

WEEK 3 - God Calls Man (Old Testament)

Last week, we talked about the fall, how man sinned and fell away from God. Today we're going to talk about what happened after that, what God did in response to man's sin. In this study we'll look at three things he did:

- Gave us the law
- Set us apart
- Called us to repent through his prophets

Giving us the Law

Have someone read:

Exodus 24:3:

When Moses came to the people and related all the words and ordinances of the LORD, they all answered with one voice, "We will do everything that the LORD has told us"

Let's read from the Catechism why God needed to give us the Law; Have someone read:

CCC 2071:

A full explanation of the commandments of the Decalogue became necessary in the state of sin because the light of reason was obscured and the will had gone astray

Setting us Apart:

God places a great emphasis on setting us apart, both in the Old and New Testaments.

Have someone read these passages:

Leviticus 20:26:

"To me, therefore, you shall be holy; for I, the LORD, am holy, and I have set you apart from other peoples to be my own"

John 15:19:

[Jesus speaking] "If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you"

Called us to Repent Through the Prophets

God gave us the law, set us apart, and he also spoke to us through his prophets extensively, mostly calling us to repent. Have someone read this passage as an example:

Isaiah 55:6-7:

**Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near.**

**Let the wicked forsake their way,
and sinners their thoughts;
Let them turn to the LORD to find mercy;
to our God, who is generous in forgiving.**

Discussion Questions:

Q: Why do you think giving us the Law was even necessary? Weren't those things obvious?

A: Not necessarily obvious. According to CCC 2071, the light of reason was obscured, meaning the Israelites' judgment was impaired as a result of sin, and they couldn't tell as easily right from wrong. Additionally, the Israelites were surrounded by people who were very sinful making it harder to know what's right.. Another aspect is the law was needed to rein in our sinful tendencies, to put some boundaries to restrict the level of sin.

Q: You've probably heard people say things like "if it works for you" or "truth is relative" essentially meaning you can determine what's right and wrong for yourself and other people shouldn't interfere with your judgement. How do you think that squares in light of God giving us his laws?

Q: Why do you think God was so concerned about setting us apart?

Q: Some of God's laws are pretty detailed and seem somewhat strange, why do you think he would have made laws like this one for example?

Have someone read this passage:

Leviticus 2:1-3:

When anyone brings a grain offering to the LORD, the offering must consist of bran flour. The offerer shall pour oil on it and put frankincense over it, and bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests. A priest shall take a handful of the bran flour and oil, together with all the frankincense, and shall burn it on the altar as a token of the offering,^[b] a sweet-smelling oblation to the LORD. The rest of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons, a most holy portion from the oblations to the LORD.

A: Detailed prescriptions like this served a purpose of disciplining God's people to obey God's commandments. It's like training a child to listen to their parents in small things so that they would listen in more important things. Additionally, these served the purpose of reminding God's people that he is their provision and their sacrifices to him were a way to remember that He is their ultimate provision, not their own efforts.

Q: What God said in Isaiah is typical of what he often said through his prophets. Did it work? After receiving the law and the prophets, did people repent? Why, or why not?

A: This is a leading question. The answer is sometimes they did and sometimes they didn't. But the law and the prophets could not on their own solve mankind's problem with sin. It required God to intervene in history through Christ's coming, his incarnation, which is next week's study.