



The Exodus

Lesson 8: God's Covenant With Israel

(Exodus 19-24, 32-34)

The Lord called to Moses from Mount Sinai, instructing him to tell the Israelites about the covenant (agreement) He wanted to make with them. Moses was to remind the Israelites how God had brought them out of Egypt. Now, if they would obey God and keep His covenant, they would be special to Him in all the earth. Whenever Moses told those words to the people, they said that they would do all that God says.

So, the people were to get ready to hear God's commandments. On the third day, God was going to come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. The people were not to go up the mountain or touch it – or they would be killed. So, they set up boundaries around the mountain. On the morning of the third day, there were thundering, lightnings, a thick cloud on the mountain, and a very loud sound of a trumpet. The people in Israel were afraid. Moses brought the people to the mountain to meet with God and listen to what He would say. The mountain was completely in smoke because God descended on it in fire and the mountain shook violently. The trumpet sounded longer and louder.

God began by giving the people ten commandments they must follow. Then, God called Moses up on the mountain and spoke other commandments to him. Then, Moses told them to the people. These commandments taught the Israelites all that God wanted from them. Keeping these commandments would make the Israelites holy just as God is holy. So, they would not be doing anything that was evil and would be obeying God. The Bible books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy all teach us about the law God gave the Israelites to follow.

When Moses told the people the words of the Lord, all the people said that they would do what God had said. All God's words were written in a book. And, Moses built an altar to the Lord at the bottom of the mountain with twelve pillars (one for each tribe of Israel) and the young men offered burnt offerings and peace

offerings to the Lord. Moses took half the blood and sprinkled it on the altar and the other half on the people. This was the blood of the covenant the Lord had made with them.

But, when God called Moses back onto the mountain for forty days and nights to give him more instructions, the people saw that Moses was taking a long time on the mountain. So, some of them told Aaron that he should make gods to go before them since they did not know what had happened to Moses. Then, Aaron told them to break off their golden earrings and he used them to make a golden calf. They said that this golden calf was their god who brought them out of Egypt. They built an altar to it, made a feast for it the next day, and made offerings to it.

God saw everything that was happening and told Moses to get down from the mountain because the people were not keeping the covenant. God was so angry with them that He wanted to destroy them all and make a nation from Moses. But, Moses pleaded with the Lord not to do this. So, God did not harm the people.

When Moses saw them, He had two stone tablets containing the law in his hand, with words written on both sides of them by the hand of God. There was so much noise from the people that Joshua told Moses it sounded like war. Then, Moses saw the calf and the people dancing, and threw the tablets so that they broke. Then, he burned the calf they had made in the fire, ground it to powder, put it in water, and made the people drink it. About 3,000 of the Israelites were killed that day and God plagued the people because of their sin.

After this, two new stone tablets were made and God wrote all the words on them that were on the first ones. He renewed His covenant with Israel. And, whenever Moses came down from Mount Sinai, his face was shining so much that the Israelites were afraid to talk with him. So, they gave him a veil and he told the Israelites all that God had commanded them.

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Written by Eric Krieg

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Study Questions:

- 1) What was the covenant God wanted to make with the Israelites? Did the Israelites agree?

- 2) What mountain did God come upon?

- 3) What happened when God came upon is mountain?

- 4) What were the Israelites not allowed to do at this time?

- 5) What Bible books teach us about God's law for the Israelites?

- 6) How long was Moses in the mountain?

- 7) What did the Israelites make during this time?

- 8) What happened when Moses came down from the mountain?

Memory Verse:

“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine” (Exodus 19:5).

Draw a picture of the lesson you learned about: