



“Open Church – Open Bible”

Min. Marossa Davis

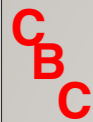


Sunday Church School

October 25, 2020

“God Meets Moses Alone”

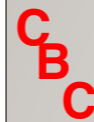
Exodus 24:12-18



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“God Meets Moses Alone”
Exodus 24: 12-18

- v. 12. “And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.
- v. 13 And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.
- v.14 And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them.”



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“ God Meets Moses Alone”
Exodus 24:12-18

- v. 15. And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount.”
- v. 16. And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.
- v. 17. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.
- v. 18. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.”

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Exodus 24:12-18

Our lesson today reminds us that God had already shown Himself in a veiled way to Moses and Aaron, Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of the people of Israel when they had gone up Mount Sinai to meet the Lord and finalize the covenant the nation of Israel was entering into with Him. The words in verse 1 indicate that the 74 men did not ascend to the top of the mountain, but only went partway up. It appears that when the covenant ceremony ended, the entire group went back down the mountain.

God now called Moses to come up to the top of Mt Sinai to get a further and deeper revelation of Him. God was going to have Moses make stone tablets on which God would write the law. He was also going to give Moses a lot more instruction about the place of worship, the priests who facilitate worship, and the tabernacle and its use.

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Exodus 24:12-18

The Lord’s words: “**Come up to me** into the Mount, and **be there.**” It was clear that Moses would be entering that special presence of the Lord. “**Be there**” can be translated “wait there” or “remain there”. It suggests that Moses would remain on the mountain for some time.

Verse 12 is the first mention of the “tables of stones”. They were inscribed by God Himself (Exodus 31:18, 34:1) with the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:22) while Moses wrote all the other commandments as God spoke them to him (Exodus 24:4, Deuteronomy 27:3). Verse 12 appears to say that the Lord would write out all the “law” and “commandments” . It can be translated “ I will give you the tables of stone, as well as the law and the commandments which I have written for their instruction. Moses certainly had

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a role in delivering the law to the people of Israel and teaching them. In the broader sense, **God Himself** was the author of the commands and was Israel’s divine Teacher.

This concept stood in direct contrast to the thinking of the ancient world where documents indicate that laws were given to people by the King, not their gods. But here, the God of Israel provided his laws directly to His covenant people and...He actually wrote the basic ones (the Ten Commandments) personally **on stone** as a sign that all His laws came from Him directly and are not the product of human invention.

The Lord’s emphasis on instructing the people in His law reminds us that **teaching** is one of God’s primary goals in our lives. As believers, once we are taught the truth and are brought to faith in Christ through the work of the

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Holy Spirit, God’s work focuses on instructing us in His ways. He teaches us the truth so that we might be **wise and discerning** and able to apply it to every situation we encounter in life.

One of the ways the Lord teaches us is through His written revelation, the Bible, as the Holy Spirit enlightens our mind to understand it. It is given so that we might know God better, consistently obey Him, and grow to maturity and Christlikeness. It is crucial to our spiritual well being that we eagerly read, study, and learn the Scriptures and **submit** to what they teach us.

In verse 13, Moses quickly responds to the Lord’s summons to re-ascend the mountain. In doing so he took with him his minister **Joshua.**

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The Hebrew word used here for **Minister** refers to one who serves. It is often used of those who served in Israel’s worship, but is also used of aides or an assistant to someone of great importance. Joshua has only been mentioned one time earlier in Exodus Chapter 17 when he led Israel’s successful military victory over the Amalekites just 3 months after leaving Egypt. Nothing is known of him before that, but Moses obviously saw in him the qualities of a good leader, both military and otherwise.

Joshua, along with Caleb, boldly stood against almost the entire nation when the people refused to enter the land God had promised to give them (Numbers 13-14). He eventually **succeeded Moses** and led the people in the conquest and settlement of the Promised Land. His final words to the nation reveal his faithfulness the Lord to the very end of his life’s journey (Josh. 24).

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Moses understood the need for human help and encouragement. The Lord provides His Word to teach us and the Holy Spirit to empower us, but He also provides fellow believers to help us, challenge us, encourage us, and hold us accountable. This is why we make our fellowship in a local church a priority. Joshua now accompanies Moses as he started back up the mountain. Before going, Moses gave instructions to Israel’s elders as they would not be accompanying him on this trip. They were told to wait at the foot until they returned. There is the thought that they would keep things in order until then.

As Moses sensed that his time on the mountain might not be brief, he gave further instructions to **Aaron**, (his brother who had been with him throughout the events in Egypt and the exodus), and **Hur**. Both men had held up Moses’ arms as they stood overlooking the battlefield while Joshua and the

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Israelites defeated the Amalekites.

