

# Adult **BIBLE** Class

**FALL QUARTER**  
September,  
October,  
November  
2022

**For Adults**  
**Ages 26 & Up**



**Union  
Gospel  
Press**

**Large-Print Edition**

# Adult Bible Class

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September, October, November 2022

Editorial .....	2
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Learning to Honor God

UNIT I: Beginning with Obedience

Sept. 4—Obedience in Leadership—Exod. 3:1-12 .....	4
Sept. 11—Obedient to Remember—Exod. 12:1-14 .....	9
Sept. 18—Promise of Obedience—Exod. 19:1-6; 24:3-8 .....	14

UNIT II: Obedience in Worship

Sept. 25—Obedience and Respect—Exod. 19:16-25 .....	19
Oct. 2—Obedience in Worshipping God Alone—Exod. 20:1-11 .....	24
Oct. 9—Obedience in Building the Tabernacle—Exod. 40:16-21, 29-30, 34, 38 .....	29
Oct. 16—Obedience on the Day of Atonement—Lev. 16:11-19 .....	34
Oct. 23—Obedience in Offerings—Lev. 22:17-25, 31-33 .....	39
Oct. 30—Obedience in Feasts—Lev. 23:33-43 .....	43

UNIT III: Obedience in Society

Nov. 6—Obedience in Justice—Exod. 23:1-9 .....	47
Nov. 13—Obedience in Rest—Exod. 31:12-18 .....	51
Nov. 20—Obedience Among Neighbors—Lev. 19:9-18, 33-37 .....	55
Nov. 27—Obedience in Celebration—Lev. 25:1-12 .....	59
Paragraphs on Places and People .....	63
Daily Bible Readings .....	64

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Edited and published quarterly by  
**THE INCORPORATED TRUSTEES OF THE  
 GOSPEL WORKER SOCIETY  
 UNION GOSPEL PRESS DIVISION**

Rev. W. B. Musselman, Founder

Price: \$5.79 per quarter\*  
 \$23.16 per year\*

*\*shipping and handling extra*

ISBN 978-1-64495-287-0

# Growing in the Obedience of Faith (Rom. 16:26)

KENNETH SPONSLER

The theme of this quarter's lessons is "Learning to Honor God." How do we do that? One important way is by examining how His people Israel learned (or failed to learn) this vital imperative. Honoring God cannot be done apart from obedience to Him, so every lesson this quarter looks at the obedience called for in specific areas of life, both individual and corporate.

Before we delve into each of these areas, however, we must be clear on one overriding truth: the obedience that honors God is the obedience of faith. He is not interested in outward expressions of duty that do not spring from the heart. This is made abundantly explicit throughout the Old Testament as well as the New (cf. Isa. 1:10-18; 29:13-14; 66:2; Mic. 6:6-8; Heb. 3:12).

Nor are we to ever imagine that we can earn God's favor, or merit salvation, through our obedience. The obedience that God wants from us is a response of faith to His provision of salvation in Jesus Christ. We obey Him out of love, believing in what He has done for us and trusting in His goodness, wisdom, and power.

That is essentially what Israel was called to do. God repeatedly prefaced and concluded His commands with the reminder that He had delivered them from bondage in Egypt and made them His people (cf. Exod. 20:2; Lev. 25:55). They were to obey Him out of love and gratitude for what He had done for them and what He promised to do in the future. At its heart, Israel's disobedience revealed distrust in Him and His word. The same is true when we disobey.

We begin our study in unit I, "Beginning with Obedience," with three lessons on how God's people started their journey as God's people. Lesson 1 looks at the call of Moses to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage and how he learned to obey that call. His initial reaction was one of protest: who was he to undertake such a monumental task? Moses resisted and argued against God's choice of him (cf. Exod. 4:1-13), but the Lord overcame his doubts.

Lesson 2 covers the preparations God gave His people for the first Passover and stresses how important it was that they remember this great event for all generations to come. Their deliverance from the final plague on Egypt came through trust in Him and obedience to His instructions. Likewise, keeping the memorial as the Lord prescribed would show continuing faith that the deliverance was from Him.

In lesson 3 we see the people of Israel promise their obedience to God in response to His covenant. It was a promise that was broken over and over again through their history, but God never broke His promises to them or abandoned His covenant.

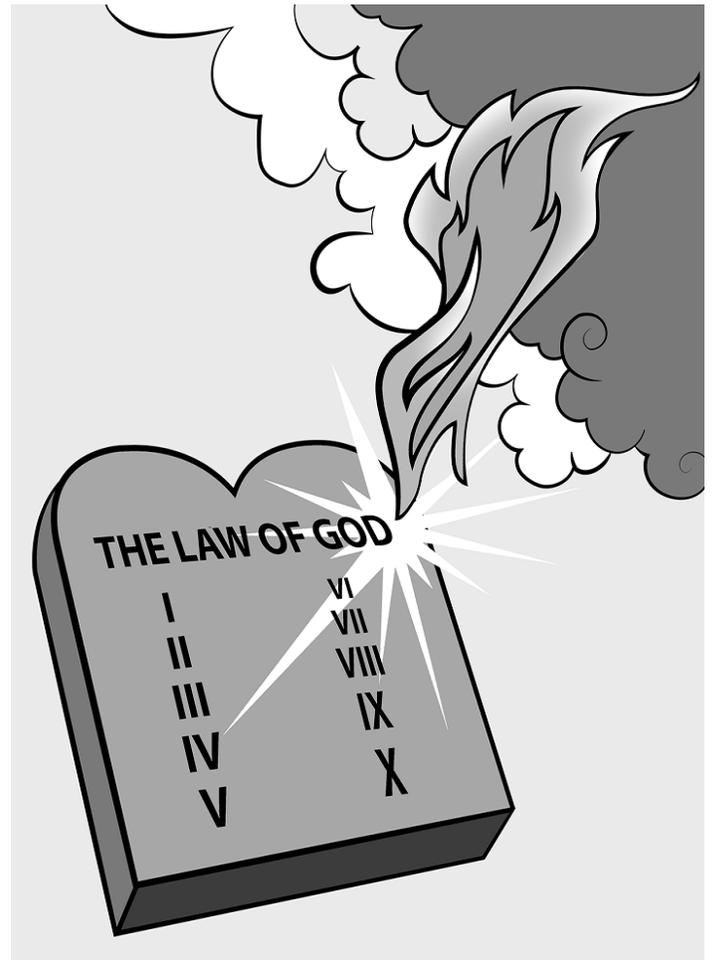
With lesson 4, we begin a new unit, "Obedience in Worship." We cannot worship God rightly without accurate knowledge of who He is, and Israel was given a spectacular (though distant) glimpse of His power and glory while they camped below Mount Sinai. They needed to learn respect for His holiness and to show that respect by remaining within the bounds that He set for them.

