

Clough Deuteronomy Session 16

Deuteronomy 5:1-21: The #1 Public Theophany in Human History & Post-salvation

Fellowship Chapel; 23 Mar 10

In the handout you'll see where we are in the flow of things. We did Deuteronomy 1:1-5, that was that first part, the introduction to God's spokesman; that corresponds in treaty form to the preamble. Again, we're making the analogy between how Deuteronomy is structured and how treaties were made in the ancient world. We are not saying that you have to know all about the treaties to understand the book of Deuteronomy; all we're saying is it's an interesting historical analogy, a similarity of structure. And why I keep talking about that is because in school you will be taught that Deuteronomy is a late generation, in other words, because it's advanced in its theology, in other words it's very developed, that surely that could never have happened in the second millennium, it had to have happened later because of the evolutionary idea that culture is getting better and better. And this analogy is interesting because the first century treaties do not correspond to the Deuteronomy form; it's only the second millennium treaties, that is treaties around 1200, 1000 BC or earlier that correspond to this form. So it shows you that the Deuteronomic form was something going on in that early second millennium.

And so these treaties were defining a relationship between a great king, like Pharaoh, and lesser kings of the smaller tribes. So you have an unequal relationship between a superior and an inferior. And the treaties would be written so that in the preamble there would be an introduction and then there'd be a prologue and the prologue would inevitably have the superior ingratiating himself with the inferior. In other words, the king of tribe X should obey and go along with Pharaoh because Pharaoh was so good to tribe X, Pharaoh did so many good things for tribe X, therefore they owe him one. So that corresponds in your outline from chapter 1:6 to chapter 40:40, that second row on the table. And that we've gone through in all the details and we've seen how that's Moses first exposition, that's his first sermon, and he had... he's trying to have the second generation, the surviving generation, he's motivating them to obey and follow the Lord.

And he does so two ways; he does, as I say, part 1, past gracious actions of Yahweh. In other words, God did this for you, and now He expects you to respond to Him. It's a personal relationship, this is not just a legal thing, it's a personal relationship. And the second thing is that we got into it the last part of that section, is that God, because He is the Lord of history, has a destiny for the nation, and so therefore believers who are part and parcel of that great destiny have a personal sense of destiny. And that second element you will not find in the treaties. That's why I put little (1) parenthesis (2) parenthesis. What I have right there by the (2) parenthesis you will not find in the secular treaties. Anybody know why? Think about that. Why can the first one be present in an Ancient Near East treaty but the second never is that way? Of course, the answer is because the great king, Pharaoh or whoever, could not control and guarantee the future. It's very simple.

See, here's where the theology of the Bible comes in. There is no guarantee. In the ancient pagan world they believed in gods and goddesses

and the problem was that it was a counsel of many gods and many goddesses, and at any given point in human history, one of those gods or one of those goddesses would be in the ascendancy, would hold the checkbook, so to speak, would hold the power. But you could not guarantee that next Tuesday afternoon that god or goddess would be overthrown with one of the other gods or goddesses. See, that's the dilemma of an unbeliever. The problem is that you don't have a personal purpose to history and the problem is if you don't have a personal purpose to history then your life just doesn't count, frankly. And people don't think through that, that your life cannot have purpose if the whole doesn't have a purpose. So now we're coming... last time we covered Deuteronomy 4:41-49 in which that was an editorial comment.

So now let's turn to Deuteronomy 5 and this is the beginning of a big, big section, but really the whole simple section of the book goes from chapter 5, as I point out on the chart, from 5:1 all the way to 26:19. So this is the detailed stipulations. Now the importance of this section is that here is outlined in excruciating detail what God expected of the believers in the nation, or what He expected of the whole nation. And here's where we get insights that you can't get anywhere else. In fact, it's this section that speaks both to the inside, or the interior of us, the heart, and the exterior, the life, the life outside, the social details of life. And that's why the next row on the outline is Deuteronomy 5:1-11:32 in which I've entitled loving Yahweh with all the heart, because the emphasis in chapter 5 through chapter 11 is the mental attitude, and the very fact that Moses spends half of this entire book dealing with mental attitude tells you something. See, Moses lived through forty years of watching a people who had seen God deliver them from Egypt, who had heard God speak from Mount Sinai, and they failed. They failed in their mental attitude, they failed in their heart. Something went wrong with that first generation. So Moses doesn't want to repeat that, and so this is why he spends fifty percent of this book addressing what goes on in the heart.

And this is an immediate lesson for us. Law, external law, cannot hold a society together. If a society cannot be unified in the heart, it can't be unified. And where you have a fragmented society you always have a totalitarian imposition of order that compels unity and compels order by force because there is no order inside the heart.

