

WATER·FIRE·STONE

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MOSES

Session 12 – His Presence, Part One | Exodus 24

The first nineteen chapters of Exodus recount how God delivered Israel out of Egypt and brought them through the wilderness to Mt. Sinai. It has been a courtship of ups and downs, with Israel being faithful one day and fickle the next.

When crisis comes, Moses is unwilling to walk away but he's painfully aware that he can't go forward alone. There are no shortcuts to spiritual growth. If you want to reach new heights, an escalator won't do. You need a mountain.

In this four-part series, *His Presence*, we explore the transforming power of God's presence to stretch our capacity and sustain new growth.

Icebreaker

What is your favorite form of physical exercise? What's your least favorite?

Goals for this Session

- Discover the significance of God's covenant with Israel.
- Consider where you would be without the faithfulness of God.
- Pray for glimpses of God's glory that will humble and help you to remain faithful.

This chapter picks up where we left off in Exodus 20:21. At that time, God spoke to the entire camp, giving the Ten Commandments, but the people were terrified to hear the voice of God. So Moses approached the thick cloud where God was and heard the rest of the covenant conditions set forth by the Lord. Those details and regulations are spelled out in Exodus Ch. 21-23.

1 This is a significant event for Israel, so take a minute to review and get the big picture. God brought Israel to Himself, up out of Egypt, through the wilderness, to Mt. Sinai.

- a. When they first got to Mt. Sinai, God reminded the people what He did to save them. Then He spoke about the covenant He would make with them.

What was God's plan and what did it require of Israel? Use Exodus 19:5-6 for help with your answer.

- b. How did the people respond? Put yourself in their place. At that point, the details of the covenant were not spelled out yet. They were simply being asked whether they would fully obey the Lord. How would you respond in a similar situation?

Give a personal example of being obedient to God even when you didn't have all the details.

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Anyone who wants to enjoy fellowship with God must be committed to do everything God says.

Philip Graham Ryken

2 Read Exodus 24:1-8 | After receiving the rest of the covenant conditions, Moses returned to camp with instructions to bring Aaron, his sons Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders up to the Lord. But first, he presents the people with all the conditions of the covenant the Lord is making with them.

- a. The people now have a clear picture of what this covenant with the Lord requires. Again, they promise to obey (verse 3). It's time to make it official, so Moses starts preparations for a ceremony to seal the covenant.

Verse 4 – This time, Moses' construction project at the base of the mountain wasn't a barrier. What did the pillars represent?

Verse 5 – For the burnt offering, the entire animal was consumed by fire; nothing was left. This represented total dedication to the Lord. From Romans 12:1-2 what does our total dedication to the Lord look like?

The peace offering was roasted and served as a celebratory meal to honor the Lord. As believers, what does this represent for us?

Romans 5:1, 10

Colossians 1:20-22

- b. Verses 6-8 – Before the sacrifice, the blood was collected into bowls. Moses sprinkled some of the blood on the altar, signifying that the people's sins were forgiven. Then he read the Book of the Covenant a second time and the people repeated their promise to obey. Moses sprinkled the blood on all of the people as a sign of their commitment and responsibility to keep covenant with God.

Israel would fail miserably (and almost immediately) to keep covenant with God. Truly, we would fare no better!

As believers, what does this represent for us?

Matthew 26:27-28

Ephesians 1:7

1 John 2:2

Cutting a Covenant

When two parties would make a covenant, they cut an animal in half and lay the pieces opposite each other with a path between. The stipulations of the covenant would be recited and both parties would pass between the severed animal. It was a graphic way of saying, "If I do not keep my promise, may it be to me as this animal." (God made this covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15.) This covenant with Israel was similar. It is the covenant God made with His people. They were bound by blood to keep God's law; by the same blood their sins were forgiven.

3 Keeping Promises | Walking through all the details of this section may seem tedious, but this is one of the most important events in Israel’s story, right up there with the Passover episode that brought them safely out of Egypt.

Think about the promises God made in Exodus 6:6-8 and what we’ve already seen Him do for them so far.

“I will deliver you from slavery.” ☑ (Exodus Ch. 1-18)

“I will take you to be My people.” ☑ (Exodus Ch. 19-24)

“I will bring you into the land that I swore to give you.”

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The glory of God’s faithfulness is that no sin of ours has ever made Him unfaithful.

C.H. Spurgeon

We’ve heard the people say “*yes! We will do everything the Lord says*”—*three times now*. They don’t know it yet, but we know they won’t keep their promise. Isn’t that our story too? Where would we be without the faithfulness of God to forgive sin?

Memory Verse

All the people answered with one voice and said,
“All the words which the Lord has said we will do.”
Exodus 24:3 NKJV

Which part of this verse resonates most with you today? How or in what way?

4 Read Exodus 24:9-11 | God's Invitation. What is happening? Do your best to describe this remarkable scene.

- a. Compare this scene with three other texts which describe God enthroned in Heaven. Note what is similar and what is different.

Isaiah's experience - Isaiah 6:1-8

Ezekiel's experience - Ezekiel 1:22-28

John's experience - Revelation 4:1-6

- b. Glimpses of Heaven. Imagine trying to explain this experience later, to your family and friends. *"I saw God!"* What does He look like? *"Well, His feet . . ."* Moses can barely describe it himself. Highlight what stands out most to you and why.

5 Read Exodus 24:12-18 | Come Up to Me. The Lord tells Moses to come up the mountain and wait there.

- a. Who does Moses leave in charge of the camp while he's away? Why do you think he chose them?
- b. Who does Moses take with him? What do we know about this young man so far?
- c. Moses has climbed this mountain several times; every time going further up. Discuss what occurs this time. Highlight what stands out to you, and why.

Action Steps ►► As you think through this part of Moses' story, what is the most important takeaway point for you personally? How will you put what you've learned into action?

Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

Adoration – Giving praise and honor to God for who He is and what He does.

Confession – Honestly deal with sin; acknowledge to God the ways (and whys) you fall short.

Thanksgiving – Verbalize your gratitude; express your praise and a thankful heart.

Supplication – Pray specifically for the needs of others, ourselves, our church, our nation.



Close your discussion time by praying together. Use the A·C·T·S pattern as a group focus and keep it simple. No need to be lengthy or profound, just authentic.

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