In the days that followed, God built on this knowledge by declaring His underlying requirement that they give Him their undivided and exclusive worship (lesson 5). They were not to minimize His glory by making any kind of visual representation of Him (graven images), and they were to honor both His name and His appointed day of rest, the Sabbath.

Lesson 6 wraps up the extensive instructions on building a place for His holiness to reside safely among them. The tabernacle was the place where God chose to manifest His glory to His people in the form of the pillar of cloud and fire that rested upon it. They were not to attribute magical power to the tabernacle or assume it protected them just by being in their midst. It was to remind them of His presence with them and of the implications that presence held for the way they conducted their lives.

One of the most important things the Israelites had to learn in their relationship with an unassailably holy God was how their inevitable sinfulness would be dealt with. Lesson 7, covering the Day of Atonement, lays out the concrete steps of faith and obedience they were to take to ensure that their sins were taken care of. The sacrifices ordained for that purpose may strike us as bizarre and mysterious, but they point unerringly ahead to the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf. Israel was to exercise faith in what God ordained for them, just as we place our faith in His perfect provision for us.

Likewise, some of the details regarding acceptable offerings (lesson 8) may sound foreign to us, but God was teaching His people to honor His holiness with their offerings. The principle that they needed (and we need) to learn is that God is honored when we bring Him our best and not try to pass off something inferior or unwanted. What place does He really



occupy in our hearts?

We might not think that festivals would be a matter for obedience (lesson 9), but Israel needed to learn that in their appointed feasts they were to remember God's goodness to them and rejoice before Him.

The final unit, "Obedience in Society," shows how honoring and obeying God affects our day-to-day living with one another. Treating everyone with justice and truth (lesson 10) matters greatly to God. Honoring Him by setting aside the day He ordained (lesson 11) is equally vital. Loving our neighbor is at the heart of living in obedience to God's law (lesson 12). And although we do not observe Sabbath Years or Jubilee Years as Israel did, lesson 13 drives home the truth that God owns everything. We are responsible to Him in how we use what He has given us.

# Scripture Lesson Text

**EXOD. 3:1** Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb.

**2** And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed.

**3** And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

**4** And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I.

**5** And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground.

**6** Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

**7** And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people

which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

**8** And I *am* come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

**9** Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

**10** Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

**11** And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

**12** And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

## NOTES

# Obedience in Leadership

Lesson Text: Exodus 3:1-12

Related Scriptures: *Joshua 1:1-9; Judges 6:11-16; I Samuel 15:10-26; I Chronicles 17:1-14; John 17:1-5*

TIME: 1445 B.C.

PLACE: Mount Sinai

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**GOLDEN TEXT**—"I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exodus 3:10).

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## *Lesson Exposition*

### **BURNING BUSH—Exod. 3:1-3**

Moses, the shepherd (Exod. 3:1). Near the end of the book of Genesis, Jacob and his family came to live with Joseph in Egypt (46:6-7). Jacob's descendants, the Israelites, remained in Egypt for more than four hundred years (cf. Acts 7:6). At some point the Egyptians saw the Hebrews as a threat and enslaved them (Exod. 1:8-11).

By the time of Moses' birth, the number of Hebrews had greatly increased. In an effort to diminish the number of males in the population, the Egyptian pharaoh commanded the midwives to kill all Hebrew baby boys at birth. However, they refused to do this (vss. 15-22).

In such a time as this was Moses born. In an effort to keep him from being killed, his parents hid him for three months. Perhaps because of a search being made by Egyptian soldiers, Moses was placed in a basket and hidden among the reeds along the Nile River (2:1-4).

It was there that little Moses was found by the pharaoh's daughter and then raised as her adopted son. Given all the amenities of the palace (cf. Acts

7:22), Moses could have remained in Pharaoh's court and possibly even ascended to the throne one day. All that changed when he witnessed how cruelly his people were being treated. Casting his lot with God's people (Heb. 11:24-25), Moses attempted to deliver the enslaved Israelites (Acts 7:23-25). This was not God's time, however.

As Exodus 3 opens, Moses was a shepherd in the land of Midian and had been for the past forty years (Acts 7:30). At age eighty, Moses no longer envisioned himself as a deliverer of slaves. He was apparently content to take care of the flocks of his father-in-law and to live in relative obscurity.

The area known as Midian had no definite borders, but it apparently extended into the southeastern portion of the Sinai Peninsula. Since the Midianites were descendants of Abraham (Gen. 25:1-2), Moses had actually married into a family to which he was distantly related.

"Horeb" (Exod. 3:1) was another name for Sinai, "the mountain of God," to which Moses would later lead the Hebrews. It became a holy place because God appeared to Moses there and later gave the law from this moun-