So now I want to go to Deuteronomy 5:1-33, which this is the chapter 5 section, we're going to get at least halfway through that tonight, and in this we're going to deal with the Mount Sinai event itself and its ramifications. Now before we do that, again, following in your handout, I deal with an issue of what love means. And I'm trying to avoid something here. The word "love" today has so many trivial connotations and so many unbiblical motifs that we read l-o-v-e in the text and we're in danger of not grabbing it; it's not registering in our heads and our hearts what it means to love Yahweh. Even in evangelical circles the idea of loving God is interpreted in purely an emotional way.

That's not the force of this word and to prove it to you, if you look in your outline here's a quote from a secular treaty that uses that word "love" in the context of the second millennium for this kind of a document. Rib-Addu, who was a lesser king writes to Pharaoh and in the course of his communications to Pharaoh this is a direct quote translated

from that document: "to love Pharaoh is to serve him and to remain faithful to the status of vassal." That's how love is meant to be interpreted in this context; "to love Pharaoh is to serve him," see, there's a submission, there's a personal relationship but it's a superior/inferior type relationship; it's the relationship of an inferior to the superior, and the love here isn't a romantic love at all; the lover here is what we would translate, I think the nearest word in our contemporary language or dictionaries today would be loyalty, I'll be loyal to, or I will pledge allegiance to; that's the thrust of this word.

Now to prove that it's not just the secular people that are saying this I'm going to go into the New Testament in a moment but on your sheets I have in italics the missing element, and here's where... remember, we have this idea that what lacks in the secular unbelieving treaties, and that is a sense of destiny, and the reason is that a sure destiny was impossible on a pagan basis. So Moses, in Deuteronomy 4:1-4 he has gone through those two phases of motivation, past actions and future. Think about communion service. Every communion service we read through or discuss 1 Corinthians 11, or the Matthew passage where Jesus says this, and what two things is he talking about, "Do this in remembrance of Me." So in our communion we're remembering back, but then also in the communion service there's that little phrase, I will not drink of the wine until I come again, that's the future destiny. So even in the communion service you have these two parts, looking past a memory of the historical event but looking forward to something that's sure and certain in history.

Now I've listed there some uses of the word "love" in the New Testament where Jesus is doing the speaking as the superior to us who are the inferiors. And you'll see He uses the word exactly the same way. We're talking here, a time of 1500 years, 15 centuries have come and gone and yet this word has retained that nuance. So we have these Johannine examples: "If you love Me, keep My commandments," [John 14:15] "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and manifest Myself to him," [John 14:21] So the intimacy is predicated upon loyalty first. "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and my Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words...." [John 14:23]

See, the loyalty is expressed in obedience to the desires of the superior. "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love..." [John 15:10]. And then in 1 John we read: "By this we know that we [have come to] know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him," [1 John 2:3-4]. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him," [1 John 2:15]. That last reference in 1 John 2:15 is a great example to lock in the meaning of l-o-v-e because obviously when he says "do not love the world or the things of the world," you'd never interpret that in a romantic way. Clearly that's one of allegiance, clearly that's one of priority. So the first big idea heading into Deuteronomy 5 is understanding that the love as it's going to be used from now on through this section is talking about the loyalty, or faithful service to, sort of thing.

Then the second big idea is that we'll deal with this again and again because there's a lot of discussion going on about the role of the law in the church age and so on, but I want to introduce the concepts of law and grace tonight, and so first let's deal with the word "law," Torah, or the various other synonyms for it. In the Old Testament "law" meant verbal revelation of God's will. Let's think about that as the definition of law to keep us from getting a little screwy here-verbal revelation of God's will. It also exists in the New Testament under the law of Christ. The New Testament has law in it in that sense, we'll have to deal with what it doesn't have in another sense in a moment. But if you define law just to be the verbal revelation of God's will, obviously it's in the Old and the New Testament. The difference, however, is that in the Old Testament law is a national thing, it's centered on the nation Israel. The law of Christ in the New Testament is centered on individual believers transculturally, in many different cultures, and that's why the New Testament doesn't address how to dig latrines outside the camp, because it's different in each different country. But in the Old Testament it's anchored to one nation.

