

Exod 04-11-14b

Let's resume our study now in the book of Exodus, chapter 34. We have established what it is that God says and why it is that God answers Moses' request in this way. Because what Moses is going to need for the next 40 years is not an experience to look back on, but some truth to apply, some truth to put his faith in.

God doesn't give him what he wants, he gives him what he needs. He doesn't give him what he asks for, he gives him what God knows is best. And God does the same for us.

We don't always get what we ask for, we don't always get what we think we need, but if we are trying to live in a way that pleases God, God will give us what he knows we need. So, Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped in verse 8 of chapter 34. Then he said, If I now have found grace in your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we are a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as your inheritance.

This is a request for God's presence. The very same thing that God promised a few chapters earlier, I will go with you, because of the interruption, the breach of the covenant, the golden calf incident and so on, Moses goes back up and says, Lord, I need the assurance that you will go with us. Well, we know that it's important for God to be with us, right? It is very important that we have the presence of the triune God in us and with us.

The Holy Spirit has sealed us. The Holy Spirit has been given to us. He is with us and never leaves us.

Never. I don't care how badly you sin, how far you go into error, the Holy Spirit does not leave. He will constantly exercise his ministry of conviction, sin, righteousness and judgment.

Deep in our heart of hearts, all of us know, if we are on a wrong path, that it is a wrong path. That there is a standard of righteousness that we are falling short of and that there is a penalty. There is a judgment.

I may not see it now, it may not be near, but it's coming. All of us know that. I can say that confidently because the Bible tells us that that is the Holy Spirit's ministry.

And it is a worldwide ministry. Jesus said he convicts the world, believers and unbelievers. It is much more beneficial for a believer because we have something we can do about it.

An unbeliever needs to come to Christ. Someone who is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ needs to respond to that ministry. Moses says, pardon our iniquity.

This is the penalty bearing aspect of our sin. And he groups himself with the nation of Israel. And pardon our sin, our crossing of the line, our departing from the way.

He does not mention transgression. Why? That is the part of sin that deals with the injury to others. And that's really not in view.

This has been a sin against God. You can't injure God. You can incur a penalty and you can be separated from Him.

This is the same thing you find over in Isaiah where he says, your iniquities have separated between you and your God. Your penalty connected, guilt inducing aspects of sin have separated between you and your God. And your sins, leaving the way, falling short of the mark, have hid His face from you so that He will not hear.

Now there is nothing quite as bad, in my view, as being related to God, having Him as your Heavenly Father, being potentially an heir of all of these great blessings and all of these great benefits, and failing to seize them, failing to use them. Wouldn't it be awful to starve to death and be found in your house an emaciated skeleton, having starved to death and died a miserable, horrible death. And somebody looks, and here in your bank account you've got all kinds of money that you didn't spend.

You didn't buy groceries. You didn't avail yourself of what you had. You had the means to live and you just went nuts and didn't use it.

You forgot about your bank account. You forgot about your assets. And you starved and died a horrible, painful, miserable death when there was money right there.

Or you had a pantry stocked full of groceries and you just forgot. I used to have a cat that as he got old and got sort of senile, and he had always lived in single story dwellings. He lived in apartments.

He lived in mobile homes. He lived in all these places where there was just one floor. A white Persian cat.

Well, we moved to a house that had two stories. And he was 14, 15 years old, and he wasn't really able to learn a lot of new things. And so at night, we'd all pack up and go upstairs, get ready for bed.

The cat was still downstairs, and pretty soon you'd hear this mournful meowing and wailing. Where did everybody go? I'm all alone. Well, he forgot that go upstairs, that's where all the people are.

Go upstairs and you find your nice warm feet to lay on and sleep at night like he always did. And all he had to do was go upstairs, but he just couldn't keep it in his mind that, oh, this is a multi-level, I can go up the stairs and there's a whole other world there. He just couldn't remember it.

And so we find ourselves in that position where we don't remember that God is present, and

God is available, and God has made provision. And if we don't seize and lay hold of it, we're just a cat meowing around in the dark. All we've got to do is walk up the stairs.

It's no big deal. Moses says, Lord, go among us, even though we are stiff-necked people. Even though we keep showing you our neck, stay with us.

