**Session 7: Egypt and Exodus (Part II)**

Israel has been in Egypt for 400 years and God will form them into a kingdom of priests as His firstborn. The problem is that they do not know who God is and who they are. God is going to give them that identity.

Chapter19:6; called to be a kingdom of priests (Kohen, Kohanim; priest, priests); they will bring the Good News to the nations manifesting God’s presence to the world. God will also give them the Law and a tabernacle; He will gift them the gift of the Sabbath (this is important because they have been enslaved and beaten down; now God redeems them and gives them rest). The greatest thing is that the God of Israel, unlike the Greek gods that above their subjects, the God of Israel is going to live among them (tabernacle) He will lead them, guide them and provide for them.

**Review of the timeline**: 6 major covenants starting with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and now in Chapter 24; He will raise them up to be a nation of priests.

Chapter 19:6; “And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” V. 8 “We will do all that the Lord has spoken;” these are the terms of the covenant.

Chapter 20; God will lay out what He expects of this covenantal relationship (which is the 10 Commandments); the question continues “Do we have to still follow them?” Yes! Jesus embodies the 10 Commandments; living according to them; they supersede all time; they are Universal Law.

We think about the Law of the Old Testament differently than they did; “I love your law” said David; this law (Torah; rooted in Yarah; “to throw or cast” used in an archer’s term meaning “hitting the mark”); and the “mark” is the glory of God, the presence of God, the beatific vision; to be with God forever and ever; which is given to Israel after they have been released from bondage. We do not think of Law in this fashion. The reason why Israel appreciates the Law because it must be understood in the context of covenant and relationship; like many other (covenantal) relationships, as they mature and become more serious there are natural progressions concerning rules and regulations (which are good for the relationship). In the 10 Commandments, God is saying to Israel that there is no other gods and other different aspects of that. People that do not understand this covenantal relationship do not comprehend why there are rules and regulations. Ultimately, it is for our good! Learning obedience may actually mean saving our lives. God loves us and has set forth His law so that we may have life. We have the choice to obey or not.

“Chet” (to miss the mark) means disobedience.

**The 10 Commandments**: Exodus 20:3-4 “You shall have no other gods before me and have no graven image before me” (Catholics group the first two Commandments unlike our Protestant brothers and sisters; (cf Catechism No. 2085; tell us why this Commandment is number 1 because we are to manifest the presence of God to the world).

Catechism: No. 2116 “All forms of divination….” Horoscopes, astrology, mediums, etc. contradict the honor, respect and loving fear that we owe to God alone.” This is to liberate to follow the one true God. We are called to forsake such things as these. Why do we turn to these turn to things “in fun” when we have so many other things?”

V. 4: “Graven images” don’t Catholics have all statues in churches? Catechism Nos. 2130-2131 tells us that everything changed with the Incarnation of Christ. So images of Christ, the Blessed Mother, Saint Joseph, the Blessed Mother and the Saints are now permitted.

Chapter 21-23; “The Book of the Covenant” is made up of laws that Israel is supposed to obey and how they will treat the sojourners that come along; this might be considered the first catechism of how to treat people. Israel, as a child was an abused child (during the first 400 years of life); to avoid becoming abusers themselves, so God tells them to treat them with dignity, treat them as I treat you.

Chapter 24; the terms of the Covenant are read and they all agree to obey (v.7) “All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will be obedient.” Then the ceremony of blood takes place. This is a new covenant; vv. 15-18 Moses go to Mount Sinai for 40 days (the # for testing) and something is happening below (Chapter 25-31 Moses receives a pattern for worship; have the veil pulled back so he can see the tabernacle); like Saint John gets the similar vision that we read about in the Book of Revelation. In the Bible worship is liturgical, very formal, very organized.