Now the law in the New Testament, now we've got a problem because the word l-a-w is used several ways, not because the Holy Spirit is confused, it's because by Jesus time the idea of law had been twisted, so when we read the New Testament law and grace are contrasted. But the contrast is between how the Old Testament law does not apply to the church and it's also because of the way that law was conceived. So let's look at the three points under that. Mount Sinai law was blinding and scary overwhelming holiness of God. When God spoke from Mount Sinai it was very clear who was holy here and who wasn't. Just the idea of God's presence coming in creates a reaction. So the Mount Sinai law spoke to the heart, it wasn't just external, it cut to the quick. What happened by the Pharisees, they distorted the law, trivializing it to externals and that's why there had to be a second Mount Sinai. Isn't it striking that when Jesus straightens out the law He does so from a mountain; ever think about that? The sermon on the Mount. The sermon on the Mount is actually the second sermon on the second mount, Mount Sinai was the first sermon on a mount, and it's the second sermon on the mount that straightens out the Pharisaic distortion of the first sermon on the first mount. And that's why Jesus, you remember, in the Sermon... it's very obvious, He drills deeply down into the heart.

Now the Pauline correction, Paul in his epistles took note of this, after all, he had been a Pharisee himself, and so Romans 3:19-20 give you the Pauline emphasis, the Holy Spirit speaking through Paul that he says here's what the law should have done. "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." So it wasn't just to give to Israel, the idea was that the whole world was to hear of Israel and become guilty because of the high standards that they would see in this ancient nation Israel. "Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." So law was a revelation of God's will and God's character that in a fallen world produces a reaction-yikes, what am I going to do about this. That's the reaction to the will of God.

Now grace; there was grace in the Old Testament, and that was seen in how God condescended to enter into covenants and to give deliverance and blessings to Israel. Did God have to do that? No, God didn't have to do that, let the world go to hell; after all, you know, He had revealed Himself, He had a great flood, He destroyed the old civilization, He had the new civilization start, and it wasn't three generations and the whole civilization of the earth was screwed up again. And he could have let it go but He didn't; He intervened. So that itself is an act of grace. The very fact that God intervened in Israel is an act of grace. And isn't it striking that it's that very intrusion into history that people so resent. When we say what, only Israel has truth, no one else has truth, why, that's pretty exclusive, why are you so dogmatic you Christians? Why don't you allow the other religions have a choice? Because the other religions emanate from an uninterrupted culture; the other religions emanate from a culture that's sliding downhill because of the fall, because of corruption, because of perversion; Romans 1:18 and following.

But it was only one culture that God spoke to and He handed the rest off. That's why in Deuteronomy 4 we read I've given the nations to... go ahead, worship the stars, you can do that, but for My nation you won't worship the stars, you're going to worship Me and I'm going to show you how to do it. So we have this historical intervention and it's extremely offensive, particularly in our day, that we have an exclusivistic claim on truth. You'll run into this all the time if you speak at all about Christ, the way, the truth and the life, and here's the thing you want to notice, you can try to help somebody that reacts that way when you talk, try to show them that their objection against "the way, the truth and the life, no man comes unto the Father but by Me," that John 14:6 type thing, their objection to that begs the question because their objection is founded on the idea that they have in their heads that all religion comes out of man's heart. That's the premise in their criticism; see, they have a hidden premise there. The premise is that all religions could be true because they're man created. But see, that begs the question, doesn't it, because the point is that the Bible denies that by saying that God initiated this through revelation. So the objection against exclusivism is nothing more than saying there's no revelation. And that's exactly the whole point. So perhaps you can help people think through that if you run into it.

Also, grace in the Old Testament was shown by the procedures for cleansing from sin through authorized substitutionary rituals. God allowed a priesthood, He created rules about cleansing; the priest had to do this, the priest had to do that, you had to go three times to Jerusalem during the year, you had to sacrifice and so forth and so on. Now we view that from our vantage point as a lot of religious detail but that's because we're reading our situation back into the Old Testament, so let's not do that; let's think about an Old Testament saint. The Holy Spirit doesn't indwell him like He does us. He doesn't have the completed canon of Scripture. He doesn't know anything about Jesus, he hasn't seen the cross. All he has seen is the holy demands of Jehovah. And he's vaguely aware that Jehovah does love the nation, but the only way he can reconcile it is by blood sacrifices because that's the only thing that salves his conscience; somehow he knows that as gruesome as a blood sacrifice is it's somehow, in some sense appeasing the God who judges him.

And this is why primitive societies, prior to the Christian faith going out into the world, had blood sacrifices, some gory, the Mayans had human sacrifice. Blood sacrifice is very common in world history and it comes about because of guilt, it comes about because of a sense of sin. Misinterpreted, perverted, yes, but the blood sacrifices weren't limited just to Israel; we don't know how God worked in the hearts of ... the Scriptures don't really tell us what was going on out in the Gentile spheres, but the Gentiles had blood sacrifices all over the place.

