

EXODUS 32 – INSTRUCTION IN HOLINESS

Exodus (Names) – Changing the World
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SECOND DIVISION OF EXODUS

- First Division – Intro and leading Hebrews out of Egypt to God (Exodus 1:1-17:7)
- Transition – Contrasting the Gentiles' response to Israel (Exodus 17:8, 18-27)
- Second Division – Overview, Giving of the Law (Torah)
 - Instruction in Holiness contrasted with Man's sinfulness
 - Division between righteous God and rebellious man (Veil)
 - Instability of sinful man AEB rejection and accepting God's Law (18: 10-18)
- God did not come for them because they were righteous but because they were sinners in need of His grace as they were descended from:
 - Thieves (Jacob and sons)
 - Murderers (Simeon and Levi, and the other brothers)
 - Rebellious adulterer (Reuben)

ANOTHER TALMUDIC MYTH

- Verse One makes clear that the Hebrews arrived at Mt. Horeb at least 60-90 days after leaving Egypt (Passover) (Hebrews used a 30-day lunar calendar)
- During the Second Temple period, after the Babylonian Captivity, the Jews associated Pentecost (50 days) with the giving of the Law at Mt. Horeb
 - During the Babylonian Captivity the Jews had no Temple, thus they had no Festivals; i.e., they were in danger of losing their culture
 - Changing the focus of the holy day kept their culture without the Temple
 - This "rewriting" changed God's intent for the holy day and demonstrated why they were not receiving the New Covenant – worship of Law, not God of Law
 - This changed the holy day from offering God the "first fruits" of the harvest, two loaves of leavened bread (God giving His Holy Spirit to Christians who were the first fruits of the New Covenant rejected by Jews)

ONE FINAL MYTH TO DISPEL

- Verse 4 (Eagle's wings) – The word eagle is not in the Hebrew, just wings
 - This could mean any bird's wings but usually the Griffon Vulture is intended (Hebrews were not defiled biologists); however, Western minds prefer eagles
 - The word wings could also refer to the talit garment (prayer covering His people) as it does in several verses; but, its design had not yet been given (Law)
- The context expresses God's care for the Hebrews in many respects
 - He not only looked to their physical needs
 - He sought to make them aware of their spiritual needs preparing them to receive His Law in humility
 - Hebrews reception of the Law elevated their pride then and ever since

THE FIRST AGREEMENT

GOD CALLS MOSES

- God calls Moses to Mount Horeb to set the terms for the Hebrews based on Himself (similar to how He approached Abraham [Heb 12:14](#))
- However, this covenant was different from the covenant made previously in the Scriptures – it was a "conditional" covenant
 - Unconditional covenant – its terms were set by God Who would fulfill its terms
 - Conditional covenant – its terms were set by God but man had to fulfill its terms
- Terms:
 - Obey God and keep His covenant
 - Then God would make them a treasured possession among all nations
 - Kingdom of Priests and a holy nation
 - God would give "True Jews" all this in Millennial Kingdom and eternity future

MOSES CALLS THE ELDERS

- Moses takes God's message to the Elders
 - Elders take a message to the people, probably via the chain of judges
 - The people receive a message from God
 - Everyone, but Moses, probably heard this message (not from God):
 - I will make you a special people above all the nations of the earth based on My power as I am Lord over all the earth
 - In other words – I am more powerful than all the gods of Egypt and I will make you greater than Egypt so all the nations of the world will obey you, including Egyptians
 - The Jewish people, according to the Talmud and Rabbinic Laws, have considered themselves above all people ever since Sinai
- The people agree to hear God

MOSES REPORTS TO GOD

- Moses takes the people's answer back to God – we will do this
- In effect, this constitutes an agreement to hear God's Words
 - There will be a covenantal meal of agreement after the giving of the Law
 - Yet, they will turn away from obeying God's words very quickly
- God gives instructions on how the people are to prepare themselves to receive His words
 - Make yourselves "clean" (holy) for two days – prepare to see true holiness
 - Wash their garments
 - Wait for God's signal on the third day
 - Do NOT touch the mountain of God when He is on the mountain – man or beast

INTRODUCTION OF WORKS

- Here are the instructions Moses gave to the (elders) people
 - Consecrate (make yourselves holy) for two days
 - Wash your garments
 - Do not have sex (which interferes with your consecration) (God did not say this)
- Notice how Moses "added" (works) to God's words about sex
 - Either he added to God's word on consecration, or
 - This was written after the Law was given and appended in for emphasis, or see 15
 - Ancient practices included abstinence, thus, it was a "given" to avoid sex
- The addition to God's words is what initiated sin in the Garden when Adam overemphasized God's admonition by adding "do not touch" to the "do not eat" of the tree of knowledge (see 2:16-17; 3:1-6)

RITUAL CLEANNESS EMPHASIZED

- God is laying the foundation for ritual cleanness to convey the understanding of spiritual cleanness
 - The Old Testament was riddled in the outward ritual purification process with little understanding of the spiritual cleanness required to satisfy the Law which was impossible for all men (because of inherent sin-nature)
 - The New Testament, after the resurrection of Christ, smashed the façade of ritual cleanness, emphasizing spiritual cleanness based on the imputed righteousness of Christ given to the believer apart from works of the flesh
- God's holiness not previously emphasized in Scripture; thus, this is the first time man confronted with the understanding of holiness
 - Man at least was not to touch the mountain in God's presence
 - Violating God's holiness was punishable by death

