**Living Life Together**

**Living Life Together in Joyful Obedience to Our Covenant[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**1 Chronicles 12:32** - *And of the children of Issachar, who were men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do…*

**1 Kings 4:29** - *Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore.*

3 principles to help us fulfill our role in culture

**I. Understand the Covenantal Nature of Our Relationship with God**

A. God communicates to His people in forms and images that are easily understood

"Thus far in Exodus, the relationship between God and Israel had been wholly one-sided, with Israel being the passive beneficiary of God's active role in history. It was God who took the initiative in sending Moses to the pharaoh, who coerced the tyrant by way of the plagues to liberate Israel, who performed the wonders at the sea, and who supplied the Israelites physical needs in the wilderness. Now a new phase in Israel's history is about to commence. God's redemptive acts on Israel's behalf require a reciprocal response on the part of Israel. The liberated multitude of slaves must be united not only by a vital sense of shared tragedy and a common experience of emancipation, but even more by bonds of perceived ideals--a vision of a new order of life, namely, the establishment of an essentially different kind of society from what had hitherto existed. The precondition for the fulfillment of this goal, indeed its instrumentality is to be the forging of a special relationship between God and Israel. This relationship is to be sealed by a covenant, which would establish Israel as God's ‘treasured possession’, as a ‘kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’" (Nahum Sama, Exploring Exodus: The Origins of Biblical Israel, p. 130)

B. God’s commands are preceded by divine mercy, provision, and protection

**Exodus 19:4** - *You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself.*

**1 John 5:3** - *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.*

C. God’s commands are the logical extension of His ownership

**Exodus 19:5** - *Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;*

**Ephesians 1:11-12** - *also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.*

D. Joyful obedience is central to our God-given purpose

**Exodus 19:6** - *and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.*

**Galatians 5:13** - *For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

E. The 10 commandments were given in the typical form of an agreement between a king and his servants

1. Preamble

**Exodus 20:1-2a** - *Then God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God…*

2. Historical prologue

**Exodus 20:2b** - *…who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

3. Stipulations

Cf. Exodus 20:3-17

4. Witness and deposit of the text

**Exodus 25:21** - *You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you.*

5. Curses and blessings

**Deuteronomy 28:1-4, 12** - *Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the Lord your God…*

6. Obeying the 10 commandments is a response of love for our God who first loved us

**Matthew 22:36-40** - *One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”*

a. Loving God

1) You shall have no other gods before me – 20:3

2) Do not make idols – 20:4-6

3) Do not take the name of the Lord in vain – 20:7

4) Keep the Sabbath day – 20:8-11

b. Loving others

1) Honor your father and mother – 20:12

2) Do not murder – 20:13

3) Do not commit adultery – 20:14

4) Do not steal – 20:15

5) Do not lie – 20:16

6) Do not covet – 20:17

7. Obedience is the appropriate response for people who properly fear God

**Proverbs 1:7** - *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

**II. Let God’s Law Quickly Drive Us to Our Redeemer**

A. No one, at any time, was saved by keeping the law

cf. Romans 4:1-5

**Romans 3:28** - *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.*

B. The law was intended to reveal our need of a Savior

1. **Galatians 3:24-25** - *Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

2. This was Jesus’ point to the Rich Young Ruler

cf. Matthew 19:16-22

3. This is why the giving of the law was closely followed by the institution of the sacrificial system

4. This is why the more we respect God’s law, the more we love God’s Son

**Romans 8:3-4** - *For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

C. Jesus did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it

**Matthew 5:17** - *Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.*

**Jeremiah 31:31-34** – *“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”*

**III. Strive to Contribute to Our Church Being Known for Joyful Obedience to the Commands of God**

A. As a way to demonstrate the genuineness of our salvation

**1 John 2:3** - *By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.*

B. As a way of silently proclaiming the identity of our Master

**Exodus 19:5** - *Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;*

C. As a way of fulfilling our God-given purpose

**1 Peter 2:5, 9-12** - *You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ…But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

1. Dr Steve Viar [↑](#footnote-ref-1)