

Week Five: The God Who Speaks to His People

Exodus 20:1-24:18

Question

How did Yahweh reveal his will to his people, Israel? Does God still speak to us today?

Key Verse

“And God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.’” — Exodus 20:1-3

Session Introduction

Intimate communication is central to the special relationship that Yahweh has with his people, Israel. The Lord wants his people to know him and to be faithful to his Word. God spoke. In an awesome scene, the Lord revealed himself to the people of Israel on the holy mountain called Sinai. Earlier in the Exodus, God spoke to Moses. Here, he is addressing his people.

At the heart of God’s self-disclosure are ten “words,” or commandments, that define the covenant boundaries of the relationship that Israel would have with him and with one another. These provided the foundational framework for the 613 laws found in the five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Jesus is described by writers of the New Testament as the supreme and ultimate Word of God. The writer of Hebrews opens his letter with these words: *“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...”* (Hebrews 1:1-2a).

Reading Plan: Week Five

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Reading</i>	
29	Sept 20	Exodus 20:1-26	
30	Sept 21	Exodus 21:1-32	
31	Sept 22	Exodus 21:33-22:15	
32	Sept 23	Exodus 22:16-23:9	
33	Sept 24	Exodus 23:10-19	
34	Sept 25	Exodus 23:20-33	
35	Sept 26	Exodus 24:1-18	

Exodus: Leaving Egypt

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, you are a God that speaks to his people. In times past, you have spoken through angels and prophets, but in these last days you have spoken through your Son. Open our ears and hearts to know your Word and your will for our lives. In Jesus Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Getting Started

1. Do you think God still speaks to his people today?
2. What is the dominant voice governing our culture today? Do you think people are open to listening to God?

Sinai: Meeting at the Mountain

Watch the Video

Video Notes

Moses is a mediator. The voice of the Lord is powerful and awesome. As the people approached the holy mountain of Sinai, they were filled with fear at the sight of the glory and the sound of God's thunderous speech. Out of their fear, they commissioned Moses to be a mediator of God's word to them. The story of Mount Sinai would stand as a perpetual reminder that the Law of Moses was divinely inspired and authoritative.

Yahweh is a jealous God. At the heart of the commands of God is a singular commitment to be exclusive and absolute in fidelity to Yahweh alone. Worship and love of other deities would not be tolerated. Think about the covenant between Yahweh and Israel like a marriage; idolatry is the religious equivalent of adultery. To state it positively, Jesus called this the Great Commandment: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength"* (Deuteronomy 6:5 and Mark 12:30).

Jesus is the supreme Word of God. Jesus is the Word made flesh. The New Testament describes him as the ultimate and final revelation of God. On the Mountain of Transfiguration, the apostles, like Moses and the prophet Elijah, are given a glimpse of the Shekinah Glory of God and hear the thunderous voice of the Father, *"This is my Son... Listen to him"* (Matthew 17:5).

Pentecost is a New Sinai. After Jesus' resurrection and ascension, the Word of God is to be written on human hearts. On the festival of the Day of Pentecost, the annual celebration of the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, the followers of Jesus were empowered from within by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Miraculous speech poured forth from their lips, and they heard the praises of God spoken in the languages of the world.

Shema: Hearing God's Covenant Word

Read Exodus 20:1-21: The Ten Commandments

3. How do you feel about the idea that Yahweh is a jealous God who wants exclusive worship (20:5) from his people?
4. The Ten Commandments are often summarized into two categories: love of God and love of neighbor. How does the love of neighbor (Commandments 5-10) relate to and flow out of the love of God (Commandments 1-4)?

5. Why did the people need a mediator between them and God (20:18-21)? How does the writer of Hebrews describe Jesus in comparison to Moses and the prophets of old (See Hebrews 1:1-4)?

Tabernacle: Journeying with Glory

6. Read Jeremiah 31:31-3. How is the promised new covenant going to differ from the covenant and commandments offered by Moses?
 7. In your walk with God, have you had any Mount Sinai moments where you dramatically heard God speaking to you?
 8. Why is it so hard for us to remain attentive and obedient to the Word of God?
 9. What could you do to engage in reflection on the Word of God in the coming week?
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Prayer Requests

You may want to share prayer requests with one another. There's a Prayer & Praise Journal found on p. 46 where you can keep track of your group's requests. Have someone close in prayer or pray together as a group.

Closing Prayer