Pardon our iniquity and our sin. Transgression here is not in view. The injury to God is not an issue.

Take us as your inheritance. Notice the difference between please give me my inheritance and please take us as your inheritance. It's the difference between subjectivity and objectivity.

What's more important? That God is pleased, that God has an inheritance, or that I am pleased and that I have an inheritance? Oddly enough, at the very point that you say, it's not important what I have or what I get, it's what God has and what God gets, that's the point at which your own inheritance sneaks up from behind you and overtakes you. And you wind up with tremendous blessing and tremendous peace and tremendous satisfaction in life. At the point that you say, life is about what God wants, that's at the point that you find your own wishes and desires and opportunities being fulfilled.

Like Jesus said, the one who tries to save his life is going to lose it. But the one who loses his life for my sake will find it. It's when we let go of the things that we're grasping for, quit trying to go down our own path and decide to go down God's path, that's when all of the things we were looking for on our path overtake us.

It's an irony. It is the way God made his plan. He said, you know, I can't give you things in a way that you'll appreciate and that you'll understand until you don't invest yourself in them to the point that you destroy yourself.

Well, now in verse 10 of chapter 34, God is still talking to Moses and he says, This is again in response to the request that Moses makes. He says, go with us, make us your inheritance. God says, behold, I make a covenant.

Before all your people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth nor in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the Lord, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. This word translated awesome in Hebrew means terrible.

You know what terrible means? We say, oh, that pizza was terrible. That's not really an accurate use of the word. Terrible means fraught with or inducing terror.

If you go see a really scary movie, you know, Halloween 7 or whatever it is, and it just scares the willies out of you, you should come out and say, that was a terrible movie. And it probably was in more ways than one. But terrible in its original true sense means terror-inducing, fear-inducing.

You can say, that's a terrible storm. Well, if it makes you afraid, that's accurate. And that's what God says here.

It is a terror-inducing thing that I will do with you. This is going to incite terror and fear in the surrounding nations. What God does with Israel is going to make people afraid.

You know, they're always saying, be afraid, be very afraid. Well, people are going to be afraid. They're going to be very afraid.

You go forward to Joshua and read what Rahab says to the spies. She says, we know all about what God has done with you and how He destroyed the Egyptians and how He has mowed down those who oppose you. And people here are quaking in their boots.

Please deliver me and my family because I know we're all going to die unless you spare our life. She knows because God is going to fulfill this promise 40 years later. It is a terror-inducing thing that I will do with you.

What I do with you is going to strike fear into the hearts of the godless. Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

Just as an aside here, by the way, which would you rather be? Would you rather be an Israelite or would you rather be a Hivite? Do you want to be coming in and occupying a good land that is given to you by God? Or do you want to be the godless pagan that is being driven out by the God of the universe who created the world and has awesome, total destructive power? Which side of Him do you want to be on? Do you want to be inheriting the land of those that have been driven out? Or do you want to be losing everything as you are driven out and slain by the advancing armies of God? I mean, it seems like a mindlessly simple choice, but we don't always make it. Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it, the land, be a snare in your midst. You shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, cut down their wooden images.

For you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous god. Lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the prostitute with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and they invite you, and you eat of their sacrifice, you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the prostitute with their gods, and make your sons play the prostitute with their gods. You shall make no molded gods for yourselves.

The feast of unleavened bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you. In the appointed time in the month Abib, for in the month Abib you came out from Egypt.

All that open the womb are mine. This is the law of the firstborn. Every male firstborn among your livestock, whether ox or sheep, but the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a

lamb.

If you will not redeem him, you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. None shall appear before me empty-handed.

Six days you shall work. On the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.

You shall observe the feast of weeks, firstfruits of the wheat harvest, feast of ingathering at year's end. Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the Lord God of Israel, for I will cast out the nations before you. I will enlarge your borders, neither will any man covet your land, when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.

You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven, nor shall the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover be left until morning. The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of the Lord your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

Then God tells Moses to write this all down. Now, let's think. We've had the passing by of the goodness of God.

We've had the declaration, the Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious, all the things we've covered there. Moses says, Lord, pardon our iniquity and our sin. Go with us, have us as your inheritance.