MOSES' JOURNEY

Holiness unites God & man



Holiness divides God & Men



GOD'S HOLINESS DISPLAYED

- Third day dawns with "long" trumpet blast
 - God's holy presence in the form of cloud and fire (pillar of cloud and fire)
 - God's, and probably teraphim, voice(s) thundering
 - God's Shekinah flashing out of the clouds veiling God's visage
- This audio-visual display designed to convey the separation between a holy God and an unholy people (Ex 1:18; 11:23; 32:3-7)
 - This display was designed to impress upon the people that violation of God's Law meant facing God's wrath, the result of inherent sin-nature
 - Violation of God's holiness only meets with God's wrath and judgment
 - All who reject God's salvation must meet God's wrath (Ro 9:22-25; 3+7; Re 20:7-18)
 - An act of grace conveying the truth: "fear of God is the beginning of wisdom" (knowing God's holiness can lead to repentance) (Pr 1:7-10; 11:10; H 1:7; 22-32)

HOLINESS PRODUCES REPENTANCE, NOT GROVELING

- This display not designed to produce groveling obeisance which is worthless
 - God sees thoughts and intents of the heart – groveling is of Satan (Ps 4:12)
 - Repentance leads to salvation, a new nature loving holiness (2Co 5:17,28; 7:9-10)
- The flesh seeks to please through outward forms of piety to remain in sin
 - This became enshrined in the Talmud (Mishna & Gemara) [false Jews]
 - They seek to imposed these outward forms on all people via the Noahide Laws
 - Christ condemned empty, outward forms of piety (Mt 14:5-12; 23:23-34)
- Understandable they did not immediately perceive the intent of the Law but after about 400 years some people did perceive the truth of the Law
 - God's Law undergirded by holiness produced repentance (demonstrated God's love) in "true Jews" until Christ's slaughter (Ps 51:14,17; Rm 2:19-27; 8:33-39)

MOSES BRINGS THE ELDERS TO MOUNT HOREB

- Nearly every source, both Christian and Jewish, agree that Moses did not bring the entire Hebrew population to the base of Mount Horeb
 - They could see the events from the camp in the plain before Mount Horeb
 - Elders, as the people's representatives could relay all they had seen and heard
 - Some sources do say that all males 20 y/o and above came to the mount
- Everyone admonished to NOT touch the mountain or they would be killed
 - Stones
 - Arrows
- In fact, God tells Moses to go back down and warn the people again, showing His merciful grace (no pleasure in death of sinners) (Ex 18:21; 34:3-8)

PRIESTHOOD, WHAT PRIESTHOOD?

- God sends Moses back down the mount to warn the people again not to come up the mount to see God or they will die.
 - Moses tells God this warning has already been conveyed (God knew this)
 - God perceived curiosity would cause the bolder ones to approach anyway
 - God was again demonstrating His mercy and grace
- God then makes an interesting statement about priests:
 - The Aaronic priesthood has not been established
 - Moses is not questioning the statement so some priesthood must have existed
- We are left with a dilemma
 - Either one believes God's word has a contradiction
 - There is a priesthood in place we have overlooked

PATRIARCHS OR PREVIOUS PRIESTHOOD?

- Patriarchal Priesthood – General time period of Abraham
 - Job demonstrates the priesthood as patriarch (head) of his clan
 - He performed the Ascending Sacrifice daily for his clan and himself (Job 1:2-4:27:5)
 - Abraham performed sacrifices for his family
 - He was tasked with sacrificing Isaac to demonstrate his faith in God and God's promise of an heir apart from his own work (Gen 22:1-14; Heb 11:17-19)
- Other Priesthood – Post Cataclysm
 - Melchizedek was a priest who was also outside of Abraham's line (Gen 14:17-20)
 - While many believe this was a theophany, I believe he was a human priest from Shem's consistent testimony of God which kept the truth extant
 - He was a "type" of a better than Aaronic priesthood (Heb 7:12-4; Heb 5:5-4; 6:19-7:28)

PRIESTHOOD OF FIRSTBORN

- Jewish scholars recognize this priesthood as the firstborn males who were consecrated to the Lord
 - God referred to Israel as His firstborn emphasizing the importance of firstborns
 - God sacrificed firstborn of those who did not apply blood to their lintels (Ex 4:21-23)
 - God instructed the Hebrews that all firstborn sons will be consecrated to Him and such appointed livestock would be either sacrificed or redeemed (Ex 13:1)
- This may have some merit as Christ was God's firstborn who was to the sacrifice for sin and then to be the high priest to the Father
 - Obviously, not supported by Jewish thought in any form as they consider Jesus to be in Hell continuously boiled forever in excrement (Talmud)
 - Not directly addressed in Scripture and Christ is a priest like Melchizedek

EMPHASIZING GOD'S HOLINESS

- God reiterated to Moses that there were NO exceptions to those who violated His holiness
 - The patriarchal priests were no more holy than the ruling elders
 - There may have been some who thought they were as "holy" as Moses to talk to God, a problem that will reappear in the Pentateuch, even among his kin
 - God tells Moses to tell these priests that they needed consecration also
- Then God makes an exception to His own rule – Moses is to bring Aaron
 - God allowed him to touch and experience His holiness in some measure
 - God elevated Aaron above the patriarchal priest
 - Possible preparation for Aaronic priesthood to administer the sacrificial Law
- Moses and Aaron return to God's presence, all receive The Ten Words