

Series: Exodus

Title: From the Schoolmaster to Christ

Text: Exodus 19: 7-20: 26

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Exodus 19: 3: And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5: Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Proposition: Using the law as our schoolmaster to declare us guilty in sin, God brings his people to obey his voice by bringing us to believe on Christ.

Title: From the Schoolmaster to Christ

THE PRIDE OF MAN

Exodus 19: 7: And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8: And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do.

This is how all unregenerate, spiritually ignorant men and women approach God's word. They heard God say, "*if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.*" And "*All the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do.*"

Unregenerate man comes to God's word thinking he can do whatever God commands in the law of Sinai! Every man born of Adam presumes he is good inwardly when in truth he is dead in trespasses and in sins. Every man born of Adam presumes he possesses the ability to merit God's favor when in truth he is without any ability!

1 Corinthians 2: 14: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

Exodus 19: 8:...And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. 9: And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD.

Our text is at Mt Sinai where God is giving the law to the children of Israel. Galatians 3: 19 says the law was given "*in the hand of a mediator.*" Ten times we see God spoke with Moses alone and the children of Israel spoke to Moses alone. Moses took the words of God to the children of Israel and Moses took the words of the children of Israel to God—that is the work of a mediator.

Christ Jesus is the Mediator typified by Moses. Due to the sin of God's elect, Christ Jesus must go between God and his elect and bring us together.

THE NECESSITY OF SANCTIFICATION

Exodus 19: 10: And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, 11: And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai...

God declares that due to the sin of every man and due to holiness of God, sinners must be sanctified before we can come to God. Sanctification means to set apart, to make pure and clean, to make holy.

By Adam's disobedience we were made unrighteous—guilty before the law of God. Also, Adam's fall resulted in us being born of Adam's corrupt seed so that our very nature is defiled, unclean, common and unholy.

Therefore, before we can approach God, we must be washed in regeneration by the Holy Spirit. A new, holy, sanctified, clean, pure man must be created within us. This work is performed in us through the sin-atoning work of redemption accomplished by Christ. The sanctification of God's elect is a must due to the sin-atoning blood of Christ Jesus who sanctified his people by his one offering at Calvary.

Titus 3: 3: For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. 4: But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7: That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Notice, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost—our sanctification—was shed on us through Jesus Christ our Savior. All who Christ justified must be sanctified in regeneration and made heirs of God in our experience of his grace because Christ perfected all who are sanctified by his one offering. Justice demands we be sanctified and given life.

So it is the sanctifying work of Christ emphasized in our text. We see that by the fact God told Moses, a picture of Christ the Mediator, to sanctify the children of Israel. God told him to do it in two days and on the third day be finished and God would come down. Moses did so. In three days on the cross, Christ performed the will of God. We are told by the Hebrew writer that we are sanctified by Christ fulfilling the will of God on the cross.

Hebrews 10: 9: Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10: By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once... 14: For by one offering [Christ] hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

On *the third day*, Christ arose with his people justified and sanctified in him. God typified this by things that happened on the third day: *the earth arose* from corruption to life on the third day, *Abraham offered Isaac* on the third day, and *the flesh of the sacrifice* was burned on the third day.

So we see, due to our sin, we must be sanctified and made holy to approach God. This is the work of God by the sanctifying work of *the Holy Spirit* in regeneration which is a must for all who *Christ* justified and sanctified by his one offering on the cross. The children of Israel, here, typify those set apart and made holy

in election by God the Father in eternity for whom Christ laid down his life. Sanctification is of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

NOT BY OUR WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Exodus 19: 12: And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: 13: There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount...21: And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish....24: And the LORD said unto [Moses],...thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them. 25: So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

Mt Sinai represents the holy, just and good law of God because God gave the law there. By not allowing sinners to touch that mount, or even gaze upon God, without being put to death, we see typified what Paul said, *“by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”* (Rom 3: 20) If we attempt to justify or sanctify ourselves by our own hands under the law, God will slay us in eternal death. The only way we can come to God is in Christ our High Priest who Mediates on behalf of his people, *“The LORD said unto [Moses],...thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them.”* We must come to God only in Christ our High Priest. That is why when the Galatians were seduced to turn to the law for sanctification, God said through Paul,

Galatians 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

Titus 3: 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...

THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Exodus 19: 16: And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. 17: And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. 18: And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

In scripture seven is the number of perfection. There are seven things listed in this passage that appeared to strike fear in Moses and the children of Israel when God appeared. There was thunders, lightnings, a thick cloud, the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, the mount was on a smoke, the LORD descended upon it in fire, and the whole mount quaked greatly. Therefore, Arthur Pink suggests these seven things represents the perfect manifestation of God’s unapproachable holiness.