But in Israel it was very clear that those blood sacrifices were substitutionary, there was an interpretation that somehow that lamb, that oxen, if you did that you were cleansed but cleansed only temporarily. You had to keep doing it. See, that's foreign to the way we think because we know it was a once and for all thing. So when you read the Old Testament you've got to kind of do a translation in your head. Don't try to come to the Old Testament as though you're a New Testament believer; you've got to imagine what life was like under the old dispensation.

Now the idea of redemption on an unbelieving basis is basically one generating merit, and it comes out of Eden. What did Adam and Eve do after they sinned? What were they trying to do to cover up? Clothes. Now it's interesting, the first pair of clothes made a theological statement. And it's interesting forever after that, what is the motif of righteousness? The white garment. And so imputed righteousness, clothing has a powerful analogy to theology. Clothing is a picture of righteousness. And it's interesting that in one sense unbelief rejects that and wants to try to produce some merit in order to qualify.

Here, for example, in March New York Times, op-ed of March 10, 2010, Al Gore says, at the end of it, he's trying to do an apology for global warming and he makes this stunning statement at the end of his op-ed. Listen carefully. "From the standpoint of governments," right away, listen to what he said, "From the standpoint of governments what is at stake is our ability to use the rule of law as an instrument of human redemption." Now this man got Christian vocabulary because he attended Southern Baptist churches in his youth. Evidently he listened with one ear because his theology is totally anti-biblical; law never redeemed. Law was not given to Israel to redeem Israel. Now Mr. Gore, where are you getting this idea. I'll read it again and then I'll decode it. He says, "From the standpoint of governments what is at stake is our ability to use the rule of law as an instrument of human redemption." Translated, what it means is to use the rule of law as an instrument of totalitarian rule. And he identifies totalitarian rule by the elite, namely himself and his colleagues, as redemption of society. So here you have a profound, a PROFOUND anti-Christian statement, that here we have man, the elite, the oligarchy, deciding that not only shall they lead society but their leading of society is an act of redemption. This is the spirit of antichrist.

Grace in the New Testament context, of course, is a once and for all sacrifice of Christ, it provides a new human spirit, a regenerate spirit, Christ's life in us, eternal life, the indwelling Holy Spirit for empowerment, these are the things of grace. These are assets, I guess sometimes we don't appreciate the fact that other believers, whom we will meet in heaven some day, it will be interesting to sit down and talk to an

Old Testament saint. I'm sure when that moment will come in our lives they will be quite envious of what we had that they did not have, and we'll be envious of them because they saw the miracles and they talked to Moses and they saw Elijah. But they'll turn around and say yeah, but we didn't have this, this, this and this, you guys did. By the way, what did you do with it? Well.... We don't want to be like that.

All right, let's go to Deuteronomy 5:1, now this is the beginning of this long, long exposition, the second exposition. Now a preliminary observation here. This goes on, from chapter 5 through 26, now if you want to get an idea of how long these people had to listen to Moses, take a stop watch and read slowly from chapter 5 all the way to 26 and you'll quickly understand that this is not a sermonette for Christian-ettes; this is a long exposition and he expected the people to have the concentration capability of staying with it. Of course they didn't have texting, cell phones, and other things to distract them, but nevertheless they had to really pay attention to this thing. I mean, the average person today would phase out by chapter 11. And this is why seminaries, of course, teach 20 minute sermonettes, the pastors can't teach 21 minutes because everybody goes to sleep. But in the Old Testament people had a power of concentration.

So "Moses called all Israel, and said to them: 'Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and you may be careful to observe them.'" I want to unpack that first verse a little bit. Notice the term "statutes and judgments." Now there's three things that you need to understand here. There's two nouns, "statutes and judgments," those do not mean the Ten Commandments. The statutes and judgments are detail things. We'll get into those in chapters 12 through 26. The Ten Words, the Ten Devarim, these words are distinctly different from the statutes and judgments, and let me show you some nuances here.

Hold the place, turn back to Leviticus 24; this apparently tells us how the statutes and judgments arose because God didn't directly reveal all these things at one fell swoop, like he did the Ten Words. But if you turn back to Leviticus 24:10, an incident happened. Now watch the reaction of Moses and the elders to this incident. Remember, by this time they already have heard the Ten Words, so in Leviticus 24:10, "Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp. [11] And the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD and cursed; and so they brought him to Moses. (His mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan."

See that little parenthesis, by the way; notice those, how Moses puts those in the text. Why do you suppose the Holy Spirit chose to put this woman's name in the text, here we are thousands of years later, what relevance is that? I think the relevance is it was a real person, it was a real incident, this is not a Bible story; this is a record of an actual historic incident that happened. So, "His mother's name was Shelomith ... [12] They put him in custody that the mind of the LORD might be shown to them." See what happened, they put him in jail; this is one of the rare, rare cases where you'll see a confinement in the Bible; it's remarkable,

there's not many references to jail in the whole Bible. So "they put him in custody, that the mind of the LORD might be shown to them." So they turned around and they sought the Lord's will in this case.