Joshua accompanied Moses up the mountain, but apparently only to the cloud perimeter then only Moses went into that very cloud itself. As Moses climbed the mountain he approached a cloud that covered the top of it. The cloud here is the one described in Exodus 19:16. It is equated with the “glory of the Lord” in verse 16. This brilliant, powerful, display represented the presence of the Lord in all His glory and power and holiness. God’s glory is sometimes known as the **Shekinah- glory** and it was residing on Mount Sinai’s peak! “The **symbols** of God’s manifested presence or “glory” are all there; **cloud and fire, and the voice of God.**” [Wiseman, D.J. Tyndall Old Testament Commentaries (p.187). Inter VarsityPress]

This verse tells us that the cloud “abode” upon Mount Sinai. The

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Hebrew word for “abode or dwell” and it gives the idea of **nearness and closeness**. From this word comes the Hebrew term for **tabernacle** which is the subject of much of the revelation Moses was to receive on the mountain.

Moses did not enter the cloud immediately. He ‘ **waited**’ for six days, then on the seventh day God called to him from the midst of the cloud. Only then did Moses enter the cloud, drawing near to God’s presence (v. 18) We are not told the reason why God had Moses to **wait** to enter the cloud. Perhaps it was to remind him and us that one must not take God’s holiness lightly. On this occasion, the Lord invited him to come near, but not immediately. Sometimes God asks us to be **patient** and **wait for Him**.

To the Israelites encamped in the valley below Mount Sinai, the cloud on the mountaintop was like a “devouring fire”. The people had seen the cloud

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in their travels, appearing as a cloud by day and a fire by night to lead them (Exodus 13:21), and they understood this represented God’s special presence with them. They also understood that **Moses was now meeting with Him** and acting as their representative. Moses entered the cloud of Glory and remained there 40 days and 40 nights. God supernaturally sustained him as he neither ate nor drank during that time according to Deuteronomy 9:9.

Moses enjoyed a unique privilege in his time. Yet today “the believer has an equally glorious opportunity...for we are able to come nigh to the very presence of God in the holy of holiness because of the blood of Christ (Hebrews 10:19). We no longer have to wait at the top of the mountain for revelation. That has been given to us in the Holy Scriptures. **Our responsibility now is to read and obey.**

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Our Golden text this week was verse 17 where it states the sight of the Lord was like **devouring fire**...! God is glorious and He is far above anything we can imagine with our finite minds. He is all knowing, all powerful and present everywhere at once and infinitely above any rival claim or authority. He is deserving of every iota of praise and obedience from His creation. God desires that we glorify Him by worshipping Him through singing songs, loving others and living for Him.

This sight that the Israelites saw struck awe and fear into their hearts because it overwhelmed them with a sense of the Lord’s power. Yet, our infinitely glorious Lord wants us to know Him better through a relationship built on faith in Jesus Christ. If a relationship on our part required righteousness, we would be hopelessly lost. But, the **Good News** is that if we are saved,

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our relationship is built on **Christ’s perfect righteousness** instead, and that is what brings God all the glory!

From the Jewish Aspect, the Hebrew word for the burning bush that God called to Moses to deliver the Israelites from the bondage of slavery in Egypt (Exodus 3:2) is the same word for devouring, consuming fire that the people of Israel saw when Moses went up Mount Sinai.- ‘ *esh*. Fire is used figuratively in the Bible as the manifestation of God’s presence as well as His anger. Fire was sacred. However, fire also represented God’s anger and judgment. The Lord was angry at the complaints of the Israelites in the desert: and when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled: and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp”. (Num. 11:1)

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How then did Moses stand in the presence of the fire to commune with God while the Israelites viewed the fire as consuming? Moses imagines that man can nonetheless withstand God’s fire, containing it within himself and yet not be consumed by it. His vision proposes that **what looks like a destroying fire need not be**, and that it can be brought into our breasts, our homes, into our camp. It is a vision of what man could be, what Israel could be, if God lived among us. Similarly, only Moses was invited into God’s presence this time, not the elders, nor the others.

Believers in Yeshua are told that we have not come to Mount Sinai but to Mount Zion, which represents love and forgiveness, not fear and terror. We have come to the city of the Living God with all those who receive Yeshua as the mediator of the New Covenant. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

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Practical Points

1. Christian leaders should spend time alone with God in prayer and study (Exodus 24:12)
2. A godly, prayerful support team is vital to the success of Christian ministry (vs. 13).
3. Christian leaders should learn to delegate duties so they can extend the reach of their ministry (vs. 14).
4. God is always with His people, even in frightening and confusing times when they do not sense His presence (vs. 15-16).
5. We approach our holy God through faith in Christ, never in our own righteousness (vs. 17).
6. Believers should draw closer to God in times of testing and decision (vs. 18).

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For Further Reflection

1. How are our lives as Christians affected by spending time alone with God? Ask yourself, how has my life personally been affected by my alone time with God?
2. How does our access to God today compare with Moses’ access to Him?
3. How was Moses training Joshua for future leadership (Exodus 24)? How does Moses provide an example for leaders today? Why is such training important in today’s churches?

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