

Dr. John Oswalt, Exodus, Session 10, Exodus 19-20

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This is Dr. John Oswalt in his teaching on the book of Exodus. This is session 10, Exodus 19-20.

Great to see each of you. Thank you for coming. I got a report on Ruth Mitchell a few minutes ago. No, she's in Cardinal Hill, began her therapy today and informed folks that she has certain hours when she goes to see the therapist, but she will be doing her exercises in her room, of course. And the good word that I heard was the first words out of her mouth when she fell were, I won't be able to go to Bible study. What a good woman.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for your goodness to us. We thank you for the blessings that you pour out upon us. We thank you for the blessing of an example like Ruth Mitchell. Thank you for her. Thank you for her faithfulness. Thank you for her commitment to you and your word.

And we pray your blessing upon her that she may indeed recover as quickly as possible and that we may again enjoy the blessing of her presence. Thank you, Father, for all of the ways in which each of us experiences your blessings. Forgive us when we focus on our problems and forget all of the unseen care that you lavish upon us that we just take for granted.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you now for this; it is another opportunity to spend an hour around your word. Please open its truth to us, O Lord, that we may live to serve you and your world. In your name, Amen.

All right, we are looking this evening at chapter 19 and the first part of chapter 20. Obviously, the first part of chapter 20 is loaded with content, and we'll only just touch it in this survey, but we will try to touch it at least.

Notice the background, the second element on the background there. The biblical covenant follows the form of covenants that are used, that were used throughout the Near East. This was a covenant between a great king, an emperor if you will, and a subject people.

It begins with an introduction, typically telling who the king is and who the people are, though it may just tell who the people are and who the king is. A second is a historical prologue, which spells out what has happened to make this covenant possible. Now, in these kinds of covenants, typically, the historical incident was the king had come in and whipped them, and they were a beaten people, and the king now, in his great, great kindness, says, I'd like to make a covenant with you.

Little choice did they have. We'll see a very different historical prologue for the Bible. Then come the stipulations, what the two parties to the covenant agree to.

And then comes in again, in this political covenant form that's used, the witnesses. Excuse me. No, the next one typically is what to do with the text.

Where is the text of this covenant to be kept? Typically, it is to be kept in the main temple of the subject people. Then comes a list of divine witnesses, all the gods that are called upon to witness this covenant. And finally, a list of blessings and curses, which follow.

If you keep the covenant, these are the blessings. If you break the covenant, these are the curses. Now, it's fascinating that the book of Deuteronomy pretty much conforms to this pattern, but chapters 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Exodus also conform to it pretty dramatically.

We'll be talking about this over the next three weeks as we look at this material. Now, in the outline of the book that we talked about, chapter 19 is preparation for the covenant. This is a very, very serious moment.

God has been working with these people now for at least 400 years. Go back to Abraham at another 150 years, 550 years. God has been slowly bringing them along to this point.

Will they accept this covenant? Will they enter into a binding relationship with God? Paganism is not about commitment. It's as little commitment as you can possibly make with a maximum emphasis on what you can do to control the gods to make them bless you. This is radically different in that God is inviting these people into a relationship where they commit themselves to him, but he also commits himself to them.

So, it's a critical, critical moment, and we'll spend a fair amount of time this evening talking about this preparation. Then, chapters 20 through 23 are the presentation of the covenant, where the terms of the covenant are laid out, and then chapter 24 is the sealing of the covenant, the covenant ceremony in which the people accept the covenant and agree to keep it. So, this part of the book, we talked about chapters 1 through 15 as a revelation of God's power.

Chapters 16, 17, and 18, what did we call that? Anyone remember? Maybe I will take up truck driving after all. A revelation of his providence. Give that lady a gold star.

A revelation of his providence. God cares. Yes, he has power.

Yes, he's the greatest God on the face of the earth, the only God on the face of the earth, but this powerful God also cares for his people. Now, we are getting a revelation of his person or his principles. What kind of a God is this powerful, provident being? And one of the functions of the covenant, it becomes very clear.

We've got 14 or 15 of these covenants. It's pretty clear that the stipulations in the various covenants reflect the character, purposes, and wishes of the great king. One of these kings, every one of his covenants has no adultery.

Interesting. You wonder what exactly is going on there in that man's life, but what we're seeing then is, in this covenant, a revelation of the character and the nature of God. So, keeping the Ps, a revelation of his purpose, of his person, a revelation of his principles.