This is God's response. He says, I'm making a covenant. And here it is.

There are essentially seven elements of this covenant. And these seven elements apply to you and me just as much as they do to Israel. We're in a different situation.

We have a new and better covenant founded on new and better promises. But the elements, the essentials are the same. Let's break this down and look at it.

First of all, what does God say? He says, I'm going to do this terror inciting thing with you. In other words, I am going to use you to manifest myself to the nations. And those who do not respond are going to be afraid.

There's only two choices. You either join or get crushed. You either fall on the rock and are broken or the rock falls on you and you are crushed.

God is going to make an issue through Israel as a witness to the nations. Who is going to be the witness? Does he say, I'm going to make you witnesses to the nations? He says, I'm going to do something with you that will be a witness to the nations. God's work in Israel will manifest itself to the nations and will make them afraid.

Now, they have a choice in that fear as to what they're going to do. Are they going to come to a healthy fear of the Lord and come to him and become proselytized in Israel and come and

worship God? Or are they going to flee in terror and run away? One way or another, God is going to make himself known to them and is going to incite fear. It will either result in a godly fear or an ungodly fear.

But they will not be without the knowledge of God. It is what God does in and through the nation of Israel. This is number one.

God is going to manifest his power in Israel, in his people, as a witness to the godless. That is what God does with us. You are not a witness to the godless in your own strength and your own power and of your own volition.

Nor am I. We should be people in whom God is at work. And God will work in us to be a witness. And there is a difference.

Because it is who takes the initiative. Who makes the decision about when, where and how this witness is born to the godless. Is it us or is it God? Well, it is God.

God does not say, I am going to sit back here in the rear with the gear. You go forth and see if you can incite some terror in the godless. He says, I am going to work in you and it will be a witness to the godless.

And that is the model for evangelism. That is the model for our ambassadorship. Let God do the work in us.

He will figure out where, when and how we are a witness to the godless. And it may or may not involve speaking. It may or may not involve sharing the gospel.

But it will be a witness. The one thing we cannot do is go to pains to hide our light under a bushel and avoid acknowledging that we belong to God. That is number one.

This is a term of this covenant. God says, I am making a covenant. First of all, you have to be someone in whom I can work.

That is number one. Number two, look at verse 12. Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst.

Destroy their altars, break down their sacred pillars, cut down their wooden images. You shall worship no other god. The Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

Lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they prostitute themselves with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, then one of them invites you, and you eat of his sacrifice. You start partaking of his deal. Now, we don't really have this problem.

I can't think of a single time in my life where somebody said, you know, I've got this image of Baal sitting on my hearth, and if you'll come over and I'm going to chop up some spaghetti in front of it, let's eat spaghetti and meatballs in front of my false Baal God. We don't really get

faced with that, do we? What do we get? What do these gods represent? The people in the land, why are they worshipping these images and these gods and these Asherah poles and sacred pillars and things? What's going on with that? What are they looking for? Why does somebody worship a god and pray to a god and sacrifice to a god? I want something. I want some prosperity.

I want some success. I want some protection. I want some security.

I want my life to be better in some way, and this is how I'm going to make that happen. I'm going to appeal to this thing by sacrificing, by worshipping, by honoring this thing. I'm going to make some prosperity for myself.

I'm going to solve my problems. I'm going to establish my security with this thing. Isn't that why people worship a false god? So are there false gods today? Are there things that people look to and say, this is my problem-solving device, this is my security, this is my safety, this is my foundation, this is what's going to help me along? Well, of course.

And it comes in all different stripes, shapes, and sizes. You have people who go in for different kinds of religions and cults, Scientology, Kabbalah. Did you hear that somebody or other elected Madonna as the most influential Jew of the year or whatever, and she's not even Jewish? But she got this award because they said, well, yeah, we know she's not Jewish, but she does the Kabbalah thing and got everybody interested in Kabbalah.

And, of course, she has the Madonna name, and Mary was a Jew. I don't know how they figured it out. But she's got people off investigating this weird numerology and mysticism that is a cancerous offshoot of Judaism, and she's big into this, and so she's led many other, you know, the blind leading the blind.

