

Men's Sunday Night
A Study in The Book of Exodus
Lesson 12 – Exodus 23:20-24
Journey to Freedom
Covenant Confirmed

God promised His people victory because His angel would go before them and help them defeat their enemies, if the nation faithfully obeyed God's commandments. Their ownership of the land was purely by God's grace, but their enjoyment of the land depended on their faith and faithfulness. Once in their land, the people were warned not to imitate the idolatrous practices of the other nations. God promised His people health, prosperity, and safety if they obeyed Him, for these blessings were a part of His covenant. Israel did conquer the Promised Land and destroy the cities and idols of the godless inhabitants. But unfortunately, God's people began to make peace with their heathen neighbors and learn to worship their false gods and goddesses.

Exodus 24

Moses is about to receive from God the divine pattern for the tabernacle and the priesthood. Whenever God calls us to do a work, He gives us the plans and expects us to follow His will. Before Moses and the leaders of the nation could ascend the mountain to meet with God, the people had to enter into a covenant relationship with God. Moses shared the Word of God with the people, and they agreed to obey it.

The covenant was confirmed with sacrifices and the sprinkling of the blood on the altar and on the people who agreed to obey it. The blood on the altar spoke of God's gracious forgiveness of sin, while the blood sprinkled on the people committed them to a life of obedience. Believers today have been sprinkled by the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense and are committed to obey His will.

It is possible to believe in God and be a part of His covenant and yet not be close to God. What a privilege it is to fellowship with God, and what a tragedy it is that we too often fail to spend time in His presence. Unfortunately, many come near to God and still go away and sin. How important it is that our personal worship of the Lord result in a clean heart and a right spirit, for great privileges bring with them even greater responsibilities.

Read Exodus 23:20-33 and Answer the Following Questions:

1. God gives some promises to the Israelites. What was the condition for these promises? What would be the result of obedience to these promises? (See 23:20-31)

2. What other specific benefits would the Israelites experience as a result of obeying the Lord? (See 23:25-26)

3. Why didn't the Lord drive out all of Israel's enemies at once?

4. Why should the children of Israel not make any covenant with the people? Did they? Is there any lessons we can learn from this is regards to making covenants today? (See 23:32-33)

5. What is the difference between an unconditional and conditional promise? Give some Biblical examples.

Read Exodus 24:1-18 and Answer the Following Questions:

6. The Lord tells Moses to come up again to the mountain to meet with Him. Who else is supposed to go with him? What is the Lord teaching Israel about Himself through his instructions? (See 24:1-2)

7. Why did Moses write down what God said since he had already relayed it to the people? What is the advantage of written Scripture as compared to just oral?

8. Why could the elders along with Moses now go up and meet with God? What was the purpose of this meeting? What does it mean that they saw God? (See 9-11)

9. Who went upon the mountain? Who was left in charge while Moses was on the mountain?

10. Why did a cloud cover the mountain? What is the glory of God called? When and why does it appear?

11. What do you think Moses was doing during his first 6 day stay?

12. How can we apply the principles of sacrificial offerings to our lives today?

What is the Shekinah Glory of God? Exodus 24:15-17

The word (Shekinah) does not appear in the Bible, but the concept clearly does. The Hebrew rabbis used this extra biblical expression, a form of a Hebrew word that means “He caused to dwell,” signifying that it was a divine visitation of the presence of the Lord on this earth. The Shekinah was first evident when the Israelites set out from Succoth in their escape from Egypt. After leaving Succoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the promise land. By day, the Lord went ahead of them as a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night as a pillar of fire to give them light and warmth. God spoke to Moses out of the pillar of cloud, assuring him that His presence would be with the people.

The visible appearance of God’s presence was not only seen by the Israelites but also by the Egyptians. During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He made the wheels of their chariots come off which caused them to malfunction. Exodus 14:25 says “ *And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty, and the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians.* ”

In the New Testament, Jesus is the dwelling place of God’s glory. Colossians 2:9 tells us “*For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*” In Jesus, we see the visible presence of God Himself in the second person of the Trinity. Although, His glory was also veiled, Jesus is nonetheless the presence of God on earth. Just as the divine Presence dwelled in a relatively plain tent called the tabernacle before the Temple was build, so did that Presence dwell in the relatively plain man who was Jesus. When we get to heaven, we will see both the Son and the Father in all their glory, and the Shekinah will no longer be veiled. “ *Beloved, now we are children of God: and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*” 1 John 3:2