



## THE SINAI SUMMIT

Exodus 19

God graciously chose Israel to be His special people, His treasured possession. This unique status obligated them to humbly obey and honor the Lord as His special representatives in the world. We who follow Christ today have the same responsibility.

In this study, we are going back to the basic foundation, not only for the Israelite nation, but also for us as believers today. In Exodus 19, we are given principles for how to walk with God and told why it's important to walk with God, and we are going to be shown how it all began near the mountain we call Mount Sinai.

There are two primary reasons God holds this meeting at Sinai. And the first reason is to *communicate significant revelation* to God's people in light of His own character.

We read here in verses 1-3:

*On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the*



In Egypt, the vulture goddess was thought to protect the people

*land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. They . . . encamped in the wilderness. . . . before the mountain, while Moses went up to God.*

The text goes on in verse 3 to tell us, “The LORD called to him out of the mountain,” giving Moses what he is to say to the people of Israel.

Now there are several aspects of this revelation from God I want to point out. First, it begins with a *review* in verse 4:

*“You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.”*

I have read that the eagle will fly beneath her young eaglets to catch them on her wings if they falter. God says that His care is like that of an eagle. Although Israel has failed, He has faithfully cared for them and brought them from Egypt to this place and into a special relationship with Him.



Now verse 5 makes it clear that God's revelation demands a *response*:

*“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.”*

Did you notice the word “covenant” here? A covenant in the Bible refers to a solemn treaty, or agreement, binding two parties in a contract that spells out the obligations of each party. It also spells out the consequences for breaking the covenant.

This covenant, which we call the Mosaic covenant, is conditional. In other words, God says, “If you do all of these things, you will enjoy the benefits of being My people.” Now understand this: Israel will always be God's covenant people, but because of disobedience, they might not experience all the benefits of this covenant.

And that brings us to a third aspect of this revelation: Obedience to God's revelation results in *rewards*. Verse 5 names the first of three rewards: “You shall be my treasured possession.”

This is a very tender expression. God wants the people of Israel to understand that they are highly valued in His eyes. And what God treasures, He protects and nurtures.

Verse 6 promises another reward for the people if they obey the Lord's covenant. He says, “You shall be to me a kingdom of priests.” The apostle Peter uses this expression in reference to New Testament believers. He says, “You [Christians] are . . . a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9).

A priest was one who stood between God and mankind. A priest spoke to God on behalf of people and spoke to people in response to what he learned from God. Peter says that in the same way God intended Israel to be a kingdom of priests, you and I, as followers of Christ, are also priests. As His priests, we are to speak to our neighbors, coworkers, and fellow students as representatives of the Lord Jesus. We are

*As His priests, we are to speak to our neighbors, coworkers, and fellow students as representatives of the Lord Jesus.*

also able to go directly to God and intercede for people all around the world.

The third reward for obeying God's covenant commands is also stated here in verse 6: “You shall be . . . a holy nation.” To be holy doesn't mean to be perfect. The word *holy* means to be set apart to God as a distinct people separated from sin, and that's exactly what God's people should be.

Before we move on, let me tell you that God is preparing His people to receive the Ten Commandments—this is where we're headed next. And God wants Israel to know that by God's grace, they have been chosen to be God's treasured possession, set apart from the rest of the nations as priests to represent God to a fallen world.

Now I pointed out that one purpose of God in the Sinai Summit is to communicate significant revelation to Israel. But He has another purpose for it: to *create in the people a deep and genuine respect* for who He is.

Let me give you three ingredients of genuine respect for God. The first one we find in verses 7-8—a *willingness to obey*:

*Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him [in verses 1-6]. All the people answered together and said, “All that the*



*LORD has spoken we will do.”  
And Moses reported the words of  
the people to the LORD.*

They’re saying here, “God, whatever You have to say, we want You to know that we will obey.” Their words are sincere, even if they are naïve about their own sinful hearts.

The second ingredient of genuine respect for God is an *openness to listen*. Look at verse 9:

*The LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever.”*

This “hearing” is not like some of us husbands when our wives ask us to empty the garbage, and we have to confess, “I heard my wife, but I wasn’t really listening, so I never did anything.” The Lord is talking here about “hearing” that results in doing.

A third ingredient of genuine respect for God is a *recognition of His superiority*. Listen as God warns Moses here in verse 12:

*“You shall set limits for the people all around, saying, ‘Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death.’”*

God is impressing on the people that there is a separation between the holy Creator and the creature; He’s not a good buddy or the man upstairs. God is awesome and glorious, and recognizing this causes us

to revere and respect Him. If God were to show up in a church service today, most Christians think they would run up and give him a hug or have Him sign their Bible; no, we would all fall down like Isaiah and recognize His awesome and infinite superiority. PQ

God is revealing these truths about His character before He ever delivers the Ten Commandments. And let me tell you, beloved, when God shows up, Moses says, “I tremble with fear” (Hebrews 12:21).

How do we approach God boldly and without fear, while at the same time coming before Him with genuine respect and awe and worship? We approach God the Father through Jesus Christ, who made a way by His sacrifice on the cross.

So, you can have that summit meeting with the Lord every single day. But you come humbly and in awe of His greatness and glory. You don’t come to tell Him what He’s doing wrong or what He needs to get busy doing, and you don’t demand that *your* will be done; you pray, “Oh God, Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; for Yours is the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.”

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Why is it important to review what God has done for you in the past? What does this reveal about Him and you?

What rewards do you see in your own life for obedience to God?

How do you recognize and communicate the holiness of God in your life?

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