Then [13] "the LORD spoke to Moses, saying," so here we have the development through a case law, through an incident that happened. So God is saying okay, now here's what you do in this situation to be compatible with me; you've heard My Ten Words, now here's the application of some of those Ten Words. [14] "Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him. [15] Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. [16] And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall surely stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death."

Obviously there's a verdict in this case and then that became a statute and judgment. That's how the statutes and judgments were eventually built up. It wasn't Moses speculating, it was as they came across cases they sought the Lord's will, and then the Lord gave them, well here's what you do if this happens, here's what you do if that happens. And that's why when you get into the statutes and judgments you have all these details but these details had to follow because in real life you have to apply the Word, you have to know, well, what do I do now. We won't have time but 1 Kings 6:12 is a good example to show the difference between a statute and a judgment. God tells Solomon walk in the statutes, enforce the judgments, because the judgments are the case law.

Okay, now what are the big verbs here, at the clause in verse 1, the purpose clause, I want you to hear for the purpose [5:1] "that you may," one, "that you may learn them," you have to learn the commandments before you can obey them, so that, right away, that requires maturity, that requires some growth, that requires exposure to the Word of God, that requires teaching; you have to learn them. And then it says, "and be careful to do," or "to observe them." So there's two verbs here; verb number one is learn, verb number two is be careful, that means pay attention to, that means the ability to focus on the part of the Word of God that applies to the situation. So you have to know the Word well enough to concentrate and it also means, "be careful" means it takes an effort, it doesn't come automatically, you can't do this while you're sleeping, this has to be an effort. And it says I want you to pay attention to them so that you can do them, or carry them out. And we'll get into one way of doing that with a kind of a framework matching procedure.

The idea here is everybody, notice verse 1 is addressed to "all Israel," so this means not just an elite, it means to all people, it means to the ordinary humble man and woman and child, not just the Levites, not just the elders, but all Israel had to know this. You see what we have here? We have one of the earliest statements of education in history. And that is the purpose of education in this book? The idea that the peasant, that the (quote) "uneducated" farmer, would have to sit here and learn the law. Why is that? Because God was giving them a liberty and with liberty comes responsibility, and it was given to everyone; everyone had access to this;

it wasn't some little sneaky deal that the elite will tell you, you peon, the elite will tell you what you are to do because the elite knows more than you do. Not here! So this is why I keep unpacking these verses, you've got to pay attention to the text, particularly in our time, we've got so many things going on in our society around us we need to look at the details here.

Now verse 2, "The LORD our God made a contract," remember, a covenant can be a contract, it's the same word, berith, "a contract with us in Horeb," and by now you know that that's one of the unique features of the nation Israel, no other nation in world history had a contract with God, only one. And the second thing you always want to remember about Israel, no other nation had a chain of prophets over two thousand years that had a consistent message. You will never find that anywhere else. So all these people yak-yakking about comparative religion and giving everybody a break don't know their facts; there's a reason why this is the truth.

Now verse 3, "The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but He made it with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive." The emphasis, then, is that something new has happened and with this we need to go forward to a slide; what we have is an act in history that is momentous, unprecedented, and what we need to remember in Scripture, and I always teach it with a framework approach with these events, and I think this is the way we need to think through the Scriptures, because if you think in terms of an event, some act of God, with the doctrine that that act reveals, it protects you against the idea that religion is a compartment over here, like the post-modernist is teaching.

This protects you when you hear a teacher in the classroom take some loosey-goosey attitude that in history we don't really know, or you're studying Roman history and Julius Caesar is the great persona of that era and your whole curriculum hangs on the Roman emperors. Baloney, the greatest person in the Roman Empire was the Lord Jesus Christ and any historian and any history teacher that doesn't teach that is teaching false history. Jesus was more important than Julius Caesar; Jesus was more important than Caesar Augustus because He had an impact that outlasted the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire collapsed but the Church continued. And see, we are not allowed to say this in the classroom, I mean, it's bad enough if you mention the word "God" but don't ever mention the word "Jesus Christ" in the classroom, the antichrists will come crawling out of the woodwork in the next five minutes. So what we are saying is that any history course that doesn't have these events in it isn't a history course, it's just an unbeliever's revised curriculum trying to mask and hide divine revelation.

