

Introduction

- https://www.huffpost.com/entry/bc-as-australia-corpse-flower_n_67926e2ae4b040854118d130 - People waiting 3 hours in line to get a whiff of a stinky flower...
- We're the kind of people that want to see amazing sites. We'll wait in line to see and experience what we think is important, valuable, etc.
- Aren't you glad you don't have to wait in line to meet with God? The God of all creation who holds everything in His hands invites us to not only meet with Him, but to know Him.
- Knowing God is a big theme in the Book of Exodus. Exodus is teaching us that God wants a relationship with people. He wants a relationship with you. How well do you know God? This morning, do you have a relationship with Him at all? Are you growing in your relationship with God? Are you struggling in your relationship with God? Are you confident in your relationship with God?
- The most important thing in your life is your relationship with God. God calls you into a relationship with Himself so you might live on His purpose (MPS).
- [Exodus 19](#) is a significant passage of Scripture where God comes to His people for the first time. God wants His people to know Him and know how to live in a relationship with Him. God meets with His people at Mt. Sinai to give them the Law and bring them into a covenant relationship with Himself.

- This passage is significant for us because it helps us to understand our relationship with God. I want to show you three truths from this passage about your relationship with God.

Your relationship with God is personal.

- vs. 1-2 - The people have come to Sinai, the mountain of God, where Moses first met with God. When God met with Moses at the burning bush, God told Moses that He would bring the Hebrews to this spot (3:12).
- The Hebrews camp in front of the mountain (vs. 2). God will eventually descend on the mountain. As if the people are camped in front of the throne of God. The people will stay in front of the mountain for a year.
- Mt. Sinai is NOT the Promised Land, but they must stay at Sinai to receive instructions from God so that they can prosper as a nation in the Promised Land.
- vs. 3 - Moses goes up the mountain. Moses will ascend the mountain seven times in Exodus - three times in this chapter. An 80 year old man constantly climbing a mountain to intercede between God and His people.
- vs. 4-6 - Beautiful truths that the people need to know before God gives them His instructions.
- vs. 4 - God delivered them. They knew that, but God's rescue was like that of a mother eagle who lifted her children to safety high above the danger. God brought the people to Himself. It's intimate language. It was personal. He gathered the people to His presence because He loves them ([Exodus 34:6-7](#)).
- vs. 5 - The Hebrews will be His treasured possession - set apart from every other nation. God chose to set His love on them.

- vs. 6 - The people are a kingdom of priests. [Genesis 1](#) - from the beginning, it's been God's desire to establish His Kingdom on earth. In Garden of Eden, God ruled as King and Adam and Eve ruled with God as vice-regents. However, they rebelled against the King and were banished from Eden. Humanity rebelled against God's good plan. We want to be our own kings, but it doesn't change God's plan to establish His Kingdom and to His people apart as a kingdom of priest.
- Kingdom of priests = the purpose of God's people. A Kingdom of priests to represent God to the world. Israel not rescued simply so that they could have a relationship with God. Israel rescued so that the world might know God through Israel.
- Holy nation = distinct from every other nation. If the Hebrews obey the Law of God, they will be distinct from every other nation.
- First six verses a reminder that God's people had a personal relationship with Him. He invited them to know Him and live for Him.
- Your relationship with God is personal.
- **Your personal relationship with God grows as you continue to get to know the God who delivered you.** Tend to take for granted that we are invited to know God - His character, His desires for us, His will, His love. Tend to take for granted that we can actually know God.
- Don't ignore the privilege of a personal relationship with God. **Your personal relationship with God grows as you continue to pursue the purpose of God.** Don't confuse your what you think purpose is with God's revealed purpose for your life. Your purpose: get married, have a family, have a good job, have some fun hobbies. That's what we focus on. God's purpose: be a kingdom of priests. Represent God in this world. The words spoken to Israel are spoken to us ([1 Peter 2:9](#)). We are God's treasured possession, a royal priesthood, a holy nation so that we might proclaim the praises of God.

Your relationship with God is serious.

- A personal relationship where you are loved, given purpose, etc. but don't forget who you are in a relationship with: the God of all creation.
- vs. 5 - "Listen carefully and keep my covenant." vs. 8 - "We will do all that God has told us to do." God entering a covenant relationship with God - this is serious! If they obey God, God will bless. If they disobey, there will be consequences for their disobedience.
- vs. 9 - God coming in a dense cloud. The people would see God's presence at Sinai. They would believe Moses because it would be apparent that what Moses spoke was from God.
- vs. 10 - God coming to meet with God and His people. [Ex. 19](#) very different than God with His people in the garden of Eden. In Eden, Adam and Eve naked and unashamed. They walked with God in the garden unhindered by sin.
- However, because of sin, everything is different. God wants to be close to His people, but sin is a barrier. God's people are unholy. God must make a way for them to approach Him. They need to be clean.
- The people had two days to get ready. Clothes had to be washed. Boundaries placed around the mountain. They could only ascend the mountain when a trumpet sounded. God set an appointed time for His people to meet with Him by invitation only. If they approached the mountain at a time that was not appointed, they would die. If they touched even the base of the mountain, they would be put to death, shot with arrows. They could only come close under God's direction.
- vs. 15 - not to have sexual relations in preparation for the Lord's descent on the mountain. Why? Not explained - but perhaps as they waited on God their relationship with Him to take precedence over even the most significant relationship they had on earth: the relationship with their spouse.