Okay, that being said, let's look now. Questions or comments about this material? Yes. That's involved, yes, in the blessings of the curses.

Yes. Yeah. All right.

Chapter 19 then is the preparation. What is the opening date that is given in the first verse? The third month. Third month from what? The Passover.

The Passover occurred on the 14th day of the first month. So now on the first day of the third month, they arrive at Sinai. That's a key point because this is Passover when God delivers from death, and this is at the time of the feast of first fruits or since it's 50 days later, Pentecost, and that Pentecost has to do with the 50 days.

So, what's going to happen here in this third month? They're going to receive the Torah which is the revelation of his character. So, for the Jews, as they became more urbanized and less rural, this feast became not so much a harvest festival which is what it was in the beginning. You had finished the barley harvest and you were beginning the wheat harvest.

So, this one-day festival was a festival of thanks for what had been harvested and a festival of trust for what was going to be harvested. But I say as they became less rural and a little more urbanized, slowly this feast of Pentecost came to be a celebration for the giving of Torah. Now, think about that.

What is Easter about? Deliverance from death. The lamb is slain from the foundation of the earth. And what is Pentecost about? The giving of the Holy Spirit.

The enablement finally after 1400 years. The enablement to keep the Torah. And so you can sense what Paul is doing when in chapter 6 he says as a Christian born again, raised from the dead, you've got to quit sinning.

But you can't quit sinning on your own. I know, he says. I've been there.

I've done that. There is now, therefore, no condemnation to those who do not walk in the flesh but walk by the Spirit. Pentecost has come.

For 1400 years, we Jews have been trying to keep the Torah in our own strength and can't. Love it. It defines us.

It makes us who we are. And we can't do it. It damns us at every step of the way.

But now the promise has come. The Holy Spirit has come to enable us. So, it's very significant that the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost and not three days later or four days earlier.

On that day. That day when his coming is the fulfillment of the Torah. Okay.

Verse 2. There, Israel encamped before the mountain. What did Chapter 3, verse 12, tell us? God said this would be a sign. You will bring my people out of Egypt, and they will worship me on this mountain.

What do you think Moses was feeling as they got to that mountain? Affirmed. A deep, deep sense of God's faithfulness. God has kept his promises.

Yes. Yes. So again, as we've talked before it's not clear how many of the Hebrew people really learned the lessons of the exodus and the crossing of the sea and the journey through the desert.

But Moses did. Moses got it. And this must have been a great moment of confirmation.

Does anybody here have an experience like that you'd like to share? When God has led you and you had to step out in faith and then at a later point he's confirmed it? Well, I when I was still in the in the service and I was on the that SJ duty and maybe the Lord said it's time for you to resign and come out of the army. I've got a place for you. I want you to go to.

At that time, I thought he was saying seminary. He was saying he was not into the full-time clerical ministry but teaching. And so, it was Asbury, and that's where it started.

But when I got that word, when I got that function, both of us looked, and we prayed and said, well, and we talked to somebody back here. There were no houses available—nothing available here to move here just suddenly like that.

It was going to occur within about six months. But even before, about a week before I got here, a house opened up. It was the old Methodist Parish.

And we came there, and just as an addition again an affirmation, we had prayed as a family for that local for housing and a place to go, and my youngest daughter Ann, the rambunctious one, jumped up in prayer in the middle of the prayer and said daddy can we have a fireplace in our new home. And I wanted to push it down. I said no, well, we can't really, uh, you know, ask for that kind of specific things, and a fireplace is not the important thing.

And the Lord spoke to me almost out of it and said, how dare you. How dare you. So, when we came here, and we first saw the house, and we'd never had it before, we walked in that house, and there was a fireplace.

So, with affirmation, it was sort of whipped cream on top. Yes, how dare you. Good, good.

Okay thanks. According to verses four and five, why did God deliver them from Egypt? To bring them to himself so that they would be his special treasure. Now it's interesting God didn't really say that to Abraham or to Jacob or to Joseph.

But here's what this was all about all the way through those days. It was about God wanting a people for himself. I bore you to myself on eagle's wings.

I think oftentimes it's hard for us to really believe how much God values our fellowship with him. But this says that's what it was about that we could come to him as his treasured possession and enjoy his fellowship.

Yes, yes, that's the next question. That's all right. What are the implications of verse six for Israel's purpose in the world? What is that saying about Israel's purpose in the world? They should be intercessors.

Yes, a holy priesthood or a holy nation. A royal priesthood. Now it's very interesting.

