

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

## "THE BOOK, THE BLOOD, THE BREAD" | EXODUS 23-24 | PASTOR BRIAN

### WARM-UP QUESTION:

What is a unique way people find rest and refocus you've seen or heard of?

### *"Not Perverting Justice and Celebrating Holy Times" - (Exodus 23: 1-19)*

We see these laws against corruption, favoritism, and following the mob as well as laws guiding celebrating God's provision of food and freedom. How can people today have that balance of being disciplined and also being thankful and joyful?

### *"Conquering the Promised Land" - (Exodus 23: 20-33)*

God encourages the people that He will drive out their enemies before them, but warns them that it will take time. What does it say about God that He wins the battle? How can we better wait for the victory?

### *"Draw Near to God" - (24:1-18)*

Twice God says, "Come Up to Me" and when people did, they were able to meet with God in a special way. What does that say about God's character? How does that affect your attitude towards worship?

### REFLECTION QUESTION:

We see through this section that God doesn't want His people to work all the time or to fight their own battles. They are to rest and celebrate His provision and to Trust He will bring victory. Have you been fighting your own battles, working all the time? Have you answered God's call to come and shared a significant moment with Him? Draw near to Him and He will draw near to you.

## The Book, The Blood, The Bread

### I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-7 AP: Food Drive. **Fostering Hope**. Wmn's Planning Mtg. C@R. Neighbors. Parenting Seminar.
- B. Slide8 Prayer Tonight: 6:30pm in Agape room.
- C. Slide9 Sept.11 20 Aniv. - TY to Murr city for the 9-11 Tribute. *Share*. [If you haven't heard Andy Deanne's testimony of 9-11 listen online to his message at *Cornerstone*] *assoc senior pastor* **How should we respond during a tragedy/crisis?** How about remembering these 3 things I learned in going to help in 2001: *Listen, Love, and Lead*.
1. **1st, Listen attentively**, be God's ears before you're His mouth. **2nd, Love unconditionally**, any race, creed, or religion. **3rd, Lead people sensitively**, to the One who cares for them the most ... **Jesus**.
- D. Prayer: grieve w/those who grieve. *The Lord is near to the brokenhearted & saves the crushed in sp.*

### II. Slide10 Intro: The Book, The Blood, The Bread

- A. We are going to take 2 chapters this morning. We're going to talk about: *not perverting justice, celebrating holy times, how they are going to conquer the promised land. And drawing near to God.*
- B. Slide11a The **blindfold** covering the eyes of *Lady Justice* represents **objectivity & impartiality**. When you are blind, you cannot see a person's *identity, beauty, wealth, power, race, etc.* **And** this is how justice is supposed to be; it should be **blind**.

### III. Slide11b NOT PERVERTING JUSTICE (23:1-9) **Read**

- A. Slide11c **Don't Pervert Justice**. In line with previous laws that **prohibit exploitative behavior**, these rules promote *honesty, justice, and fairness*. Particularly in situations where one might be tempted to *promote self-interest over justice*.
- B. (1) A ban on spreading rumors.

- C. (2) **siding with the many** - taking a poll, standing with the majority, the large group, the herd, the mob, is often morally wrong. Everybody's doing it. The old king Jimmy translated it as, they'll shall not follow a multitude to do evil. 2 reasons it's hard: first we want to be well liked, popular. Second, it takes courage to dissent from the immoral majority.
- D. (3,6) **Don't be partial** - to the rich or to the poor. Help the poor sure, but when it comes to the court of law, don't be partial. *Judges are to enforce justice, not compassion.*
- E. (4,5) **How to Treat One's Enemy** - Sometimes you don't like the (your enemy) & sometimes they hate you (their enemy).
- F. (7,8) **Corrupt judges destroy societies.** We see it all over the world.
- G. (9) So this section reminds us as believers to also reflect *the mercy and justice of God* in a broken world by *caring for the poor, the defenseless, and the oppressed.*

#### IV. Slide12a **CELEBRATING HOLY TIMES (10-19)** *Read The Sabbaths & The Festivals*

##### A. **THE SABBATHS** (10-13)

- B. Note the Sabbath is not just weekly but yearly. The Sabbath is for refreshment.
1. **The laws here relate to sacred time.** (weekly, monthly, yearly ... bringing a *religious rhythm, a rhythm to our lives*)
  2. The sabbatical year showed God's concern for **the land** and **the poor**.
    - a) It's unfortunate that people today have forgotten His lessons and are *destroying creation by their exploitation of resources.*

##### C. Slide12b **THE FESTIVALS** (14-19)

- D. (14) **Feast of unleavened bread** - a celebration of Israel's liberation. Starts w/Passover
- E. (16) **Feast of Harvest** - Shavuot, Weeks, Gk. term Pentecost/50th, 50th day after Passover (the 1st fruits of your labor) [**Labor Day**] - celebrating God's provision.

