

## **The Ascent...**

### **Mountain of Presence**

In the Bible, mountains are often more than just geographical features. Throughout Scripture, God often meets His people in high places. But, here is the truth we often overlook—while the view from the summit is often breathtaking...transformation happens during the climb. Whether it's Mount Sinai, Moriah, or Calvary, the ascent requires effort and a singular focus on the One we are climbing to meet.

We will explore these pivotal mountain encounters where we will see that while the terrain may be difficult...the view of God from the summit changes everything. This series isn't just about geographical peaks it's about the spiritual journey as we rise above the noise of the world to hear the voice of the Father.

For Moses, the mountain wasn't a one-time event...it was the recurring office where he met his Creator. His life was defined by three distinct ascents that mirror our own walk with Christ.

#### **First Ascent: The Call in the Commonplace**

1 Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. 3 And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." 4 When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." 5 Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." 6 And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Exodus 3:1-6

You don't have to be "ready" for the mountain. You just have to be willing to take off your shoes. Holiness begins with recognizing where we stand.

#### **Second Ascent: The Covenant at the Summit**

16 On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. 17 Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. 19 And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. 20 The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. Exodus 19:16-20

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy
5. Honor your father and your mother
6. You shall not murder
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal
9. You shall not bear false witness
10. You shall not covet

God gave the Ten Commandments, not as a heavy burden, but as a map for how a free people can stay free.

### **Final Ascent: The View from the Summit**

1 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, 2 all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, 3 the Negeb, and the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. 4 And the Lord said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, 'I will give it to your offspring.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there." Deuteronomy 34:1-4

*"A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit." -- D. Elton Trueblood*

1. **Embrace the Ordinary:** Keep climbing. God's often calls when we are just doing our jobs.
2. **Recognize the Holy:** While we can approach God with boldness because of Jesus, we must never lose our awe. Leave the idols at the base.
3. **Trust His Timing:** Sometimes God calls us to a summit just to give us a glimpse of the future, even if we aren't the ones to walk into it.

***"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" -- Mark 1:15 (NIV)***

### **The Second Mile: Going Beyond Sunday**

Let's dig deeper together to see how God is calling and equipping each of us to reach the lost.

**Monday** – God calls to us continually. He is calling us out of this world and into His arms. He is calling us in the routine and in the amazing. When can you hearing Him most in your life?

**Tuesday** – Moses caught a glimpse of God and heard His voice. God instructed Moses to kick his shoes off as he was standing on Holy ground. What is holy ground and when have you stood on it?

**Wednesday** – It should come as no surprise that Moses led the people back to the place where he first encountered God. How are you leading those around you to that holy ground today?

**Thursday** – God later gave Moses a glimpse of the promised land as an encouragement to Moses. Where does God give you “glimpses” of future and generations to encourage you all the more?

**Friday** – It takes a special servant’s heart to plant the seeds of a shade tree knowing full well you will never sit under. What kind of seeds are you planting like this today?