.
3. The name God provides Moses leaves questions to be answered... there is ambiguity and mystery involved... requiring faith on Moses part to accept and to trust. The sign of the Burning Bush provided evidence that this God was for real.

v. 'YHWH' in Scripture:

1. Old Testament – 'YAHWEH' [actually the "Tetragrammaton" of four letters YHWH is used] and also 'Jehovah' for Lord of Hosts... a memorial name in the 1st person indicating relational connection.
2. God would assume other names and titles including:
 - a. Elohim – God as transcendent Being... the Creator of the universe.
 - b. El Elyon – God most high... Ruler of all things.
 - c. El Shaddai – Everlasting from the root word for mountain.
 - d. Adonai – Lord and Father.
 - e. Abba – Daddy... an intimate relational term for Father.

7. The Plagues – Ex 7-11:

- a. Remember that Scripture is not mere history of events in a chronological order, but theology revealed through redemptive history. Scripture is the author's statement about God inspired truth regarding real people in an historical and cultural environment as revealed by the Spirit. Scripture always says something about God we need to know so we can develop a more intimate relationship with Him.
 - i. Egypt was the super-power of its day, and the Pharaoh was the supreme leader on earth who looked to his own pantheon of gods for help and support. Behind the personal drama of a people seeking release, we observe a spiritual drama between the supreme God of the universe and local spirits of the Egyptian religious system headed by Satan.
 - ii. God confronts both the people and spiritual powers with the assertion that He is the true and only God. The plagues are part of the spiritual warfare demonstrating God's power.
 - iii. Pharaoh – was a cruel and ruthless despot who was considered to be divine. The model of servant leadership God established as His standard was exhibited by Moses and King David imperfectly, and perfectly my Messiah-Jesus.
 - iv. Sorcerer-Magicians – were scholarly men trained in magic and the metaphysical black arts. They were highly educated in the temple schools of their false gods where they practiced sorcery and mystical arts. There is a spiritual reality they worked through, but it

- is Satanic and not as God intended and is in opposition to God's rule... this is made obvious by the dueling of the plagues between Moses and the sorcerers – Exodus 7:11-8:7 demonstrated that there was supernatural power at play in opposition to God. But the final plagues starting at Exodus 8:17-19 the magicians had to confess that “the finger of God” is at play, meaning a greater power than their own was evident.
- v. Hebrews – were a contentious group who had enjoyed great favor under Joseph when he was governor of Egypt but had now fallen into disfavor. Egyptian leaders were concerned that they presented an internal threat to their rule and decided to systematically dispirit them.
 - vi. Moses – after 40 years as a prince of Egypt Moses left Egypt afraid for his life and uncertain of who he was. 40 years as a shepherd had turned his thinking inward... he was timid and lacked confidence. God's challenge against the supernatural powers of Egypt was as much to bolster His chosen leader as it was to demonstrate the superiority of His power.
- b. Literary structure – Exodus follows 3 groups of 3 events:
- i. Each series of 3 follows a pattern – Moses confronts Pharaoh in the morning at the river, then Moses later returns to Pharaoh, then Moses uses a symbolic gesture without warning.
 - ii. Plagues 1-3 – blood, frogs, and gnats:
 - 1. Each were elements from the river which was symbolic of life for the Egyptians. The river was also known to be erratic as it would flood and then subside. Their dependence upon their gods was to stabilize their life, and Pharaoh was seen as the human representation of a living god.
 - 2. God clearly differentiates and distinguishes Himself from the Egyptian deities, and similarly between God's servant Moses and Pharaoh's servants the magicians.
 - iii. Plagues 4-6 – flies, livestock, and boils:
 - 1. These are elements from the land, also needed for their life but considered stable and predictable compared to the river. When these stable elements became unstable, the supernatural duel between God and the magicians takes on a new dynamic.
 - 2. This clearly differentiates between the God and the Israelites and Pharaoh and the Egyptians.
 - iv. Plagues 7-9 – hail, locusts, and darkness:
 - 1. These are elements from the air and sky, they were neither river nor land based and obviously were more enigmatic, transitory, and spiritually frightening events. The symbolism of the air and sky introduces the heavens into the duel.
 - 2. God now is clearly differentiated between Himself and everyone else. God is Ruler of all... earthly and heavenly.

c. Creation and the plagues:

