



Date: 06-07-2026

Sermon: A Treasured People

Text: Exodus 19:1–8 NLT

The church exists because God rescued people, gathered them together, and gave them a shared identity and mission.

God brings His _____ people to Himself.

Exodus 19:1-4 NLT

Exactly two months after the Israelites left Egypt, they arrived in the wilderness of Sinai. After breaking camp at Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and set up camp there at the base of Mount Sinai.

Then Moses climbed the mountain to appear before God. The Lord called to him from the mountain and said, “Give these instructions to the family of Jacob; announce it to the descendants of Israel: ‘You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You know how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.

Notes:

**God names His people as His _____
possession.**

Exodus 19:5 NLT

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.

Notes:

God forms His people into a _____ of _____.

Exodus 19:6 NLT

And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.' This is the message you must give to the people of Israel."

Notes:

God's people are to be:

A _____.

_____.

1 Peter 2:9 NLT

⁹ But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

A _____ nation.

God's redeemed people respond _____.

Exodus 19:6 NLT

So Moses returned from the mountain and called together the elders of the people and told them everything the Lord had commanded him. 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.

Notes:

Three Action Items:

1. _____ your rescue.

- Before you focus on what you need to do for God, remember what God has done for you.

Take time this week to reflect on this question:

What has God rescued me from, carried me through, or brought me out of?

Gratitude fuels obedience. Forgetfulness fuels rebellion.

2. _____ to God's people.

Do not treat the church as a religious service provider.

Ask: Am I meaningfully connected to the people God has gathered me with?

That may mean joining the church, committing to a life group, serving faithfully, reconciling with someone, or choosing to stop standing at a distance.

God rescues people and gathers them into a family.

3. _____ God intentionally.

This week, choose one place where you will consciously live as part of God's priestly people.

At home. At work. At school. In your neighborhood. In your church.

Ask: What would it look like for me to represent God here?

Because the church exists to show the world what God is like.

Expanded Notes: A Treasured People

1. God's People Are Blessed in Order to Bless the Nations

The calling of Israel in Exodus 19 should be read in light of God's earlier promise to Abraham. God did not choose Abraham's family so they could keep blessing to themselves. He chose them so that through them "all the families of the earth" would be blessed.

Genesis 12:1–3 shows that election is connected to mission. God blesses His people so His blessing can extend outward.

This helps us understand why Israel's identity mattered. Their life together was meant to become a living testimony to the surrounding nations. They were to show what life under the true God looked like.

Deuteronomy 4:5–8 says that Israel's obedience would display wisdom and understanding before the nations. Their national life was supposed to make people ask, "What great nation has a god so near to it?"

For the church, this means our life together is part of our witness. The world should not only hear what we believe; they should be able to see the character of God reflected in how we worship, forgive, serve, reconcile, sacrifice, and love one another.

Study thought: God's people are never chosen merely for privilege. They are chosen for purpose.

2. Covenant Relationship Includes Both Gift and Responsibility

Exodus 19 contains a covenant structure. God graciously initiates the relationship, but His people are called to respond faithfully. This does not make the relationship cold or contractual. It shows that belonging to God changes how His people live.

Leviticus 26:12 says, "I will walk among you; I will be your God, and you will be my people." That is covenant language. God gives His presence, and His people live as those who belong to Him.

Jeremiah 7:23 summarizes covenant life this way: “Obey me, and I will be your God, and you will be my people. Do everything as I say, and all will be well!”

Biblical commentary often points out that covenant obedience is relational before it is behavioral. Israel was not obeying an abstract rulebook. They were responding to the God who had made Himself known to them.

This is important because people often separate grace and obedience as though they are enemies. Scripture does not do that. Grace creates the relationship; obedience expresses the relationship.

Study thought: Obedience is not how God’s people purchase grace. It is how they practice belonging.

3. Holiness Is About God’s Presence, Not Merely Moral Improvement

When God calls His people holy, He is not simply telling them to behave better than other nations. Holiness means being set apart by God, for God, and near God.

In Exodus 19, the mountain itself becomes holy because God descends upon it. The people must consecrate themselves because they are approaching the presence of the Lord.

Exodus 19:10–11 shows that the people had to prepare themselves before meeting with God. Their holiness was connected to God’s nearness.

Leviticus 19:2 says, “You must be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.” The standard for God’s people is God’s own character.

This helps clarify Christian holiness. Holiness is not spiritual arrogance. It is not isolation from people. It is not rule-keeping for its own sake. Holiness is a life shaped by the presence, character, and ownership of God.

Hebrews 12:14 says to “work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.” Holiness matters because God matters.

Study thought: Holiness is not about proving we are better than others. It is about showing that we belong to the Lord.

4. God's People Need a Mediator

In Exodus 19, Moses goes up the mountain, receives God's words, and brings them back to the people. The people do not approach God casually or independently. They need someone to stand between them and the Lord.

This points to a major biblical theme: sinful people need a mediator in order to dwell with a holy God.

Deuteronomy 5:23–27 shows the people trembling at God's voice and asking Moses to hear from God on their behalf.

