

## SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Exodus: Set Free, Live Free

TITLE: God Is Good, But Not Safe

**SCRIPTURE:** Exodus 19:1-25

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We are in a series on the Book of Exodus from the Old Testament. Why study this book? Exodus is the Old Testament story of the salvation of God's people that points forward to the great salvation that comes to us by faith in Jesus. Exodus helps us better understand what it means for God to *set us free* from our broken, messy lives so we can *live free* in loving, personal relationship with God.

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### SERMON NOTES

*Think with me: What things are good things, but also dangerous things? Interesting question, isn't it? Electricity, fire, sugar, water, dry ice...*

It's not so unusual that something can be good and dangerous at the same time. If we are to know God in the way he has revealed himself to us in the Bible, we have to come to grips with the fact that he is good and holy at the same time. And in the Bible, 'holy' is not exactly safe. As Mr. Beaver explained to Lucy about the great lion, King Aslan, in "The Chronicles of Narnia," "Course [Aslan] isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you." In Exodus 19 we see this very thing, God is good, but he's not safe.

**Passage Summary** – The first half of the book of Exodus (chapters 1-18) tells the story of God rescuing ancient Israel from Egyptian slavery. But the book has a second half (chapters 20-40) where God, through Moses, gives the 10 commandments to Israel, as well as, the instructions on how to build a sacred tent (the Tabernacle) that symbolizes God dwelling in midst of his people. What links these two halves together is the crucial story in Exodus 19. The people of Israel are out in the middle of nowhere land and they find themselves at the foot of this mountain called Sinai. Here, God dramatically reveals his presences to the people in the form of a violent storm cloud—thunder, lightning, smoke, earthquake—very scary. The people are warned three times not to cross the boundary lines Moses has set up. Clearly, it's not safe to come too close to God. The odd thing about this frightening scene is that Holy God has come down to invite Israel into a unique and close relationship with him. The word used to describe this relationship is "covenant"—which is a kind of legal agreement between God and Israel, but...

**Key Question** – The question is: *How is it possible to live in a close, personal relationship with a God who is good, but at the same time, holy? (i.e., not safe?)*

**Answer** – God makes it possible. How so?

- God is always the starting point for relationship. (19:1-4; Exodus 3:11-12)

- God tells us how we can enjoy relationship with him (19:5-8)
- God reveals himself to us as good and holy (19:9-25)

**BIG IDEA** – We need an appropriate fear of our good God. In order to live in a close, personal relationship with God, you don't need to be afraid of God, but you do need an appropriate fear of God. (Hebrews 12:18-29)

**For Discussion** –

1. What are some other things that are a part of everyday life that are good things, but dangerous things?
2. What was God's purpose in coming down on Mt Sinai in such a powerfully frightening way? (20:18-21)
3. What were the terms of the covenant that God was about to make with the people? Why is the IF/THEN statement in 19:5-8 not referring to Israel losing their salvation?
4. How would explain to someone who doesn't know God that the God of the Bible is a good God, but not necessarily safe? How would you explain the goodness of God and the holiness of God?
5. Talk about how the paradox—You don't need to be afraid of God, but you do need an appropriate/a healthy fear of God.