- F. **Feast of Ingathering** - Sukkot, Booths (sleep outdoors, reminding them of their humble beginnings, that they lived in shelters/tents when they were 1st freed). The final harvest of crops in autumn.
- G. (17) only **males**? Since travel in the ancient Near East was difficult and often dangerous, women and children were not required to make these pilgrimages.
- H. (19) **Not boil a young goat in its mothers milk?** - 2 other x's in Torah, Ex.34:26 & Deut.14:21
1. In Canaanite texts, **cooking a goat** (kid) **in its mother's milk** is part of a **magic ritual**, seems to relate to pagan practices. **It continues to serve as the basis for many of the kosher laws** developed in later periods, in particular the separation of **meat and dairy**. [hard to get cream w/your coffee at meals]
  2. It could simply mean, **it is wrong to boil an animal in the substance with which its mother gave it life**. Dennis Prager
- I. **Ok finished w/the laws**. *We could not keep all of these laws, but we know of One who did, Jesus Christ, who lived a life we could not live. And then died to death that we should've died.*

## V. Slide13a **CONQUERING THE PROMISED LAND (20-33) Read**

- A. **Slide13b** (20) God is the **hero** of the story - *I will* 11 x's (once *He will*).
- B. **Slide13c** (30) **Little by little** - The Israelites will gain the promised land through *a long, progressive series of campaigns and displacements* (i.e. Josh 1-13).
1. However, many local, *non-Israelite communities* will remain in the land through the period of the **judges**, into the **monarchy**, and even after **exile**.
- C. Often it's the same for us ... the victory does not come **all at once** but **little by little**. Although eventually it will be total, right now the victory is *gradual*.
1. No doubt the Israelites wanted the victory to come right away.
  2. They wanted to **march in 1 day, watch their enemies march out the next, and then take over the Promised Land**. [note God had a reason for it!]

- a) They weren't ready ... and just maybe, *you're not ready!* (some *wild beast* you don't know about).

## VI. Slide 14a **DRAW NEAR TO GOD (24:1-18)** *Read 9-11 only come closer*

A. This is a chapter on a worship service. A 1st of its kind.

1. In this chapter we have: *a call to worship, the reading of God's word, we have a confession of faith, and a commitment to obedience, and the sharing of a sacramental meal.*

B. Slide 14b break in 1/2: 1-11 & 12-18, you will note both *begin & end* the same.

1. Both begin with *Come up!* (1,12)
2. Both end with a significant meeting w/God. (11,18)

C. Slide 15a **THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT** (1-4a)

D. There are degrees of nearness to God:

1. The people remained at a distance because of their fear of the Lord.
2. Moses, Joshua, Nadab, Abihu, Aaron, and 70 of the elders went up the mountain to meet God.

a) Nadab and Abihu - were the older 2 sons of Aaron who were later killed for offering incense improperly (strange fire, unauthorized fire).

3. Then Moses and Joshua went further.

4. Finally Moses went into the glory cloud alone.

a) J. Oswald Sanders wisely commented, *We are at this moment as close to God as we really choose to be.*

b) God invites us to draw near. James 4:8 *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.*

c) These Israelites had **the book** and **the blood**, and even **made promises** to obey God. **But** they did not have *the vision* of the glory of the Lord that Moses had on the mount.

d) In drawing near to God, we do not want it to lead us to a **careless familiarity**.  
*Our God is a consuming fire*, Nadab & Abihu would find that out later  
 (Lev.10:1)

E. Moses alone, God only allows one mediator.

F. **Slide15b THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT** (4b-8) *ratifying the covenant*

G. They say they would be obedient twice.

1. Just like with the **vertical and horizontal wedding vows**, we respond with *I do* or *I will*.

H. Here the covenant is being signed by **both** parties ... *in blood*.

1. The 1st portion of **blood**, *sprinkled on the altar*. This represents **God** signing His portion of the covenant.
2. The 2nd portion of **blood** was *sprinkled on the people*, for their forgiveness. *Because without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins*. This was the people's signature. *"May I be like this animal if I do not hold up my end of the agreement."*

I. This is what a **bloody altar always** signifies: **forgiveness** of sins, **atonement** has been made, God has **accepted** the sacrifice for the payment of sin. And, His **wrath** has been turned aside.

J. **Slide15c THE BREAD OF THE COVENANT** (9-11) *a divine meal*

K. They saw God (partially) and had a **meal** with Him. *Talk about a happy meal :)*

1. **Slide16 Isn't this God's ultimate goal? Mt.8:11** (Jesus to Centurion, servant was sick) *msg "I've yet to come across this kind of simple trust in Israel, the very people who are supposed to know all about God and how he works. This man is the vanguard of many outsiders who will soon be coming from all directions - streaming in from the east, pouring in from the west, sitting down at God's kingdom banquet alongside Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then those who grew up 'in the faith' but had no faith will find themselves*

*out in the cold, outsiders to grace and wondering what happened.”*

L. Slide17a MOSES 2ND ASCENT OF MOUNT SINAI (12-18) **Read**

M.(18) 40 days and 40 nights - the number 40 appears frequently in the OT and is **symbolic** as a period of separation for the sake of spiritual purification and growth. (think Noah/raining 40, Spies spinning the land/40, Elijah/ran 40 fleeing Jezebel, Jesus in the wilderness fasting/40)

N. CM every Sunday when we gather, this *Great God of Heaven* has entered into covenant w/us.

1. Slide17b He says, *so I've given you a BOOK, & made a way by the BLOOD, & I'll give you BREAD so we can eat together.*

O. Keywords: book, blood, bread, justice, sabbaths, festivals, sacred time, conquering promised land, God is the hero, draw near to God, covenant.