Royalty suggests kingship. Priesthood service. The holy one is possession.

We are God's possession and, therefore, partake of his character. So that there's a sense in which when you put all that together you come up with the Messiah. In one sense Israel never quite fulfilled that.

But the Messiah did fulfill it for the sake of all of us. But they are to be priests. As Mel said, to be a priest is to be an intercessor.

It is to be a mediator. Well, a mediator for whom? The world huh? Yes. Their election is for the sake of others.

Why does God bring them to himself? He loves them. He wants their fellowship. But is he going to be content with their fellowship? No.

He wants the fellowship of the entire world. And they then their election is for a purpose. So the initial pattern of the Levites then.

Mm-hmm. The Levites are the priests for Israel, and Israel is to be the priests for the world. Now, they really did not get that until after the exile.

It's only after the exile that they have no king. They have no independent nation-state. They have no army.

And they're saying, who are we? Well, what are we supposed to be? And you sort of hear an Ezra saying have you read Exodus 19 recently? Oh, this is what we were supposed to have been from the beginning. And it took the fire of exile where they lost all that other stuff before they're ready to hear what it's about. Okay, now notice that verses five and six go together as Ron was observing.

How does verse five start? If yes if you will obey my voice and what? Keep my covenant. So here is the challenge. God is beginning the preparation and he's beginning the preparation here cognitively.

He's getting them to think. He's motivating them to keep the covenant and the initial is backward. Remember what I've done for you.

How I have borne you to myself and then forward. If you will keep the covenant that I'm going to offer you in the next few days, there's a promise for you. So, he's beginning by getting them to think about this thing.

Now I observe that in verse 19 or 6, we have the second occurrence of holy in the book. The first occurrence was in chapter 3, verse 5. Holy ground, and you will now be a holy nation. Now, is there anything morally excellent about that ground? Say no.

Yeah, that's right. No, there is nothing morally excellent about that ground. What are we saying about it? The presence of God was there, and where God's presence is, that is, in essence, holy because God's essence is holy.

The concept here is of otherness. God is other than anything else in creation. So, it will often be said that holy means set apart, and that's certainly true as far as it goes.

This ground is other than ordinary ground. You've got ordinary ground on the bottom of your shoes. Don't mix that ordinary ground with this ground which is another kind of ground.

Take your shoes off. So, we're talking here about God's holy essence. God is not like you.

He's not like me. He's not part of this world. He is other than this world.

Well, what's going on here? He wants to be with his people. They will be holy. All right.

Once again, it is you will belong to me, and belonging to me is going to make you other. But now we're not talking about holy essence. As will become clear we're talking about holy character.

God is calling them to behave differently than the world. The world lives for itself to aggrandize itself to satisfy its own needs and its own desires and own purposes. But this is going to be another kind of nation.

A nation that gives itself to a kingly priesthood. Not a sort of well I'm no good. I can't do anything and so I'll just have to live my life for others.

No. It's a royal priesthood. A priesthood who knows its worth.

Who knows its place? Who knows its value and gladly lays aside its own self-interest? Its own self-aggrandizement for the sake of others.

So, in these two instances in 3:5 and 19:6 we have a comprehensive vision of holiness. No. We cannot finally share the essence of God.

He's the only one who is truly other. But we can share his character, and that character is different too. Self-giving love will always be other in this world.

Integrity does not care about the aggrandizement that lying can give. Is always going to be other in this world. So, these two occurrences are quite significant.

At the very outset, you come to grips with the fact that the one you're dealing with is another kind of being. Get that fixed in your heads. Now, at this moment, when the covenant is about to be revealed to you, what is it for? What's it about? It's about your becoming other in his character.

Yes. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, aren't we in some way also sharing his essence? I think it's going too far in the sense that you're still part of creation. You're still limited.

So, all those, you don't have omniscience, you don't have omnipresence. Those qualities that separate God from this world are of his essence; we don't get that. But his character we do.

Okay. So, as I said, these verses prepare the people cognitively to accept the covenant. Think.

Think where you've come from. Think what I've done for you. Think about the marvelous promises that I have for you.

If you'll accept the covenant. Okay. Let's push on.

Verses 10 through 15. There are three things here that the people are called to do. What are they? Wash their clothes.

Wash the clothes. Build a fence. And what else? Yes.

Suspend. Do not make yourself eunuchs or whatever. What's the significance of those? What are they saying about God? All right.

He is clean. What's coming up here is not going to defile you. It's not going to make you unclean, unlike some other activities.

