

YOUNG PEOPLE'S

Bible Class

For Adults Ages 18 Through 25

FALL QUARTER

September, October, November 2022



Union
Gospel
Press

Young People's Bible Class

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The Quarter Ahead	2
Editorial	3

Learning to Honor God

UNIT I: Beginning with Obedience

Sept. 4—Obedience in Leadership—Exod. 3:1-12	5
Sept. 11—Obedient to Remember—Exod. 12:1-14	10
Sept. 18—Promise of Obedience—Exod. 19:1-6; 24:3-8	15

UNIT II: Obedience in Worship

Sept. 25—Obedience and Respect—Exod. 19:16-25	20
Oct. 2—Obedience in Worshipping God Alone—Exod. 20:1-11	25
Oct. 9—Obedience in Building the Tabernacle—Exod. 40:16-21, 29-30, 34, 38	30
Oct. 16—Obedience on the Day of Atonement—Lev. 16:11-19	35
Oct. 23—Obedience in Offerings—Lev. 22:17-25, 31-33	40
Oct. 30—Obedience in Feasts—Lev. 23:33-43	45

UNIT III: Obedience in Society

Nov. 6—Obedience in Justice—Exod. 23:1-9	49
Nov. 13—Obedience in Rest—Exod. 31:12-18	53
Nov. 20—Obedience Among Neighbors—Lev. 19:9-18, 33-37	57
Nov. 27—Obedience in Celebration—Lev. 25:1-12	61

Editor in Chief: Kenneth Sponsler



**Union
Gospel
Press**

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

Rev. W. B. Musselman, Founder

Price: \$3.59 per quarter*

\$14.36 per year*

**shipping and handling extra*

ISBN 978-1-64495-369-3

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THE QUARTER AHEAD

“I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Exod. 20:2). Before giving commands to His people, God reminded them of who He was and what He had done for them. In response to His character, He expected His people to obey Him. The same is true for us today. Obedience and honor are tied closely together—it is respect for God that motivates our obedience of Him. This quarter, we study how God’s people learned to honor and obey Him in different ways.

In unit I, we see that a commitment to obey and remember God’s character is the basis for honoring Him. In lesson 1, we see that this commitment must start with our leaders as they trust in God’s leadership and authority above all else. Lessons 2 and 3 reveal that honoring God is possible only when we meditate on His character. Only when we remember His faithfulness are we motivated to obey His Word.

In the second unit, we learn how particular God is about worship. This shows us that we must have a healthy fear of God (lesson 4) so we can esteem Him above everything else in our lives (lesson 5). Lessons 7 through 9 remind us of God’s holiness—that He is perfect and expects perfection from us, which we can only obtain through the blood of Jesus Christ (II Cor. 5:21).

The ceremonial part of the Mosaic Law may seem overwhelming to us. It should, for it points to God’s holiness; it persistently reminds us of our sins against God. However, it should also

show us that in order to honor Him, God’s people need to be set apart from the world as His ambassadors (cf. II Cor. 5:20). Christ has covered our sins, but we should still make an effort to display God’s holiness and goodness to all people for the sake of the gospel. Through Christ, we are free from the bondage of sin and empowered to be God’s holy people through His Spirit.

But does this holiness stop with our individual lives? In unit III, we learn what honoring God means for a society. God’s law is good, and it is designed to help His people prosper (Ps. 19:7-9). When a society resists God’s standards, they also resist God’s blessing. Practicing godly justice increases the fear of God in society (lesson 10). A day of rest and God-honoring celebrations gives everyone an opportunity to worship and observe God’s mercy and grace in Jesus (lesson 11). Loving our neighbors promotes peace on a societal level (lessons 12 and 13). Of course, without knowing the gospel, unbelievers do not understand the implications of these practices. We must be sure to use God’s laws to witness to His mercy and grace. Because God is our Creator and we were designed to glorify Him, honoring Him in obedience is truly for our good.

Learning to obey is a lot more than learning to keep your head down and do what God says. It is believing that He deserves to be honored and cultivating a desire to bring about His will with a heart of joy and endurance.

—Megan Hickman.

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Honor and Obey

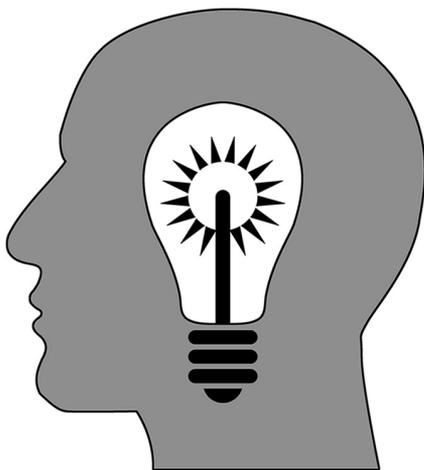
MEGAN HICKMAN

What is your reaction when you hear the word “obedience”? Does it sound stuffy, harsh, or—dare I say—boring? For many people, mindlessly obeying anyone, even God, is a scary and distasteful proposition. But contrary to popular belief, God does not command mindless obedience from anyone. In fact, the Scriptures tell us to love God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind (Luke 10:27). Loving God with all your mind does not mean that you robotically obey Him, but it does mean that you reverently obey Him (cf. John 14:15). There is a missing ingredient that limits people in their understanding of humble obedience, and that is honor.

When I was a teenager, my mom set certain standards and rules for me to follow. As I am sure was the case with most of you, I was often resentful of her boundaries. She responded to my argumentative spirit with, “You’ll understand when you have your own kids someday.” By saying that, she wanted me to know that I did not see the whole picture, that her love was the motivation for her law. Because she deserved honor from me (Deut. 5:16), I should have been willing to obey her.

