

7/27/08

The Holy God At Sinai
Ex. 19:1-25

Moses and Israel have arrived from their wilderness journey at the foot of Mount Sinai, ready to encounter Yahweh and become his covenant people through the giving of the law.

The heart of the book of Exodus centers on this encounter of Israel with God at Mount Sinai, this was the very place God officially made Israel His people by the covenant of the law. Ex. 24

1. The birth and rescue of Moses from the Nile was, that one day he would bring them to Mount Sinai. Ex. 1-2
2. The appeared of God to Moses on the mountain was to commission him, to bring them to Mount Sinai to worship and serve Yahweh. Ex. 3-4
3. The ten plague judgment upon Egypt was judgment on the gods of Egypt, ending with the slaying of the first-born, proving Yahweh was the true and only God, beginning their journey to Mount Sinai. Ex. 5-12
4. The crossing of the Red Sea and destruction of the Egyptian army confirmed God's constant guidance and protection, as they moved towards Mount Sinai. Ex. 13-15
5. The cleansing of the bitter waters, the provision of quail, manna, water from the rock and the defeat

of Amaleke re-affirmed the presence of Yahweh in their midst and His ability to get them to Mount Sinai. Ex. 16-17

6. The visit of Jethro, as Israel encamped at the mountain of God was to prepare Moses for their journey after Mount Sinai. Ex. 18

Chapter nineteen has been seen as the introduction to this third division of Exodus, to enter into covenant with God by the law, emphasizing God is holy. Ex. 19-24

1. The covenant of the Lord was declared to Israel. Ex. 19
 2. The ten commandment for Israel. Ex. 20
 3. The social and civil ordinances for Israel. Ex. 21-23
 4. The covenant entered into by Israel. Ex. 24
- * In one year 58 chapters were given to Moses at Sinai. Ex. 19-40, Lev. 1-27, Num. 1-10

We want to look at the meeting of Israel with the Holy God, which unfolds in three movements. Ex. 19:1-25

- I. The revelation given to Moses to communicate to the people, implied God's holiness. vs. 1-8
- II. The instruction to Moses in preparations of the people, communicated holiness. vs. 9-15
- III. The manifestation of God to Moses and the people revealed holiness. vs. 16-25

I. The revelation given to Moses to communicate to the people, implied God's holiness. vs. 1-8

A. The journey and location of the people. vs. 1-2

1. The time it took Israel to get from Egypt to Sinai was three months. vs. 1
 - a. The location is identified as the wilderness of Sinai, synonymous with the land of Media, that Moses fled to, after being rejected by the Hebrews as their deliverer. Ex. 2:15
 - b. The three months are exact, marked by the phrase, "on the same day", the 15th in the month of June. Ex. 12
2. The summary of the route they took is given in a general way. vs. 2
 - a. They had departed from Rephidim, arriving at the Wilderness of Sinai. vs. 2a-b
 - b. They were now encamped before the mountain. vs. 2c-d
 - c. The mountain is clearly identified as being in Midian, which is Saudi Arabia, not in the Sinai Peninsula, according to Scripture.
 - 1) The mountain of God is the very same one Moses encountered God

in the burning bush, called Horeb, in Midian. Ex. 3:1

- 2) The same mountain is identified by three titles, "the mountain of God", "Mount Horeb" and "Mount Sinai". Ex. 3:1, 19:11
- 3) The command to Moses was to bring the children of Israel to the same mountain. Ex. 3:12
- 4) Paul makes this very clear, "for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in **Arabia**, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." Gal. 4:25

B. The message to be delivered to the people. vs. 3-6

1. Moses ascended up for the first time to meet God in the mount of God. vs. 3
 - a. Yahweh initiated the meeting by calling out to Moses. vs. 3a-b
 - b. Yahweh commanded Moses to declare His words to Israel. vs. 3c-d
 - 1) God identified the people as, "The house of Jacob". vs. 3c
 - 2) God identified the people, as, "The children of Israel". vs. 3d
2. Moses was to remind them of the power and protection of Yahweh they had witnessed. vs. 4

- a. He destroyed the Egyptians, “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians”, you is emphatic. vs. 4a
- b. He delivered bring them to Horeb, “And how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.”
 - 1) The description is figurative and poetic, of a caring and tender mother eagle, caring for her young.
 - 2) Moses Song, “For the LORD’S portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance. “He found him in a desert land And in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, Hovers over its young, Spreading out its wings, taking them up, Carrying them on its wings, So the LORD alone led him, And there was no foreign god with him.” Deut. 32:9-12
- 3. Moses was to declare the condition of the covenant Yahweh would make with them. vs. 5
 - a. The conduit would be their ears, “Now therefore,” vs. 5a
 - 1) The phrase therefore “im-shama” means to hear, to perceive with the ear, if listening. Josh. 24:15