Why do people go into that kind of thing? It's going to improve my life. It's going to give me better standing with people. It's going to make me successful.

You've got the mouthful of teeth guy, Tony Robbins and his whole program. You have Ron Dyer, L. Ron Hubbard, all of these different ones that have these, you know, here's success. You ever seen the infomercials in the middle of the night? Get into real estate.

No money down. Buy for nothing and sell for big profits. Oh, I made \$45,000 last week on a distressed property.

So real estate is going to be my solution, or whatever it may be. These are the false gods of today. People make entertainment of God.

This is where my satisfaction comes from, seeing my program, going to my concert, listening to my band, whatever it may be. These are the false gods. What does God say about this kind of thing? No compromise with the godless.

Do not eat of their sacrifice. Do not engage in their practices. And do not fellowship with people who make that their priority.

Because they will suck you in. You will be ensnared. If this is the way the godless solve their problems and establish their security and derive their weak, pathetic forms of happiness, do not go there.

Do not participate. And do not fellowship with them. You will be sucked in.

This is what God says. No compromise with godless solutions is permissible. Otherwise, two things will happen.

What's the worst thing that can happen to a woman? What's the worst thing that can happen to a woman? Or one of the worst things? If somebody kidnapped you and hauled you off to a foreign country and forced you to be a prostitute as a woman, that's just a pretty horrific fate, isn't it? It's the stuff of nightmares. To be kidnapped, hauled over to Thailand or someplace and forced to be a prostitute. God says, if you compromise, if you delve, if you dabble, if you associate with godless solutions, you will be kidnapped and you will be prostituted.

That's what He says. Look at the words. Lest you make a covenant, verse 15, with the inhabitants, they prostitute with their gods and make sacrifice.

They invite you. You eat of the sacrifice. You intermarry.

You will be ensnared. You will prostitute yourself. You will play the harlot, play the prostitute with their gods, and you will make your children prostitute themselves with these gods.

Not only do you lead yourself astray, you lead your family astray. You lead your progeny, your children, into the same form of error. That is principle number two.

Remember, there are seven terms of this covenant. God says, I'm making a covenant. Here's how it goes.

I am going to work in you to be a witness. We have to be amenable to that. We have to understand that.

Number two, you cannot compromise with the godless. They will trap you. They will prostitute you.

Number three, the feast of unleavened bread you shall keep. Of course, you shall make no molded gods for yourself. This is kind of a little sticker because that's what they just got through doing, right? They started down the road of the Egyptians.

They started down the road of false gods and false believers. This is the god that brought you out of the land of Egypt. No, it isn't.

That's a lie. It's a bald-faced, out-and-out lie. This is not the god that brought you out of Egypt, but they're deceiving themselves.

Now, look at verse 18. The feast of unleavened bread you shall keep. Seven days, eat unleavened bread as I commanded you.

In the appointed time, the month of Bibh. In the month of Bibh, you came out from Egypt. Third principle, remember where you came from.

Who delivered you? This puts us in mind of what we saw over in some of our other studies, where in Hebrews, the author of Hebrews is talking about if you are putting your faith in angels, what angel was ever made an heir by God? What angel ever sat down at the right hand of the Father? What angel has been your Redeemer? What angel has ever been promised that his enemies will be made his footstool and has been elevated to the right hand of God? Whatever you're putting your trust in, do you not remember where your salvation came from? The same argument is made here. Remember where you came from. That feast of unleavened bread is a reminder of deliverance from bondage.

And he says, you keep that feast. Do not forget where you came from. Do not forget your original deliverance.

Because the one that delivered you, delivered you for a purpose. That wasn't just a happenstance and then God got busy somewhere else. You've been delivered for a purpose.

So don't forget where you came from. Now, verse 19, so that's the third principle. Remember where you came from and remember God's mighty and gracious deliverance.

Number four, all that open the womb are mine. Every male firstborn among your livestock, whether oxen or sheep. All the firstborn of your sons.

If it's a donkey, it's not a holy animal, you have to redeem it. You have to convert. You have to substitute that which is not holy and usable for that which is.

And there's a lot we could say about that. We'll actually come back and study this in a little more detail next time. I want to get through these seven aspects of the covenant.

