

Exodus 028  
A Peculiar People  
Exodus 8:20-25  
December 28, 2025  
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Well good morning everybody. Happy, (almost) New Year. It is an interesting time of the year with Christmas and Thanksgiving behind us, new year's in front of us.

We are making our way verse by verse through the Book of Exodus. The Book of Exodus is about the redemption of a nation, the nation of Israel, which had been in bondage for 400 years. God raised up Moses as His instrument. That process is completed, and Moses, at age 80, steps out in faith to be used by God. God, through Moses and his brother Aaron, begins to rain plagues all over the land of Egypt as God's special nation is being redeemed.

We are now on the fourth plague. The Nile has been turned to blood. The frogs have multiplied. Gnats have multiplied all over Egypt from the dirt. Now we come to the flies. As we will be showing you, each of these plagues that God introduces mocks a different god in the polytheistic Egyptian pantheon.

The Plagues of Egypt			
NO.	DESCRIPTION	SCRIPTURE	Egyptian Deity
1.	Water to Blood	Exod. 7:14-25	Hapi, Khnum
2.	Frogs	Exod. 8:1-15	Heqt
3.	Gnats	Exod. 8:16-19	Set
4.	Flies	Exod. 8:20-32	Uatchit
5.	Disease on Cattle	Exod. 9:1-7	Hathor, Apis
6.	Boils	Exod. 9:8-12	Sekhmet, Serapis
7.	Hail	Exod. 9:13-35	Seth, Nut
8.	Locusts	Exod. 10:1-20	Seth, Nut, Osiris
9.	Darkness	Exod. 10:21-29	Re, Horus, Atum
10.	Death of the First Born	Exod. 12:29-36	Min, Osiris, Heqt, Isis

As we now prepare to study this fourth plague, the plague of flies, we can break this down into four parts: God's instructions to Moses (Exodus 8:20-23); what God predicts happens in terms of the flies (Exodus 8:24); Pharaoh starts to backpedal (Exodus 8:25-29); and then you see Moses' response (Exodus 8:30-32).

Let us take a look, first of all, at God's instructions to Moses. God gives to Moses instructions that He is to give to Pharaoh. We see a command (Exodus 8:20); a consequence (Exodus 8:21); and then there is going to be some divine protection (Exodus 8:22-23). Notice, first of all, the command. I am in Exodus 8:20. I should give you the title of this message. The title is "A Peculiar People."

Flies (Exodus 8:20-32)

- I. God Instructs Moses (20-23)
  - A. Command (20)
  - B. Consequence (21)
  - C. Protection (22-23)
- II. Prophetic Fulfillment (24)
- III. Pharaoh's Concession (25-29)
  - A. Pharaoh's proposal (25)
  - B. Moses' counter proposal (26-27)
  - C. Pharaoh's acceptance (28)
  - D. Moses' intention (29)
- IV. Moses' Response (30-32)

Notice Exodus 8:20, as God is instructing Moses:

*"Now the Lord said to Moses, 'Rise early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he comes out to the water, and say to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Let My people go, that they may serve Me'"' (Exodus 8:20).*

The end game, of course, is not just liberation from Egypt. That would be enough, but God liberated them for a purpose. The purpose is to serve Him.

We have a command (Exodus 8:20). The command is liberation from Egypt so that the nation will serve the Lord. That becomes the blueprint, that becomes the pattern, if you will, for God's work in our own lives. Did you know that God redeems us not just to redeem us? God redeems us so that He might use us.

*"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10).*

You will notice "that we might (*would*) walk." It is the Greek verb "peripateo," and it is in the subjunctive mood, meaning that it is the mood of possibility. I am either going to walk in the good works God has for me or I am not. The choice is up to me, even though I have already been redeemed.

One of the things that we strive for here is the clarity of the gospel. The gospel message itself to the lost sinner is very, very easy and is very, very simple. It is to believe or trust in the person of Jesus Christ so as to be saved. Yet when a person receives that, when a person accepts that, when a person embraces that, God has a purpose for that person's life. The purpose is that God might use that person's life as His channel, or as a vehicle to spill over to other people.

God did not just save me, and He did not just save you, to keep us out of hell. That, of course, is the most important thing—we are not going to hell—but God's purpose for us is so much higher than that. It is not only to have our fire insurance paid up; it is so that He might use us as a blessing to other people. That is why you see what you see as God is giving instructions to Moses for Pharaoh—"Let My people go." Notice that is not the end of the picture. The end of the picture is "that they may serve Me."