Chapter 32: Moses hears from God, the people down below took the gold from the Egyptians and fashioned a golden calf (remember the 10 plaques; Egyptian idol Apis); they went back to what they knew. This is what happens without Moses’ leadership.
V. 7; Moses is sent down to “his” people; the “stiff necked” people; then Moses begs and intercedes on behalf of the people; he appeals to God a.) about His reputation (v.12) and b.) (vv. 12-13) remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whom You swore by Your own self; You made a covenant! This is for Moses’ sake not God’s; he is learning the power of the covenant. God changes; *Shub* (Hebrew) *Metanoia* (Greek) to turn. Why does nothing happen to Aaron? The Good News is the Moses intercedes for him; he is guilty but he gets a pass just like we are guilty and are forgiven as well. Is Aaron forgiven for the sake of Moses? There is a major change; from law and a tabernacle, but the nations of priests look like they are laicized; God chooses one tribe to be the priests (the Levites) over this problem of the golden calf; those who corrupted the people; around the tabernacle are the Levites are like “deacons” are serving; but the priests are from the tribe of Levi but from the family of Aaron. This is where the Book of Leviticus comes from; Chapter 1-16 is the priestly code; Chapter 17 is for the people.

Israel has formed a new form of priesthood, they have the liturgy and tabernacle and the law to lead them as a nation of priests as the firstborn; their entire lives have changed from food, clothing and liturgy. God has laid out on the calendar salvation history where the hours and days have meaning. Every 7th day is holy so they rest, every 7th year is a sabbatical year and every 7x7 years is the great jubilee; they have pilgrimage feasts throughout the year;

1.) Passover (Unleavened bread; pilgrimage to Israel)
2.) Pentecost (Weeks; 50 days after the Pentecost)
3.) Sukkot (Tabernacles; to commemorate their journey)

The Catholic Church also have these feasts; as we follow the life of Christ: which fulfills the Old Testament Feasts:

1. Advent (anticipation of the birth of the King)
2. Christmas (the birth of the King)
3. Ordinary Time (the teachings of the King)
4. Lent (preparation for the most important part of the year)
5. Death and burial of the King
6. Easter (the event)
7. Ordinary Time
8. Feast of Christ the King

We too have the liturgical year; again, this is the Church that Jesus started; liturgy is the work of the people.

Chapter 33-34: Covenant Renewal: (vv. 2-3 “I am going to send an angel to go with you”); Moses responds “You are not going to go with us” “Is it not Your presence among us that makes us distinct among the nations?” If You do not go with us then we do not have a mission; then God said He would go with them. This notion of “God being with us” means that He is near; John 1: “God dwelt among us” as a Catholic Church, what makes us distinct and different (from other Christians) is that God, His real presence is in our midst (not of our own doing, but His); His presence in the Eucharist, God is with us! This is why we bless ourselves when we pass Catholic churches.

God will dwell on the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant; leading his people by a cloud by day and fire by night; just as He leads and guides us today.

Moses cuts two new tablets; one is placed before the Ark of the Covenant, with Aaron’s rod (priestly authority) and a bowl of manna; later we will find out that it will travel and be sealed in a cave in Jeremiah’s time; and John will describe the new Ark of the Covenant will be Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh; the bread from heaven; the King of kings and Lord of lords, Mary is the new Ark of the Covenant. We will begin to see what is coming ahead and what is the fulfillment.

Chapter 35-40; building of the tabernacle; Moses blesses it as God blessed the Sabbath when it was done, “it was good.” There are a lot of relationship with the building of the Tabernacle and the story of creation. It is a microcosm of creation, where God dwells with us as He did with Adam and Eve.

**The Key**: as God was present on Mount Sinai (the fire and the clouds) in a unique way; people were afraid; would it be great if we could take this experience with us every day? The Tabernacle is making now God present among Israel, which makes Him unique among the nations; this concludes with one year on Sinai. A lot has change; hopefully, they have learned to trust God a little more; would you have trusted more then? What about today with everything we have? Do we trust God?

The Book of Numbers; they break camp and move North to the Promised Land to face more struggles; when Israel becomes complacent with God in their midst.

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