Build a fence around the mountain. He is separate. You cannot become him.

You cannot be absorbed into him or absorb him into yourself. And how about this? The pagan religion centers on fertility. We will reproduce ourselves.

We will gain control of the life force. And in a real sense, this is the expression that we will deny ourselves because God can't be controlled through our behavior. So, in a real sense, this is rather like the Sabbath day.

Does God want us to stop working? No. But every seven days, he wants us to remind ourselves that it's not my work that gives me my life. So, in the same way here, God thinks he did a good job with sex.

If you have a question about that, read the Song of Solomon. God is not anti-sexual, but he's saying here for a period of time, remind yourselves you do not have in you the life force. You cannot reproduce yourself in the fullest, truest sense of the word.

Okay, now I said the first preparation was cognitive. What's this preparation? Well, no. Yeah, it's physical preparation.

It's actions. And the technical terminology is volitional. The first one is about something to think about.

This is about something to do. And in a real sense, it's the idea that here, in baby steps, God is saying, do this, and you do this. Getting them ready for a few days later when God is going to say in a big package, do this.

And they've been prepared, so they say yes. Okay, so cognitive, volitional. Now, look at the next paragraph.

As I look at the clock, I think we're in trouble. The next paragraph, which I'm just going to answer for you, is about affective feelings. Look at that.

On the morning of the third day, there were thunders and lightnings, a thick cloud on the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire.

The smoke went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered in thunder. Feelings, senses.

So, God has concern for the whole person. Cognitively, he's concerned about how we think. Volitional, he's concerned about what we do and how we can exercise ourselves in work and activity.

And he's concerned about what we see, what we hear, what we smell, what we feel. So, in a remarkably holistic way, God is preparing the people for this amazing event that's about to occur. Well, it seems like in all of this, he's giving them spiritual and physical boundaries.

And then those two types of boundaries prepare them for the Ten Commandments because we see those boundaries given in the Ten Commandments. Yes, yes. The spiritual dealing with the worship and then the other dealing with mankind.

Yep, spiritual and physical and in a sense, spiritual and physical is involved with all three of those. But God, sometimes we suggest that God is really only interested in the spiritual component. And that's not true.

God is concerned about every aspect of our being. He made us, and so he cares. So, when we attempt to make worship centers gorgeous, oftentimes in the Anabaptist tradition from which my family came, oftentimes it is no, no.

You have to destroy all affectation. Well, yeah, it can definitely get out of bounds. It can go over on the wrong side.

But God understands our need for beauty, and he understands our need to beautify things as an expression of love. So, all of these are in their appropriate place. Isn't he also connecting what he said earlier, that I am God and don't trifle with me.

You can be the intercessors, but we are not the same. That's right. We are not little gods.

That's exactly right. And that's in the face of paganism, because paganism in a real sense tries to obliterate the distance between us and the divine, so that we can become divine and that way control the divine without ever having to surrender our own control of ourselves. That's the goal of paganism.

And God says, no, you cannot control me. In fact, if you try to control me, you'll destroy yourself. Don't come near the mountain.

And it's interesting, I asked the question there with the last verse where Moses goes up to God, and God says, I want you to go back down there and tell him not to go across that fence. And Moses says, God, we built the fence. They're scared to death of you.

They're not going to go across the fence. Go down and tell him not to cross that fence. This is serious business.

Serious business. Okay. Chapter 20, verse 1, is the introduction, and God spoke all these words.

Chapter 20, verse 2, is the historical prologue. I am the Lord your God who beat the tar out of you. No, no, I'm the Lord your God who brought you out of slavery.

There is a total 180-degree difference. I'm your King who has beaten you and you are my slaves. And here is the covenant you're going to accept.

I'm the God who's delivered you from slavery and I invite you into a covenant with me. I can't make you. If I made you, it wouldn't be any good.

So, I invite you. I've done all I can do to prepare you to bring you to the place where you want to say yes. But the history that underlies this new relationship is a history of deliverance.

Now, what we have in the Ten Commandments is, I have the short form of the stipulations. This is what you're going to agree to in this covenant with me. Then we have an interlude that we'll talk about next week and then we have the long form.

Now the difference between the short and the long form is the long form is expressed in specific cases. If then. If this should happen, then this is what you must do.

Now, that's the way law codes all over the ancient world were stated. But the covenant form lets you do something else. And this is, if you will, the equivalent to Hammurabi's code or the Sumerian Ur-Namu or all the rest.