If you are a Christian moving into the year 2026, which we all are, we need to press into God's design, God's purpose for our lives. We are not saved by good works, but we are saved unto good works. We are saved in such a way that God simply wants to use us not to be reservoirs of blessing, but to be conduits of divine blessing. That is where spiritual life really starts taking a foothold in our lives.

It is interesting that as you look at the land of Israel, you will see two oceans, not oceans, but seas. There you will see the Sea of Galilee, and then you will see the Dead Sea. The Sea of Galilee teems with biological life: fish, sea animals, etc. You look at the Dead Sea and everything in the sea is dead. That is why we call it the Dead Sea.

Why is it that one sea is dead and the other sea is alive? The answer is that the Sea of Galilee has a river emptying into it, and then it has an outlet where water is released from it. The Dead Sea is not that way at all. It has water coming into it, but there is no outlet.

That becomes an interesting metaphor for the life of the Christian. Do you want to be the Sea of Galilee or do you want to be the Dead Sea? I am going to pick the Sea of Galilee. How do I become the Sea of Galilee instead of the Dead Sea? I start to see my life not as something that enters it, which is wonderful—we all need to take in divine truth—but I want to be an entity, a vessel that will release water out of it as well.

If I am a receiver and a taker, then essentially what starts to happen is that I start to die inside. The reason I die inside, just like the Dead Sea, is that I am really not living according to my purpose. I have become a reservoir of blessing and not a channel of blessing.

A Christian may be saved, but they really cannot experience the life that God has for them when they function that way. We cannot just receive, receive, receive, take, take, take, and at the same time not be in a position to give. What your Bible says is that it is better to give than to receive (Acts 20:35). It talks about how a person, when they water other people, they actually water themselves in the process (Proverbs 11:25).

God wants to use our lives in all kinds of different ways. That is the purpose of spiritual gifts. One of the great tools, or one of the great ambitions that you can have as you approach the year 2026 is to ask the Lord, "Lord, how do You want to use me this year? Do You want to use me as a teacher? Do You want to use me as a financial giver? Do You want to use me as a leader? Do You want to use me as an administrator? Do You

want to use me as an exhorter? Do You want to use me as an encourager? Do You want to use me as someone who exercises mercy to other people?"

These are all gaping needs within the body of Christ. They are gaping needs within our own church. As we do that, we find that our lives do not look like the Dead Sea anymore, but rather like the Sea of Galilee. You see this pretty clearly there in Exodus 8:20, when God says to Moses, "Tell Pharaoh to let My people go, that they may serve Me."

What if Pharaoh will not do what he is told? There is a consequence, and there are always consequences for disobeying God. Notice Exodus 8:21. This is what Moses is to tell Pharaoh:

*""For if you do not let My people go, I will send swarms of flies on you and on your servants and on your people and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians will be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they dwell"" (Exodus 8:21).*

"Pharaoh, if you do not listen to God, there is a consequence." That is how it always works in the Bible. There are consequences and repercussions for not obeying God.

*"But the way of the transgressor is hard" (Proverbs 13:15).*

Satan loves to come into our minds and get us to believe that if I do things my own way rather than God's way, I am really going to experience freedom. When you go down that road and rebel against the principles of God, you discover that you have been lied to. You have discovered that you have been deceived. In fact, the far easier path, the path of least resistance, would be obedience to God.

Deuteronomy 10:13 talks about the law, and it says this:

*"And to keep the Lord's commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?" (Deuteronomy 10:13).*

The Ten Commandments really are not so much ten restrictions. They are ten guardrails. It is like going to Pike's Peak and your child or your grandchild, when there are no guardrails or borders, starts to run for the side of the road and you tell them to stop. You are not trying to take away their freedom. You are trying to prevent them from destroying themselves, killing themselves, injuring themselves, hurting themselves and other people. That is the way the law of God operates. That is the way the law of God functions.

1 John 5:3 tells us that the commandments of our Lord are not burdensome. They are there to act as guardrails protecting our lives. When we live in deception and rebellion against the principles of God's Word in any area you can think of—sexuality, emotional well-being, how we conduct ourselves, gossip, any number of things where God's word

says, "No, stay away from that"—when we live our lives in rebellion against what God says, we start to discover a lot of consequences that we wish we would not have to experience, which could have been completely and totally avoided had we simply followed the way of the Lord at the beginning.