- i. It is known now and was likely known then that certain naturally occurring events fit the description of the phenomena described in many of the plague events. Some of these naturally occurring events would include:
 1. An abnormally high river flow level would have washed down sediment upstream that could turn the river red with sediment and fuel an algae bloom that fouled the water and killed fish.
 2. The algae bloom and dead fish could cause the frogs to leave the water, and the disease organism *Bacillus Anthracis* caused the frog's sudden death.
 3. Gnats, midges, mosquitoes, and flies are common to stale water breeding and abundant around decaying critters.
 4. The livestock could have been killed by anthrax caused by the dead frogs.
 5. The boils could have been caused by a skin reaction to fly bites transmitting skin anthrax to people.
 6. Hail and thunderstorms would have destroyed flax and barley, but would have left the wheat and spelt for the locusts that would follow behind the flood waters.
 7. Darkness could be due to heavy fog coupled with dust particulates held down low by an inversion layer.
- ii. While these plague events may have had some underlying natural phenomenon unknown to the people of that era, the confluence of them were both extreme and very unusual in their severity and timing. It is not unlike God to use natural phenomenon for His purposes... He is the Creator and creation must necessarily be obedient to Him. Jesus verbal command calmed the storm at sea, brought about the healing people, and nature's response to His death at the Cross clearly demonstrates Jesus' authority over the natural order. Jesus verbal command over demons and Satan clearly demonstrates His authority over the supernatural order.
- iii. The theological point behind this is the order and severity of these events is clearly extraordinary, where God is demonstrating His authority in essentially de-constructing creation. The God that created heaven and earth, can also destroy or alter His creation as He sees fit. The God who called order to reign over chaos, is also free to let chaos loose. The order in which these things progress declare that God is purposefully acting... this is not a random set of circumstances, but events planned and carefully executed to demonstrate a point... God is supreme and deserves submission and obedience.

8. The Passover in Exodus 12 – the 10th and final plague:

- a. This final plague brings about judgment against Pharaoh and deliverance for the Jews.
 - i. God's supernatural power and authority is clearly demonstrated [Exodus 11:1-6].

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- ii. God's grace is clearly demonstrated in His making the distinction between His chosen people the Jews, and their oppressors the Egyptians [Exodus 11:7]. The Egyptians lose out and God's people prevail.
- b. This plague also introduces a major theme in Scripture – substitutionary atonement.
 - i. God gave clear requirements as to the necessary qualifications of the substitute. This makes sense on the basis of ritual sacrifice in the Ancient Near East... but it takes on an entirely wondrous meaning in light of Messiah-Jesus:
 - 1. A lamb without blemish – Exodus 12:5.
 - 2. No broken bones – Exodus 12:46.
 - 3. Efficacy is in the blood sacrifice – Exodus 12:7, 13.
 - 4. You must apply the blood in faith – Exodus 12:7.
 - 5. You must consume the lamb in a specific ritual form in faith – Exodus 12:3-13.
 - ii. This sacrifice was so important that God used it to initiate a new covenant – it leads inextricably to Messiah-Jesus who is the Passover Lamb personified – 1 Corinthians 5:7
 - 1. A new era for Israel, a new beginning with a new calendar – Exodus 12:2.
 - 2. An annual feast of remembrance called the Passover to be practiced by the nation in perpetuity – Exodus 12:27.
 - 3. The cross takes the place of the door posts where the blood is applied by faith.
 - 4. The 'Lord's Supper' takes the place of the Passover ceremony – a new beginning with a new tradition built upon the past.
 - 5. Old Testament Passover looked back to the miraculous deliverance from Egypt and the slavery and oppression it entailed. It provided a new lease on life with a new hope in a land of promise for God's people.
 - 6. New Testament Lord's Supper looks back on the cross and the miraculous deliverance from slavery to sin and death. It provided a new lease on life with a new Hope in eternity for God's people.

iii. Continuity of the Passover:

<u>Exodus:</u>	<u>Characteristic:</u>	<u>Jesus:</u>
12:3	Lamb	John 1:29; 1 Cor 5:7
12:5	Without blemish	Hebrews 4:15, 7:26
12:46	No bone broken	John 19:36
12:6, 21	Vicarious sacrifice	Matthew 26:28; Heb 9:28
12:6, 21	Blood shed	Hebrews 9:12; 10:10, 14
12:7, 22	Blood applied	Hebrews 9:14; 12:24

9. The song of Moses and the concept of Holy War:

- a. War in the Old Testament is almost always between nations.
- b. War in the New Testament is almost always spiritual between the Kingdom of God [good & holiness], and the kingdom of Satan [wickedness & evil].