So we go through this and what we're doing tonight is we're saying look, there's the event at Mount Sinai; now we learn some things from that because associated with that event over on the right side of the diagram is the doctrine of revelation, inspiration and canon. Those are the ideas that that event reveals. So whenever we are talking about the Bible being revelation this is why you always hear me say go back to Mount Sinai, there's the picture of what revelation looks like. And you can ask the person, like the guy I quoted back two lessons ago, you know, he said well, there aren't any truths of revelation, there's only truths about revelation. That was Temple's quote and you have it, I think in session

14. The key question to ask is this, if you had a video camera and you were sitting down at Mount Sinai, what would you have recorded? That's a trick question because that will expose however that person is thinking about revelation. There's only one correct answer to the question. If you had a video camera you'd see exactly what the Bible says; you would have seen fire on Sinai, you would have heard a voice coming out, in the Hebrew language, speaking the Ten Commandments. If that isn't what you think a video camera would have recorded you are screwed up, you do not understand the doctrine of revelation; you have an unbiblical view, a false view of what revelation is.

So this is why these events are so important, they are anchors for you. Not only are they anchors for you but they are triggers for your imagination. When you're struggling with the trials and crises of life you've got to have something powerful on the inside and one of the things God has given us all is the power of imagination. And if you can go back and you could think of Mount Sinai to calm yourself down and think of what you would be, put yourself back centuries and think of yourself standing there before Sinai and hearing the voice of God. Now I think that's calming, that gives you strength, that gives you inner power, because all of a sudden you're not hearing a political leader, you're not hearing a human being, you're hearing about God talking to you. And He's talking to a million other people at the same time. What a God that does that! See what it does, it stabilizes you mentally so now you're equipped to handle and move out and understand revelation.

So we want to, because this verse that we've just dealt with, this verse is speaking about the Lord did not make a contract with our fathers, but He made it with us. So let's look at this doctrine, the doctrine of dispensations. Now this is a word that's a curse word among some evangelicals. I mean, they get hypertension over this word and it's because they don't understand it and because a lot of the people who claim to be dispensationalists don't understand it either. So let's straighten out this word because I'm going to use it and I'm sure people coming out of Reformed tradition and so forth are going to get upset because they think this is heresy, that this is teaching multiple ways of salvation, that God's gospel has changed over the centuries and how can you be a Christian and believe that sort of thing? Let's go through this.

The basis of salvation has been constant through all time; it has never been different. The Old Testament saints were saved in anticipation of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. So as far as anyone getting to heaven it has always been the finished work of the Lord Jesus, so it's not true that dispensationalism teaches many ways to salvation. Anybody that tells you that has never read Dr. Ryrie or any of the dispensational theologians. Second, the means of appropriation, the means of appropriating salvation have been constant with time, faith and faith alone. Abraham, when Paul goes to develop the doctrine of justification by faith who does he pick? The Old Testament guy, Abraham. And how was Abraham saved? By works or by faith? By faith. So anyone down through history has always appropriated salvation by faith.

Now let's come down here [third], the content of the salvation message that has changed. They didn't know about the cross of Christ in the Old Testament. As history moves forward there are more details revealed and

so now we have changes and it enlarges going forward in history. The content of the revelation of the salvation message increases with time. During the Tribulation you're going to have angels preaching the gospel of the Kingdom. What are they going to be saying? I don't know what they are going to be saying but it's going to be more information for the people living on earth during the Tribulation. What do you suppose is going to be the message of salvation during the Millennial Kingdom. People can go to Jerusalem and see Jesus and hear it directly; what are they going to hear. We don't know that, but it will be some content centering on the Son of God. [Fourth] The will of God in sanctification, that changes and enlarges going forward. We don't get knocked out of fellowship because we don't go to Jerusalem three times a year. The will of God in the Old Testament was different.

Now going back to this verse where it says God "did not make a contract with our fathers," he's talking about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So there was a dispensation, how God worked, how He administered His plan during the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is different than how He's administrating His plan in the days of Moses. That's all that verse is saying, something changed because of the progress of revelation.

Now it says in verse 4, "The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire." And we already went through that in chapter 4 and so on, but I want to mention, so we are clear, clear about these doctrines, it's on the outline, the five points in the doctrine of revelation. [1] It is verbal, these are features that the Bible says consists of revelation. It is verbal, meaning that there are words spoken, there is information flowing from God's mind to our mind and a good reference to that is Deuteronomy 30 because in Deuteronomy 30 we have that revelation, this passage, revelation is not foreign, it's not over across the sea where you can't get it, it's accessible. Verbal revelation means information is transferred from God's mind to our mind, not an aura, not a mystical feeling, though that may accompany it, but it's verbal.

Another thing about revelation it is personal, meaning that it includes personal interaction between God and man, Psalm 95, If you hear Me don't rebel against Me. So if God speaks to me and He's a person and I'm a person, then I will respond to Him, positively or negatively. So revelation always precipitates a response, and you'll see this coming up in the text.