Moses served as a covenant mediator, but his role was temporary and incomplete. He could deliver God's words to the people, but he could not finally cleanse their hearts or secure permanent faithfulness.

The New Testament presents Jesus as the greater and final Mediator.

1 Timothy 2:5 says, "For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus."

Hebrews 3:1–6 compares Moses and Jesus, showing that Moses was faithful as a servant in God's house, but Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house.

Study thought: Moses could bring God's message down the mountain, but Jesus brings God's people all the way into the presence of God.

5. Israel's Calling Reveals Both God's Purpose and Humanity's Weakness

Exodus 19 is a beautiful moment, but it is followed by Israel's repeated failure. This should not make us cynical. It should make us honest.

The people sincerely respond to God, but their later actions show that human commitment alone is not enough. Israel needed more than external commands. They needed transformed hearts.

Deuteronomy 30:6 looks ahead to a deeper work of God: “The Lord your God will change your heart and the hearts of all your descendants, so that you will love him with all your heart and soul.”

Jeremiah 31:31–34 promises a new covenant where God’s law would be written on His people’s hearts.

Ezekiel 36:26–27 promises a new heart and a new spirit, so that God’s people would be empowered to walk in His ways.

Biblical commentary often notes that Exodus 19 sets before us the beauty of God’s intention for His people, while the rest of Israel’s story exposes the need for inward renewal.

This is why the gospel is not simply, “Try harder to be God’s people.” The gospel is that Jesus fulfills what Israel failed to fulfill, dies for covenant breakers, rises again, and gives the Spirit to make obedience possible from the inside out.

Study thought: God’s law shows us what covenant faithfulness looks like, but only God’s grace can produce it in the heart.

6. Jesus Fulfills the Calling of God’s People

Israel was called to represent God, but Israel often failed. Jesus comes as the faithful Son, the true Israel, and the perfect representative of God.

Where Israel grumbled in the wilderness, Jesus trusted the Father in the wilderness.

Where Israel broke covenant, Jesus obeyed perfectly.

Where Israel failed to reflect God fully, Jesus revealed God completely.

Matthew 4:1–11 shows Jesus being tested in the wilderness. His responses come from Deuteronomy, connecting His obedience to Israel's wilderness story.

John 1:14 says that the Word became flesh and “made his home among us.” In Jesus, God's presence dwells with His people.

Colossians 1:15 says Christ “is the visible image of the invisible God.” Jesus perfectly shows us what God is like.

This matters for the church because we do not represent God by our own strength. We represent God as people united to Christ, filled by the Spirit, and shaped by the gospel.

Study thought: The church's identity is not built on its own success, but on Christ's faithfulness.

7. The Church's Priestly Witness Includes Worship, Intercession, and Mission

A priestly people does more than hold a title. Priestly identity shapes the church's activity.

The church offers worship to God.

Romans 12:1 calls believers to present their bodies as a living and holy sacrifice. Worship is not limited to singing; it includes the whole life offered to God.

The church intercedes for others.

1 Timothy 2:1–4 calls believers to pray for all people, including those in authority, because God desires people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

The church proclaims God's excellencies.

Hebrews 13:15–16 connects praise, doing good, and sharing with others as sacrifices pleasing to God.

This gives the church a fuller picture of its calling. We gather before God in worship, we stand before God on behalf of others in prayer, and we go before the world as witnesses to His grace.

Study thought: A priestly church is not passive. It worships upward, prays outward, and lives missionally.

8. God's People Display His Character Together

The New Testament repeatedly teaches that the church's shared life is part of its testimony.

John 13:34–35 says the world will know Jesus' disciples by their love for one another.

Ephesians 3:10 says God's purpose is that His wisdom would be displayed through the church.

Philippians 2:14–16 calls believers to live without grumbling or arguing so they may shine like lights in the world.

This means the church's unity, humility, generosity, and holiness are not secondary issues. They are part of how the church shows the world what God is like.

A divided, selfish, consumer-minded church tells lies about God. A loving, holy, servant-hearted church displays the beauty of the gospel.

Study thought: The church is not only a place where God's Word is taught. It is a people through whom God's character is displayed.

9. Personal Study Questions

1. Why is it important that God gave Israel their identity before giving them the commandments?
2. How does Genesis 12:1–3 help explain Israel's purpose in Exodus 19?

3. What is the difference between being chosen for privilege and being chosen for mission?
4. In what ways can a church accidentally become consumer-minded rather than covenant-minded?
5. How does Jesus fulfill what Israel failed to be?
6. What would it look like for our church to live more visibly as a priestly people?
7. Where do I need to move from merely attending church to actively belonging to God's people?
8. How should the church's shared life help outsiders see the goodness of God?

10. Key Takeaway

God has always intended to form a people who live near Him, belong to Him, reflect Him, and represent Him. Exodus 19 gives us a foundational picture of that calling. In Christ, the church now shares in this identity—not as a replacement built on pride, but as a redeemed people built on grace. We belong to God together so that we may display God together.