- vs. 16-19 - Thunder, lightning, thick cloud, loud blast of a trumpet. This is NOT like the Garden of Eden. This is terrifying! All the people shuddered (vs. 16). Mountain encompassed by smoke and fire. The whole mountain shook violently - trumpet grew louder and louder.
- Would the people ascend? Isn't the trumpet the invitation for the people to come close? [Exodus 20:18-21](#) - After all, if they are a kingdom of priests, shouldn't priests come into the presence of God? They're too afraid. God had come to test them - would they enter God's presence or not? Seems they failed another test - at the invitation to come to God's presence, they did not.
- The people are terrified - they remain at a distance rather than coming close. God wants the people to fear Him - to see His greatness so they would not sin, but would they let fear keep them from experiencing the presence of God? Or, would they trust God by coming close by the way He prescribed? Would they ascend the mountain when given the opportunity? God wanted them to fear so that they might not sin, not fear so that they might flee.
- In [Exodus 19:19](#), did the people miss their chance to commune with God as a kingdom of priests? Because they were fearful of walking into the fire of God's presence? Fearful that God would judge them?
- vs. 20-24 - Moses ascends, but the people don't. vs. 20 - God warned the people to be careful to not break through because many would die - they weren't in the right condition to come up - weren't prepared or too fearful?
- The only way to enter God's presence is to enter God's way. Moses tells God that the people could not come up. Is Moses defending the people? Letting God know that the people are too afraid? God tells Moses that they cannot come up at all. Could it be because of the people's initial failure to come up the mountain, they are now prohibited to ascend at all.

- [Exodus 20:18-20](#) - The people don't want to come up. They want a mediator. They want to obey God (good fear - vs. 19) but they want someone to go to God on their behalf.
- Your relationship with God is personal, but at the same time it is serious. You need to think carefully about how you respond to Him.
- **Your response to God matters for your own soul.** Think too little of God? Think too little of what he's told you? Think too little of what you've told him? (We'll do what you say.) That will lead to disobedience. Or, the wrong kind of fear of God? Wrong kind of fear = God, I can never come close because what I've done. I can never be forgiven. I can never live out your purpose. That will lead you to stay away from God and not obey Him.
- **Your response to God matters for the sake of others.** Called to be a blessing to the world - a kingdom of priests. How could they bless others if not willing to know God? If not willing to obey His voice? How can you be a blessing to others if you are not willing to obey His voice? If you're not willing to invest in your own relationship with Him? At home - is the reason why your kids aren't growing in their faith because of your inattention to your own faith?

Your relationship with God is unshakable.

- The people unwilling to ascend, but Moses was. He went to the mountain as a mediator for God's people. He gave the people the Law so they could know how to live in His presence even though they were unwilling to ascend the mountain.
- This is Israel's story. Every test that comes, they fail. Called to be a kingdom of priests, but at every turn, they don't live as priests. Instead, they continually need priests. They continually need a mediator.

- In this passage, they weren't willing to trust God and come into His presence because they were scared of the fire.
- The question of the OT - Who will ascend the mountain OR, can we ever come into the presence of God and enjoy a relationship with Him?
- Moses was willing to ascend the mountain, but he was sinful as well. He will prove to be an insufficient mediator/priest. However, years later, Jesus would come. He will ascend a different mountain - mount Calvary. On Mount Calvary, Jesus faced what Israel was afraid of - the wrath of God. At Calvary, Jesus took upon Himself what Israel knew they had coming for them - the judgment of God. Jesus died on a cross in our place so our sins could be forgiven. Three days later, He rose from the dead so that we could be given the gift of life abundant and eternal.
- [Hebrews 12:18-29](#). Because of Jesus, we get to ascend a different mountain. Sinai is not our mountain! Mount Zion is our mountain! We get to come into the heavenly city and meet with God. Because of our faith in Christ, we have received an unshakable Kingdom. Our God, who is a consuming fire, has consumed the penalty of our sin through the death of His own Son. There is no need for us to fear!
- We come to Mt. Zion not in trembling fear but in joy because our mediator has taken upon Himself the wrath of God so we could be given an unshakable relationship with God. Our relationship with God is unshakable because Jesus ascended the mountain and took our death.
- **Will you choose an "I can't" attitude?** Fear causes us to say, "I can't." Fear that we can't live up to God's standard, fear that we can't accomplish God's will. Fear that God is always mad at us. So many choose an "I can't" attitude. I can't trust Him. I can't be forgiven. I can't serve Him. I can't help others. I can't share the Gospel. I can't go on that mission trip. Why? If you have a relationship with God, and you know what He has called you to, why would you say, "I can't?"

- **Will you choose a “Why not?” attitude?** If you are confident in your relationship with God, why not? Why not serve Him? Why not live boldly? Why not obey? Why not invest in your relationship with Him? Because you are in a purposeful relationship with God you have no reason to not walk by faith.
- This morning, will you place your faith in the One who lived, died, and rose again for you?
- This morning, if you are a follower of Jesus, will you live by faith and live as a kingdom of priests pursuing His purpose?