

## Exodus 24

Chapters 20-23 contained the LAW. We started with the 10 Commandments and then, in essence, the remaining chapters gave more details regarding those 10. They focused mainly on fairness and restitution. While I believe they were intended for the judges, certainly they also taught the people how to attend to their disputes with their neighbors. The Spirit of the Law is forgiveness, fair restitution for wrongs committed, and certainly a love for one's brothers and sisters. While there are many "do's" and "don'ts", the assumption seems to be on the consequences since God knows that we all have fallen and carry the nature of Adam in our flesh. The Spirit of the Law is also orderly and respectful conduct in any situation regarding more than 1 person, that is, in any relationship, including the one we have with God.

In Chapter 24, we will witness the ratification of the covenant given to the Children of Israel through their mediator, Moses. This is a two or three-stage process:

1. Moses, the priesthood and the elders will go up to the Mountain of God.
2. We will then witness the people's assent to the Word of God given to Moses. Included in this stage were burnt offerings and peace offerings whereby the blood was sprinkled on the altar and then on the people.
3. There was one more trip up the Mountain where the LORD gave Moses the Law written on tablets of stone. Whether or not this was the final step is debatable but I believe that giving the Law on stone was significant even if the significance was only having Moses receive it physically.

(Exodus 24:1) Now He said to Moses, "**Come up to the LORD**, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. (2) And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him."

God calls Moses, Aaron and his sons plus the seventy appointed elders of Israel up to the Mountain. Notice that only Moses can approach God...the others must worship from afar. The people are not allowed on the Mountain – which was to continue to learn utter reverence for the LORD.

This was the OT model of His relationship with mankind after the fall. (Before the Fall, the LORD walked in the Garden and met with Adam and Eve. After the fall, sin had separated them from their Creator).

In the post-fall state, there was a special **prophet** that had close access to God (there were many who walked with Him but certainly Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph come to mind). Jeremiah gave us a wonderful picture of this closeness. So intimate was his relationship with the LORD that sometimes it was difficult to discern who was speaking, the prophet or the LORD!

Then there were the priests led by the High **Priest**, the Cohane Gadol. These were the intermediaries and the intercessors for the people. They were the ones responsible for officiating the sacrifices to God. (If you know anyone whose last name is Cohen or Levi, it's a fair bet that they were descendants of Levi from whom the priesthood was derived).

Then there was everyone else, the “regular folks”, that is, the children of Israel.

This pattern was certainly in place throughout their history until the final destruction of the Temple. Of course, something else happened before the destruction of the Temple: the life, death and resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus the Christ.

Jesus was “The Prophet” spoken of by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:

**Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (15)** "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, **(16)** according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' **(17)** "And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. **(18)** I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. **(19)** And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him. There are references to Jesus as the Prophet throughout the Gospels. Too many to record here.

After His resurrection, the spiritual Truth was understood:

**Hebrews 2:16-18** For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. **(17)** Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, **that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining to God*, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.** **(18)** For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

**Hebrews 4:15-16** For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. **(16)** Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

And what of the people? At His death, the veil was torn symbolizing that the entrance to the Holy of Holies was no longer reserved for the High Priest, for all! And this Holy of Holies was symbolic of the Great Throne Room of God in heaven. The people who were forced to worship afar now can worship in spirit and truth because the Spirit of Christ lives in them. He is also called the Spirit of Truth! The Throne of Grace is opened to His children,

**John 1:12-13** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: **(13)** who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

**1 John 3:1** Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

**(Exodus 24:3)** So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "**All the words which the LORD has said we will do.**"

After meeting with God on the Mountain, Moses returns to the people. Either they thought that that could obey it all (pride) or they just didn't understand the consequences for disobedience. I personally am in favor of the former since pride is at the core of our fallen state!

Remember once before the Israelites said these very words:

[\(Exodus 19:8\)](#) Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.

And this was before the 10 commandments were ever given!

[\(Exodus 24:4\)](#) And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

(5) Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. (6) And Moses took half the blood and put *it* in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

After telling the people all of the commandments of the Law, Moses writes in down on the skin of kosher animals like sheep, goats and cows. Sometimes the younger animals of these types were used which made for a finer quality.

After writing it down, he then built an altar using 12 pillars of stone. These were not hewn but left in whatever state he found them according to what the LORD commanded earlier:

[Exodus 20:25](#) And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it.

Then he had some young men to fetch the animals and slaughter them for the offerings. There were two offerings made: a burnt-offering and a peace offering which are called voluntary offerings (a third one was a grain offering):

The [burnt offering](#) was a voluntary **act of worship to express devotion or commitment to God**. It was also used as an atonement for unintentional sin. Except for the hide, the whole animal had to be burnt up.

The second voluntary offering was the [peace offering](#), which consisted of any unblemished animal from the worshiper's herd, and/or various grains or breads. **This was a sacrifice of thanksgiving and fellowship followed by a shared meal**. The High Priest and other priests were given some of the meat. The fat, kidneys and the liver were burnt up for God. The remainder went to whomever else was participating in the ceremony as a way to show God's provision. **The vow offering, thanksgiving offering, and freewill offering mentioned in the Old Testament were all peace offerings.**

[In the NT time something dramatic was achieved. First, lets look at the entire law as summed up by Jesus:](#)

[Mark 12:33](#) And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all

the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Let me rephrase those verses showing another perspective: we failed in loving God and loving others. So, **Jesus loved us** with all His heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength to die on the cross we deserved. And because of His kept promise to send the Holy Spirit we can love our neighbor as oneself.