So if you have questions about the redeeming of the donkey, save them for next week. The firstborn of a donkey redeemed with a lamb. What's the difference between a donkey and a lamb? You don't put a donkey on the altar.

A lamb you do. We'll talk about it next time. But what's the idea here? All that open the womb are mine.

The firstborn are dedicated to God. Why? This again is a form of remembrance. First of all, our third principle, remember where you came from.

Our fourth principle, remember who is currently sustaining you. Remember who is currently blessing you. Remember who is currently giving you a crop and giving you offspring and giving you productivity and fruitfulness.

Remember how you got started in your Christian life and faith. And remember what is currently sustaining you. None shall appear before me empty-handed.

Remember that the things that are given to you are given to you to serve God, not to please yourself. Don't get your eye on the gift and lose sight of the giver. That's that principle.

These things are a blessing, but they should draw us closer to God, not closer to the gift, not closer to the blessing. You don't want to be the man saying, oh, my barns and silos are full and tomorrow I'm going to build more barns and more silos and then have your life required of you and discover that you forgot that it is God who gives these things. Every good and perfect gift comes down from above.

So the idea is all about God. Principle number one, God is going to manifest His power and have an effect on the nations. Principle number two, you have to remember that you are set apart to God and you can't compromise, you can't let yourself be taken away from God.

Principle number three, remember that it is God that delivered you. Principle number four, remember it is God that sustains you and blesses you and gives you things for His purpose and His service. All of these are all about God.

They all tie back to God. Do not come before me empty-handed. You come before God and have in your hand that which God has given you, acknowledging that He is the source, He is the author.

Twenty-one, six days you shall work, on the seventh you shall rest, in plowing time in the harvest you shall rest, observe the feast of wheat, the first fruits of wheat harvest, the feast of in-gathering at year's end. These are the three assembly feasts. The Sabbath is a weekly reminder and a weekly time of separation to God.

Separate yourself from work, separate yourself from strife, separate yourself from toil, separate yourself from entanglement in the world. Sit at home and remember who you are and why you are here once a week. Three times a year, all of the men of Israel are to gather.

God says, do not worry that you are going to come and gather and lose your land. That somebody is just waiting for you to go to an in-gathering feast or an assembly feast and you are going to come back and find out that the Amalekites have stolen your property. God says, I will enlarge your borders, I will cast out the nations before you, no man will be looking for your land while you are gone.

This is a great and precious promise. If you spend time and dedicate it to God, don't worry that something is going to unravel and fall apart behind your back. I saw the proof of this for four

years when I was in college, when I was a midshipman.

There was no time for Bible study in my schedule, but I knew enough at that time to know that it was essential. And so I just took time that I did not have every day to study the Word of God. And it was astonishing to me and to my roommates and to anybody else within the range of observation that in spite of the fact that I lost, and I was no great student to begin with, but in spite of the fact that I lost a little over an hour a night out of study time to spend time in the Word of God, I passed.

I survived. I went through and graduated and did fine. God will not allow you to suffer loss because you dedicate time to Him.

If you focus on God, if you dedicate your heart to God, you are not going to come up short. God is not going to say, well, it's real great that you spent some time in Bible study, but you lost your job, this, that and the other has happened because you just shouldn't have done that. God honors those who honor Him.

And He tells the Israelites here, you come to Me three times a year and you will not suffer loss for so doing. Now, I think this threefold reminder is interesting because who is it that are to assemble? It's not all of Israel. It's the leadership.

It's the men. What is the application for us? We are not led by our emotions. We are not led by our feelings.

We should be led by our mind. And I think three times a day, you have the pattern in Scripture. We've talked about it many times with David and with Daniel.

Evening and morning and at noon, I will go to God. I will pray. I will cry aloud.

God will hear my voice. Daniel prayed three times a day. And initially it looked like he was going to suffer loss because of that.

The nobles complained. Daniel gets thrown in the lion's den. But all it does is promote Daniel.

Those nobles wind up getting executed and Daniel winds up getting promoted. You will not suffer loss. But wouldn't it be a great thing if we could remember three times in a day, just as Israel was to assemble before the Lord and remember that they serve Him and that He is their source, He is their deliverer, He is their sustainer.