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c. Song of Moses – Exodus 15:1-21

- i. Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, “ I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will extol Him. The LORD is a warrior; The LORD is His name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea. The deeps cover them; They went down into the depths like a stone. Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power, Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy. And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You; You send forth Your burning anger, *and* it consumes them as chaff. At the blast of Your nostrils the waters were piled up, The flowing waters stood up like a heap; The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, ‘I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be gratified against them; I will draw out my sword, my hand will destroy them.’ You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; They sank like lead in the mighty waters. Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders? You stretched out Your right hand, The earth swallowed them. In Your loving kindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided *them* to Your holy habitation. The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them; By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; Until Your people pass over, O LORD, Until the people pass over whom You have purchased. You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, The place, O LORD, which You have made for Your dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established. The LORD shall reign forever and ever. For the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them, but the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea.
- ii. **This ‘song’ is poetry... it speaks in terms of images and emotion about the greatness and character of God.**
 1. **In the Ancient Near East when groups went to war, each nation typically had their own patron god that the people trusted and worshiped who they believed would help them prevail in their struggle. These gods were typically tied to a geographical area. These gods were also capricious and fickle, but they could be manipulated with offerings and sorcery. It was reasoned that the group that prevailed in battle must have had the greater god.**
 2. **In contrast, notice the words used to describe God’s Character and Nature:**
 - a. **Highly exalted.**
 - b. **Majestic in Holiness.**
 - c. **Working wonders.**
 - d. **Loving kindness.**

- d. This song introduces the Biblical theme of ‘Holy War’ – which means *God intervening directly in history for His people*. This is totally different from the Muslim concept of Holy War [Jihad] where men are striving for God.
- i. God’s promise to Moses and the Jews is an outflow of grace initiated in the Patriarchal narratives... where under the Old Covenant people operated by faith in dependence and obedience to God. The reality of grace is that it’s a gift... meaning you don’t deserve it, and you can’t earn it. You have the choice to either accept it or reject it... but solely on the terms that God offers it. Thus, there is no negotiation... it’s a take it or leave proposition and you bear the consequences of your choice.
 - ii. The Abrahamic covenant is based upon a blessing promising ‘seed’ [offspring, a people or nation] and land [an inheritance, where abundance and blessings flow]. The source of the promise is God, and it is received by faith in God’s Grace... it is clearly a gift that is not earned.
 - iii. There are instances where Abraham and later the Israelites are instructed to use force to achieve God’s ends... and in these cases, God allows fighting in accomplishing His purposes as in the case of Abraham’s rescuing Lot in Sodom & Gomorrah and Joshua’s subjecting the Canaanites.
 - iv. God’s promise to Abraham’s seed Jacob and his sons was allowed by the wrongful violence of the sons against Joseph, who later secured by Grace a position of authority as governor of Egypt to save his family and open the opportunity for the nation to form. Grace and promise obviously can be convoluted and complicated.
 - v. In the immediate events preceding the plagues and Passover, the seed now firmly established in Egypt is threatened by the new leadership that had forgotten how Joseph saved the nation and served Pharaoh and his people. God promises Grace that involves transplanting the people to a ‘land of milk and honey.’
 - vi. Throughout the Exodus God’s Grace received by faith and necessary human effort ordained by God go hand in hand, with God empowering and providing for the nation.
 - vii. In approaching Canaan, the Israelites were required to completely destroy the Canaanites because of their iniquity... the Israelites were here an instrument of God’s justice. Many years later, the Babylonians would be chosen as the instrument of justice against Israel. In both cases, it is not about the more righteous disposing of the unrighteous... this is clearly not the case especially with the Babylonians. The issue was God had rendered a judgment against a people and employed others to accomplish His will. These are actions and situations where God does not war directly, but indirectly.
 - viii. In circling Jericho, God acts directly in taking down a fortress that was way too strong for Israel to contend against. God required His people to circle the city at a safe distance, but the impregnable walls were knocked down by God. This is a case of active intervention by