You will notice that Moses in Exodus 8:21 announces a consequence. The consequence is: Pharaoh, if you do not let My people go so that they may serve Me, then Egypt is going to be overrun by flies.

Flies are interesting because, as I mentioned before, the Egyptians worshiped what they called the god of the fly. Dr. Ed Hindson says:

"The Egyptian deity challenged by this plague would have been Uatchit, who looked like a fly and whose function was to divinely protect Egypt from insect swarms."<sup>1</sup>

All of these judgments that are coming upon Egypt are designed to attack an Egyptian deity. This is the nature of God. God hates rivals. Anytime a person, a society, or a culture starts to worship something other than God, God takes aim at that entity and tries to destroy it.

*"I am the Lord, that is My name;  
I will not give My glory to another,  
Nor My praise to graven images"* (Isaiah 42:8).

I am just wondering today, as we enter the year 2026, what kinds of idols do we have in our lives? Idols are things other than God that we get value, self-worth, or security from. There could be all kinds of things that we are trusting in other than God.

It could be wealth, which is not a sin in and of itself, but it becomes a sin when our possessions possess us rather than the other way around. It could be a talent; it could be an ability; it could be the way you look; it could be a connection that you have, a relationship that you have. These things are not sinful on the surface, but something that we have a tendency to elevate to too high of a standard in the human heart.

What you learn about the God of the Bible is that He takes aim at such things and deliberately tries to destroy them and bring them down, because He wants the place of preeminence in our hearts and our lives. That is what you see happening here in Exodus 8:21.

Then you go down to Exodus 8:22-23 and God, speaking to Moses what he is to say to Pharaoh, announces a divine protection. Notice Exodus 8:22:

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ed Hindson, Hindson, E. E., & Mitchell, D. R., eds. (2010). *King James Version Bible Commentary for Today: The Most Up-to-Date Commentary on the Time-Honored Text of the King James Version*, 93.

""But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there, in order that you may know that I, the Lord, am in the midst of the land"" (Exodus 8:22).

You will notice here that there is a reference to Goshen. You will notice that all of the places of geography in the Scripture are actual real places. Where is Goshen? Goshen is near the Nile Delta. It is a place that goes all the way back to the days of Joseph. It is where Joseph came to, along with his brothers. The Pharaoh that worked with Joseph took God's people and incubated them in the land of Goshen.



Goshen is called the land of the Hebrews within the land of Egypt. It says in Genesis 45:10, as you might recall:

*"You shall live in the land of Goshen, and shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have" (Genesis 45:10).*

What is being spoken of here is, although this judgment of flies is about to hit Egypt, God's people, the nation of Israel, the Hebrews living in Goshen, are going to be supernaturally protected.

What God is predicting here is that the children of Israel are going to be protected from this terrible plague that is coming as they are residing in Goshen. That is the exact same kind of thing that God is going to do for the saints in the Tribulation Period. There are coming upon the earth some terrible judgments. The Church of Jesus Christ will be raptured or taken to heaven before these judgments hit, and there will be many people that will be converted during the Tribulation Period. They are called saints.

Just because they are called saints, you should not say that they are Church Age saints. When you see "saints" in the Bible, you have to figure out what saints are in view. There are three kinds of saints. There are Old Testament saints. There are—today, since the day of Pentecost, up until the Rapture—Church Age saints, that is us.

Then there will be Tribulation Period saints, people that are converted primarily through the preaching of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists after the church has been removed.

Seeing the word "saint" does not give you the right to jam the church into that text. You have to ask yourself: What saints are in view? In this case, we are talking about Tribulation Period saints, as these terrible judgments as manifested in the seal judgments, the trumpet judgments, and the golden bowl of wrath judgments which are coming to planet Earth.

Many times God will supernaturally protect His own from those judgments. I do not think He does it 100% of the time, but He does do it some of the time. There is a reference to this in Revelation 9:4, which says, *"But only the men who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads"* would be affected by a plague that is described in the Book of Revelation.

