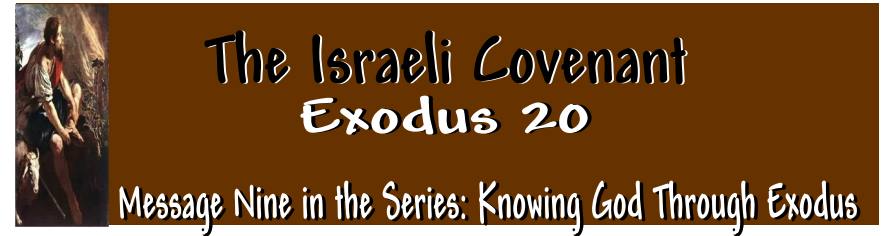


Question: Why then do Christians so often feel the Christian life is one of labor and ho-humism? Could it be that we have the cart before the horse: we say we love and revere God, but we really do not and therefore attempt what we think is the Christian life by sheer grit and determination?

Question: If so, is this not idolatry since we are really depending upon ourselves to be perfect, rather than depending upon God who is perfect?

Question: Can anyone relate to this? Would anyone like to be a little vulnerable and share how they might struggle with this?



Introduction

The Israeli Covenant, (most often referred to as the Mosaic Covenant) was introduced in Exodus 19:3-8. Through this covenant Yahweh promised...

- to make the Israelites his own special people (19:5), and
- to make the Israelites a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (19:6).

In return the Israelites agreed and proclaimed, "*We will do everything Yahweh has said*" (19:8). The opening outline of the covenant is then found in Exodus 20...the Ten Commandments. The ten commandments are then expanded upon in the rest of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

I. The parameters of the covenant. 20:1-17

A. Israel's Worship (3-7)

- First Commandment: vs. 3 (positive)

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- Second Commandment: vs. 4 (negative)

- Third Commandment: vs. 7 (negative)

B. Israel's Work (8-11)

- Fourth Commandment: vs. 8 (positive)

C. Israel's Walk (12-17)

- Fifth Commandment: vs. 12 (positive)
- Sixth Commandment: vs. 13
- Seventh Commandment: vs. 14
- Eighth Commandment: vs. 15
- Ninth Commandment: vs. 16
- Tenth Commandment: vs. 17

Application:

Question: Since we know from studies in Romans and Galatians that the Law was not intended to make us fit for God or fit for a home with him in heaven, what might this Introduction and Outline of the Ten Commandments tell us about what God desired from the Israelites?

II. The Effects of the Covenant. 20:18-21

Read the passage.

Question: How did the Israelites of the Exodus differ from Christian's of today regarding the presence of God and his audible voice?

Question: What might this tell us about our attitudes toward Yahweh?

Question: Look carefully at verse twenty. What kind of balancing act is taking place through Moses' instructions.

Question: What does this teach us about the relationship between Old Testament believers and God? Were they really to perfect themselves through the law or was following God's law the logical response that flowed from hearts enraptured with Yahweh?

III. The Promise of the Covenant. 20:22-26

Read the passage. Focus on verse twenty-four.

So, okay, by now you should be seeing a pattern. The Israelites were not slaves to the law. Obedience to the law was to be their act of worship, the response of their hearts to their magnificent Creator. God was not asking them to follow him blindly as the poor subjects of the Egyptian, Canaanite, and other eastern religions were forced to do. Instead, they were invited into a relationship of overwhelming mutual respect...the way Adam and Eve had been invited...and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

Question: So, now back to verse twenty-four. What would be the natural outcome of this kind of relationship?