Three times a year, drop what you're doing. Make the trip to God. Assemble in His presence three times in a year, all the men of Israel.

If we can bring our mind three times a day and assemble it before God, that's the leadership of our soul, just like the men are the leadership in Israel. And we dedicate our goals and our values and our priorities to God when we wake up in the morning, halfway through the day, and again in the evening as we review one day and prepare for the next. We do it in the

presence of God.

That's what God is asking of us. Principle number four. Number one, God will manifest His power and have a witness to the godless.

Number two, there is no compromise with the godless that is permissible. We belong to God and to compromise is to be ensnared and prostituted. Number three, remember the source of your deliverance.

Number four, keep on remembering on an ongoing basis, on a regular basis, God. Assemble in His presence. Dedicate the leadership, the policy, the goals, the values, the priorities to God on a regular, ongoing basis.

We meet three times a week for Bible class and I think it's a great number. I think it's a great reminder. There are not more than two days that can go by in a week before we have assembled ourselves in God's presence to be reminded of who we are and why we're here.

Three-fold remembrance. Check our priorities. Check our goals.

Check our values. And ideally, we can do it daily. Morning, noon, and night.

Number five, you shall not, verse 25, offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven, nor shall the sacrifice of the feast of Passover be left until morning. What's this all about? Seems like an odd thing as we're going down through here. All of these seem to be sort of non-sequiturs until you look at the flow of thought behind it.

It all ties back to God. God is at work in you. God doesn't want you to compromise with darkness.

God initially delivered you. God continues to deliver you. And now, number five, do not come before God in impurity.

When you bring the blood of the sacrifice, don't let it be tainted. You say, well now, what do you mean, do not come before God in impurity? How does that relate to leaven with the sacrifice? Leaven, universally in the Bible, is a picture of sin. We don't bring blood sacrifices, so what is the application for us? What does Romans 12, 1 and 2 tell us? Offer yourself a living sacrifice.

The sacrifice we bring is ourselves. If we are going to come before God, is that sacrifice going to be tainted with leaven? Is it going to be impure? Is it going to be soiled, spoiled, impure, defiled? How do we make sure the sacrifice is clean and clear and pure? This is your claiming of God's promises. Psalm 51, 1 John 1. Acknowledge transgression.

Acknowledge sin. Acknowledge iniquity. Let God cleanse and forgive and sanctify.

The Lord Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. He said, if I do not wash your feet, you have no part with me. You have no inheritance with me unless you are regularly cleansed.

And as I have forgiven you, you should forgive each other. The blood of the sacrifice should not be mixed with leaven, nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning. What is this about? The Feast of the Passover is the feast where they eat the sacrifice themselves.

Other sacrifices are placed on the altar and are the ola, the whole burnt offering. The Feast of the Passover is one where the lamb is slain and the people eat it themselves. And he says, don't leave it until morning.

Don't let it spoil. What you are supposed to eat is kind of like what Jesus told the disciples in the upper room. This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Drink ye all of it. Don't leave it until morning. That which we are to partake and take in, take it all.

You don't just say, well, this is the tender part. Here's the dark meat. That's what I like.

I'm leaving the rest of it. What God says you're supposed to take in, take it all in. This is the consumed sacrifice, the Feast of Passover.

It is at once a reminder of salvation and of dedication and of separation. And it is that which is regularly taken in. And he says, take it all.

Do not be like the crowd of 5,000 where 12 baskets of fragments were taken up. Don't be like the crowd of 4,000 where 7 baskets of fragments were taken up. If God gives you the counsel of His Word, if God gives you the teaching of the truth, you take it all.

You seize it all. You digest it all. Apply it all.

Don't pick and choose. Why do we have 435 denominations? People pick and choose. I like this part.

I don't like that part. I'm going to concentrate on this, not on that. We endeavor to pursue the whole counsel of God.

Do not have a partial faith. Do not have a partial taking in of the sacrifice. Take it all and be pure as you do so.

That's principle number five. Element number five. Again, we have the idea of firstfruits.

The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of the Lord your God. Remember that every good gift comes from above. Never think like Cain.

I am such a good farmer. Look at the great sacrifice I can bring to God. It all comes from God.