*"So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast or worshiped his image" (Revelation 16:2).*

You will notice that particular malignancy that is coming is only for the unbelievers and not the believers. This shows us the supernatural power of God. He has the power to bring judgments, and at the same time, He has the power to target whom these judgments are to hit. In this case in the future Tribulation Period, the saints will be exempted from some of God's judgments.

God is doing the exact same thing here with this judgment of flies. He is exempting from it His people that will be safely and securely tucked away in Goshen.

Then you look at Exodus 8:23, why is God doing this? This is why I have entitled this sermon "A Peculiar People."

*"I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur" (Exodus 8:23).*

Why is God treating His own people differently than the unbelievers throughout the land of Egypt? The answer is that God has always treated His own people differently. In fact, one of the great purposes of God in our lives is to make us different from the world, to stand out from the world.

As Paul is writing to Titus on the island of Crete concerning the church, he calls us a peculiar people (Titus 2:14), not a people that are weird in the sense of fashion or trends, or something like that; and not in a nerdy type of sense. There are some people that are different because they just act differently, and that is not what the Bible is advocating.

What the Bible is promoting is a body of people that is different because they do not march according to the drumbeat of this world. They have a different value system. They think differently. One of the great strategies of Satan is to get the church, in terms of its value system, to be exactly like the world, because Satan understands that when the church becomes exactly like the world, the church loses its authority to speak to the world.

Why would an unbeliever follow the teachings of Christianity when the Christians watch the same programs and laugh at the same dirty jokes that the world laughs at? The world looks at that and says, "You know what? You are no different from us. I do not think I need your Jesus."

But the church starts to have power when it is unique from the world; different from the world; stands out from the world. This is why, as 2 Corinthians chapter 6:17 says:

*"Therefore, 'come out from their midst and be separate'" (2 Corinthians 6:17).*

This is the whole problem with Lot. In the Book of Genesis, Lot was living in a compromised position as a believer. He looked exactly like the world system around him. The moment that Lot became just like the surrounding culture of Sodom and Gomorrah, was the moment he lost his influence to speak into that civilization and culture. Even his own family did not take him seriously.

"Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, 'Up, get out of this place, for the Lord will destroy the city'"

What he is saying is true. He is preaching a really good sermon there, but notice the reaction of his family:

*"But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting" (Genesis 19:14).*

In fact, as far as I can tell, that is the only time the Bible uses the word "jesting."

"There goes Lot again, joking around again. Yeah, he is preaching spiritual truths, supposedly, but he sure does not have a lifestyle that emulates what he is preaching, so we are not going to take him seriously." This was at a time when he needed to be taken seriously, because what he was saying was true. God was about to destroy the whole city, and he got out. It does not look like they got out, as far as I can tell, because the individual, the gentleman Lot, did not have a lifestyle that matched his rhetoric.

The story of Lot is in the Bible to show us what we lose when our value system becomes exactly like the world. When we think the way the world thinks about sexuality, when we think the way the world thinks about the pursuit of mammon, or any other topic or subject that you can think about, we lose our ability to effectively reach the world because the world says, "What do they really have to offer? They are just like us."

In the Bible, you will see this constant push that God has towards making His people different from the world. That is why He says in Exodus 8:23: "I will put a division between My people and your people."

When He puts them under the Mosaic Law, which is coming at Mount Sinai, there are a lot of things that they are to stay away from, because that is what the pagans do. Unless you understand the surrounding pagan culture of Canaan, a lot of the commands that God gives in His law will not make sense to you. The moment you see that such-and-such behavior is exactly what the Canaanites did, is the moment we can see why God says, "Do not do that. Do not be like them. Be different. Be a unique and peculiar people."

We are supposed to stand out, as the Book of Philippians says, as lights shining in the midst of darkness, amongst a crooked and perverse generation and world (Philippians 2:15). That is our calling. With that calling comes the power or the authority to reach the surrounding culture.

He says in Goshen:

*""I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign will occur"" (Exodus 8:23).*

God likes to give signs commemorating His power. Isaiah 7:14 says, and this is a great passage to think about even a little bit after Christmas:

*"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).*

There is coming a sign. There is coming a miracle. The miracle is going to be a person born into the world from a virgin. Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who could pull off such a thing? God can pull it off because He is the God of signs.

"When you see these signs materialize over Egypt—the multiplication of the flies and how My people are going to be supernaturally protected in the midst of that—you will see a sign that will authenticate that it really comes from Me."

