

Introduction to the Old Testament, Part 2: Lessons from Mt. Sinai

Expository Lessons from the Book of Genesis

I. Intro

- A. This lesson will focus on one of the most pivotal days in the history of the world. From this Old Testament example, we will address 4 of the 8 reasons discussed in our last lesson as to why Christians should read the Old Testament:
 - 1. Seeing the heart and character of the God of the Scriptures
 - 2. Understanding the background of the New Testament
 - 3. All of these things are written for our benefit, these are our Scriptures! (Romans 15:4, 2 Tim. 3:16-17)
 - 4. Reading prophecies that prove that Jesus is the Son of God and rose from the dead, written 1000 years before Jesus was born.
- B. Our focus: the day God came down and scared His people half to death! We will look at two places:
 - 1. The Exodus account: Moses' original account
 - 2. The Deuteronomy account: Moses' retelling of the account almost forty years after it happened, and near the end of his life

II. The Exodus Account (Exodus 19:1-20:21)

- A. Israel has made its way from Egypt and is now camped at the foot of the Mt. Sinai.
- B. God makes a conditional promise
 - 1. vs. 5 "if you obey My voice... you shall be a special people... a royal priesthood and a holy nation."
 - 2. This foreshadows the Church, where the Church is set apart, a holy nation (1 Peter 2:7-11)
- C. vs. 3-10 Moses is the intermediary between God and Israel (like Jesus for us)
- D. vs. 11 "the third day" - How they kept time: the third day is the day after tomorrow (today, tomorrow and the next day). Jesus was crucified on Friday and rose on the third day (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday).
- E. Ex. 19:16-20:21
 - 1. This account is given shortly after it happened. 3 months after Israel came out of Egypt.

2. People had heard about God, seen His miracles in and coming out of Egypt, but now they encounter God and they are terrified and ask Moses to speak directly to God for them.

F. 10 Commandments

1. No other God.
2. No bowing down to images. God dwells in “unapproachable light” (1 Tim. 6:16) and Moses approaches God in “thick darkness” (Ex. 20:21). No making of images of God.
3. No taking God’s name in vain.
4. Observe the Sabbath. (In Colossians 2:13-17 Paul tells us we are no longer bound to obey this command.)

The first 4 commandments deal with our relationship with God; the last 6 deal with our relationships with each other.

5. Honor your parents.
 - a) Eph. 6:1-2 - young children are to honor and obey their parents.
 - b) Matt. 15 and Mk. 7 – as older (adult) children are to take care of and provide for our parents – this is how we honor them.
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not bear false witness.
10. Do not covet your neighbor’s wife, slaves, or anything he or she owns. (Notice that this commandment deals with the heart, not just outward actions.)

III. The Deuteronomy Account (Deut. 1:1-3, 4:5-13, 4:23-24, 5:1-7, 5:22-33)

- A. 1:1-3 This account is Moses’ retelling of the story of Mt. Sinai at the end of his life, nearly 40 years after it happened
- B. 4:5-13 The message: don’t forget the day you heard the voice of God. Fear Him. Obey the 10 Commandments. Pass these on to your children.
- C. 4:10 “assembly” is the same Greek word (ekklésia) for Church (see Matt. 16:18)
- D. 4:23-24 object lesson: God is a consuming fire, a jealous God

- E. 5:1-7 reminds them that Israel heard the 10 Commandments themselves, don't forget!
- F. 5:22-33
 - 1. God's people are terrified of Him. They say essentially: "Moses, you go up and speak with God. We will do whatever He commands."
 - 2. God's response: that is wonderful! My people fear me. This is a good thing.
 - 3. "Would they had such a heart in them so as to fear Me and guard my commandments all the time, that it might be well with them and their sons forever." vs. 29
 - 4. Following God's commandments is the best thing for us. The fear of God is a good and healthy thing in the New Testament. What about today? Do we need to still fear God?
 - a) "... fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:27-28)
 - b) "Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." (1 Peter 2:17)
 - c) "Consider the kindness and sternness of God." Romans 11:22
 - 5. Hebrews 12:14-29
 - a) We are to pursue peace, holiness, avoid sexual immorality
 - b) Hebrew writer returns to Mt. Sinai. Our God (this is addressed to Christians!) is a consuming fire. (vs. 29)
 - c) At Mt. Sinai the people could not escape God who spoke from earth. We shall not escape God who speaks from heaven.
 - d) "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire." vs. 28-29
 - 6. Psalm 34:8 "The Angel of the Lord shall encamp around those who fear Him, and He will deliver them."
 - 7. We need to understand who God really is.
 - 8. We need to understand the consequences of our sin (Matt. 5:22, 29-30)