Third, revelation is historical, that means it's intermittent so it depends upon historical memory, Exodus 12 is the Passover, 1 Corinthians 11 is communion. In other words, revelation isn't always constant with time. There are bursts of revelation in history and then God's quite for centuries, and then there's some more bursts, and then He's quiet, and then there's another burst. During the Maccabean Revolt, if you read 1 and 2 Maccabees, they're in the middle of a revolt and they don't know what to do with this altar thing and the text in 1 and 2 Maccabees says there's no prophet of God so we'll set this aside until one comes to tell us what to do. They knew when a prophet was speaking and when there was no prophets available. We don't know how they knew that but somehow they knew it.

Then revelation is comprehensive, meaning it has implications that span all of life, Deuteronomy 12-26, we'll see that. When God speaks He

doesn't speak to a little religious compartment; He speaks to history, to science, to every area of endeavor. That is why a secular education is child abuse because it cuts the Word of God away from every single subject when God's Word is comprehensive.

Five, revelation is prophetic, there's a line of self-consistent prophets with a horizon to the end of history, 1 Peter, talking about the Old and New Testament, and Hebrews, spoke in many ways, in last days by His Son. Those are the elements of what we mean when we talk about revelation. The intellectual ramifications of this is extremely powerful. It basically undermines the entire idea of the Enlightenment, the whole idea of the age of Enlightenment with the post-modern... all of that is undermined by this, this content.

Then we say God spoke "in the midst of the fire." Then in verse 5 what does Moses say? Remember we said revelation is personal; God can't speak without causing a reaction. And so we have, then, "I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid...." "...you were afraid," I would dare say all of us would be, judging from Isaiah and his reaction when he saw the glory of God; John, the apostle, when he sees the risen, ascended Lord Jesus Christ, "for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain."

Now we're going to, in the remaining time tonight, we're going to look at the structure of the Decalogue and I have this broken down, we can go to the next slide, I have this broken down in two parts. On the left side of the chart and the right side of the chart. Let me explain; we're going to get into some of the details and commands next time, what we're looking at is structure now, okay. So on the right side of the chart, that's the structure of what the Ten Commandments are saying, each of the ten, commandments presupposes that the people that are listening already know. We don't normally think of that but, for example, God says, "thou shalt not commit adultery," that presupposes they know marriage and what adultery means; they have some idea of the whole situation of marriage. That's what we mean.

So on the right side we have all these commandments, and I notice if you look on your handout you'll see N, a capital N with asterisks, asterisks, that capital N with an asterisks, asterisks, designates commandments that in Jewish tradition were given to Noah. They have what they called the Noahide tradition that at Noah's time people knew this. Now there's some they didn't, you'll notice that at Noah's time people knew these. Now there's some they didn't, you'll notice that all the Ten Commandments do not have N asterisks asterisks after them, but that's the Jewish tradition.

Now on the left side, that is general God-consciousness that we infer from Romans 1 and other passages, and just a presuppositions of the commandments. So let's go down the first row. Number 1, the first commandment, [Deuteronomy 5:6] "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. [7] You shall have no other gods before Me." So the knowledge of God in all men including His providential working, men know that, there are no atheists. There are people who have perverted their heart, hardened their conscience so they could pass a lie detector test because they've convinced themselves they

don't believe in God, but I guarantee you, when they stand before the throne of God, they'll know God's there. So number 1 presupposes a knowledge of God and that is benefits incurs our obligation.

The second commandment presupposes there exists truth about His character that can be perverted and that means it presupposes an awareness of God's character enough to experience discomfort and motivation to pervert it. Adam and Eve had that. Then the third row, the idea that you can take the Lord's name in vain, it presupposes that language relates to reality; if language doesn't relate to reality you can't take the Lord's name in vain. So it presupposes a whole view of language.

Now we come to the fourth commandment about the Sabbath, and it doesn't presuppose anything, it's an odd commandment because it is a command that apparently wasn't given to Noah, it's unique to Israel, and interestingly, is never commanded in the New Testament. Of all the Ten Commandments nine of them are repeated in the New Testament, except this one. It's a sign commandment which we'll have to get into and explain later.

