

## Exodus Chapters 23:20-24- John Karmelich

1. Back when I wrote about the 10 commandments, I stated it was a model for happiness.
  - a) If we lived our lives, *through the spirit*, the model for a happy life is found in the 10 commandments.
  - b) But what about rewards? Every know & then I've talked about "rewards" in heaven. The Bible is real clear on this especially in the New Testament. This is not about salvation, this is rewards for obedience for what God called us to do:
    - i) Jesus said "'Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. (Rev 22:12 NIV emphasis added)
  - c) But what about "rewards" on earth? Are there any?
    - i) This is what Christians often call "blessings". Blessings are God's rewards to us here on earth for obedience.
    - ii) As we walk through the Christian experience some are more obvious than others are. Some we can obviously see as coming from God. Others we have to look back in our life and see what God has done for us.
    - iii) I can hear the critics now: "What about the suffering church? Are you going to tell me *they* get rewarded for their obedience *in their life*?" The answer is yes. God promises us joy *through* trials. Study Philippians, as the whole book is about having joy through times of trials. Paul wrote Philippians in a jail cell! Therefore a big part of it is attitude and perspective.
  - d) Why am I getting into all this? Because this is what the last part of Chapter 23 is about!
    - i) It is about the rewards (some might call it benefits) of *believing and obeying!*
    - ii) It is more than just "Gee, if I obey the 10 commandments, I should have a pretty good life". God promises supernatural intervention. Anybody who has been a Christian for some time can testify to this fact. For some, it is more than others.
      - a) Remember God is in control, not us. Our obedience does not require God to respond. The key is attitude. God *allows* us to go through trials because there is some lesson He is trying to teach us.
      - b) Usually, a person has to hit a point of *acceptance* before God will intervene in our lives to change the situation.
2. Let's put this lesson in perspective. The last 2½ chapters was a whole set of "do's & don'ts, most of which were don'ts. After listening to the 10 commandments from God himself, plus 2½ chapters of additional commentary from God through Moses, I suspect the Israelites were feeling pretty convicted at this point.
  - a) Remember that the plagues on Egypt were all fresh in the Israelites minds.
  - b) They also made it through several months in the desert, surveying several times only by God performing additional miracles through Moses.
  - c) Now, they get a set of rules & regulations that all sound fair and reasonable, but still convicting. Just as when we hear the law, it all sounds reasonable, but given our sinful nature, we know we are guilty of failure to keep the law.
  - d) Which all leads to my opening statement: What's the reward/benefit for obeying God? That's what we are going to read about in the rest of chapter 23.
3. Chapter 24 is something entirely different. It is about the "ratification" of an agreement.
  - a) Ever seen a presidential signature ceremony? This is where the President of the United States is shown on the White House Lawn, or at some press conference setting, signing a new bill into law. There is usually a big "signing" party involved.
  - b) Or how about an American mayor "ceremonially" opens a building or a new highway with a big ribbon cutting party?

- c) These are modern equivalents of what was happening to the Israelites in Chapter 24.
    - i) It was the “ratifying” of the 10 commandments.
    - ii) It was the public acceptance to agree to abide by these rules.
      - a) The people publicly agreed to obey and serve God.
    - iii) A Christian equivalent might be a Billy Graham crusade, where at the end people step forward and publicly desire to proclaim Christ as your savior.
      - a) (My soapbox-opinion on public crusades: They are important and many people get saved that way. One can equally be saved by privately praying to God and begin changing their lifestyle.)
  - d) So the question arises, was this a good thing or bad thing?
    - i) I argue good thing. Being saved then requires obedience. The failure of the Israelites (and us, of course) cries out with the need of another method of being a better person. Thus turning your life over to Jesus isn't just a method of salvation, it is a way to let God make you into a better person.
    - ii) Acknowledging the law as good is an important step. The “law” is God’s standard for righteousness (right-way-of-living). God’s law has not been replaced by Jesus. God’s law is still God’s standard. The difference today is that we accept Jesus as a substitute payment for our sins, and we let God begin transforming our lives into what God wants us to be.