- God... and this back and forth between God as Warrior and a warrior people serving His justice against a condemned people continues throughout Scripture.
- e. What does this tension between God as acting agent and passive agent really mean? What is the theological issue behind this tension?
- i. At issue then and now is the necessary preparation and discipling of God's people as agents of change in the world. Also foundational is the necessary dependence by faith in God, instead of upon the people's own strength, wisdom and means.
 - ii. This problem cycles throughout Scripture and remains a major problem for Christians today. When the Israelites enjoyed success and security, they forgot their dependence on God, and suffered the consequences for their error.
 - iii. Whether it was the Israelites who carried the Ark into battle presuming to force God's hand – 'putting God to the test', or the Israelites expecting their Messiah to be a military man to free the nation by military force, then subjugate the Romans and instill the Messianic reign from Jerusalem. God will not permit Himself to be a 'Genie in our bottle' for our use at our discretion.
 - iv. It is important to understand that God is not capricious or unfair, but it is apparent that His ways are not our ways and like Job, we don't see the whole picture. That's why we walk by faith dependent upon grace.
 - v. It is also important to understand that God gave us a brain and abilities and He expects us to use them. It is prudent to lock your door at night, rather than relying on God to keep you safe from intruders. It is diligent to secure the financial means possible to you and protect them from theft by placing them in a vault in a bank, rather than under your pillow and then expect God to bail you out when you are robbed. It is prudent to know where you are going in your various journeys and make preparation for what you will need and encounter, not expecting God to work things out when a problem occurs.
 - vi. Sometimes God will ask you to step out of your comfort zone and do things that seem less that rational, but we must make sure to be listening to the Spirit and being obedient to His calling before you place yourself in harm's way.
 - vii. God is always faithful, and everything is a gift from above, but walking in faith with God will always combine the tension of trusting Him and making prudent preparation. It's almost always both in play at once not one against the other.
 - viii. In the New Covenant of Jesus in the church age [present age included] – political and military powers are still in the hands of the state. However, Spiritual rule is now in the hands of Messiah... who also promises that political and military rule will be unnecessary in the New World Order Jesus will instill at His 2nd coming. In the meantime, we exercise spiritual authority in His name, and serve His mission [Missio Dei] as His ambassadors.

10. The Covenant – Exodus 19:

a. Exodus 19:3-6

- i. Basis of the covenant is “God’s loyal love” [Hessed] – God’s motivation is that He loves the people He chose; Israel’s motivation is to be based on appreciation and love expressed in obedience.
- ii. Purpose of the covenant is to prepare a “treasured possession” [crown jewel, a symbol of God’s wealth]... a kingdom of priests [set apart for the service to God], mediating in the life of the nations and a holy nation [God’s unique people], set apart from earthly ways to mirror God as His ambassadors.

b. Exodus 19:7-9

- i. In the Old Covenant – God’s promise is conditioned by Israel’s promise to remain faithful and true... using the language of husband and wife. However, this was something they were unable to do. When they honored the covenant in obedience they were blessed, when they disobeyed they were cursed. The people accept the terms enthusiastically... though their promise is prone to failure, God tolerates much disobedience and then finally draws a line in the desert.
- ii. In the New Covenant – God’s promises are infinitely better in Jesus... the Beatitudes [Matthew 5:1-12] reveals God’s intent – it is all blessing and no curses. The requirement is to receive Jesus as savior, obey Him as Lord, and walk in the light of the Spirit... and the blessing leads to eternal life with God.

c. Exodus 19:10-25

- i. God is revealed through awe-inspiring phenomena that excites and frightens the people – fire, billows of smoke, earthquake, & thunder. It is a massive display of shock and awe on queue.
- ii. “Fear of the Lord” is profound and reverential respect. These people had never seen or heard anything like this before, and it totally blew their minds.
- iii. “Consecration” is the ritual of preparation to live a new life of holiness and obedience... to fail is certain death.
- iv. Cross reference with Psalms 119:1-8 for old covenant, and Hebrews 10:19-25 for new covenant.

11. The Ten Commandments – Exodus 20:

a. The commandments are introduced by a reminder of Grace – “I brought you out of Egypt”:

- i. It is a reminder of God’s providential Grace. Note the literary rhythm – “I AM” *therefore* “you shall.”
- ii. It is a reminder that because of what God has done in the past, He can be trusted for the future.
- iii. It is a reminder of the greatness of God... you have seen My miracles – remember and be obedient!

b. The commandments are unique yet similar:

- i. The 1st 4 commandments are unique to the Ancient Near East... and speak to the difference of God Almighty YHWH from the demonic gods of other peoples. These are specifically about life with God and form the vertical axis between humanity and God.
- ii. The 2nd group of commandments is similar to other ANE laws. The Code of Hammurabi and Akkadian cuneiform tablets included similar instructions dating from the 17th century BC. These are specifically about human life in community and form the horizontal axis between people.
- iii. The two axis together form the symbol of the Cross – note how this shows up in Jesus' teaching on the Great Commandment:
 1. Vertical Axis – Matthew 22:37-38 – “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.”
 2. Horizontal Axis – Matthew 22:39 – “And the second is like it... you shall love your neighbor as you love yourself.”
 3. Summation – Matthew 22:40 – “All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

c. Details of the 10 Commandments:

- i. 1st commandment – You shall have no other gods before Me – 20:3
 1. This is mono-theism – the declaration that there is only one true God of the universe and worshipping any other was wrong and treasonous.
 2. “Before me” can also be translated “In preference to me.” This is an exclusive relationship similar to monogamy.
 3. There shall be no other worship offered other than to God, who reserves and demands exclusive allegiance.
- ii. 2nd commandment – You shall not make for yourselves any idol – 20:4-6
 1. In the ANE the making of an idol was intended to capture the life or essence of the god. It was believed that if a person could possess the life/essence of the god, they could manipulate that god for one's own ends.
 2. The decree prohibits making images for use in idolatry. However, there is no stated objection to sculpture or art in this decree.
 3. Idols produce a form of instant gratification. Idols were often installed in grand temples that were intentionally awe inspiring, and smaller versions of the idol were often crafted for sale to traveling worshipers so they could take the memory of the event with them [cross reference Acts 19:23-28]. Ironically, this produced a sort of addictive response where people wanted more and more images to take home with them as a memorial shrine in their homes. They would burn incense

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and place grain and flowers before these shrines as a form of worship – buying safety and success for their family.

iii. **3rd commandment – You shall not misuse the name of the Lord [make a vain oath or false promise] – 20:7**

1. **God is Holy... and His name is Holy, therefore:**

- a. **Do not attach God’s name to an empty cause... a profane matter.**
- b. **Do not invoke God’s name to cover a falsehood [lie] or a mistruth [an exaggeration].**
- c. **Do not invoke God’s name to support a matter for your own personal benefit.**

2. **False prophets in the Old Testament and New Testament invoked God’s name for their personal benefit... they claimed visions and messages from God for personal gain. This is a grievous sin for which they would be executed if found out to be false. Surely God will not look favorably on false prophets and false miracle workers.**

3. **There will be people and evil spirits who will lie in the name of the Lord... we must test the spirit and judge those who presume upon God’s name. All personal spiritual insights and revelations [non-normative words from God] should be tried and tested in light of Scripture [normative and authoritative revelation].**

iv. **4th commandment – The Holy Sabbath – 20:7**

1. **The Hebrew word ‘remember’ carries the idea of reliving or actualizing the past through the gift of memory. By remembering who we are in light of God, is to acknowledge and imitate on earth what God has accomplished in heaven.**

2. **Moses provides 2 approaches to this matter:**

- a. **In Exodus – the focus is on creation.**
- b. **In Deuteronomy – the focus is on redemption.**

3. **The point is that our identity is caught up in who God is and what He has done for us in light of redemptive history. Keeping the Sabbath holy is a living means of keeping this memory and identity fresh.**

v. **5th commandment – To honor your father and mother – 20:12**

1. **To honor means “to give dignity, to value an appreciative relationship in deference to others in the communal structure.”**
2. **This commandment is coupled with a promise... “so that your days may be long in the land.”**
3. **We need to remember that the Old Covenant promise is about ‘seed’ or offspring and ‘land’ or inheritance. These coupled together provide an interesting insight to the desired community where relational intimacy God has decreed is the standard,**

- and helps us better understand the unique relationship of intimacy and respect that exists within God as Trinity.
4. The environment of reverence, appreciation, respect, intimacy, promotion, love, care and concern for one another – are all reflections of life within the God-head of Trinity.
 5. This commandment is the hinge point [where the rubber meets the road] between the commands regarding our relationship with God [commands 1-4], and the commands governing society [commands 6-10].
 6. Thus, family life is the centerpiece of God's ordained social order... but it presumes husband-wife health, parent-child health, and family-community health – which precedes and affirms child-parent health, and child-community health. These are all bound together in this command.
- vi. 6th – 10th commandments – this group of commandments serve to help regulate life in a 'morally and ethically fair' as well as 'honest and equitable' social order. Though contemporary societies tend to redefine these in terms of their view of a preferred social order, God's definitions are fixed.
1. You shall not murder – life is precious, each person is created unique and is dear to God. The fact that each individual including the unborn all have a unique DNA and RNA sequence that is hard-wired in every cell within the body, and that we all have a unique retinal and fingerprint scan clearly speaks to God's love for the individual.
 2. You shall not commit adultery – the marriage relationship is holy, it is the glue that holds the social order together and helps to restrain our baser motivations that would otherwise break the exclusive covenant that is marriage.
 3. You shall not steal – the emphasis is to find and accomplish by earning your way by doing what is right, and not utilizing the short-cut of taking what belongs to another. This has a reciprocal in the social classes of wealthy and poor, citizens and sojourners. God's plan is that the wealthy have a responsibility to care for those unable to care for themselves and to help provide for others by providing them with work and a reasonable wage.
 - a. The righteous rich were people of integrity – such as Boaz who took in Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth, the latter ultimately became his with his wife [Ruth 3:1-4:10ff]. These people were spoken well of and were an example of Godliness and Godly favor.
 - b. The Unrighteous were people of base instincts – such as Lamech [Genesis 4:23-24] and Nabal [1 Samuel 25:25-28] who were examples of what not to do.

