

## FROM THE SEA TO THE MOUNTAIN

The Old Testament Today

Banska Bystrica, 26th September 2021

הֵלְכוּ שְׁנַיִם יַחְדָּו בְּלִתֵּי אִם-נִוְעָדוּ

**Amos 3:3** Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?

**Exodus 19:1-24** On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. <sup>2</sup> They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, <sup>3</sup> while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: <sup>4</sup> You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; <sup>6</sup> and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." <sup>7</sup> So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. <sup>8</sup> All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD. <sup>9</sup> And the LORD said to Moses. "Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever." When Moses told the words of the people to the LORD, <sup>10</sup> the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments <sup>11</sup> and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. <sup>12</sup> And you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, 'Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death. <sup>13</sup> No hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain." <sup>14</sup> So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments. <sup>15</sup> And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman." <sup>16</sup> On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. <sup>17</sup> Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. <sup>18</sup> Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. <sup>19</sup> And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. <sup>20</sup> The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the LORD to look and many of them perish. <sup>22</sup> Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them." <sup>23</sup> And Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.'" <sup>24</sup> And the LORD said to him, "Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest he break out against them."

Ὁὐ γὰρ προσεληλύθατε ψηλαφωμένῳ ὄρει, καὶ κεκαυμένῳ πυρί, καὶ γνόφῳ, καὶ σκότῳ, καὶ θυέλλῃ, <sup>19</sup> καὶ σάλπιγγος ἤχῳ, καὶ φωνῇ ῥημάτων, ἧς οἱ ἀκούσαντες παρητήσαντο μὴ προστεθῆναι αὐτοῖς λόγον· <sup>20</sup> οὐκ ἔφερον γὰρ τὸ διαστελλόμενον, καὶ ἄν θηρίου θίγη τοῦ ὄρους, λιθοβοληθήσεται· <sup>21</sup> καί, οὕτως φοβερὸν ἦν τὸ φανταζόμενον, Μωϋσῆς εἶπεν, "Ἐκφοβὸς εἶμι καὶ ἔντρομος." <sup>22</sup> Ἀλλὰ προσεληλύθατε Σιών ὄρει, καὶ πόλει θεοῦ ζῶντος, Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐπουρανίῳ, καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, <sup>23</sup> πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἐν οὐρανοῖς ἀπογεγραμμένων, καὶ κριτῇ θεῶ πάντων, καὶ πνεύμασιν δικαίων τετελειωμένων, <sup>24</sup> καὶ διαθήκης νέας μεσίτη Ἰησοῦ, καὶ αἵματι ῥαντισμοῦ κρείττον λαλοῦντι παρὰ τὸν Ἄβελ. <sup>25</sup> Βλέπετε μὴ παραιτήσηθε τὸν λαλοῦντα. Εἰ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι οὐκ ἔφυγον, τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς παραιτησάμενοι χρηματίζοντα, πολλῶ μάλλον ἡμεῖς οἱ τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν

**Hebrews 12:18-25** For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest <sup>19</sup> and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. <sup>20</sup> For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." <sup>21</sup> Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." <sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. <sup>25</sup> See that you do not refuse him

ἀποστρεφόμενοι

who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.

## OUTLINE

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- 0.4. THE NEW COVENANT

### 1. EGYPT – THE WORLD LEFT BEHIND

- 1.1. SEPARATION
- 1.2. “WHITE FUNERAL”
- 1.3. SERVANTHOOD OF LOVE

### 2. SINAI – THE NEW WAY OF LIFE

- 2.1. EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES
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- 2.3. THE NEW TESTAMENT

### 3. THE CENTRAL PRINCIPLE OF GOD’S LAW

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### 4. TO REMEMBER

## 0. INTRODUCTION

### 0.1. REVOLUTIONS AND NEW ORDER

- we know what we do *NOT* want – but we cannot agree what we DO WANT

### 0.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

[CASSUTO] The passage begins, On the third ...without preceding wayehi [‘And it came to pass’], and without any link with the previous text, as though to notify us that here begins a theme that stands alone, that is unique, that requires the reader to forget almost everything else and concentrate his full attention on what he is about to be told now

- Time → seventh week since the Exodus (number seven) → 1445 BC(?)
- [WIERSBE *Be Delivered*] The exodus took place 480 years before the fourth year of Solomon’s reign (1 Kings 6:1), which was the year 966 BC. That means that the date of the exodus was 1446 BC and that Jacob’s descendants had been in Egypt since 1876 BC. Both Genesis 15:13 and Acts 7:6 give “four hundred years,” which is a round figure, but Galatians 3:17 specifies “430 years.” Most conservative biblical scholars accept 1446 BC as the date of the exodus
- Place → Sinai (Jebel-al-Lawz?) Cassuto: NO
- [*Expository Bible Commentary*] Most scholars prefer to identify Sinai with Gebel Musa because of its relation to the plain (20:18: “they stayed at a distance”) and because of its imposing granite formations.

