

Serm.Series: “Moses: God’s Poster Child of Meekness and Devotion”–Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN–8/8/10

Title: “Where Moses Met God”

Text: Exodus 19

Intro.: Illus.: Jesus and Moses

Theme: The only way to see and believe in God, as our Savior from sin, is to view Him through the lense contrasting our sinful weakness versus His almighty holiness and then seeing how he brought it to bear through his payment in Jesus’ death on the cross for our sins.

God is good on His Word—so His plan of salvation can be trusted

The camp at Sinai was more than just another stop along the way **Exodus 19: 1-2**

1. God had already told Moses that their arrival at Mt. Sinai would be a sign of his love and grace
 - a. To Israel who needed to know and believe in a God that was bigger than themselves
 - b. For Moses who needed validation and vindication before a skeptical crowd
2. Do you take into account all God’s promises to you, focused in his kept promise in Jesus, and if so, then what?
 - a. *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. 2 Cor. 1:20*
 - b. **Illus.: Thrown away ring and promise comes home**

Being careful not to lose sight of the forest for the trees in God’s saving actions in our lives

1. For many of the Israelites they settled for deliverance from Egypt rather than looking to the bigger goal
 - a. And so they grumbled when Egypt was done and only desert lay before them (Rephidim)
 - b. Israel will be highly prized, protected, and empowered to bring the Savior to the world **Exodus 19: 3-9**
2. We settle for trivial trinkets of life when God wants us to raise our sights to heavenly treasures
 - a. **Illus.: Young child settles for playing with box rather than with Christmas present**
 - b. *Since you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. Col 3: 1-4*

Because God doesn’t go back on his Word, his commitment to save us and not destroy us can be trusted

1. Even when Israel was wayward in their listening (obey-5) and keeping (guard-5), God kept seeking them out
 - a. *“I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. Malachi 3:6-7*
2. When we walk by faith in our awesome and mighty God to save, we have nothing to fear of his dealings in our life
 - a. *The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.” Zeph. 3:17*

Preparing to meet God in all His might and holiness Exodus 19: 10-25

Present yourselves before the Lord in a manner worthy of your calling

1. *Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, Ephes. 4:1*
2. Israel to do a lifestyle spring house cleaning in view of the respect due God’s holiness before which they appeared
 - a. An outward wash up and dress up as if they were coming before a King – because He was King of Universe
 - b. An inward moral inventory/renovation (particularly sexual sins – prevalent in pagan worship-sign of idolatry)
 - c. *Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. Col. 3:5*
 - d. Nothing new and shocking in the sewer nature of our society than from the past; yet, God says come out from it
3. What makes us worthy is not what we do to clean ourselves up from sin but believing/trusting only Jesus can do it
 - a. *Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor. 6:11*

Change your attitude from hostility, ambivalence, or fear to one of awe, respect, and honor toward God

1. **Illus.: Wonder brings morality**
2. The Israelites were stunned into silent worship and awe by the sound and light show of God’s almighty presence
3. Do you have a wonder/awe of God? Do you look at what he has done for you and your family and drop to your knees? Do you begin to order your life agenda, words, actions, and attitudes in service to the One who loved you?
4. *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20*

Jesus and Moses

A burglar broke into a house and shined his flashlight around looking for valuables. He picked up a CD player when a strange, disembodied voice echoed from the dark saying: *'Jesus is watching you.'* He nearly jumped out of his skin, clicked off his flashlight and froze. When he heard nothing more he continued. Just as he pulled the stereo out he heard: *'Jesus is watching you.'* Freaked out, he shined his light around frantically. Finally, in the corner of the room his light beam came to rest on a parrot. 'Did you say that?' he hissed at the parrot. *'Yep, the parrot confessed, then squawked, 'I'm just trying to warn you that he's watching you.'* The burglar relaxed. 'Warn me, huh? Who in the world are you?' *'Moses,' replied the bird.* 'Moses?' the burglar laughed. 'What kind of people would name a bird Moses?' *'The kind that would name a Rottweiler Jesus.'*