    - iii) With that, lets jump back into Chapter 23.
4. **23:20** I am going to send an angel before you, to protect you in the way, and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. **23:21** Take heed because of him, and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him.
- a) Some translations have “angel” in all capitals or the first letter capitalized.
    - i) This is significant as we read further.
  - b) There are many passages in the Bible that clearly state “an Angel of the Lord”
    - i) The voice of the burning bush was “an Angel of the Lord”.
  - c) In both cases of “Angel of the Lord” and the “Angel” as described in Chapter 23, both of these are no ordinary angels. Why?
  - d) For starters, the Angel of the Lord” of the burning bush claimed to be God himself.
  - e) This angel here, has the power to forgive sins, as stated in Verse 21.
  - f) Whoever this angel is, the Israelites must:
    - i) respect him as you would respect me,
    - ii) obey him,
    - iii) they must not rebel against him,
    - iv) He has power to forgive sins, and
    - v) God’s name is in him.
  - g) Because this Angel is 1) a representative of God, 2) Has God’s power in him and 3) has God’s power to forgive sins, most Bible “experts” see this as a “type” of Jesus Christ
    - i) Jewish commentators simply see this as God’s representative. As God’s representative one obeys him as one obeys God. Jesus himself argues that He is God’s representative all through the Gospel of John.
    - ii) Here is Jesus speaking to the Jewish leaders: “Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.”  
(Gospel of John 14:10 NIV)
5. **23:22** But if you diligently obey him, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and I will be an adversary to your adversaries.
- a) Notice this promise of God is conditional. If you obey God...he'll be an enemy to your enemies. That is a wonderful reward for obeying God.

- b) Does this mean God is on “our” side in a war? One can look back at the outcome of any war and see the results as God-ordained. I’ve argued many times that God knows all things and all things are for the Glory of God (Romans 8:28 applies here.) Many a godly person has died in the battle for a righteous cause. This verse does not spare you from death if it is God’s will. God’s purposes are far larger than what we understand.
- c) Do we as Christians have enemies? Jesus thought so.
- i) Jesus said: “Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three.” (Luke 12:51-52 NIV)
  - ii) Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. (John 7:43 NIV)
  - iii) This means we can *expect* to have enemies if we walk in faith as Christians.
  - iv) This verse, along with many other verses state we have the ultimate victory.
- d) Remember, the forces of Satan fight you because he wants you to be an ineffective witness for Christ. An ineffective witness prevents others from being a Christian. Satan’s time on earth is limited to, and determined by a fixed number of believers (Romans 11:25). Neither we, nor Satan, knows what that fixed number is. Therefore, Satan fights prevent that number from being reached! (It’s a brilliant plan by God, to keep us witnessing for Him and our focus on Him, since no one but God knows that number!)
- e) What else causes us to have enemies? The same reason people are anti-Semitic. It is the conviction brought on by people obeying God. Deep down in people’s hearts they *know* they should be obeying God. They *know* they should be following the 10 commandments. When they see others going to church and doing their best to avoid sin, they feel convicted. They take out their convictions (guilt) on believers.
- i) “Hurting people hurt people”, Rick Warren, Pastor, Saddleback Church
- f) What’s the point of this verse? Is it the fact we’ll have enemies in this world? Not just that. The point is God himself fights our enemies. What chance does our enemies have if God himself is fighting on our behalf?
- i) This is why Jesus teaches us to “Love our enemies” (Matthew 5:43).  
The natural reaction of a person is to hate those who hate you. Jesus says be above that. God knows that person is an enemy of the Christian. They will get their punishment in the end. Jesus is teaching to be above this. Then the other person will realize “there is something different about you”. That makes you a good witness for Jesus Christ.
    - a) This by the way, is not an endorsement to allow physical abuse. Jesus himself ran away when the Pharisees tried to stone him. Did Jesus still preach to them? Yes. Did Jesus still try to convince them that he was the Messiah? Yes. But he also ran away from unnecessary danger. Not that God-the father couldn’t rescue Jesus from those situations, but to teach us a principal of setting boundaries and avoiding abuse.