### 0.3. COVENANT

- → privileged relations (friendship; loyalty; unity) [to be your God . . . I will be their God" (Gen. 17:6-8); "for us" (Rom. 8:31), "on our side" (Ps. 124:1-5)]
- → rules of cooperation (laws) → MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS
- → free response

- (1) Adam, (2) Noah, (3) Abraham, (4) Sinai / the Law of Moses (5) David

#### 0.4. THE NEW COVENANT

- **Heb 7:12** For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well
- → Sinai replaced by the New Covenant of Christ (Jer 31:31 → **Hebrews 8:13** In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away)
- repeated renewals of the covenant → educational punishment

### 1. EGYPT – THE WORLD LEFT BEHIND

- **Matthew 6:24** "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money
- **Luke 17:32** Remember Lot's wife

#### 1.1. SEPARATION

- from slavery; idolatry; persecution; ghetto existence; minority status...
- also from → economic stability (Nile)
- also from → great culture (arts; developed society); sense of tradition/history...

#### 1.2. "WHITE FUNERAL"<sup>1</sup>

- **1 John 2:15-16** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world- the (1) desires of the flesh and (2) the desires of the eyes and (3) pride in possessions - is not from the Father but is from the world.
- [CHAMBERS] There are things in a man's natural life that are fine and beautiful, but when a man comes to Jesus Christ, he has to forgo them, and go to their "white funeral." (*The Shadow of an Agony*)

#### 1.3. SERVANTHOOD OF LOVE

- **Romans 6:16** Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?
- **Romans 6:17-18** But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, <sup>18</sup> and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness...

### 2. SINAI – THE NEW WAY OF LIFE

#### 2.1. EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES

- LAW: (1) moral (2) ritual (3) civil (4) criminal → NATIONHOOD
- submission to a NEW ORDER
- [CHAMBERS] This attitude is spreading amongst us to-day amazingly, people are enchanted with the truth, sympathetic with the truth of God, but remaining in sin. "Repentance" is not in their vocabulary, only regret; there is no confession of sin, only admitting. Religion is turned into education, and the Christian life is made to mean a happy life instead of a new life. (*God's Workmanship* – Lectures 1910-1917)

<sup>1</sup> "White funeral of the single life": phrase from Tennyson's poem "To H.R.H. Princess Beatrice"; to Chambers, it meant a passage from one stage of life to another—leaving the past behind and moving into the future; he often used it to mean death to self and a complete surrender to God. (*The Complete Works*, p. 687)

## 2.2. ACCESS TO THE REAL GOD

- the only true religion → revelation from the CREATOR
- **Exodus 31:18** And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony (שְׁנֵי לְחֵט הָעֵדוּת), tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.
- → the law of God and the ATTRIBUTES of God (the law as God's self-revelation)
- Israel → the light to the nations

## 2.3. THE NEW TESTAMENT

- a "second conversion" → from the **SET OF RULES** to the **LOVE OF A PERSON** (Jesus → the Holy Spirit)
- Rom 7 → Rom 8 (death to the Law!!)
- **Rom 8:2** For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.
- **Rom 3:31** Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law!  
 [CHAMBERS] If my religion is not based on a personal history with Jesus it becomes something I suffer from, not a joyous thing, but something that keeps me from doing what I want to do. (*Disciples Indeed*)

## 3. THE CENTRAL PRINCIPLE OF GOD'S LAW

- **Exodus 19:4** I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself...
- from WHAT to WHO... from *programs* to personal *allegiance*...  
 [CHAMBERS] ...if a Christian is not a Christian at heart he carries his Christianity like a headache instead of something worth having, and not being able to get rid of his head, he cannot get rid of his headache. (*Biblical Ethics*)

### 3.1. THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

- **Mark 12:28-30** And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.' <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'
- **Deuteronomy 6:4-5** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might

### 3.2. PLURALITY AND TOTALITY

- **Pro 11:14** Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety
- **Luke 10:42** one thing is necessary (ἐνὸς δέ ἐστιν χρεία)
- **Phil 3:8** ...I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.
- **Phil 3:13** ...But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,
- **Galatians 2:19-20** For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. <sup>20</sup> It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

## 4. TO REMEMBER

- Salvation is more than getting free of punishment.
- Saved means "saved from sin" (Jesus' name) → to grow into Jesus' likeness (Lev 19:2; Gal 4)
- In salvation God is bringing to himself "chasedim" – those who love him and are loyal to him.