



SELFIES IN THE DESERT, PART 5: APPROACHING GOD WITH AWE

Has God ever felt distant, as if something is blocking your connection with Him? Or maybe God feels distant even when you're trying to do all the right things. *You're not alone.* A truth that we sometimes overlook: What's often missing isn't more effort, but a reverent awe and worship of God.

BIG IDEA: A shallow view of God produces a shallow life. Awe of God is the key to meeting with God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When was the last time you truly felt a sense of awe toward God?
What are some of the distractions or routines that dull our sense of His majesty?
2. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Exodus 19:1-11](#).

¹ Exactly two months after the Israelites left Egypt, they arrived in the wilderness of Sinai. ² After breaking camp at Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and set up camp there at the base of Mount Sinai. ³ Then Moses climbed the mountain to appear before God. The LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "Give these instructions to the descendants of Israel: ⁴ 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You know how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.' ⁵ Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the peoples on earth; for all the earth belongs to me. ⁶ And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.' This is the message you must give to the people of Israel." ⁷ So Moses returned from the mountain and called together the elders of the people and told them everything the LORD had commanded him. ⁸ And all the people responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has commanded." So Moses brought the people's answer back to the LORD. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will come to you in a thick cloud, Moses, so the people themselves can hear me when I speak with you. Then they will always trust you." Moses told the LORD what the people had said. ¹⁰ Then the LORD told Moses, "Go down and prepare the people for my arrival. Consecrate them today and tomorrow, and have them wash their clothing. ¹¹ Be sure they are ready on the third day, for on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai as all the people watch. [Exodus 19:1-11 \(NLT\)](#)

3. Why do you think God brought the Israelites to a specific place—Mount Sinai—for this encounter?
What does this teach us about the importance of having a dedicated place to meet with God?
4. Chris said, "Before meeting with God, the Israelites had to prepare with a willingness to obey." How does your attitude of obedience affect your ability to hear from God?
5. What's one area of your life where awe of God could lead you to deeper obedience?
6. Why is it important to approach God with a "clean heart"? How do confession and repentance prepare us for deeper intimacy with Him?
7. With your Bible or Bible App, read [James 4:8](#) and [1 John 1:9](#).

Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. [James 4:8 \(NLT\)](#)

⁹ But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [1 John 1:9 \(NLT\)](#)

8. What do the verses in James and 1 John teach us about getting close to God?

9. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Exodus 19:12, 21.](#)

¹¹ Be sure they are ready on the third day, for on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai as all the people watch. ¹² Mark off a boundary all around the mountain. Warn the people, 'Be careful! Do not go up on the mountain or even touch its boundaries. Anyone who touches the mountain will certainly be put to death. ²¹ Then the Lord told Moses, "Go back down and warn the people not to break through the boundaries to see the Lord, or they will die. [Exodus 19:12, 21 \(NLT\)](#)

10. God commands them to mark boundaries around the mountain and approach with reverence. What does this boundary teach us about respecting God's holiness? How do we balance the intimacy of a personal relationship with God and the reverence of His holiness?
11. Chris mentioned how we often treat God like a "buddy" or "homeboy." Why is a casual view of God dangerous to our spiritual growth? How can awe of God transform the way we worship and live daily?
12. With your Bible or Bible App, [read Exodus 19:16-20.](#)

¹⁶ On the morning of the third day, thunder roared and lightning flashed, and a dense cloud came down on the mountain. There was a long, loud blast from the trumpet, and all the people trembled. ¹⁷ Moses led them out from the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ All of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the LORD had descended on it in the form of fire. The smoke billowed into the sky like smoke from a brick kiln, and the whole mountain shook violently. ¹⁹ As the blast of the ram's horn grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God thundered his reply. ²⁰ The LORD came down on the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses climbed the mountain. [Exodus 19:16-20 \(NLT\)](#)

13. Thunder, lightning, smoke, and the whole mountain trembling as God descends. How would you have reacted witnessing this scene? What does this moment reveal about the power and majesty of God?
14. Chris said that meeting with God doesn't happen by accident—it takes a plan, a place, and a prepared heart. Which of these three (plan, place, prepared heart) do you need to focus on most right now? Why?
15. What practical changes can you make this week to approach God with greater reverence and intentionality? How can this group support you in cultivating a deeper, awe-filled relationship with Him?

THINK ABOUT IT

You don't drift into a deep relationship with God. *Awe of God* must be cultivated with intentional preparation—through obedience, purity, and slowing down to listen. If you want more depth in your life, start by elevating your view of God. As you grow in awe, you'll experience a richer, deeper relationship with Him that reshapes every part of your life.

MOVING FORWARD

We often talk about wanting to "feel close to God" or "hear from Him," but the truth is, we live in a culture that treats God casually. We approach Him distracted, hurried, or when it's convenient. But meeting with God is not something we stumble into—it requires intentional preparation. Awe of God isn't old-fashioned; it's essential. If we want depth in our lives, we must reclaim the awe of being in God's presence. The way we approach God determines how deeply we experience Him.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

¹⁰ Then the LORD told Moses, "Go down and prepare the people for my arrival. Consecrate them today and tomorrow, and have them wash their clothing. ¹¹ Be sure they are ready on the third day, for on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai as all the people watch. ¹⁸ All of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the LORD had descended on it in the form of fire. The smoke billowed into the sky like smoke from a brick kiln, and the whole mountain shook violently. [Exodus 19:10-11, 18](#)