  - ii) Many complain: “Gee, I don’t see God fighting on my behalf”. I see people who never go to church making lots of money and doing very well.
    - a) David himself made this same complaint to God some 3,000-3,500 years ago in Psalm 73. David was troubled by this until verse 16 of Psalm 73:
    - b) “When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.” (Psalm 73:16-17 NIV)
    - c) The problem is God doesn’t always punish His enemies in this lifetime.
    - d) God often allows the wicked of this world rewards *now*, because that is the only rewards they will ever get for eternity. There will be no excuses before God in the final judgement.

- g) Getting back to the verse itself, this is a promise that God fights our battles for us. It is a reward for obedience.
    - i) “When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him. (Proverb 16:7 NIV)
  - h) Last point. It is also important not to “gloat” when God does punish your enemies. Several verses last week talked about helping your enemy in time of his need.
    - i) See Exodus 23:4-5 for review if needed.
    - ii) “Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, (Proverbs 24:17 NIV)
    - iii) (OK, I’ve spent 1½ pages on one verse, better get moving! ☺)
6. **23:23** For my angel will go before you, and bring you in to the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I will cut them off.
- a) The land of Israel was described as the land of these 6 tribal nations. All of these nations had heathen practices.
  - b) These nations were wiped out from the *national*, not personal existence. There are mentions of Hittites and Jebusites in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel. None of these nations exist today (How many Hittites do *you* know?). God keeps his word, but not necessarily in the timing we expect him to do.
  - c) God was not only punishing these nations for the sake of the nation of Israel’s benefit, but also as punishment for their sin.
    - i) We get a “clue” of this back in Genesis.
    - ii) God told Abraham that his descendants will be in bondage for 400 years. One of the reasons for the long period was to delay judgement on the people currently living in the land. “In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.” (Genesis 15:16 NIV)
7. **23:24** You must not bow down to their gods; you must not serve them nor do according to their practices. But you must completely overthrow them and smash their standing stones to pieces.
- a) When you read of these people in the land, just think “sin”. Each group had a different sinful practice. When God says not to serve them and destroy their “standing stones” (i.e. alters), God is referring to the sin in our life.
    - i) Have zero tolerance for sin. Destroy it before it has a chance to grow. This is why the Lords’ prayer includes the line “Lead us not into temptation”.
    - ii) Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7 NIV)
8. **23:25** But you must serve the Lord your God, and he will bless your bread and your water, and I will remove sickness from your midst. **23:26** None will miscarry her young or be barren in your land. I will fulfill the number of your days.
- a) Here comes the rewards/benefits for obedience.
  - b) When God says he will “bless” bread & water”, he means 1) there will always be enough and 2) it will not be poisonous or bitter.
  - c) Jesus teaches us the same benefits for obedience. Jesus said “Do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:31-33 NIV emphasis added)
  - d) What about sickness, miscarrying, and living long lives? Does these verses guarantee we will have these things if we obey him.
    - i) As a general principal yes, as an always/everytime principal, no.

- ii) Most people can relate to suffering due to sickness, a women miscarrying or someone dying early. God earnestly expects us to pray for people in these painful situations. God usually rewards prayer to improve those situations.
    - a) God has the ability to stop cancer as easily as the common cold. Most veteran Christians can testify of amazing stories of healing.
  - iii) The key to understanding this is God's sovereignty. God will do what God will do, and He is in charge, not us. With that said, God loves us and wants the best for us. Everything God does and *doesn't* do is for his purpose.
  - iv) God's allowance of suffering is a whole lecture/book unto itself. To summarize, pray for those in these needs. Have others pray for you during these times. You can't expect God to change the situation just because you have been obedience. God is in the miracle business. But it is in His time, not yours!
9. **23:27** I will send my fear before you, and I will destroy all the people to whom you come; I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. **23:28** I will send hornets before you that will drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite before you.
- a) Ever been attacked by a group of hornets? What do you want to do? Run!!!!