In Leviticus 22: 21, God commanded Moses, *“whosoever offereth a sacrifice”* to God *“it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.”* God gave the reason in Leviticus 22: 2:...*that they profane*

not my holy name in those things which they hallow unto me: I am the LORD.” We cannot offer to God the works of our blemished, polluted, defiled hands because to do so would profane God’s holy name. We must be perfect and all our works must be perfect to be accepted of God.

Why then did God give the law here at Mt. Sinai?

OUR SCHOOLMASTER UNTO CHRIST

Exodus 20: 1: And God spake all these words, saying, 2: I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3: Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6: And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. 7: Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. 8: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9: Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. 12: Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 13: Thou shalt not kill. 14: Thou shalt not commit adultery. 15: Thou shalt not steal. 16: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. 17: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s. 18: And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19: And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. 20: And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. 21: And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

God gave the law to show his people our sins and drive us to Christ. We heard the people say, “All that God commands we will do!” Several times we are told “they washed themselves.” They picture a sinner attempting to come to God by his own works under the law. Then in chapter 20, God gave the law through Moses. A sinner must have Christ declare to him that the law says he is guilty of all these things in thought, word and deed. That is the purpose for which the law was given. As you read the ten commandments, understand that no sinner has ever kept God’s commandment in thought, word and deed in perfect righteousness from a perfectly holy heart.

When the Spirit uses the law to reveal to us what the law says, we behold God in his holiness and we behold our own sinfulness. We see that pictured in the reaction of the people to God’s holiness—*“And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.”*

Then by God’s grace, he makes the sinner flee to Christ for mercy, for Christ the Mediator to represent us to God. We see that typified in the people asking Moses to mediate for with God—*“And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the*

people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.”

So we see in type that the law was given to reveal our sin and guilt and drive us to Christ.

Galatians 3: 24: Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Please understand, the law was not given for us to try to make ourselves righteous. The law was given to declare us guilty, make us see our need of Christ the Mediator and to drive us to Christ that we might be justified from our sins by Christ’s faithfulness which is imputed to us through faith in Christ.

CHRIST THE WAY

Exodus 20: 22: And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. 23: Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. 24: An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. 25: And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. 26: Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

When God reveals to his child our sin then God reveals that Christ is the Way. Everything God revealed to Moses and told Moses to reveal to the children of Israel typifies Christ who is the one way his people come to God—*“And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.* Scriptures says we were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without spot or blemish. (1 Pet 1: 18-19) There was lots of silver and gold involved in the ceremonies of the law. God reveals to us that we are not redeemed by our works under the law but by the precious blood of Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, who presented himself to God and was thus fit to bear the sin of his people under the justice of God that he might redeem us from the curse of the law.

God says, *“An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me.”* Scripture declares that believers have an Altar, whereof they have no right to eat who serve the law. Christ is that Altar. The altar in the ceremonies sanctified the sacrifice. Scripture says that like the bodies of the sacrifices were burned without the campe, the Lord Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate, let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. (Heb 13: 10-13)

God reveals that they were to *“sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen.”* These all typify Christ our Lamb, our Substitute, who gave himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor on behalf of his people. (Eph 5: 2)

God said, *“in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.”* There is no stairway to heaven, only Christ the Way! Christ obeyed the law in perfect righteousness and justified his people from all our sins by his own blood. Therefore, when God brings his child to believe on Christ, God imputes righteousness unto us; we have established the law through faith in Christ.

Since, Christ justified us from all our sins, God promises to never impute sin to those who believe on his Son. He says he remembers our sins no more. This is how God brings us to obey his voice and reveals we are his peculiar treasure, his holy priesthood, as God promised at the beginning of Exodus 19. (Ex 19: 5-6; 1 Pet 2: 5-10)

AFTER THAT FAITH IS COME

What about the law, our schoolmaster, that was used to bring us to Christ? Once we have believed on Christ, we have established the law, given it full honor and upheld it fully, through faith in Christ. (Rom 3: 31) Therefore, God gives everyone who believe on Christ this good news “*after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*” (Gal 3: 25-26)

Hebrews 12: 18: For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, 19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: 20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: 21 And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) 22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. 25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven: 26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. 27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29 For our God *is* a consuming fire.

If we would serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, then never attempt to serve God by the constraint of law. Serve God through faith in Christ by the constraint of Christ’s love in gratitude to him for making us righteous and holy and complete! May God give us grace to do so!

Amen!