John's gospel is a book of signs. In John 20:30-31, John explains why he wrote the book. John the Apostle was an eyewitness, if you will, to the ministry of Christ. He is the apostle that put his head on the chest of Christ in the Upper Room (John 13:23). John is the apostle that Jesus called over and over again "the apostle whom the Lord loved." There is nobody that knew Jesus better than John in Christ's earthly ministry.

John wrote a book about it. It is called The Gospel of John. John explains why he wrote this book. At the end he says:

*"Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30-31).*

John says, "I want to write to you some signs that Jesus gave." In fact, at the end of his book, John says:

*"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose the world itself would not contain the books that would be written" (John 21:25).*

"I do not want my book to read like the United States tax code that just goes on forever and ever, so I want to highlight to you just seven signs."

The first sign is Jesus changing the water to wine at Cana of Galilee. Then you will see the healing of the official's son; the healing of the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda; the feeding of the 5,000; the walking on the water; the healing of the blind man; the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Actually, there are two more signs: the miraculous catch of fish, that is number nine; and number eight is, of course, His bodily resurrection from the dead. There are actually nine signs that Jesus did, as recorded in John's Gospel.

"SEVEN SIGNS" in the Gospel of John		
	1. Changing Water into Wine	2:11
	2. Healing official's son	4:46-54
	3. Healing an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda	5:1-18
	4. Feeding the 5,000	6:5-14
	5. Walking on water	6:16-21
	6. Healing a blind man	9:1-7
	7. Raising dead Lazarus	11:1-45

Sprinkled throughout John's Gospel are Jesus' seven "I Am" statements: "I am the way, the truth, and the life"; "I am the good Shepherd that lays His life down for the sheep"; "I am the bread of life"; "I am the light of the world." You are looking at all of these statements—"I Am" statements and signs. If that were not enough, he gives you seven discourses that Jesus gave.

What are you supposed to do with that information? Is this a history lesson? "Thanks for the data. Let us close the book and go home." No, keep reading the purpose statement in John's Gospel:

*"Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30-31).*

Faith is only as good as the object it is placed in. "That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ." What does that mean? Is Christ His last name? Do we call him Mr. Christ? No, He is the "Christos [Χριστός]." He is the Mashiach. He is the long-awaited Messiah. If that were not enough, He is also the Son of God.

John has a Christological purpose in writing. We would see His signs and understand who Jesus is. Then He has a soteriological purpose in writing, which is in that last clause, "and that by believing you may have life in His name." He wants you to see who Jesus is so that you can exercise faith in Him and receive the gift of eternal life. All of John's Gospel communicates this as it revolves around the signs that Jesus performed.

God is a God of signs and they are about to see signs, a major sign, all over the land of Egypt, through the fly judgment that is coming. Everything that God said would happen in these instructions to Moses for Pharaoh happened. What a shock, huh?

You can count on it. When God announces that He will do something, it will happen.

*"Then the Lord did so. And there came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and the houses of his servants and the land was laid waste because of the swarms of flies in all the land of Egypt" (Exodus 8:24).*

In other words, everything that God said would happen, happened. This is one of the reasons—and I have tried to explain this many times—I am a big fan of Bible prophecy. Bible prophecy is the only thing that I know of where you get history in advance with a track record.

God has a track record of perfect fulfillment. The things He announces in the short run happen. If the things that He announces in the short run happen, then the things that have been unfulfilled are going to happen as well. There will be a Rapture of the church. You say, "When is it coming?" I do not know, but I know it is coming. "I do not believe in the pre-tribulational rapture of the church." Fine. If you are a believer, you are going anyway. It is not something we all vote on.

There will be a seven year Tribulation Period. There will be an Antichrist. There will be a Second Advent. There will be a thousand-year Kingdom. There will be the destruction of the cosmos by fire, replaced with the new heavens and new earth. There will be a Great White Throne Judgment. There will be a Sheep and Goat Judgment. There will be a judgment for the Jews in the wilderness. There will be a Bema Seat Judgment of rewards.

All of these things, absolutely, 100% are going to happen. They just have not happened yet. The reason I know that they are going to happen is because every time God says something is going to happen, it happens just like He says. Foolish is the person that acts like this data or this information does not exist. Wise is the person that adjusts their life accordingly?

