

**The Village Church – Rancho Santa Fe**  
**Week #12 – Adult Bible Study – 2025 & 2026**

**Discovering the Bible**

**December 2 & 3, 2025**

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**Review – The Return**

1. The story of the slow return of the exiles to Judah (the Southern Kingdom)
2. The Temple is rebuilt, the Passover celebrated
3. Ezra – priest & scribe given the task of rebuilding the Jewish community, setting in place particular customs and emphases that remain central to Judaism today
4. Nehemiah – Persian civil servant charged with rebuilding Jerusalem
5. The rediscovery of the Law – and the larger scriptural tradition of the people now being called “Jews”
6. Isaiah’s theological take: a glorious future planned by God, Good News, New Creation

**The Law**

7. Exodus 34:10-28 – God Renews the Covenant
  - a. We are back at Mt. Sinai
  - b. Moses has broken the first two tablets on which are (were) written the 10 Commandments, and now God re-establishes the covenant with the people
  - c. Here is included more instruction about how God’s people are to maintain their distinctiveness from other peoples and gods
  - d. Here we see God’s exclusive claim upon his people and the resultant ban on idol worship – there is but one God and one way to worship and live under the rule of this God
  - e. V14: “(for you shall worship no other god, because Yahewh, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God)”
8. Leviticus 19:1-18 – The Holiness Code
  - a. Here is a “blend” of requirements for maintaining the unique identity of the Jewish people and for prescribing moral/ethical requirements
  - b. “You shall not do as” the Egyptians, the Caananites, or any others (Ch 18)
  - c. “You shall be holy” (Ch 19) – in other words, you shall be “set apart” from others
  - d. Instructions re: sacrifice & harvest
  - e. Instructions re: fair dealing, justice
  - f. V18b: “...you shall love your neighbor as yourself..”
9. Deuteronomy 5:1-22 – The Ten Commandments
  - a. Moses presents again the Law as given by God at Sinai, in effect, making the covenant a contemporary thing with a new generation of God’s people
  - b. In each generation, the relationship with God must be affirmed and brought into the present
  - c. The Law, however, remains the same
  - d. These Commandments are the basis for all other laws and ordinances that will arise in the life of Israel
10. Deuteronomy 6:1-9 – The Great Commandment
  - a. The keeping of the Law is what enables and guarantees the abundant life of the people
  - b. “...so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly...”
  - c. A summary of all the Law: “You shall love the Lord (Yahweh) your God with all your heart...soul...might.”
    - i. All Law flows from the love of God and to love this God one keeps the Law

- d. Keep, recite, bind, fix, write – knowing and keeping the Law is the heart of keeping God foremost in the life of the community and of the individual

11. Deuteronomy 6:10-25 – Remember God’s Faithfulness

- a. The Law is not just about ethical commands or keeping of rituals and observances
- b. The Law is also (and equally so) about remembering the history of God with his people
  - i. Here, the word “law” means so much more than its use in common English
- c. God made a promise to Abraham, delivered from slavery, and gave a homeland
- d. This history must be taught to subsequent generations so that each generation feels the same sense of indebtedness and relationship to God as did the first generation

12. Deuteronomy 30:1-20 – Choose Life

- a. Here is a passage that speaks of God’s people being exiled from their land, but before this actually happens in history, so it is most likely a text that was “written back into” the history
- b. The upshot of the text is the same as all those that speak of the giving of the Law
  - i. In keeping the Law, God’s people will find their identity, their purpose, their life
- c. Note use of common themes: loving God with all of one’s self, teaching the children, and abundant life that flows from doing these things

13. Psalm 1 – Joy in God’s Law

- a. An ode to the life-giving effect of the Law
- b. And a warning to those who would forget or neglect the Law
- c. It is no accident that the first hymn in Israel’s songbook/prayerbook speaks of the Law
- d. Keeping the Law is about righteousness – right living

14. Psalm 19:7-14 – God’s Glory

- a. The psalm begins with God’s glory, and connects God’s glory with God’s Law
- b. Note the outcome of keeping the Law, and the very essence of the Law’s nature: perfection, reviving, sure, giving wisdom, right, rejoicing, clear, enlightening, pure, enduring, true, righteous, more precious than gold, sweeter than honey, rewarding, protection from error and fault, producing blamelessness and innocence

15. Some theological observations

- a. At the heart of God’s action in the world and his relationship with his people is God’s Law
- b. Regardless of what is happening in the history of the people, God’s Law remains constant
- c. The challenge of God’s people is to keep the Law in every season and situation of life

## Questions for Your Life Today

- A. God’s law includes “rules and regulations” such as “do not steal, lie, kill.” How do these specific things relate to the summary of God’s law to “love God alone and with everything”
- B. God’s law includes “love” as the summary. How does love lead us to determine the right action in specific situations?
- C. God’s law is also revealed in historical acts. How do such acts inform our own actions in the everyday situations of life?
- D. A relationship with God and the blessed life that then results is not dependent on being in a particular location (such as a Promised or Holy Land). How does this truth from the scriptures impact your own life?
- E. How did you learn the Law from your parents? How have you/will you teach your children?

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*Primary Source: Discovering the Bible: A New Generation, published by The Kerygma Program, Pittsburgh, PA. Boyd Lien, author.*