

Key Number Two

THE LAW



SETTING THE SCENE

*T*WO things happened after Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden.

The first was that evil got worse. It had taken root in human nature and brought great suffering, pain, and death to the human race. Eventually, God brought a worldwide flood to cut back the progress of evil that otherwise threatened to destroy the whole of humanity.

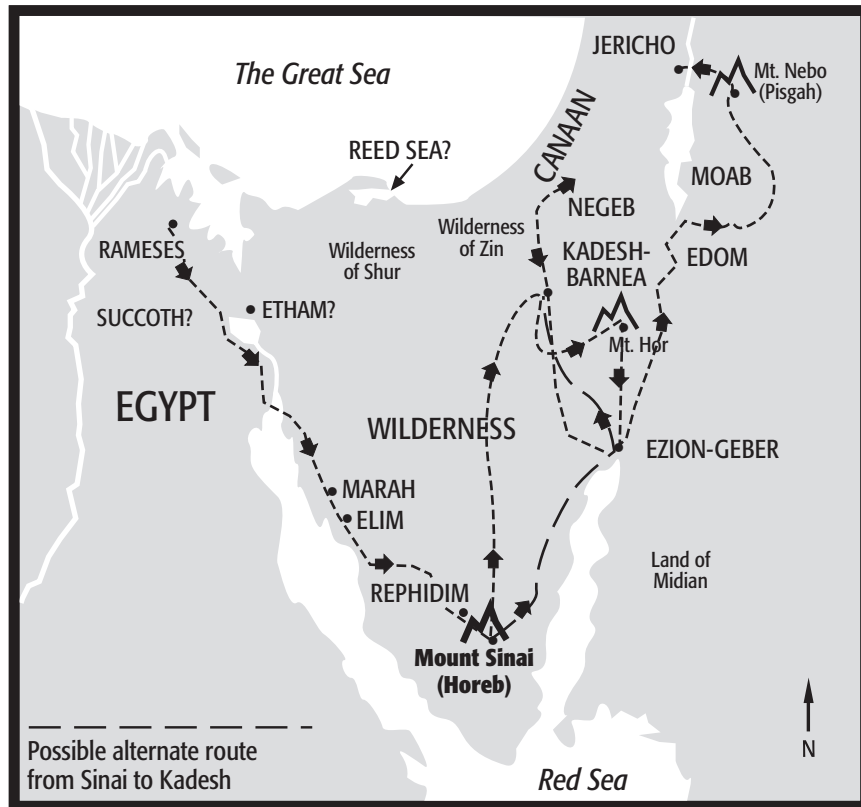
The second was that God kept reaching out to men and women. God had promised that a deliverer would come to save us from the knowledge of evil and restore God's presence and blessing. The Bible story shows us how God is faithful to His promise.

God made Himself known to a man by the name of Abraham, promising to bless him and bring blessing to the whole world through him (Genesis 12:2–3). From this point onward, the Bible story focuses on the descendants of Abraham.

During a great famine, Abraham's grandson Jacob and his entire family settled in Egypt, where there was grain. Their descendants remained there and eventually became enslaved and oppressed. Over a period of four hundred years, Jacob's descendants grew in number from the seventy original family members to a people numbering nearly two million.

God had compassion on these people and acted to deliver them. He raised up Moses, who led them out of Egypt and back to the land God had promised to Abraham. Along the way, these two million Hebrew people stopped at Mount Sinai, where God made a covenant with them, in which He said, "I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people" (Leviticus 26:12). Then God gave them the Ten Commandments.

THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS TO MOUNT SINAI



Moses led the Hebrew people out of Egypt to Mount Sinai, where God gave them the Ten Commandments.

DATES	EVENTS	BOOKS OF THE BIBLE	WORLD HISTORY
	Creation The Flood	<i>Genesis</i>	Construction of pyramids begins in Egypt (2650 B.C.)
2000 B.C.	Abraham Isaac Jacob Four Hundred Years of Slavery in Egypt	<i>Job</i> <i>Genesis</i> <i>Exodus</i>	Metalworkers create bronze, ushering in Bronze Age
	Exodus from Egypt (Moses) Entrance into Canaan (Joshua)	<i>Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy</i> <i>Joshua</i>	Egyptians begin using parchment for writing
	Three Hundred Years of Chaos (the Judges)	<i>Judges</i> <i>Ruth</i>	King Tut buried with fabulous treasures in Egypt
1000 B.C.	King Saul King David King Solomon Divided Kingdom (930 B.C.)	<i>1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs)</i> <i>Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel and the Minor Prophets</i>	First Olympic Games held at Olympia in Greece
500 B.C.	Fall of Jerusalem and exile Rebuilding of Jerusalem (Ezra, Nehemiah)	<i>Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther</i>	Aesop becomes famous for his fables Plato born in Greece
4 B.C.	Birth of Christ		Great Wall of China completed

FOLLOWING ALONG

I. God Gave the Ten Commandments.

1. "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).
2. "You shall not make for yourself an idol" (v. 4).
3. "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God" (v. 7).
4. "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy" (v. 8).
5. "Honor your father and your mother" (v. 12).
6. "You shall not murder" (v. 13).
7. "You shall not commit adultery" (v. 14).
8. "You shall not steal" (v. 15).
9. "You shall not give false testimony" (v. 16).
10. "You shall not covet" (v. 17).

II. There Is Purpose in God's Law.

- A. God's Law is like a mirror reflecting the character of God.
1. Since they were His people, their lives must be modeled on who He is.
 2. Without God, there is no foundation for the commandments.
 3. Many people want to be good without God, but God defines what is good.
 4. When you see how the law reflects God's character, your reaction will be to worship Him.

B. God's Law is like an X ray reflecting our primary struggles.

1. The commandments speak to the ten most significant struggles of human life.
2. The first four commandments reflect our struggle to love God.
3. The last six commandments reflect our struggle to love our neighbor as ourselves.
4. The Law, like an X ray, reveals problems of which we are not aware.

C. God's Law is like a railway track giving direction for your life.

1. God wants your life to reflect His character.
2. The Holy Spirit can create a desire to follow God's laws within you.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. . . . And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

3. The Holy Spirit can give you power to move in the direction of God's commands.
4. The Holy Spirit turns God's commands into promises.

DISCUSSING TOGETHER

1. What was one of the big rules of your household, growing up?

2. In what ways did this lesson change your perspective of the Ten Commandments?

3. If God dropped the Ten Commandments into an isolated people group that knew nothing about Him, how do you think it would impact their lives?

4. Which of the Ten Commandments do you think are most difficult for people to obey? Why?

5. In what sense is the Law an X ray of our soul? What do you think it will reveal about the condition of our souls?

6. If the X ray of the Law shows our souls to be seriously sick, what hope is there for us?

Building the Story

THE LAW:

The Ten Commandments reflect the character of God, identify our greatest struggles, and demonstrate our need for Jesus Christ.

Looking Ahead

If you would like to prepare in advance for session three, read Leviticus 16. It describes the Day of Atonement, a religious ceremony instituted by God to illustrate how He would deal with our sins. Imagine how you would have felt if you were observing this ceremony.