Firstfruits shall be brought to the house of the Lord. This also, by the way, is the means of sustaining corporate worship. There is a responsibility to help sustain corporate worship in

whatever form.

Seventh, do not boil a kid, a young goat, in its mother's milk. What a strange injunction. Especially in the light of these others.

Of all of the possible things you could name, you know, you could say, well, do not dig a pit for your neighbor's ox to fall into or whatever. Here he says, do not boil a young goat in its mother's milk. It seems pretty cryptic.

But think about it. What does the mother's milk do for a kid? That's its nourishment. That's its sustenance.

That is what enables it to grow and flourish. When someone takes a kid and kills it and then boils it in its mother's milk, he takes that which was designed to be the nutrition for the little goat and instead boils him in it. Young things in the Scripture, like children, Jesus says, if you oppress one of these little children, it would be better for you that a millstone were hung around your neck and you were cast into the sea.

There are angels, behold the face of my Father in heaven. The kid represents the young, the young in the faith, young spiritually. We can get on our little stand and decide that we are going to be a guide to the blind, we're going to be the Pharisees and we're going to take this one in and teach them the way and we're going to mentor them and we're going to disciple them and we're going to bring them along in the faith and we're going to be the big be-all and do-all for this person.

And we wind up taking the Word of God and beating them over the head with it. We take the Word of God, the sincere milk of the Word and instead of nourishing them with it and encouraging them and letting them grow in grace and knowledge and reach the point where they're ready for meat, we boil them in it. This is not that different from quenching the Spirit.

The Spirit is at work in someone and maybe they're not quite right and they're not quite accurate and they're not quite conforming to what we understand. What are we going to do? Are we going to take the Word of God and boil them with it? You're wrong. You're incorrect.

Shut up. Sit down. You need to do it this way and quench the work of the Spirit of God and boil them in the milk that is supposed to nourish them and sustain them and bring them to maturity.

God says don't do it. Do not boil a kid in the milk that is supposed to grow it and sustain it. We have to be careful in the treatment of one another, especially with those who are younger and newer in the faith, to be nurturing, to be encouraging, to be welcoming, to have positive types of fellowship and not inflict the letter of the law on them in such a way that they are discouraged, that they are boiled in the mother's milk.

Do not boil a kid in its mother's milk. Do not take that which is designed for nourishment and

use it to cook somebody with. And it is a reminder that we have our hands full with ourselves.

Jesus said, Who are you to judge another man's servant? If we judge ourselves, we're doing well, because then we won't be judged. If we get busy judging others and living their life for them and applying the Word of God for them, we can speak the truth to one another in love, but it should be done in an encouraging way, in a nurturing way. We ought to be administering the milk of the Word in a helpful way, not at 212 degrees Fahrenheit.

Sevenfold terms of the covenant. All of it relates to God. Every Israelite, every member of this assembly, of the household of faith, every child of God is a child of God and we are not to abuse one another.

Going back in reverse order, we don't abuse each other. We remember that God is the source of all good things. We do not come before that God impure, defiled, leavened.

We remember Him regularly. We come before Him regularly, three times a year, three times a day. In our case, three times a week also.

Regularly come before God and assemble. And don't worry that there might be some sort of loss involved in that. God says, I will not allow it to happen.

Remember where you came from. Remember the mighty and gracious deliverance of God at salvation. Never forget the bondage from which we have been freed, the darkness from which we have been delivered.

No compromise with that darkness and bondage and godlessness is possible. Our deliverance, our salvation, both from the lake of fire and out from this present evil age comes from God. No other source.

God will manifest His power in us as a witness to everyone who is outside. Let God figure it out. Let God do it.

We concentrate on purity. We concentrate on loyalty. We concentrate on love for God and love for one another.

It's all distilled and summed up in these seven elements of this renewed covenant that God gives to Moses. Next time we'll pick up in verse 29 and see what happens when Moses comes down from Mount Sinai with the renewed covenant, these two new tablets of stone. Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for spelling out for us so clearly in the example of the nation of Israel the elements and the priorities of our life before you. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will minister these truths to our hearts. Help us to live in a way that is pleasing in your sight.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.