    - i) God is not being literal about hornets, He is teaching a principal.
    - ii) God will act in a like-manner toward our enemies.
    - iii) Hornets attack upon being provoked. Those who attack believers will face specific judgement by God for their attacks.
  - b) This is the same principal I've taught earlier, God will fight for our enemies for us! We don't have to worry about defeat from our enemies, they are already defeated.
  - c) Verse 28 mentions that God will drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite. Yet, the verse does not mention the other 3 nations mentioned in Verse 23. (The Amorites, the Perizzites and the Jebusites). Why is that?
    - i) I couldn't find any commentary on this point. Reading this verse *in context* of the most likely answer is the next verse, which is that God works a "little at a time". (See comments in the next section under #10a).
10. **23:29** I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the wild animals multiply against you. **23:30** Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you become fruitful and inherit the land.
- a) God will not perform a 10-plauge-like miracle on the people who inhabit the Promised Land. His plan is a lot *slower* in the land. God states he will drive out the enemies little by little. (This is why, in my opinion, God only mentioned 3 of the 6 nations he drives out in verse 28.)
  - b) Why did God operate this way? He states so in verse 28: If God wiped them out all at once, the wild animals that existed would be too much for them to handle.
  - c) OK, what does all of this have to do with our lives? Plenty. The principal still applies.
    - i) How does God clean up our lives, all at once, or little by little. The latter, of course, just like it is stated in Verse 30. Our salvation was instantaneous as we accepted Jesus. Our growth is a slow, maturation process.
    - ii) For those who have been Christians for awhile, look back at how you were *before* you became a Christian. Look at all the changes in your life. Do you think you could handle all of that at once? Of course not. It would too much emotional and physically to think about.
    - iii) What comes to everybody's mind is that there may be a particularly bad habit or sin in your life that God has not gotten rid of yet, and yet you've prayed for it over and over. Take heart, as God works on God's timing, not yours.

11. **23:31** And I will set your boundaries from the Red Sea as far as to the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert to the river, for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you.
- a) Some geography comments:
    - i) Some translations just say “The Sea” instead of the Red Sea.
    - ii) The sea of the Philistines is the Mediterranean. Other locations in the Bible it is called “The great sea”.
    - iii) Most scholars believe “the river” refers to the Euphrates.
  - b) These same boundaries were promised to Abraham back in Genesis:
    - i) “”To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates--(Genesis 15:18b NIV)
  - c) Today, this would be most of Iraq, Iran, and Lebanon as well as modern Israel
  - d) Centuries later, when Israel was at its height of power, the size of Israel was close to this description, but was still a smaller area than what God had promised.
  - e) One interesting speculation. Revelation 21 speaks of a “New Jerusalem” coming down from heaven. The size of it was about 1,500 miles square. (Revelation 21:16 says 12,000 “furlongs wide ” by 12,000 “furlongs” deep) This is roughly the same size of an area as described in Genesis and here in Exodus! (Source: Dr. David Hocking)
12. **23:32** You must make no covenant with them or with their gods. **23:33** They must not live in your land, lest they make you sin against me, for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.
- a) When you study the Old Testament, you realize the Israelites never fully took all the land God had promised them. They compromised with some of the enemies that God told them to drive out of the land.
  - b) This area was promised to them, but the Israelites had to “possess” that promise. The same principal applies to Christians today. God wants to give us far more than we could ever imagine (this is what Paul’s letter to the Ephesians is all about!). We need to walk by faith and let God do all that he wants in our life. The blessings in our life are often limited by our lack of faith (i.e. trust) in God.
    - i) “God may grant, but we must possess; He withholds our possession of many things until we will partner with Him in bold faith & obedience.” David Guzik.
13. We now change subjects and go to Chapter 24. Chapter 24 picks up the narrative of the story where we last left off in Chapter 20. It is not out of order. The last 3 chapters were the giving of the law, plus additional “commentary” from God to Moses to the people.
- a) Now that the law is given, we pick up the narrative where it left off in Chapter 20.
