



# EXODUS

YHWH GOES TO WAR!

## **Small Group Guide: The Covenant at Sinai**

**Sermon Text: Exodus 23:20-24:18**

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### **Opening Prayer**

**Begin your time together by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and help you honestly examine where you struggle with trust and obedience.**

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### **Icebreaker Question**

**Have you ever made a promise you knew would be hard to keep but made it anyway? What happened?**

**This helps the group relate to Israel's situation in a lighthearted way before diving deeper.**

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### **Key Takeaways from the Sermon**

- 1. God makes covenants knowing our limitations - Just as parents get a dog knowing their kids won't keep their promises, God entered into covenant with Israel knowing they would fail.**
- 2. Our human crisis: We are self-centered, scared, forgetful, and unfaithful - Because of the Fall, our default mode is self-preservation and self-glorification rather than God-centeredness.**
- 3. God's faithfulness exceeds our unfaithfulness - Even while giving Moses instructions for worship, God knew Israel was making a golden calf, yet He continued to provide a way for them.**

4. **Jesus did what Israel (and we) couldn't do - Christ perfectly loved God and obeyed, fulfilling what the Law required and covering our failures with His blood.**
  5. **True faith manifests as obedience - "If you love me, obey my commandments" (John 15) - obedience doesn't create faith, but faith lived out looks like obedience.**
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## **Discussion Questions**

### **Understanding the Text**

1. **What stood out to you most from this passage in Exodus 23-24? What was new or challenging?**
2. **Why did God command Israel to completely drive out the inhabitants of Canaan and destroy their idols? What does this teach us about God's understanding of human nature?**
3. **What was the significance of the blood ceremony in Exodus 24? How does this foreshadow what Christ would do?**

### **Applying to Our Lives**

4. **The sermon described humanity as "self-centered, scared, forgetful, and unfaithful." Which of these four do you most struggle with in your relationship with God? Share an example.**
5. **Israel said "all that the Lord has spoken we will do" but broke the covenant almost immediately. When have you made promises to God that you struggled to keep? What does this reveal about our need for Christ?**
6. **How does understanding that "obedience doesn't create faith, but faith lived out looks like obedience" change your perspective on the Christian life?**
7. **The sermon emphasized that God knows we can't keep our promises, yet He loves us anyway and provides a way through Christ. How does this truth affect how you view your failures and struggles with sin?**

## Going Deeper

8. What "idols" or "gods" are most tempting in our culture today? How can we actively remove these from our lives rather than letting them coexist with our worship of God?
  9. Jesus said, "If you love me, obey my commandments." What is one specific area where God is calling you to greater obedience right now? How can this group support you?
  10. The sermon ended with "trust and obey." What does it practically look like to trust God in your current circumstances? What would change in your daily life if you truly trusted Him?
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## Practical Applications

Choose 1-2 of these to commit to this week:

### Individual Practices

- Identify your "golden calves" - Take time this week to prayerfully ask God to reveal areas where you've created your own gods (career, comfort, control, relationships, etc.). Confess these and ask for His help to remove them.
- Memorize John 15:10 - "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."
- Daily repentance and trust - Each morning this week, consciously "put the fruit back on the tree" - surrender one area of control to God and choose to trust His way over your own.

### Group Practices

- Accountability partnerships - Pair up with someone in the group to check in this week about the specific area of obedience you identified in question #9.
  - Covenant renewal - As a group, write out specific ways you want to "trust and obey" God this month. Share these and pray over them together.
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## Reflection Exercise

**Silent Reflection (5 minutes):** Ask the group to sit quietly and consider:

- **Where am I trying to be in control instead of trusting God?**
- **What promise have I made to God that I've broken?**
- **How has God proven Himself faithful to me despite my unfaithfulness?**
- **What is one concrete step of obedience God is asking of me right now?**

**After the silence, invite (but don't pressure) people to share what God revealed.**

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## Closing Prayer Points

**Pray together about:**

- **Confession - Acknowledge our self-centeredness and broken promises**
  - **Gratitude - Thank God for His faithfulness despite our unfaithfulness**
  - **Praise - Worship Jesus for doing what we couldn't do**
  - **Commitment - Ask for the Holy Spirit's power to trust and obey**
  - **Specific needs - Pray for the areas of obedience each person shared**
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## For Next Week

**Read: Exodus 25-31 (God's instructions for the Tabernacle)**

**Consider: Why does God give such detailed instructions about worship? What does this teach us about approaching God?**

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## Leader Notes

- **Be vulnerable first - As the leader, share your own struggles with trust and obedience to create a safe environment.**
- **Watch the time - You likely won't get through all questions. Choose the ones most relevant to your group.**

- **Avoid legalism - Emphasize that obedience flows from love and grace, not as a way to earn God's favor.**
- **Point to Jesus - Keep bringing the conversation back to what Christ has done for us, not just what we need to do for Him.**