Thrown away ring and promise comes home

One fine day in 1941, Violet Bailey and her fiancé Samuel Booth were strolling through the English countryside, deeply in love and engaged to be married. A diamond engagement ring sparkled on Violet's finger—her most treasured possession. Their romantic bliss suddenly ended. One of them said something that hurt the other. An argument ensued, then escalated. At its worst point, Violet became so angry she pulled the diamond engagement ring from her finger, drew back her arm, and hurled the treasured possession with all her might into the field. The ring sailed through the air, fell to the ground, and nestled under the grass in such a way that it was impossible to see. Violet and Samuel kissed and made up. Then they walked and walked through that field hunting for the lost ring. They never found it. They were married two months later. They had a child and eventually a grandson. Part of their family lore was the story of the lost engagement ring. Violet and Samuel grew old together, and in 1993 Samuel died. Fifteen years passed, but the ring was not forgotten. One day Violet's grandson got an idea. Perhaps he could find his grandmother's ring with a metal detector. He bought one and went to the field where Violet had hurled her treasured possession 67 years earlier. He turned on his metal detector and began to crisscross the field, waving the detector over the grass. After two hours of searching, he found what he was looking for. Later, filled with joy and pride, he placed the diamond ring into the hand of his astonished grandmother Violet. The treasured possession had come home. **Craig Brian Larson, editor of PreachingToday.com; source: "It wasn't all bad," The Week (2-15-08), p. 4**

Wonder Brings Morality

In Bill Moyers's book *A World of Ideas II*, Jacob Needleman remembers, "I was an observer at the launch of Apollo 17 in 1975. It was a night launch, and there were hundreds of cynical reporters all over the lawn, drinking beer, wisecracking, and waiting for this 35-story-high rocket. "The countdown came, and then the launch. The first thing you see is this extraordinary orange light, which is just at the limit of what you can bear to look at. Everything is illuminated with this light. Then comes this thing slowly rising up in total silence, because it takes a few seconds for the sound to come across. You hear a 'WHOOOOOSH! HHHHMMMM!' It enters right into you. "You can practically hear jaws dropping. The sense of wonder fills everyone in the whole place, as this thing goes up and up. The first stage ignites this beautiful blue flame. It becomes like a star, but you realize there are humans on it. And then there's total silence. "People just get up quietly, helping each other up. They're kind. They open doors. They look at one another, speaking quietly and interestedly. These were suddenly moral people because the sense of wonder, the experience of wonder, had made them moral." When we have a sense of wonder toward God, we too have our lives changed for the better. **Alan W. Steier, Linton, North Dakota.**

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Exodus 19:1-25

¹In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt--on the very day--they came to the Desert of Sinai. ²After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

³Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ⁴You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." ⁷So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak. ⁸The people all responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD. ⁹The LORD said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you." Then Moses told the LORD what the people had said.

¹⁰And the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes ¹¹and be ready by the third day, because on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. ¹²Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, 'Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. ¹³He shall surely be stoned or shot with arrows; not a hand is to be laid on him. Whether man or animal, he shall not be permitted to live.' Only when the ram's horn sounds a long blast may they go up to the mountain." ¹⁴After Moses had gone down the mountain to the people, he consecrated them, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵Then he said to the people, "Prepare yourselves for the third day. Abstain from sexual relations." ¹⁶On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. ¹⁷Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain trembled violently,

¹⁹and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

²⁰The LORD descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up ²¹and the LORD said to him, "Go down and warn the people so they do not force their way through to see the LORD and many of them perish. ²²Even the priests, who approach the LORD, must consecrate themselves, or the LORD will break out against them." ²³Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up Mount Sinai, because you yourself warned us, 'Put limits around the mountain and set it apart as holy.' " ²⁴The LORD replied, "Go down and bring Aaron up with you. But the priests and the people must not force their way through to come up to the LORD, or he will break out against them." ²⁵So Moses went down to the people and told them. [NIV]