The key is it's put in the context of a covenant with God. Now I'll say more about this next week. The interesting thing that a covenant can do is these are absolute prohibitions or commands.

These are pragmatic, if you will. These are principles. These cases grow out of these eternal principles.

And those principles, as I said, are rooted in the character of the great king. You shall not lie. You shall not steal.

No ifs, no ands, no buts. This is the way it is. Okay, how many of these commandments, these short-form principles that are the basis for all the rest, how many of them have to do with God? Four of them have to do with God.

Now I thought maybe some of you would say, somebody would say all ten, and that would have been all right. But four of them are specifically related to God. That means that since we can all do basic arithmetic, there are six that have to do with other humans.

Now, wait a minute. This is a covenant with God. What's going on here? What's being revealed? The character of God.

If you're going to be in a relationship with me, the way you treat other people is the key to whether you are in a relationship with me or not. Wow. Wow.

Let me live in a closet, and I'll be the holiest guy you ever saw. It's just having to live with people like you that makes it so hard. I don't understand.

So, it's not just other, it's not just neighbors, those that believe in God like you, but all of you. Exactly. Exactly.

Yes. I tend to think it's starting with other communities. You shall not kill.

Period. You shall not steal. Period.

So yes. Yes. Now, let's talk about those first four.

What's the first one say? Worship God exclusively. What does the second one say? No idols. And can we flesh that out a little more? What aren't they to do? Yes.

Don't make a God in creation form. What does the third one say? Don't make God's character, nature, and function empty. That character, nature, and function are names.

Because I had three mothers: my two older sisters, nine and ten years older than I, and then my birth mother. I was a very moral little boy. I did not swear, and it made me almost sick if my friends on the playground did.

So, I felt pretty good about that third commandment. Then, I got older and learned something. Anytime you feel good about a commandment, you don't understand it.

Commandments weren't given to make us feel good, and they were given to drive us to the cross. So, we're not talking about simply using the name of God in a casual oath. By God I will, when you have no intention of it.

That's included. But there are many, many more ways of making God appear empty. His name is valueless.

I have to confess, I'm very, very troubled by the text message. Oh my God. I hear Christian teenagers saying that.

Is it taking God's name in vain? Yes, it is. It is emptying God of any real value. Oh my God.

No, no. They learned it from others. So, there are a lot of ways of making him empty.

And then what about the fourth one? Our time is God's, and we show that by what we do with one seventh of it. One-seventh of our time. We sanctify all of our time by what we do with that one seventh.

I'm not saying that if we do holy things on the Sabbath, then we can do unholy things for the other six days and it's okay. Not at all. But I'm saying that if I, every seven

days, stop and think, who am I? Who is the source of my life? Who is the supply of my needs? If I stop every seven days and think about that, I'm much more likely to use the other six days in keeping with who he is and who I am.

Now what God is doing here is he's teaching some very, very profound truths. Here he's teaching monotheism. I've said this before, I'll say it again.

There are only three monotheistic religions in the world. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. And they all three got it from that one single source.

You'd almost think monotheism was revealed, wouldn't you? If you didn't know better. The anthropologists tell us, oh yeah, yeah, when people get smart they sort of naturally come to understand one God. No, they don't.

The Egyptians were the smartest people in the world. The Indians today are brilliant people. And they're Egypt and the Hindus, raging polytheists.

No, you don't come to monotheism just by reasoning your way there. God is not this world. How many religions are there that deny the making of idols? Same three.

Only these three. And they got it from one place. Now, you see, God doesn't go into a big philosophical argument here.

He says, you want to be in a covenant with me? And they say, yes, yes, we saw what you did to the Egyptians. Yes, we want to be in a covenant with you. And he says, good.

Then, you can't recognize any other gods. He doesn't say at this point, there aren't any other. He just says, practically speaking, if you're going to be my people, I'm the only God you can recognize.

And about a thousand years later, A.B. elbows Zeke and says, Zeke, Zeke, I'll bet there aren't any other gods. And Zeke says, wow, I'll bet you're right. Same thing here.

Transcendence. God is not this world. And you can't manipulate him through this world.

That's the only book in the world that teaches that. Talk about a complicated philosophical concept. Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato struggled with it.

These are slaves. So what does God say? You can't make me in the form of anything on this earth. And about a thousand years later, A.B. elbows Zeke and says, Zeke, Zeke, I'll bet God's not this world.