IV. Deuteronomy 18:15-19 - “The 11th Commandment”

- A. Background: people hear God speak and say, “We’re done. Moses, you speak with God and we’ll do whatever He tells you.”
- B. God told Moses something else on that day, which is not mentioned in the Exodus account, but Moses explains in the Deuteronomy account.
- C. Like the 5th Commandment, this additional commandment was a commandment with a promise. What is the promise?
- D. Vs. 15 “The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren.”
 - 1. The Prophet will be Jewish, “from your brethren”. (Therefore could not have been Mohammad)
 - 2. The Prophet will be like Moses. Consider the similarities between Moses and Jesus:
 - a) Both escape an evil king trying to kill them when they are born (Exodus 1:18-2:3, Matthew 2:13)
 - b) Moses turns water (river) into blood Jesus turns water into wine (Exodus 7:20, John 2:1-11)
 - c) Both lead God’s people out of slavery
 - d) Moses lifts up the serpent in the desert to save the people from death, Jesus says he will be lifted up and all who look to him will be saved. (Numbers 21:9, John 3:14)
 - e) Both were intermediaries between the people and God
 - f) Moses ushered in the Passover lamb sacrifice and meal.
 - g) At the end of his life, the Jews could not find Moses’ body. (Deuteronomy 34:5-6)
 - 3. “I will raise up a prophet”
 - a) Peter quotes this in Acts 3:22-23. He says that this Prophet is Jesus, whom God literally “raised up” (resurrected!). You must obey his voice.
 - b) This is the Prophet spoken about in John 1:21, 45, and 6:14
 - c) Jesus fulfills this prophecy given in Deuteronomy written 1000 years before his birth.
- E. What is the “11th Commandment”?

1. God gives the Ten Commandments which Moses spoke about in the Exodus account. But only now, 39 years later, does Moses share the other commandment that God had given him on the mountain, which the people did not hear.
2. In the future God will send another Prophet like me, and you must listen to His voice and obey Him. Anyone who does not obey what He says will be destroyed. (Deut. 18:15-19, Acts 3:22-23)

F. What are some of the Commandments of the Prophet?

1. Matthew 5:17 starts making sense: Jesus came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it.
 - a) “fulfill” means “to bring to completion”
 - b) Jesus is the fulfillment of the ‘11th Commandment’, the Prophet who was promised to come
2. Jesus, the Prophet, supersedes Moses (Matt. 5:22)
3. Jesus took what Moses handed down, redefines some things, cancels some things, changes some things just as Moses said would happen
 - a) Does away with dietary restrictions, the sacrificial system, Sabbath keeping, and circumcision (Mk. 7:19, Col. 2:16-17, Acts 15)
 - b) Translates murder to anger (Matthew 5:21-22)
 - c) Redefines who is our neighbor (Luke 10:29-37)
 - d) Changes the teaching on non-resistance (Matt. 5:43-46), marriage and divorce (Matt. 5:31-32)
4. Jesus was the fulfillment of the missing ‘11th Commandment’ which Moses revealed at the end of his life, the one thing Israel didn’t hear when they heard God speak. We must do what He says. (See also Matthew 17:1-8)

V. Conclusion

- A. Our God is a consuming fire. We need to fear him and obey him. This is about loving God and understanding the consequence of our sin.
- B. We need to have God’s vision for the Church: a holy nation, set apart for God. This was a conditional promise. We can’t coast!
- C. God was setting the stage at Mt. Sinai for the great Prophet who would come and give us the rest of the Law and have authority to take us the rest of the way. Jesus is the fulfillment of this prophecy and this promise. (Acts 3:22-23, Acts 7:37-38)