- 2) This is a key word in the Pentateuch. Deut. 6:4
- b. The condition would be their obedience to the specifics of the covenant. vs. 5b
 - 1) “If you will indeed obey My voice”, if you completely listen.
 - 2) “And keep My covenant”, then you must observe my covenant.
 - * The word keep “shamaar” is the same given to Adam to keep the garden. Gen. 2:15
- c. The outcome was also stated, “Then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.” vs. 5c-d
 - 1) They would be a special treasure c@gullah the possession and property of Yahweh. vs. 5c
 - * The root is to shut up or enclose.
 - 2) They would be in contradistinction, above all people. vs. 5c
 - 3) They were given the reason Yahweh could do this, “For the earth is Mine.” vs. 5d
- 3. Moses was to declare to them their function and purpose. vs. 6
 - a. They were to be spokesmen for Yahweh, “And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests”, you again is emphatic. vs. 6a

- 1) A unique term in the O. T., a people dedicated solely to the Lord, mediating to bring other to God, but they lost sight of this. Gen. 12:3, Is. 61:6
 - 2) Israel was centripetal, failing in her mission, the church is centrifugal.
 - b. They were to be the nation of God, “And a holy nation.” vs. 6a
 - * A nation distinct, set apart, holy for God and His covenant! Deut, 7:6, 14:2, 21, 26:19
 - c. This was the commission of Moses, “These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.” vs. 6b
- C. The response indicated by the people. vs. 7-8
1. The man Moses first addressed the elders of Israel. vs. 7
 - a. Moses came and called for the elders of the people. vs. 7a
 - 1) They were the leading representatives of the tribes.
 - 2) They were probably the same ones Moses first went to when he arrived at Egypt, as God commanded. Ex. 3:16, 18, 4:29
 - b. Moses laid out before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. vs. 6b

- 1) Moses consistently had been God’s unique and only representative.
 - 2) Moses was the mediator and intercessor for the nation.
2. The man Moses was a witness to the response of the people. vs. 8
 - a. The people expressed their rash willingness to hear and obey all the words of the covenant of God, “Then all the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” vs. 8a-b
 - b. The man Moses reported their agreement back to Yahweh, “So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.” vs. 8b
 - c. This is the **second ascent** of Moses.

Illustration

“So I said: “**Woe** is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.” Is. 6:5

Application

1. The journey of our life since Jesus saved us out of the world, a type of Egypt, should never be forgotten.
 - a. The bondage of our life-style, be it alcohol, drugs or a promiscuous sexual practice.

- b. The place where he found us and how far, Jesus has brought us, to the present day.
- c. The ability to look back able to measure the great benefits to our lives, be it in health, a sound family or the kind of friends that have, compared to before Christ.

* A new creature.....2Cor. 5:17

2. The grace that has been bestowed on us to be one with God we should never forget.
- a. His loving care, tenderness and mercy towards us in our needs is overwhelming.
 - b. His loving adoption of us, making us his children and more.
 - 1) “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.” 1Pet. 2:9-12
 - 2) John says, “To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own

blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Rev. 1:5e-6

- 3) We are God ambassadors imploring sinner to come to Christ. 2Cor. 5:20
- 3. The only thing God desires of us, as believers is obedience to His word.
 - a. “Then Samuel said: “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to **obey** is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.” 1Sam. 15:22
 - b. “If you love Me, **keep** My commandments.” Jn. 14:15
 - c. “He who does not love Me does not **keep** My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.” Jn. 14:24
 - d. “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.” Jn. 15:10
 - e. “Pursue peace with all people, and **holiness**, without which no one will see the Lord.” Heb 12:14

The revelation given to Moses to communicate to the people, implied God’s holiness!