It is strange that many people can acknowledge the need to honor their earthly parents yet fail to grasp the need to honor God. This can only be attributed to their lack of vision. God deserves honor, and He deserves obedience.

Honor is a word that has been somewhat lost in our modern language. At its core, to honor something or someone is to show value,



respect, or esteem. We are told to honor many people and ordinances in Scripture, but most of all, we are to honor God. He is worthy “to receive glory and honour and power” (Rev. 4:11). Have you ever stopped to ask, Why is God worthy of so much honor? Why does He deserve to be loved and obeyed by us?

There are so many reasons God deserves honor from us, but like the ancient Israelites, we often forget to meditate on His glorious character. Even when we do, our hearts are often full of doubt, and we reject His authority. That is why honoring God is a continual process of repentance as we come to see His true glory. Many of our lessons this quarter, though not giving anywhere close to a complete list of God’s attributes, help us in this process by highlighting why we should be motivated to honor and obey God.

The first and most obvious reason God deserves to be honored is this: because He created all things; they exist by His will and for His pleasure (Rev. 4:11). He is our Creator, so He has authority over us. Though this fact does not seem to motivate our obedience as much as it should, it is the foundation of our relationship with God.

We see this truth echoed in Moses' obedience to God. Moses was a great leader, but it was only because he represented God's authority and power that he was able to accomplish the deliverance of God's people. We often have to agree to obey God as our Creator before we see the fruit of obedience in our lives. We honor God by submitting to His sovereign rule.

The second reason God deserves honor is that He is good. In lesson 2, we discuss God's establishment of the Passover. In response to seeing God's goodness in their deliverance from slavery, the people of Israel assented to His laws (lesson 3). It is important to note that they assented to them solely based on God's character before they had even heard what He would require of them. That may have been overzealous on their part, but they had seen the goodness of the Lord, and they had every intention in that moment to obey Him.

Psalms 34:8 asks us to "taste and see that the Lord is good." Each of us can witness to the goodness and mercy of the Lord in unique ways. He displayed His goodness to all believers through the sacrifice of His one and only Son for our redemption. While we were His enemies, with no claim on His love whatsoever, Christ died for us. Even if God were not good, just, holy, or merciful, He would still have authority over us. The blessing of serving and worshipping a God who is good as well as powerful should motivate us to praise Him with ceaseless joy.

The third reason God deserves honor is that He is holy. In unit III, we explore the truth that God is set apart from all others. He demonstrates this by commanding Israel to build a tabernacle in which to worship Him, specifying offerings, and setting aside holy days. He also sets apart a special people for Himself by asking them to observe particular ways of living in their society. Just as the ancient Israelites were set apart, Christians today are called to be holy reflections of God's character (I Pet. 1:13-16). Our pursuit of holiness should be a pursuit of God's glory so that when others look at our lives, they see the character of Christ.

Of course, obedience for New Testament believers does not look exactly like the obedience that God required in the Old Testament. We do not make physical sacrifices anymore; we instead make spiritual sacrifices (I Pet. 2:5). We do not worship in a tabernacle or temple; we *are* God's temple. Though we have freedom in Christ from the Mosaic Law, we cannot ignore the goodness of God's character within His law. Psalm 1 reveals the value of God's law when the psalmist states that "his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (vs. 2). The psalmist saw the beauty of God's law because He saw the beauty of God's character through it.

In I Corinthians 13 we are told that perfect love does not fail. Our love for God so often falters, but He is faithful to us anyway. When we choose to obey God, we acknowledge in humility that we are shortsighted and that He is all-wise. But it is our sure hope that one day we shall see face to face. We shall know fully, even as we are fully known (vs. 12). Meditating on God's infinite authority, goodness, and holiness will help us learn to honor our glorious God for all eternity.

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

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).

Lesson Exposition

We open our quarter on learning to honor God by studying the call of Moses. God used Moses' background in Egypt to prepare him for his role as a leader, but after murdering an Egyptian for beating a Hebrew slave, Moses was forced to flee to Midian.

GETTING MOSES' ATTENTION— Exod. 3:1-3

After meeting Jethro in the land of Midian and marrying one of his daughters, Moses had tended sheep for his father-in-law for a long time (vs. 1). Moses might have thought that God had forgotten about him and the Hebrews who were reeling in their bondage in Egypt.

The Lord, however, had heard His people's cries. Now he was ready to get Moses involved in His plan to deliver them. Leading sheep through the wilderness had been good training for the man God was about to call to shepherd His people; likewise, today God prepares His people for the ministries to which He calls them.

As Moses tended the flocks near Mount Horeb in the southern Sinai Peninsula, "the angel of the Lord" appeared to him (vs. 2). This was no or-

dinary angel. "The angel of the Lord" clearly is a reference to God Himself. Moses was amazed by the sight of flames engulfing but not consuming a thornbush. We are left with the impression that Moses was drawn by curiosity. That is why he turned away from his flock to investigate the scene before him.

GOD'S REVELATION TO MOSES— Exod. 3:4-6

Once Moses came close to the miraculous fire, God called out to him. Moses, perhaps sensing the divine nature of the fire and call, responded, "Here am I" (vs. 4). This reply shows his trust and availability.

The Lord directed Moses to take off his sandals, an act that showed respect and submission. In Bible times, people removed their footwear before entering a house because they did not want to dirty the home of the respected host. Similarly, Moses was entering the presence of the Lord. The ground He chose to inhabit was holy simply because of His special presence there.

Just as dirt shows up best on white clothing, so our spiritual and moral uncleanness shows up best when meas-