Number five presupposes that there's an inclination toward procreation and family because obviously the family is mentioned here as a unit in society. Then number 6 is that "thou shalt not kill," no one may take innocent human life; that presupposes the value of human life. That one is known in the Noahide tradition, also the next one, number 7, presupposes monogamous marriage, marriage is valued over all other erotic relationships, that this was known and therefore when God speaks to it's clear in meaning. The next one, "thou shalt not steal," presupposes personal property. We're going to have a ball with that one. That, by the way, is one of the commandments that guarantees political liberty. And you will see that private property is controlled and protected in the Old Testament, unlike socialism. You will see that socialism is actually a form of theft. Then nine, thou shalt not commit perjury, presupposes that public justice exists. And number ten presupposes a control of desires, and interestingly, number ten cannot be enforced by external law. Number 10 is a very clear illustration, and it's number ten that Paul uses in Romans 7, that when the law says "thou shalt not covet, then I became aware of my sin." So number 10 strikes deeply to the heart of man.

So what's my point? The point is that these commandments fit the imagehood of God and man, and that everyone ultimately lives as though they really believe it; everyone lives in the final analysis, no matter what they tell you with their lips, in the final analysis everybody lives as though these are true. You just have to watch. I'm always amused when I see a frustrated atheist curse God for bad things. It's just humorous to watch, it just pops out because all along the know very well that God is in charge, God is sovereign.

Now we want to close tonight by looking at an interesting case of the structure. In you're outline you'll see Romans Catholics divide the Ten Commandments after Augustine, and the Roman Catholic division is that verses 6-10 all constitute the first commandment. And then they split verse 21 into two commandments; Roman Catholic tradition and some Protestants, like Lutherans I think also do that. That's just the way they organize it, it was Augustine that basically did that and he's held highly in the Roman Catholic tradition. The Protestants generally follow

Jewish tradition, in which verses 6-7 is the first commandment and verse 21 is the tenth, so there's some slight differences here. But regardless of those differences, if you notice something, and you can look up here or look on the notes, there's a chiasmic structure to the way the Ten Commandments were given. Now a chiasm is the Greek letter that looks like an X and when it's used in literature it means that the subject starts, goes down to a center point and then comes back to the original. Watch.

We start here, verses 6-10, God alone is worthy of worship and service. See where it says that; there's the first commandment, and even the second one about imagery. God alone is worthy of worship and service. Now come all the way down to the end, to verse 21, self is not worthy of worship and service. Both the tenth and the first and second are the sandwich, both of them are really addressing value and what ultimately it should be. One is God is, and the tenth commandment is "thou shalt not," self. So it's one or the other, it's a polarity that's going on here. But both are looking at worship.

Now the next one, "Thou shalt not take the LORD thy God in vain about language." Isn't it striking that the 9th commandment is also about language, one about language that concerns the nature and reality of describing God and the 9th commandment about what is truth in a court hearing. So both are dealing with language issue. Then we have the idea, the sabbath labor, that you shall not labor on the Sabbath, and notice who doesn't do the laboring on the Sabbath; you'll notice what it says, you shall do no work, you nor your son nor your daughter, nor your male servant nor your female servant." The people who are servants also had rest from their labor. That's revolutionary. And then further, nor your ox, your donkey, or any of your cattle. So the animals, the work animals, were given a sabbatical rest. And your strangers within your gates, they had a sabbatical rest. So there's a total rest over the whole society. So it was a management of labor.

Now you come down to the 8th commandment, "thou shalt not steal," again, that's property and in the Old Testament the property is the fruit of labor. And there's an expression in the Hebrew, when you steal from someone you take his nephesh, a very interesting expression because that tells you that property was so highly valued that some energy... think about this, a person works and expends their energy and their life to generate the goods and the property and it's gone, all the effort that went into that is gone. That is a destruction of nephesh. See the high value of property.

Then we have thou shalt honor your mother and father, that's talking about marriage and the family. And then we come down to the 7th commandment, marriage is to be protected, thou shalt not commit adultery," both of those commandments deal with the family unit.

Now here's the thing, in a chiasm you always want to get to the center, because the center tells you what the emphasis is in the structure. And lo and behold, there's only one, life is to be respected and preserved. And I say that's where you see the heart of the Old Testament law; the whole story of the law is that life would flourish, and it has a much, much deeper and wider scoped view of nephesh and life than we do today; we think of life, perhaps, maybe of the baby and being aborted or something

else. That's miniscule compared to this big view of life in the Old Testament, that is in every area and God says I want you to live. That's why He gives us eternal life. Life is the story of the Scripture, not death, and life must be protected.

And so the bottom line in all of this Mount Sinai theophany, one of the greatest, one of the greatest theophanies in all of human history, is these Ten Words. And isn't it remarkable that God can be so economically efficient that He can describe all of life and all of human society with Ten Words, ten sayings; not 1,196 words of legislation, but only ten. It takes a genius to condense it down to this form. So that's the theophany, that's the structure of the law. Next time we'll go through some of the details of that and then we'll finish off chapter 5 with what happened after these Ten Words were spoken.