II. The instruction to Moses in preparations of the people, communicated God's holiness. vs. 9-15

- A. The verification of God is declared for Moses authority given for the people. vs. 9
1. The method of God's communication to Moses was revealed. vs. 9a-d
 - a. God again initiates, "And the LORD said to Moses." vs. 9a
 - b. God stated the manner of communication, vs. 9b-d
 - 1) This is at Moses second ascent.
 - 2) God would have His glory veiled, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud." vs. 9b
 2. The reason for the method was related. vs. 9e
 - a. God would allow the people to witness with their own ears, hear Him speaking to Moses. vs. 9e
 - 1) They would be witnesses to the very voice of God, having a greater accountability, "that the people may hear." Deut. 4:32-22
 - 2) They would be witnesses that God only spoke to Moses, "When I speak with you."
 3. The main purpose of God was clearly stated, "And believe you forever." vs. 9e

- a. To establish God's delegated authority, to minimized the rebelliousness of people.
 - b. To establish orderly submission to maximize the benefit of the nation.
4. The summary statement was stated. vs. 9f
- a. So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.
 - b. This has been stated already. vs. 8c
- B. The separation of the people declared by God without exception. vs. 10-13
1. The preparations for the people. vs. 10-11
 - a. The Lord commanded Moses to return to the people and set them apart for two days, "Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow." vs. 10a-b
 - * The word consecration "qadash", means to set apart, to be hallowed, in context to Yahweh.
 - b. The people were to wash their clothes, external sanctification. vs. 10c
 - c. The preparations had a dead-line. vs. 11
 - 1) They were to be ready for the third day. vs. 11a

- 2) The third day the LORD would come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people, and is emphatic in the Hebrew. vs. 11b
2. The preparation of the mountain. vs. 12a-c
- a. Moses was to establish these definite lines for the safety of the people, “You shall set bounds for the people all around,” vs. 12a
 - b. Moses, then was to warn the people of the boundaries, “Saying, ‘Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base.’” vs. 12b-c
 - c. Moses was to declare the absolute consequences, if those boundaries were crossed, “Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.” vs. 12d
3. The preparations for disobedience. vs. 13
- a. No man was to approach the rebel, “Not a hand shall touch him.” vs. 13a
 - b. Men were to be stationed to execute the defiant, “But he shall surely be stoned or shot with an arrow.” vs. 14b
 - c. No one was exempt, “Whether man or beast, he shall not live.” vs. 14c
4. The preparation for the gathering of the people. vs. 13d-e

- a. They would be signaled by the sound of a horn, “When the trumpet sounds long.” vs. 13d
* Trumpet “yowbel” is a ram’s horn.
 - b. They were to respond, “They shall come near the mountain.” vs. 13e
- C. The confirmation of Moses obedience to declare God’s words to the people. vs. 14-15
1. Their sanctification was obeyed. vs. 14
 - a. Moses went down the mountain to the people and sanctified them. vs. 14a-b
 - b. The people washed their clothes. vs. 14c
 2. Their day of meeting God was announced. vs. 15a-b
* Moses told the people to be ready for the third day.
 3. Their abstinence from sexual relations to be set apart for God, to be clean ceremonially. vs. 15c
* Moses told the people to not come near your wives.” Lev. 15:16-18

Illustration

Ezekiel, “Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking”, “And He said to me: “Son of man,

I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day.” Ezk. 1:28, 2:3

Application

1. The authority to proclaim the gospel has been vested the Christian is by Jesus.
 - a. To proclaim the gospel and teaching of Jesus Christ, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” Matt. 28:18-20
 - b. To declare a persons sin forgiven or not, “So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” Jn. 20:21-23
2. The Christian is sanctified, set apart for God when born again.
 - a. Jesus prayed to the Father, “**Sanctify** them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” Jn. 17:17

- b. “By that will we have been **sanctified** through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Heb 10:10
- c. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” 1Cor. 6:9-12
3. The Christians understands he or she is called to continue a life of sanctification in Christ.
 - a. Paul exhorted the Thessalonians, “For this is the will of God, your **sanctification**: that you should abstain from sexual immorality, that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in **sanctification** and honor,” 1Thess. 4:3-4
 - b. Paul said, “Because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through **sanctification** by the Spirit and belief in the truth.” 2Thess. 2:13c
 - c. Peter identified the Christian, “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the

Father, in **sanctification** of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.” 1Pet. 1:2

- d Paul speaks about being set apart in marriage sexually to seek the Lord, “The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment.” 1Cor. 7:4-5
- e. Peter tells the Christian, “But **sanctify** the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” 1Pe 3:15
- f. Jude said, “Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, **sanctified** by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ.” Jude 1

The instruction to Moses in preparations of the people, communicated God’s holiness!

