

How does God meet with us? - Tony Pearce

Let's move on to **chapter 19**, which is the chapter where God really prepares the people of Israel to encounter God.

In **verses 3 to 6 of chapter 19**, we see that the purpose of the **Exodus**, of God taking the people of Israel, is to make them a people, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, and a special treasure to God. To make them a people who will be precious to God, who will be a kingdom of priests who can serve God, and who can be a holy nation, a nation set apart for God.

Chapter 19 verse 3: And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; ⁴ Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: ⁶ And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

So, God's purpose in taking Israel is that they should be a special people to Him. A people who He can speak through, who will be an example of the people who are the Lord's people, who are a holy nation, and a kingdom of priests.

Notice that there is a condition in this. He says, **if ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant**. When we come to the covenant which God makes with Israel at Mount Sinai there is a condition on whether it's going to be a blessing or a curse. A blessing if they're obedient, a curse of judgement if they're disobedient. So, there's a call here to be that holy nation, a nation which can follow the Lord.

When we look to the New Testament, we see that God actually applies this to the church as well, His people, who are to be a holy nation, a kingdom of priests, and a special treasure to God. **1 Peter chapter 2, verse 9** says that ⁹

ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; ¹⁰ Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

So, God's purpose for you and me, as believers in Jesus the Messiah, is that we should be the people who can proclaim the mercies of God, who can proclaim the truth about God, and can be people who have been called out of darkness into His light, His own special people. Also be a chosen generation, a royal priesthood.

And we see that Paul also prayed for the church in Ephesus, praying that they would **know what are the riches of his glory and his inheritance in the church**. Which tells us that you might not think you're very important to God, but God actually sees immense value in you and in me, as people, and in each one of us as we belong to Jesus. And He wants us to be that people who will reflect something of His nature to the world, so that people can't say 'there's no God' because they can see that their God is at work amongst His people. This people are representative of Him, to proclaim praises of God, and to bring His message to the people in the world.

We see ourselves, as far as we're concerned also, there is a condition. **'If you obey my voice and keep my covenant'**, that we have to walk in faith and obedience to the Lord.

And we see that, in this case, the people agree to it.

In **verse 7** of **chapter 19**, Moses comes and puts his proposition to them if you like.

7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord. 9 And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.

So, Moses told the words of the people to the Lord. The people respond to the call of God through Moses saying ‘all that the Lord has said, we will do.’ Later on, they going to say ‘all that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.’

Do you think they meant it?

Yeah, I think they did.

And I think there is a desire to please God, to do what He wants.

Did they do it?

Much of the time, ‘No’!

And of course, this comes up to the problem of human nature; the problem of the Torah. We can see that here is the standard which God wants us to live by. But we all fall short of it, and we need someone to be our mediator to redeem us from the fact that we fall short of the glory of God, and don’t do what God tells us to do.

Which brings us on to Yeshua, Jesus the Messiah.

Their intention at this point was ‘yes, what the Lord has said we will do’. And that’s actually an important part of the Covenant, because they had to agree to it, they had to agree to God’s terms and to put them into practice.

The next thing which happens is, we see that God actually comes down onto the mountain. The description which we have in **Exodus** is of God **coming with tremendous power and presence**, terrifying power actually, as He comes with His glory, and appears on the mountain before the people. And He also sets bounds around the mountain, so that they don’t come up too close, and this again illustrates a certain principle about God’s dealings with the human race.

14 “And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. 15 And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives. 16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.



18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. **19** And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. **20** And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. **21** And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. **22** And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them. **23** And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. **24** And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them. **25** So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

EXODUS Chapter 19 verses 18-25

If you can imagine, if you were there, that would have been a pretty awe-inspiring sight. Wouldn't it? You would have seen the mountain quaking with fire and thunderings, and heard the blast of a trumpet, which obviously was a supernatural trumpet (there was no blowing it) but you could hear this tremendous sound taking place. People would have been terrified, wouldn't they? Would you have been terrified? I guess you would!

The presence of the Lord was there. And they knew that they were encountering the LIVING GOD, coming down with tremendous power to give His commandments to the people. And God was speaking to them. And He set bounds around the mountain. Why did He set the bounds around the mountain?

Well because God is holy and God is powerful, and we are not holy, and we are not powerful. And the people who come out of God's will and encounter God, they would have been put to death, they would have died.

And so, Moses tells them to keep away, not to get near. And they put bounds around the mountain, and they consecrated it, they consecrated it to the Lord. They're also told to be ready to meet with the Lord.

We should also be ready to meet with the Lord. In **Matthew 24**, Jesus says 'you also be ready. The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect'. And we need to be ready at all times to meet with the Lord, either in death or at the Second Coming, and to be ready to meet with God, so that we are ready to be with Him. And the bounds also set up a barrier, again, because God is holy and we are not. And this reminds us there is a barrier between us and God because of sin.

And we need a way to cross that barrier.



We have to come to God on His terms, not on ours.

And this is one of the problems which the human race has. We say 'we want to come to God on our terms', we don't really want God to make up the rules. 'Let's make up the rules ourselves, let's do it our way'. 'It doesn't matter how we live; we can still come to God. We can do it our way.'

I happened to tune in to the funeral of Captain Tom the other day. That Captain Tom who raised all the money. I'm not saying he didn't do a good thing. He was trying to help people. But I was rather saddened to see that one of the songs which he'd chosen for his funeral was 'I did it my way'.

Apparently, that's one of the most popular songs, which people choose for funerals: to sing, 'I did it my way'. It is the very last song you should have at a funeral because if you are choosing songs for a funeral it's because you're about to meet with God. And if you meet with God and say 'I did it my way', He's going to say 'that's no good'. 'If you did it **my way**, you did it the wrong way!' And that's actually the problem of the human race, we try and do it our way. And we think that if we do it our way, we're going to meet with God. God says 'no, you've got to do it My way', God's way, and the very last song which I would choose to have at a funeral is 'I did it my way'. I want to say 'I did it God's way.'

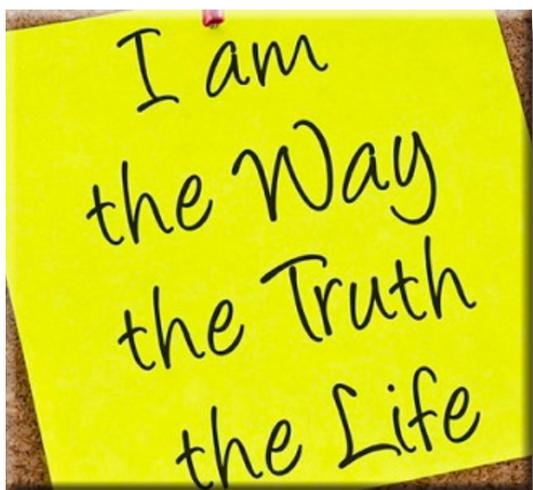
The Bible says **there is a way that seems right unto man, but the end of it is the way of death.**

Jesus says **Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

If we want to come to God, we've got to come God's way.

And God says, Jesus says, **I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except by me.**

And God sets bounds around Himself, and He chooses The Way in which we should access Him, we can't choose. If we are to do it our way, we're doing it the wrong way.



God is my strength
and power: and he
maketh my way
perfect.

2 Samuel 22:33