

Week 8 Set free to serve

Exodus 19-24

Aim: To see how we ought to respond to the extraordinary relationship God has given us who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. To see we ought to love God as he determines what that looks like, and our neighbours, even as we see loving our neighbours thus is an expression of loving God. In this way, we see too our privileged and responsible place in God's plan to gather people for himself from all nations.

Getting Started:

Share (-) when did a changed relationship change you?

Pray for understanding as we read God's word.

What is God saying?

Read Exodus 19:1-8

What are we reminded of Israel's identity now, and what do we learn comes with it?

*V1 Reminded 'left Egypt' and reinforced by calendar begun then
V4 Witnesses to what God did to Egypt; and his rescue of them
V5-6 If they obey God fully and keep his covenant (the contract God instigated between himself and them) they will be his treasured possession. Not that he isn't God over all nations, but he has set this special identity upon them in a way he has not others. With such privilege comes their identity and responsibility as a kingdom of priests – declaring the praises of God to the nations and calling on him on their behalf - and a holy nation – set apart by God for his purposes in a world set against him. (You may want to recall 1 Peter 2:9)*

What is Moses role in this relationship?

He is a mediator, like a priest, though not making sacrifices, the pattern of what Israel as a nation will be, and in these verses we see him going up and down playing that role.

He says later, recalling this day, that God will raise up one like him, Deuteronomy 18:15-19, and when Jesus comes he is greater even than him (Hebrews 3 and the whole of Hebrews has more to say on this for those interested)

Read Exodus 20:1-21

Describe what was the experience at the mountain like for the people (vv18-21)

Thunderbolt and lightning, very very frightening! Not to mention the sound of the trumpet, smoke and the voice of God! They were afraid they would die before the majesty of God expressed in this way.

What is the foundation (vv1-2) and goal (v12) of the 10 commandments?

*V1-2 God's initiative and rescue of them from Egypt and slavery
V12 That they would live long in the land, (with God in their midst as promised), experiencing his blessing.*

What do they show us about relating to the LORD? And one another?

As Jesus said in Mark 12:3-31, summarized 'love God and love your neighbor'. This is what life is about. The first 4 commands focus on our love of God and the remainder on love of neighbour but love of neighbour is inseparably an act of love toward God

Vv2-11 (Commands 1-4) Notice God is jealous for their (marriage like) relationship, and won't stand for divided commitment to other false gods or even idols created to worship him, or his name (authority/identity) being demeaned, or their dependance on him (as provider) usurped by their work

BUT this is in the context of his extraordinary love of them (esp v2 - freed, v6 – showing love, v9-11 Sabbath = giver of rest, providing when they don't work, v12 – giver of the land (of rest))

Vv12-17 (Commands 5-10) Notice they're all about how we view others and ourselves, where God provides for us (parents & ordered relationships, life, marriage, possessions, speech, what we need) so we don't need to grasp and take from each other but are freed up to serve and give

Read Romans 3:19-20 and Rom 10:4

How does Jesus' fulfil the law of God where we could not?

Vv3:19-20 because of our sin we cannot earn (as people often think) or maintain (a wiser way to think) our relationship with God. We need 'keep the whole law' and so the law highlights our sinful nature

V10:4 Jesus fulfills the law in our place so that we who believe in him may experience the benefits!

Read Hebrews 12:18-25

How does Israel and our experience of God compare - what's different?

And what is the same?

Similar – mountain theme, mediator, holiness of God before sin, gathered/assembled/churched (church means 'assembly) by God

Different – first mountain was physical, second is picking up physical as an image for the new heavens and earth, mediator not Moses now but

Jesus, who gives his own blood in sacrifice, old covenant and new covenant

Same – Do not refuse to hear and obey God's voice

Why is God saying this?

What strikes you about Israel's experience of the Lord here, that may shape how you respond to Christ and the gospel?

Examples –

*Wonder of purposes of God to privilege people to be near and dear to him,
and take a key part in his plans*

*Holiness of God, don't be glib or dismissive or underestimate the
seriousness of my own sin*

Joy of the extent of his kindness in freeing us to be his

How may we embrace the 10 commandments and the law in order to walk
in the good works God has prepared for us (2 Timothy 3:16-17)?

Reveal the character of God and how to respond rightly to him

So reveals what it looks like to love him

And reveals what it looks like to love others

*Even where we face different situations we can use the principles of God's
law to inform how we may act wisely as his people*

How is what we've read 'marching orders for mission'?

*Reflect back on 19:5-6 and 1 Peter 2:9. Not only are we saved to be his
people, as his people we have a role to play toward those who don't yet
know and love him. One comes with the other – God's goal for us includes
this responsibility under him. And so we should pray, care, give and go on
this mission, whether near or far, as we have opportunity, but always
actively seeking to engage in God's mission*

Prayer Starters

- Thank God for his life giving word
- Pray that by his Spirit may enable us to live as a holy nation and kingdom of priests
- Pray for those who see disciples of Jesus and our lives, that they may meet the LORD in his word through us

Growing Growth Group Suggestion

Those who are willing - share a prayer point for a missional ministry you pray for and pray together for them as a group

Are there any people I should follow up this week?