  - b) To refresh your memory, the end of the Chapter 20, right after the 10 commandments was Moses building an altar to the Lord. (Chapters 21-23 are all “laws”).
  - c) So here is the entire congregation listening first to God directly hearing the 10 commandments, and next listening to Moses recite the last 3 chapters.
14. **24:1** And the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from a distance. **24:2** Moses alone may come near the Lord, but the others must not come near, nor may the people go up with him.
- a) This appears to be another example of God showing the Israelites that Moses, and Moses alone was to be the appointed leader of the people. The fact that God wanted Moses “near” and the others at a distance is God reconfirming Moses as the leader.
    - i) God named others to worship at a distance, probably to show the Israelites the respect of others as a “chain of command”.
  - b) Many commentators see Moses here as a “type” of Jesus. No one else can approach God. The law is a boundary between God and us as no one is righteous (Romans 3:10) except Jesus himself. Here Moses is a model of our intercessor between God & Man.

- c) After Moses, no other single person in the history of the Israelites had that great a rank of authority. No single person was the civil leader and spiritual leader.
    - i) The leadership from Moses' successor (Joshua) onward was split between a government leader (the judges & kings.) and a spiritual leader (High Priest).
    - ii) Yet as great a leader Moses was, and as great as authority as Moses was given, Moses was punished for a later sin and was not allowed to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 20:12). Why? To point the way to Jesus. That someone *greater* than Moses was needed to be an intercessor between God and Man. Despite all the great things Moses accomplished, God was showing (by type) that man, even one appointed by God can not obtain salvation by his works/abilities.
  - d) This verse also mentions two people named Nadab and Abihu. They are the two oldest sons of Aaron. They were listed in Aaron's genealogy back in Exodus Chapter 6.
    - i) Interestingly enough, both were later killed directly by God. The descendants of Aaron were to be the high priests. These two were killed during an offering, probably for committing some sort of idolatry during the offering. (Leviticus 10). God killed them as an example to teach the Israelites how *seriously* they were to take the office of high priest and worshipping God.
15. **24:3** And Moses came and told the people all the Lord's words and all the decisions. All the people answered together, "We are willing to do all the words that the Lord has said."
- a) It is my opinion, and the opinion of most commentators that when the people said "We'll do everything God said... in this verse, they were a little overconfident, or a little scared, or both. Imagine this audible voice coming from the mountain telling them what to do and what not to do. They have first hand seen all the plagues of Egypt. Are *you* going to disagree with this voice?
    - i) The other argument is their pride. All the commandments *sound reasonable*. Their pride said, "Sure we can do this." At the end of the chapter, we read of Moses going up on the mountain 40 days. During those 40 days these same people were committing idolatry (Exodus 32).
16. **24:4** Then Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. Early in the morning he built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve standing stones-according to the twelve tribes of Israel.
- a) Moses did something a good leader should do. Put their words in writing. It is one thing for someone to say they are willing to do what God commands. Sometimes we need a visual reminder of our commitment like a written agreement or the "twelve standing stones".
  - b) This is why I have nothing against scripture verses hanging on the wall or "fish bumper stickers". Visual reminders are often good for us to keep our focus.
17. **24:5** And he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls for peace offerings to the Lord.
- a) We have the Israelites agreeing to keep Gods law. How do they demonstrate this?
    - i) First they spoke out loud saying "Yes we will" in verse 3.
    - ii) Next we have them giving a sacrifice. Why?
      - a) Offering a sacrifice of an *innocent* animal is the acknowledgement that they (you/me) have sinned and the "*innocent* suffer" because of that sin.
      - b) "The sacrifice admits our own sin and failing before God, and addressing that need through the death of a substitute." David Guzik.
  - b) Having young men (as opposed to Moses, or Aaron, etc.) perform the offerings is leadership by example. Moses is teaching by letting others perform specific acts.

18. **24:6** And Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and half of the blood he dashed against the altar. **24:7** And he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "We are willing to do and obey all that the Lord has spoken." **24:8** So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it over the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."