Jesus told this to His disciples. He said:

*"From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He" (John 13:19).*

Then one chapter later in the Upper Room discourse, He says:

*"Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe" (John 14:29).*

That is what is bound up there in that expression in Exodus 8:24, which says: *"Then the Lord did so."*

As these judgments, particularly this fourth one with the flies, are now rained over Egypt, what does Pharaoh do? Pharaoh makes a concession; Pharaoh starts to backpedal. You see Pharaoh's proposal (Exodus 8:25); Moses' counter proposal (Exodus 8:26-27); Pharaoh's acceptance (Exodus 8:28); and Moses' intention (Exodus 8:29).

- III. Pharaoh's Concession (25-29)
  - A. Pharaoh's proposal (25)
  - B. Moses' counter proposal (26-27)
  - C. Pharaoh's acceptance (28)
  - D. Moses' intention (29)

Notice, if you will, Exodus 8:25. Look at what Pharaoh says:

*"Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, 'Go, sacrifice to your God within the land'" (Exodus 8:25).*

"You can leave us, but you cannot leave the borders of Egypt. You can go play in the backyard, but do not leave the backyard. Do not leave the fenced area." That is how Pharaoh is trying to work this out now that he is seeing that God is absolutely real in what He says.

Pharaoh is a type, if you will, of the devil. Just as Pharaoh was holding the nation of Israel in bondage, Satan has been doing that ever since the Fall in Eden. Ever since the Fall in Eden, Satan has had his grip on planet Earth and he is very reluctant to release his grip, just as Pharaoh is reluctant to release the nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage. "Yes, I will give you some freedom. I will let the leash out a little bit, but it is

not going to be a lot of freedom." Pharaoh says, being a type of the devil. Satan is the exact same way.

There is a liberation coming to planet Earth. This world is going to be liberated from Satan's grasp, and Satan is going to fight God every step of the way, just like Pharaoh resisted Moses, Aaron, and God every step of the way. Do you think Satan wants to give up his illegitimate authority over planet Earth? I think not. He has enjoyed, since Eden, being the prince of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4), the prince and power of the air (Ephesians 2:2), the one whom the believer wrestles with (Ephesians 6:12), the roaring lion roaming about seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). He has enjoyed having the whole world lying within his power (1 John 5:19).

Lewis Sperry Chafer interprets 1 John 5:19 as a mother rocking her newborn to sleep. That is what 1 John 5:19 is teaching, as it is talking about the satanic influence over planet Earth, the world illegitimately in Satan's grasp, just rocking it gently to sleep. Satan does not want to give up that power, and he does not want to give up that ground. He is going to fight God every step of the way.

This is the angelic conflict that we are in. We are on God's side. We know that God is going to win, but Satan is throwing up, at God and at God's people, every conceivable roadblock he can throw up. This is why we, as God's people, are caught in the midst of the angelic conflict. We are caught in the midst of spiritual warfare.

This is why the more you try to please God in your life, there is immediate resistance. There will be resistance emotionally and physically. There will be resistance sometimes within members of your own family. God forbid there will be resistance even within your own church, all for stepping out and seeking to fulfill the Word of God in our lives.

In our household, as our family is teaming up in spiritual warfare against Satan, it is literally one piece of tug of war after another. Simple things like getting the printer to cooperate with the computer, is a huge warfare. Suddenly I go to print out these notes, which I hope you appreciate these notes, because I went through a tug of war just to get these notes printed. It works fine when I do everything else business-wise, but it does not work well with my Bible notes.

Why is that? Because we are involved in a spiritual conflict. That is why. Why is it that other people with their computers, in their households, everything prints out with no problem. In my house it is an absolute war. It is a conflict because we are trying to please the Lord, and Satan is trying to stop and discourage constantly.

This is what it is like to walk with Jesus. I am not talking here about justification. That is a one-time act. It is a free gift. I am talking about the walk of the disciple.

*"Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12).*

Do you have some of those booklets that they give you? The promises of God in the booklet are usually happy promises. "My God shall supply all my needs" (Philippians 4:19). I like that one. As I mentioned before, "He who waters others will water himself" (Proverbs 11:25). I like that one. What about this promise? How come this never shows up in any booklet?

