

The Story: Chapter Five
Moses and the Presence of God
Exodus 13-40

Reminder: Each message and Life Group discussion should be pushing you further into the details of God's Word.

- No way we cover all the details from Exodus 13-40 in one talk.
- Make sure you're diving in and getting all that you can out of The Story for you.

Last week review:

- At the original Passover, there was death in EVERY household. Both Egypt and the Israelites.
- The difference was that the Israelites had a SUBSTITUTE!
- And, for us, our sin does require death. However, there is a SUBSTITUTE!!
- And the only way for you and I to have eternal life in Jesus Christ is to be living under the covering of His blood shed on the cross.

So, the people of Israel are now out of Egypt and started on their journey to the promised land.

Exodus 13

- God calls on them to commit every first born to Him.
- Comes directly after He has just taken the first born from everyone in Egypt and saved the firstborn of the Israelites.
- This is a commitment they are called to keep moving forward.

Then the Egyptians show up...

- The people tell Moses again that he should have just left them in Egypt. Because that is where they were comfortable!!

Exodus 14:13-14

¹³ Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ¹⁴ The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

Through these chapters He's taking care of their needs, getting them food and water when they complain.

But, then we see a statement that we have to focus on today:

Exodus 19:10-11

¹⁰ 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.

LET’S LOOK AT THE TIMELINE!!

We see **5 Times** in The Story of God that God comes down to dwell with the people.

1. In the Garden
3. Jesus in the flesh
4. Through the Holy Spirit at the start of the church.
5. When He comes again to stay with us forever.

The second time is **right here**.

Most of what we see in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers is God setting up His plan to come be with His people.

So, He tells Moses there are three things required for Him to be able to come down and dwell among them.

Watch how this unfolds...

The Presence of God with the Israelites.

God says if I am to come down to be with you...

1. I’ll need a place to stay.

Exodus 25:8-9

⁸ “Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. ⁹ Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.

God gives very specific instruction on how this sanctuary, or really nice tent, is supposed to be built.

- He calls for certain wood, certain dimensions, certain fabric, etc.
- It's basically to be a portable tabernacle where God can meet with Moses or the Priest when He comes down to be with His people.

In the back of this tent is a room called the Holy of Holies.

- This area was guarded with a very thick curtain and only Moses or the Priest could go in to meet with God and then only once a year.

But, why did He have to be quarantined to the back room?

Because the people's sin had not been dealt with.

- God wants to dwell with His people but He cannot dwell with sin.

Therefore, we see His second condition for Moses:

2. Sin must be dealt with.

This is where we hit the book of Leviticus.

The majority of this book is God telling the people how to make proper sacrifices for each individual sin.

- There had been sacrifices made before but, with God coming down to dwell among us, it was necessary to install a true sacrificial system.
- The system made it very clear what had to be done for each sin committed to be clean before the Lord.

Question: If they sacrificial system was to make them clean, why did God have to stay behind the curtain?

Hebrews 10:1-4

10 The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. ² If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. ³ But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, ⁴ because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

This system was symbolic of what was to come but truthfully, the blood of bulls and goats simply cannot take away sin.

This is why, even when God came down to dwell with the people they could not have direct access to Him.

Third think God told Moses He needed in order to come down...

3. We must have guidelines on how we treat each other.

Look at this:

In Exodus 20 we see God give Moses the 10 Commandments.

If you look at them you see that the first 4 of them are about how we are to treat God.

-The other 6 of them are about how we are to treat other people.

When you look through the other 600 or so laws that they put in place, they can all be broken down to support the original 10 Commandments.

And, then we see this from Jesus in the New Testament:

Mark 12:30-31

³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

He breaks the whole thing down to these two.

- And what do they cover...

1. How we treat God
2. How we treat each other.

And, then we see this...

While Moses was on the mountain getting all of this in place with God, the people of Israel were down at the bottom of the mountain breaking the first two commandments of God.

- They decided Moses might not be coming back so they decide to throw all of their gold into a fire and, as they put it, “a golden calf just popped out”.

Have no other gods before Me.

Don't make an idol for yourself.

Here's where we learn the importance of the Presence of God.

Exodus 33:1-3

33 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’² I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.³ Go up to the land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go with you, because you are a stiff-necked people and I might destroy you on the way.”

God basically says He's tired of dealing with these people.

“You go ahead and go to the land I promised. I'll send an Angel but I'm not going with you.”

Moses quickly says,

Exodus 33:15-16

¹⁵ Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.¹⁶ How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”

Here's something we learn from this Moses:

The Presence of God is more valuable than the Promises of God

- You can have all the land you want from God, but if He's not going to be there with you then you don't want the land!

One of the struggles that we have in our lives today: I think we've learned to live our lives without the Presence of God.

- As a Believer, our number one goal should be to stay in His presence and make sure He is welcome to be with us.

We should have the same attitude of Moses: **If you're not going with us we're not going!!**

So, with all of this in mind, how do we see

The Presence of God with Us

You know what God needs in order to be present with us today?

1. He needs a place to stay

He needs an open heart in which to live.

He places the Holy Spirit in our hearts so that He can actually live among us.

He wants to live inside of us and dwell within us. No longer needing a tent of any kind.

2. Sin must be dealt with.

Salvation requires the blood of Jesus to cover all of our sin.

And, daily walking in the presence of God requires daily dealing with sin so that we stand clean and pure before Him.

3. We must have guidelines for how we are to treat each other.

And, then we should know how to treat Him and others.

He gives us tons in His Word about how we are to live our lives as a child of the King.

- We don't live this part so that He will move in with us.
- We do this because He has moved in with us.

Where are you today?