- a) Picture yourself as being among the two million Hebrews. You've heard all the laws, you've nodded your head in agreement to keeping the law, you watched the alters being built by Moses, and now, you watch the animals being killed, and now you watch the blood of animals being sprinkled on the crowd. Perhaps some of the blood hits your clothing or in the eye ☺. What are you to make of all this?
    - i) Blood represents life in the bible.
      - a) "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life." (Leviticus 17:11 NIV)
    - ii) The symbolism is that you are identifying with those animals. You are saying, that blood was shed on my behalf (sound familiar?!).
    - iii) This is another example of sanctification. The idea of being *set apart* for use by God. You are identifying yourself with the sacrifice.
19. **24:9** Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up, **24:10** and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet something like a pavement made of sapphire, and clear like the heaven itself.
- a) First of all, what does the Bible mean when it says the people "saw" God.
    - i) The Gospel of John says "No one has seen God at any time. (John 1:18a NIV)
      - a) Yet Exodus 33 says "So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. (Exodus 33:11 NIV).
      - b) And here it says the people saw God. Is that a contradiction?
      - c) What they saw was a representation of God. I personally think God is far too enormous to comprehend in any visual picture. This is why one of the 10 commandments is not to make any sort of image of God.
        - (1) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD." (Isaiah 55:8 NIV)
    - b) This is a good time to talk about studying Revelation. (Bet you didn't expect that ☺!)
      - i) Many people are intimidated about studying the Book of Revelation because all of those terms are confusing to a new reader. Yet it is the only book in the whole Bible that says "Blessed" are those who read this book (Rev. 1:3).
      - ii) Revelation has over 300 Old Testament references. Studying Revelation is a great way to learn the Old Testament.
        - a) One of those references appears here, in Exodus 24:10.
        - b) It says they say the God of Israel... under God's feet is "something like pavement made of sapphire, clear as heaven itself".
        - c) Revelation 4:6 says "Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal." This to me is the same throne.
          - (1) It's a trivial example, but it proves a point.
        - d) If you just read Revelation, you would say about this verse, so what? *Now* you know the same reference is mentioned here in Exodus.

- iii) So what does this throne reference mean? Most Bible commentators see it as a symbol of the completed work of Jesus Christ. Later, when the tabernacle is built, there is a large water basin for washing. Here we have a “glass sea” one could stand upon. Washing is no longer necessary when we reach the throne of heaven. The work of Jesus is completed. This is a type of the finished work of Jesus (more on this later as we discuss the tabernacle.)
20. **24:11** But he did not lay a hand on the leaders of the Israelites, so they saw God, and they ate and they drank.
- a) If I was in the presence of God almighty, in that situation, the last thing I would think about is eating or drinking. Personally I would be scared to death.
- i) This means that the elders felt *comfortable* to be in the presence of God. Why?
- ii) What we see here is a model of the grace of God.
- a) The blood sacrifice has been made.
- b) The blood sacrifice has been *accepted* by God.
- c) By the blood sacrifice, we can now commune with God.
21. **24:12** And the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me to the mountain and be there, and I will give to you stone tablets, namely the law and the commandments that I have written, so that you may teach them.
- a) This is the first mention of the “stone tablets.”
- b) God himself is emphasizing the importance of the law by saying the he (God) himself is writing these done on sturdy (stone) structure for our learning.
- c) Some commentators see this as a type of Christ. The word “rock” and “stone” throughout the Bible are idioms for the Messiah. Jesus himself alludes to this by quoting that “the stone that the builder’s rejected has become the chief cornerstone (Matt. 21:42). Therefore the “law” being written on “stone” is a type of Jesus being a fulfillment of the law.
- d) 40 days later Moses would break these as the people committed idolatry (Exodus 32).
- i) Here’s the question. Was God aware they were going to break these laws? Of course. Then, why did God bother?
- ii) Again, we have a “typology” of Jesus. The stone was “broken” for our sins. There is no reference of the 2<sup>nd</sup> set ever being broken. It was preserved in the Ark of the Covenant.