No longer do we have to place our hands upon the head of an innocent animal and have its throat cut and blood drained for the altar. But we are to still make sacrifices:

1. We make sacrifices of praise to God
2. We make sacrificial gifts and works to others
3. And, according to Romans 12:1 (ESV) we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice which is our spiritual worship.

(Exodus 24:7) Then he took the **Book of the Covenant** and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "**All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.**"

I think this is the last time the people will declare their obedience to the LORD. And it was made after hearing all of the Words of God. The word "obedient" in the Hebrew is Shema. As I have taught before, this means that they "heard and will obey". This is the essence of the Law: He told them before the law was given:

**Exodus 19:5 ESV** Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;

(Exodus 24:8) And Moses took the blood, sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words."

Blood was used to confirm the covenant and that blood was ceremonially sprinkled on the people. Blood was used to sanctify, cleanse and to consecrate (dedicate). The people had to be made aware of their oath and the seriousness of it – especially their part in it!

**The NT revelation is clear:**

**Hebrews 9:13-14 ESV** For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, (14) how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

**Hebrews 9:18-20 ESV** Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. (19) For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, (20) saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you."

Jesus' blood sanctifies, cleanses and consecrates (or dedicates) us. By it we are forgiven and justified before God. By it we will be spared His wrath that will poured out onto the unbelieving

and wicked world.

(Exodus 24:9) **Then Moses went up**, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, (10) and they saw the God of Israel. And *there was* under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in *its* clarity. (11) But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank.

Moses and those in the original party were called up again. These verses are rather mysterious. First, it says that they saw the God of Israel and under His feet was a paved surface that looked like sapphire – as clear as an unpolluted sky! Even though they saw God, He didn't lay a hand on them (meaning, He didn't kill them). Does this mean it was all a heavenly vision like in Isaiah or Ezekiel or even John? Was this why they were able to “see his Face” and live? Or was this a special occasion where He allowed them to see Him? It can go either way and we'll have to ask Moses when we meet him.

They certainly were stunned because the Hebrew word for “saw” in verse 11 means to “gaze as in a vision”. And as was common in that culture (and still is today), the meal signified fellowship. Did God share the meal with them? This is part of the mystery! Note that the Name “LORD” is not used here. Some believe that the Name “LORD” is the personal name of God represented by His Son. The LORD speaks and hears. The LORD manifests Himself into our reality. But God the Father does not normally do this. In these last verses, God is there but not spoken to, nor does He speak.

(Exodus 24:12) Then the LORD said to Moses, "**Come up to Me** on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them." (13) So Moses arose with his assistant **Joshua**, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. (14) And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and Hur *are* with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them."

Moses is called up a third time. This time he was to receive the “tablets of stone”. This is the first time these tablets were mentioned in Exodus. Before, Moses was given the ability to recall and write down all that the LORD had commanded. Now, by the Hand of God, He wrote on the tablets the law and commandments. The stones were strong and durable. These qualities were to be thought of when they saw what was written upon them, that is, the Law, holy and good, was strong and durable.

Moses only took Joshua along. Joshua was his assistant and a mighty warrior. He fought their enemies and routed the Amalekites when they tried to attack the Jews as they drew near to the Mountain of God!

Aaron and Hur stayed behind to take care of the people. Remember, Hur and Aaron held Moses hands up during the battle with the Amalekites.

(Exodus 24:15) **Then Moses went up** into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. (16) Now the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and **the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day** He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. (17) The sight of the glory of the LORD *was* like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. (18) So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Moses and Joshua went up but only Moses was called out from the cloud. This was after waiting 6 days. From below, the Glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire upon the top of the Mountain. Moses was with the LORD for forty days and forty nights. Was this a time of testing for Moses as it was for Jesus? No, I don't believe so. But, it was a time of testing for those on the ground below. And in about 10 chapters, we will see how they failed miserably!

The LORD was going to give Moses the Law on two tablets. The Law, in this case, was the 10 Commandments. The remaining law was given to Moses to write on parchment which he did in the three remaining books of the Pentateuch (the 5 Books of Moses). Included in the Law was the purpose and construction of the Tabernacle of God. Much of that takes up the next 9 or so chapters.

Interspersed within this teaching were New Testament revelations about the Law and even about the fulfillment of it all by the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus our Messiah.

Out of the estimated two million people that were in the camp of Israel, only 75 were allowed to come up the Mountain. Moses and Aaron, his two sons, the 70 elders and Joshua. That was it. The other 1, 999, 925 had to look from afar. Even on the Mountain, except for that time when there was a meal, only Moses was allowed to approach the LORD in the thick clouds.

Such was the Old Covenant a.k.a., the Mosaic Covenant. The people could never approach God on their own. It was a covenant of separation. And, unless a gentile came under the law, they too were considered separated from the True God of Creation.

Today, out of the 7.8 Billion people on the earth, 7.8 billion of them have the opportunity to approach the True God. You don't have to sacrifice an animal (that's been taken care of by His perfect sacrifice). You don't have to belong to any special group, nation, religion, creed or any other thing humans have devised to keep themselves from others. You don't have to follow any prescribed laws or rituals. He "wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14). In other words, from God's perspective, nothing but self-will can keep you from Him.