

Copyright © Two Journeys Ministry

Andrew M. Davis

Teaching Notes

www.twojourneys.org

Please use in accordance with the copyright policy found at twojourneys.org

This Far and No Farther

Exodus 19:16-25

On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. 17 Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain trembled violently, 19 and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

20 The LORD descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up 21 and the LORD said to him, "Go down and warn the people so they do not force their way through to see the LORD and many of them perish. 22 Even the priests, who approach the LORD, must consecrate themselves, or the LORD will break out against them."

23 Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up Mount Sinai, because you yourself warned us, 'Put limits around the mountain and set it apart as holy.'"

24 The LORD replied, "Go down and bring Aaron up with you. But the priests and the people must not force their way through to come up to the LORD, or he will break out against them."

25 So Moses went down to the people and told them.

I. The Great Central Purpose of our Lives: Knowing God

II. The Central Lesson of the Old Covenant: Thus Far and No Farther

Amos 4:12 "Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel, and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel."

Exodus 19:1-9 In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt-- on the very day-- they came to the Desert of Sinai. 2 After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain. 3 Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." 7 So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak. 8 The people all responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD. 9 The LORD said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you." Then Moses told the LORD what the people had said.

I. God Fulfills His Promise to Bring Israel to Sinai (vs. 1-4)

vs. 1-4 In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt-- on the very day-- they came to the Desert of Sinai. 2 After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain. 3 Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

A. God's Original Sign to Moses

Exodus 3:11-12 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

B. Not One Good Promise Fails

Joshua 23:14 "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed."

Psalm 145:13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made.

Psalm 119:140 Your promises have been thoroughly tested, and your servant loves them.

C. All Promises Fulfilled in Christ

2 Corinthians 1:20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.

D. Arduous Journey

1. Far more difficult than originally described

[God to Moses] ***Exodus 3:18 "The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.'***

[Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh before the plagues] ***Exodus 5:3 Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword."***

[Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh after the plagues] ***Exodus 8:27 We must take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, as he commands us."***

- a. these requests were made to Pharaoh to show his unreasonableness in refusing
- b. God's ultimate purpose was the Promised Land
- c. difficulties caused by Pharaoh's pursuit of Israel, AND God's purpose to test Israel now that Pharaoh's army was destroyed

2. Goal makes journey worthwhile

John 16:21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Romans 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

E. God's Sustaining Grace

vs. 3-4 *Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.*

1. God recounts history
2. Purpose is to give Israel confidence for future journey... journey NOT OVER YET
3. God's powerful and tender sovereign grace

I carried you on eagles' wings

All enemies are as nothing compared to God's sovereign grace

No one was able to destroy Israel and thwart God's intention for his people

E. Spiritual Significance: Goal is to COME TO HIM

Exodus 19:4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

II. The Covenant Prepared (vs. 5-9)

vs.5-9 *Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." 7 So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak. 8 The people all responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD. 9 The LORD said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you." Then Moses told the LORD what the people had said.*

A. Just Like the Ten Commandments:

1. I am the Lord who brought you out of Egypt
2. Obey me fully, all my commands

B. These Verses Lay the Groundwork for the Giving of the Covenant

C. Conditional Covenant

1. IF you obey me fully
2. The essence of the Old Covenant: blessing for obedience, curses for disobedience
3. This is the very weakness of the Old Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31-34 "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

4. Unconditional Covenant:

a. covenant with Noah

Genesis 9:11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

Genesis 9:15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.

b. covenant with David

2 Samuel 23:5 "Is not my house right with God? Has he not made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged and secured in every part? Will he not bring to fruition my salvation and grant me my every desire?"

2 Chronicles 21:7 Nevertheless, because of the covenant the LORD had made with David, the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David. He had promised to maintain a lamp for him and his descendants forever.

2 Chronicles 13:5 Don't you know that the LORD, the God of Israel, has given the kingship of Israel to David and his descendants forever by a covenant of salt?"

Psalms 89:2-4 I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself. 3 You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, 4 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.'" Selah

2 Samuel 7:8-16 *"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth. 10 And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning 11 and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. "'The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: 12 When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. 15 But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.'"*

5. New Covenant depends on someone else's obedience: Christ's

Romans 5:19 *For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

Hebrews 7:22 *Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.*

Hebrews 8:6 *But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.*

Hebrews 9:15 *For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance-- now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

Hebrews 12:24 *to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant,*

Hebrews 13:20 *May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep*

Summary: The Covenant of Sinai was a conditional covenant, breakable through the disobedience of Israel

The New Covenant in which we are saved is unbreakable and unconditional

D. Remarkable Promises

vs. 5-9 *Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."*

1. You will be my treasured possession
 - a. amazing!! That God would treasure a sinful nation like Israel
 - b. reciprocal relationship: God is Israel's treasure, Israel is God's!
2. Out of all the nations on earth

vs. 5-6 *"Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."*

- a. God not needy, doesn't need Israel for anything
 - b. God could easily have done without Israel
 - c. God's election of Israel was not based on Israel's attributes
3. Kingdom of Priests
 - a. "priesthood of the believers" has its roots here
 - b. BUT it's an OLD COVENANT promise
 - c. the priestly ministry was to proclaim the glories of God to the end of the earth, to all nations

Task first given to Israel:

Psalm 9:11 *Sing praises to the LORD, enthroned in Zion; proclaim among the nations what he has done.*

Psalm 22:27 *All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him,*

Isaiah 12:4 *In that day you will say: "Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.*

This is the "priestly duty" of the Apostle Paul:

Romans 15:16 *to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.*

4. A holy nation

That is, separated unto God... holy mean separated from other nations and their evil practices

NOTE: all these promises now made to the church!!!!

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Communication to Israel and to Moses: vs. 7-9

vs. 7-9 So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak. 8 The people all responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD. 9 The LORD said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you." Then Moses told the LORD what the people had said.

Consecration of Israel: vss. 9-15

vs. 9-15 And the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes 11 and be ready by the third day, because on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. 12 Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, 'Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. 13 He shall surely be stoned or shot with arrows; not a hand is to be laid on him. Whether man or animal, he shall not be permitted to live.' Only when the ram's horn sounds a long blast may they go up to the mountain." 14 After Moses had gone down the mountain to the people, he consecrated them, and they washed their clothes. 15 Then he said to the people, "Prepare yourselves for the third day. Abstain from sexual relations."