22. **24:13** So Moses set out with Joshua his minister; and Moses ascended the Mount of God. **24:14** He said to the elders, "Remain in this place for us until we return to you. Aaron and Hur are here with you. Whoever has any matters of dispute can go to them."
- a) Joshua was being trained to be the next leader of Israel. Joshua is the one who actually leads the people into the Promised Land.
- i) First we read of Joshua leading the battle against the Amalakites (Exodus 17) while Moses held up the pole.
- ii) Now we read of him ministering to Moses.
- iii) I doubt Joshua thought of himself as the next leader. He probably thought at this point it was going to be either Aaron’s sons or Moses’ own sons.
- iv) Never assume the role God has for you in the future. He may be training you for a specific purpose.

- b) In this verse, Moses said “Aaron and Hur are here with you.” Who is this “Hur” guy?
    - i) Back in the battle against the Amalakites, Hur was one of the two guys who supported Moses holding up the pole.
    - ii) Not much more is said of him. He is apparently one of the appointed leaders.
    - iii) Later, when the people made the golden calf, Aaron was the leader. There is no mention of Hur. By his omission he may have not been part of that crime. On the other hand, we don’t read of him trying to stop it either.
23. **24:15** Then Moses went up into the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. **24:16** And the glory of the Lord resided on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day he called to Moses from the midst of the cloud.
- a) One has to wonder what Moses did for six days. Was he waiting for a signal from God? Was his natural inclination to call out to God? Did he pray for guidance? Did he step forward and look around? Did he go back & forth and say “Nothing yet?”
    - i) Here is a model of waiting *patiently* for God. God’s 3 answers to every prayer is either Yes, No or Wait. Christian maturity requires patience. Sometimes we simply have to wait until God gives us the next step in our lives.
  - b) The 7<sup>th</sup> day in the Bible is always associated with “rest”, as God rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day in creation. As Jesus said, He is Lord of the Sabbath, and *our* rest is in Christ.
24. **24:17** Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in plain view of the people. **24:18** And Moses went into the midst of the cloud when he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.
- a) Many commentators call this the “Old Testament Equivalent of the Transfiguration.”
    - i) In Matthew 17, (or Mark 9 or Luke 9) there is the story of how Jesus was “trans-figured” to a point where he was bright-white, and Moses and Elijah was standing next to him. This was witnessed by 3 Apostles: Peter, James and John.
      - a) It was Jesus manifesting his glory before his closest disciples.
    - ii) Here we have something similar. The glory of the Lord shining like a “devouring fire...in plain view of all the people”. Here was Moses being privileged by God to go past this “barrier” within this fire.
  - b) Over the next 40 days Moses received the 10 commandments, and the instructions on how to build the tabernacle. Most of the remainder of Exodus is on the tabernacle.
  - c) This had to be a scary thing to the typical Hebrew-in-the crowd. Here was a devouring fire on the mountain. Everyone could see it. No one but Moses went up into it.
25. Next week (Chapter 25) we begin to build a tabernacle. Chapters 25-40, except for 2 chapters all have to do with the construction of the tabernacle. Here is something to think about:
- i) How many Exodus chapters were on the 10 commandments (only 1)
  - ii) How many Exodus chapters did God give for additional laws (only 2½)
  - iii) How many Exodus chapters were on the plagues (about 3-4)
  - iv) Based on context, how does this compare to 13 chapters on the tabernacle?!
    - a) Beginning next week, we’ll get into (arguably) the most important section of Exodus, the construction of the tabernacle. It is mostly lessons on how God desires to be worshipped.
26. Let’s Pray, Father, we thank you for the lessons you have taught us about you, your laws, and our relationship with you. There is so much you want to do for our lives, and so many blessings you wish to bestow upon us. Help us to let go of our worries, and walk by faith that *you*, and you alone, are working on our lives. You are changing us and shaping us into the image you want us to be. At the same time, help us to be obedient to your word, and to look for those opportunities that you specifically designed for us. For we ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.