

JULY 20th
SET APART TO SAVE

“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

EXODUS 19:5-6

“You are special.” In today’s western world, young people hear their teachers and mentors say this to them all the time. Today’s world emphasizes worth and value...that’s found inside themselves. It used to be only emphasized in Disney movies, but in our world today you find individuality emphasized everywhere. It’s a lie that comes from the father of lies. Satan has always played the game of twisting God’s truth. It’s no different with dignity and purpose. We find in the Bible a very different story of why “you are special” is true...because God gives you meaning. People don’t create their own meaning; God has already given it to them. God reminds us of this truth here in Exodus 19. “You shall be my treasured possession among all people.” What does God teach the Hebrews here and what is its significance for us?

Here in Exodus 19, we find a reminder of what God has done in saving His people. God is telling the Hebrews exactly what He’s done starting back with a man named Abram in Genesis 12. God chooses the pagan Abram to be a man who will be the father of many. God will bless him and multiply him. Moses is quick to remind the people in Exodus and Deuteronomy that there was nothing special about the Hebrews that made God look down and say, “There’s an extraordinary people there! I think that I’m going to choose to save them.” It’s all because of God’s grace that He chooses His people. As the people come to the foot of the legendary Sinai Mountain, God reminds them that He has set them apart as His special people. This act by God is what makes them special. What a blessing indeed!

We can see that God’s not done with His blessing of calling the people His people. The people are “set apart to save” as Kent Hughes describes it. They are given dignity because they are loved and chosen by God and also given their ultimate purpose...to represent God to the surrounding people. Their dignity comes from being made in God’s image and being called by God; their purpose comes from God also. They are set apart to save. That’s what the idea of a holy nation is. To be holy is to be set apart. The people of God are to be distinct from the surrounding people groups. They are marked by God as special and must live their lives as a testament of what God has done for them. They represent the people before a holy God. What a special privilege!

Men, this dignity and purpose isn’t an exclusive of the Israelites. As believers, you have been chosen and called by God to save others through your lives and witness. God has given us this distinct privilege. It encompasses all other vocations, hobbies, and talents. God uses all of it to show people how grand He is. He doesn’t need us to save others. But God. Because of His grace, he uses you as His means to save others. Martin Luther used to say, “I’m just a beggar helping other beggars find food.” God has found you and called you by name...and given you a divine commission. How will you be used by Him today to spread His Name?

Spend some time thinking about your approach to how you live your life. How has God used you this summer to impact His Kindom? Ask God for wisdom for knowing how He wants to use you where He’s placed you.

For Further Reading: I Peter 2:1-12