4. You shall not give false testimony – in a society where it took the word of two witnesses to convict an individual of wrong doing, honesty was of paramount importance and a person's reputation was their most important asset. When the righteous are subverted by the ignoble, and this becomes the standard of conduct, society is in serious trouble.
5. You shall not covet – covet is the word *Hamad* – which means to have a strong inner desire for something.
 - a. It is pining for something much as King David's son Amnon who pined for an incestuous relationship with his sister Tamar. His consummation of his desire ruined both their lives – 2 Samuel 13:1-15].
 - b. The gist of this decree is that desires need to be properly trained and restrained, don't feed your desire by improperly dwelling on something and then giving in to it.
- d. These commandments make an interesting commentary:
 - i. In our modern world, we emphasize our rights and excuse away our responsibilities.
 - ii. In God's society, we have responsibilities and rights that flow out of them.
 - iii. Effective governments emphasize personal responsibilities with accountable rights and privileges.
 - iv. Care for widows and orphans who can't care for themselves and offering a hand up rather than a hand out to the working poor are a monitor of healthy social and governmental leadership.

12. Development of the Covenant Theme:

- a. Outline of the Old Covenant:
 - i. The Law and the Altar – 20:23-26
 - ii. The judgments – 21:1-22:20
 - iii. Moral commandments and duties – 22:21-23:9
 - iv. Sabbatical times and calendar festivals – 23:10-19
- b. Hebrew Law in contrast to Canaanite culture of the time:
 - i. Raised the position of women above the status of sex objects – 22:16-17.
 - ii. Raised the loyalties and relational commitment to God above that of sorcery [manipulating powers through magic-witchcraft rituals] – 22:18.
 - iii. Condemned bestiality – 22:19.
 - iv. Condemned idolatry – 22:20.
 - v. Condemned the mistreatment of the poor, the orphan, the sojourner [alien], the widow and anyone else who is disenfranchised and without an advocate for their rights – 22:21-27.
 - vi. Produced godliness and civility in speech and communication – 22:18.
 - vii. Established responsibilities beyond self-interest – 23:4-5.

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viii. Established love for fairness and ethics above personal gain – 23:68.

c. Hebrew Law was summed up accurately by Jesus – Matthew 22:36-40:

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And He said to him, “ ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ [Deut 6:5]. “This is the great and foremost commandment. “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ [Lev 19:18] “ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

d. Old Covenant [Law] contrasted with New Covenant [Gospel of Jesus]:

i. Continuity between Old Covenant and New Covenant:

1. Basis is the same – God’s Grace and Will played out through redemptive history.

2. Purpose is the same – 1 Peter 2:9-12

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God

3. The character is the same – Holy, righteous, and good – Romans 3:21; 7:16.

4. Both are enacted and validated in life blood – Hebrews 9:16-21.

5. Basic commands are the same – love God and love others – Matthew 22:24ff.

ii. Discontinuity between Old Covenant and New Covenant:

1. The new has better promises – Hebrews 8:6.

2. The new has a better more effective sacrifice – Hebrews 9:16ff.

3. The new has a better provision:

a. The intent of the Law is placed within the heart instead of an external restraint – Jeremiah 31:31ff.

b. God’s Spirit is poured out – Ezekiel 35:24-28; Joel 2:28.

c. When led by the Spirit, one is no longer under Law nor needs a written law.

4. The new has a broader scope – it includes all the nations in equality – Acts 1:8; Isaiah 42:4; Ephesians 3:6.

5. The new is heavenly in origin while the old is earthly – Galatians 4:21ff.

6. The new is not conditional based on man’s obedience, but is unconditional based on God’s faithfulness... there is no ‘if’ in the Beatitudes.