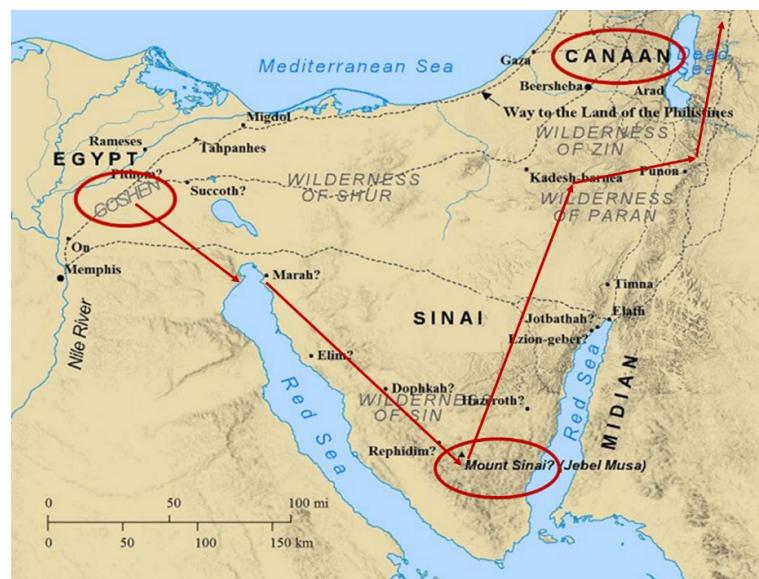
*"Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12).*

This silly thing with my computer is minimal, obviously, compared to what God's people all over the world are suffering. The religion of peace, supposedly Islam, is just wreaking havoc on Christians all over the world.

You look there at Exodus 8:25 and Pharaoh says, "You can go, but you cannot go far." You will see the word "sacrifice."

*"Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, 'Go, sacrifice to your God within the land'" (Exodus 8:25).*

"You can go do your sacrifices, but you have to do it within the borders of Egypt." We know that is not how it is going to work. God ultimately is going to take His people out of the borders of Egypt to Mount Sinai, which is at the tip of the Sinai Peninsula, and is going to put them under the animal sacrificial system, an elaborately described system involving the Tabernacle.



The very most important thing to understand about this sacrificial system is that this system was not given to redeem them. That is the mistake people make in their interpretation of the Book of Exodus. People think that the nation of Israel was redeemed at Mount Sinai. Nothing could be further from the truth. They are going to be redeemed with the tenth plague, which will bring death to all of the firstborn throughout

the land of Egypt. They will be redeemed as they pass through the Red Sea. God will close the waters of the Red Sea upon the pursuing Egyptians, and they will get to the other side of the Red Sea. In Exodus 15 they will have worship like you have never seen before. They are praising the Lord. They have already been redeemed.

Redeemed is the idea of being purchased back from the bondage of slavery. If that has already happened, why in the world would God take them about a two-month journey from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:1) and put them under the law, the sacrificial system? Was this to redeem them? No. They already had redemption. God did this not for their national birth, but for their growth; not for justification, but for sanctification.

What we discover as the nation is making its way from the Red Sea, where they had that great victory to Mount Sinai, is that God's people still sin. It is like taking your kids or grandkids on a vacation, and you are halfway out the driveway and they are saying, "Are we there yet? Johnny hit me. You two in the backseat, keep your hands to yourself." You are not even out the driveway and you are dealing with this. That is the nation of Israel as they are traveling. They are complaining against God constantly.

Now we have a question: How can a Holy God maintain fellowship with His people that have already been redeemed when they sin? The Law of Moses is a fellowship issue; the sacrificial system is a fellowship issue. These sacrifices were to take place around the clock so that a holy God could continue His presence with His redeemed people in spite of their perpetual sin.

This becomes an awesome provision that God made for His nation. You have the exact same thing. It is called 1 John 1:9, which is not addressed to unsaved people. He says in this same context: "My little children" (1 John 2:1). 1 John 1:9 says:

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).*

Why do I need that if I am already redeemed and positionally a child of God? Why would I need 1 John 1:9? Why would I have to confess? The Greek word is "homologeo"—"homo" as in "same" and "logeo" as in spoken word. "Homologeo" means simply to agree with God about sin. Why would I do that if my sins have already been forgiven positionally? It is not a justification issue; it is a sanctification issue. It maintains fellowship with God.