III. The manifestation of God to Moses and the people, revealed God’s holiness. vs. 16-25

- A. The presence of God on the mountain had an affect on the people. vs. 16-17
 - 1. The event occurred as God had declared. vs. 16
 - a. On the third day. vs. 16a
 - b. In the morning. vs. 16b
 - 2. There was a stormy appearance on the mountain by the theophanies. vs. 16c-d
 - a. There were thunderings and lightnings. vs. 16c
 - b. There was a thick cloud on the mountain. vs. 16d
 - 3. There was the signal for gathering. vs. 16e-f
 - a. The sound of the trumpet “showphar”, a ram’s horn, was very loud. vs. 16e
 - b. The affect was that all the people who were in the camp trembled. vs. 16d
 - 4. The man Moses led the people to the designated place. vs. 17
 - a. Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God. vs. 17a
 - b. The people stood at the foot of the mountain. vs. 17b
- B. The decent of God on the mountain was witnessed by the people. vs. 18-19
 - 1. The affect on the mountain. vs. 18a-b

- a. The mountain was completely in smoke, as the appearance of fire. vs. 18a
 - b. The reason the mountain was in smoke was because the LORD descended upon it in fire. vs. 18b
* Fire is one of God most used metaphors for his nature and presence, even as He led them by a pillar of fire. “For our God is a consuming fire.” Heb. 12:29
 - 2. The quaking on the mountain. vs. 18c-d
 - a. The smoke ascending was likened to the smoke of a furnace, called a simile. vs. 18c
 - b. The entire mountain was quaking greatly. vs. 18d
 - 3. The final sign by the horn began the communication at the foot of the mountain. vs. 19
 - a. The blast of the trumpet “showphar” sounded long and became louder and louder. vs. 19a
* Indicating the nearness and presence of Yahweh!
 - b. The man Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. vs. 19b-c
- C. The summoning of Moses to the mountain followed. vs. 20-25
- 1. The time of the call. vs. 20

- a. The presence of God, “Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain.” vs. 20a-b
- b. The **third ascent of Moses**, “And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.” vs. 20c-d
- 2. The second warning for the safety of the people. vs. 21
 - a. The first words were, “The LORD said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people.” vs. 21a-b
* Moses had already done so, but God can see the heart of the peoples!
 - b. The reason for these words, “Lest they break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish.” vs. 21c-d
* Regardless of the warning or precautions, there are always those people that will not obey!
- 3. The instructions for the consecration of the priest. vs. 22
 - a. The command, “Also let the priests who come near the LORD consecrate themselves.” vs. 22a
 - 1) These had to be the first-born, who were spared in Egypt and considered to be God’s property.
 - 2) Later God would redeem them and take the Levites in their stead.

- b. The reason, “Lest the LORD break out against them.” vs. 22b
* No man can approach God on his own merit!
- 4. The assurance of Moses that the people were instructed and obedient. vs. 23
 - a. The nieveness of Moses about the boundaries, “ But Moses said to the LORD, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai.” vs. 23a-b
 - b. The nieveness of Moses about the obedience of the people, “For You warned us, saying, ‘Set bounds around the mountain and consecrate it.’ vs. 23c-e
- 5. The all-wise and over-ruling authority of God. vs. 24-25
 - a. The command, “Then the LORD said to him, “Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you.” vs. 24a-d
 - b. The caution, “But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest He break out against them.” vs. 24c-d
* This is the third warning. vs. 12-13, 21-22, 24
 - c. The submissive obedience of Moses, “So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.” vs. 25

Illustration

John saw the throne of God. Rev. 4:2-11

Application

1. One day Jesus took three of His disciples up to a high mountain. Matt. 17:1-8
 - a. Jesus was transfigured into His glorified state and He spoke with Moses and Elijah.
 - b. These three men were overshadowed by a cloud and heard, This is My beloved Son , in whom I am well pleased, Hear Him”, and they became greatly afraid,
2. Peter never forget that experience, as he witness Jesus in utter holiness. 2Pet. 1:16-18
 - * “Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.” 2Pet. 1:16-18
3. God the Father now in the age of grace declares that He speak to man only through His Son Jesus.

- a. “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” Heb. 1:1-4
- b. ” Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.” Heb. 3:1-3
- c. “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.” 1Tim. 3:16
- d. “For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire,

- and to blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. (For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.” And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”) But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.” Heb. 12:18-24
- e. Jesus conceive by the Holy One, was the epitome of holiness, “For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is **holy, harmless,** undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens.” Heb. 7:26

The manifestation of God to Moses and the people, revealed God’s holiness!

Conclusion

This is the meeting of the Holy God with the people of God unfolded in three movements.

- I.** The revelations given to Moses to communicate to the people, implied God's holiness!
- II.** The instruction to Moses in preparations of the people, communicated God's holiness!
- III.** The manifestation of God to Moses and the people, revealed God's holiness!