And Zeke says, ooh, that's deep. God is teaching them profound truths. You can't manipulate him through his name, and you can't use his name for your own self-aggrandizement.

He is the author of time. All time is his. Whoa.

Stephen Hawking still hasn't figured out what time is about. So, there it is. Four things establish some key principles about time.

About God's essence. About his nature. And then comes six that tell us something about his person.

He values family. Honor your father and your mother. Remember something? You didn't make yourselves.

You're not self-existent. You are a gift. A gift of love.

However, imperfectly, they may have loved. You're a gift. Don't forget it.

That means that, in the family line, you need to be the kind of person your children can honor. Honor your father and mother. That's all it says.

That your days may be long in the land, there is a tradition of family honor and respect going both directions here. God values families.

Why? Because he values relationships. That's why. As I said, you and I don't exist alone.

We couldn't exist alone. And I, as I tell people, all my original thoughts come from either C.S. Lewis or Dennis Kinlaw. One of Dr. Kinlaw's observations, you know, one of those things that's just something you've always known and yet never thought of.

Suppose a spaceship came to Earth and their purpose was to study humanity. And they got one of us. They'd get it wrong, wouldn't they? Because humanity is bi-part.

You've got to get a male and a female if you're ever going to understand humanity. Our culture hates that. Hates it.

It doesn't even know it hates it, but it does. I am complete in myself, and I don't need any woman.

I am complete in myself, and I don't need any man. Now, if you're single here, I'm not for a moment suggesting that somehow you are defective. Not at all.

Not at all. But I'm talking about God's overall vision of humanity. We cannot be fully human without that relationship.

He did this to us. Men are from Mars, women are from Venus. He did this to us.

Again, this is from Dennis Kinlaw. He said Elsie and I have lived together for 52 years; I think it was at the time I heard him say this. If you ask me what she's going to do next, I can tell you pretty closely.

If you ask me why she's going to do it, God did this to us. We need one another. Family.

You shall not, and the word is murder. This is not a statement about warfare necessarily. So, the King James Union, you shall not kill, is a bit misleading.

This is the distinct Hebrew word for murdering. Where one individual kills another individual with premeditation because of something that serves the killer. God values human life.

You shall not commit adultery. And I am confident that he chose that expression of sexuality on purpose. He doesn't say, and you need just to cut me a little slack here.

He doesn't say you shall not commit homosexual behavior. He doesn't say you shall not commit fornication. He doesn't say you shall not commit prostitution.

Now, there are other places in the Bible where those are spelled out. They're off-limits. But the one he chooses here for this principle upon which all sexuality rests is adultery.

Why? Because it is breaking faith in a relationship. It's not an affair. I remember as a child trying to get my dad to explain why that kind of behavior should be called adultery.

He wasn't very successful. But there it is. Sexuality is for the purpose of relationship.

And any use of sexuality that denies that relationship is a tragedy. But in particular, this expression which is the breaking of faith is, if you want to say, the worst of all yes. Yes.

A couple of hot-blooded kids in the backseat of a car not good. But God is less concerned about that than he is about a 50-year-old man who says, well, mama's got some dents in her fenders. I think I'll get me one of these new models.

Years ago, I heard a man say that in the presence of his wife, and she said, Buster, they don't make the new models like they made the old ones. Then she hit him. Yeah, then she hit him, yeah.

But there it is. God values our sexuality in the context of relationships, of becoming all we were meant to be. You shall not steal.

God values individual possessions. You, as an individual, have worth, and what you possess is yours. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

I think that's very significant. He doesn't say, and you shall not tell a lie. That's about me.

Well, I didn't exactly tell a lie. I gave a totally false impression, but I didn't really tell a lie. God says, get off it.

You gave a false impression about your neighbor. And Mel, I think neighbor here is in the sense of the good Samaritan. Who is my neighbor? You shall not ever believe that your neighbor's stuff would make you happy.

Stuff is not what it's about. So, thanks for your patience. We'll stop at this point.

But there the principles are, and everything else that's going to follow grows out of these principles. And God says you do not, ever, under any circumstances. And again, I'll say one more thing about that false witness thing.

Think about Corrie Ten Boom. She's got Jews in the basement. SS trooper knocks on the door.

Do you have any Jews in here? No, sir. A lot of people say, well, that's morally false. She told a lie.

She didn't bear a false witness about her neighbor. Well, you can think about that. God bless you.

We'll stagger on next week.

This is Dr. John Oswalt in his teaching on the book of Exodus. This is session 10, Exodus 19-20.