In a marriage, let us say I do something to offend or insult my wife, which, by the way, happens on a regular basis. I am trying to work on that. Why should I apologize to my wife for what I said or what I did when we are already married? All things considered, we are still married, even though I said something to her that was insensitive. Why in the world would I ever go and apologize to her for that? It is not going to change our marriage. Our marriage is still a legal reality. True, but here is what it will change: it will change my fellowship with her. It will change my moment-by-moment enjoyment with

her. My legal status is unalterable, but moment-by-moment fellowship and enjoyment with her can be damaged through unconfessed sin.

That is what unconfessed sin does in the life of the Christian. It does not take away your salvation. It does not take away your redemption, but it will damage your moment-by-moment enjoyment with God. David in the Old Testament was a perfect example of that. We know what he did. He committed adultery, he committed murder, and then he lied to everybody to cover it up. That is quite a laundry list of sins: murder, adultery, and lying. That is three of the big Ten Commandments he violated.

Did David stop being God's child when he did those things? No. What was injured was his fellowship with God. He talks about how the heavens had become like brass. That is what unconfessed sin does in the life of the Christian.

*"If I regard wickedness in my heart,  
The Lord will not hear" (Psalm 66:18).*

That is why I need 1 John 1:9 in my Bible, not to get me saved again, but to restore broken fellowship. Many people are not ever taught this distinction between birth and growth, justification and fellowship. Because they do not understand that, they get saved every Sunday. Suppose they had a down week. "I guess I lost my salvation or never had it. I guess I need to get saved again." That is why you see the same people in churches that give altar calls, many times the same people getting saved every single week.

The truth of the matter is, the moment you trust Christ, you are completely and totally saved and redeemed. You cannot get more redeemed or less redeemed than what you are at that moment. That is a positional reality, but when we wander back into sin my prayer life is injured, the prompting and the leading of the Holy Spirit are injured, and my moment-by-moment enjoyment with God is injured. God consequently gave us 1 John 1:9 to fix that problem. That is how the Mosaic Law functioned for the nation of Israel. This is why the sacrifices were offered around the clock. That did not redeem them at all, but it restored broken fellowship.

These people, let me tell you, needed that fellowship restored. These are the folks that are going to build the golden calf. You build a golden calf and you cannot mess things up more than that, can you? Are not the first two commandments "No graven images" and "No gods before me"? If you build a golden calf and start worshiping it, then you have only broken the first two commandments of the Decalogue.

When you study the account of the golden calf, the guy leading the charge into manufacturing the golden calf is the high priest, Aaron, Moses' brother. He should have known better. Moses will confront Aaron, because while he is on the mountain receiving the law of God, the children of Israel are building this golden calf led by the religious establishment of the nation. Aaron acts like they just took some metal and jewelry and

such, and threw it into this fire and this golden calf popped up out of nowhere—total denial of responsibility.

How can a holy God maintain fellowship with a group of people like that, even though they are His people? Answer: sacrificial system. How can God keep fellowship with you and me when we routinely quench or grieve the Holy Spirit through sinful choices and conduct? Answer: 1 John 1:9.

This becomes a pattern, if you will, of salvation history. Moses is going to make a counter-proposal, Pharaoh will accept it, Moses will have an intention to exit(Exodus 8:29), and then at the end of the chapter, we will see Moses' reaction to this whole thing.

If anyone is here, Lord, and they do not know You personally, they do not have a fellowship problem, they have a redemption problem. They have not been redeemed yet. The good news of the gospel is that redemption is possible. Jesus paid the full penalty for our redemption 2,000 years ago. We ask that if anyone is in the sound of my voice that has never received that as a free gift, that for them today would be the day of salvation. Even as I am speaking, that they in their heart of hearts might place their trust, confidence, reliance into Christ and His provision alone for their individual salvation, the safe keeping of their soul, that they might receive, even as I speak, the gift of eternal life.

Help us to understand, Lord, that You love us that much. The very hairs on our head are numbered. If we were the only person on planet Earth, You still would have shed Your blood for us in our place. You certainly love us generically, humanity as a whole, but You love us as individuals and You want a relationship with us. You paid the ultimate price. Help many people, as this good news called the gospel is proclaimed, to receive this as a free gift. I cannot think of a better Christmas present to receive at this time of the year. We will be careful to give You all the praise and the glory. We ask these things in Jesus' name. God's people said, Amen.