

Sermon Outline for FBC Sep. 09nd, 2018

God gave Moses the Ten Commandments

Exodus 20: 1-17

Good morning!

Today my message is “God gave Moses the Ten Commandments.” God gave us loving laws to keep us safe. This is the beginning of a series on the Ten Commandments. We are going to look at why God gave these tablets of writing and how we deal with them today.

Jackie Perseghetti, in “More dangerous Devotions”, tells us to:

Take a moment to quiet your heart and be still before God. Think about His power. Think about His creation and all that you see about you. Ask Him to open your heart and eyes to His greatness, and to help you appreciate Him more. ¹

First, a reminder of who Moses was. Moses started as an Israelite baby (what a story that was!). He grew up as an Egyptian in Pharaoh’s house (another great story). He killed an Egyptian and ran away to live with the Israelites (until God came to him). That is when we read about Moses being called by God from the burning bush and Moses being given the mission to go free the Israelites from captivity under the Egyptians. So Moses goes to Pharaoh and we read about the plagues, Passover and the incredible crossing of the Red Sea as God uses Moses to lead the Israelites to freedom.

We pick up the story as Moses is leading the Israelites to the promised land – the land God promised Abraham that the Israelites would have if they followed God. After three months of wandering in the desert, they have come to the foot of Mount Sinai.

Moses approaches the mountain and goes up to talk to God. This is where God makes another covenant with the Israelites.

Exodus 19:3-6 NIV

3 *Then 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:*

4 *‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.*

5 *Now 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,*

6 *you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”*

Navpress, in its Life Change Series on Exodus gives us this question and answer about covenants.

The Lord established His covenant with Abraham and his descendants’ centuries before, and all God had done or would do was nothing but the fulfillment of that covenant. Why, then, did God make another covenant (the Mosaic covenant) in addition to the one with Abraham?

This Mosaic covenant was not absolutely new or independent, but was only a new phase of the Abrahamic covenant. It was necessary because now God’s people were no longer a few individuals or a family, but an entire nation. ²

God is getting the people ready to hear His next step in being God's chosen people. To be a holy nation, they need to live like a holy nation. Now let's see what they saw as this drama continues.

Perseghetti gives us a vivid description of what the Israelites saw.

Here, God gives Moses instructions for the people to cleanse themselves for three days to hear from God. The ground trembled as the Israelites stood in fear and awe. Lightning ripped across the sky and thunder rumbled in the valley below. A thick cloud hovered over the top of the mountain, signaling a loud trumpet blast. Then Mount Sinai became covered with smoke as the Lord descended upon it in fire. The earth shook, and smoke billowed from the mountain like a furnace.³

God had already told the people via Moses that they would be God's chosen people if they were obedient and followed God. They would be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Moses and Aaron go up onto the mountain and God gives them the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20:1-17 gives the Ten Commandments from God to the people of Israel.

Exodus 20:23 NIV *"Do not make any gods to be alongside of me: Do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold."*

Chapters 21-31 give all the details on these laws that Moses is to teach the people.

Exodus 31:18 NIV

When the Lord finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the Testimony, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God.

Moses takes the tablets down the mountain only to find the people worshipping a golden calf – exactly what God had forbidden! In anger and frustration, Moses throws the tablets on the ground and they shatter.

Now, you would think Moses would hate his people and wish God to destroy them. Not happening! Moses goes to God to plead for mercy for the people. God hears Moses and forgives the people again. He has Moses chisel out two more tablets, writes on them the Ten Commandments again, and sends Moses back to the people with a radiant face. This time the people have behaved and waited the forty days and nights for Moses to return.

There is so much in this story that it would take many sermons to cover every aspect. For today, I am setting the scene for the next weeks, as we look at the Ten Commandments individually and see how they work in our world now.

We looked at why God gave these tablets of writing to the Israelite people. As the nation grew, it required more organization and details to keep it holy and true to God. This is very similar to the world today. It is growing and getting out of control, so the government instills more rules and regulations in an effort to keep order instead of chaos.

The problem, as I see it, is that today we are making up our own rules and leaving God's commandments, rules and guidelines behind. Just like when Moses came off the mountain with the first set of tablets and found the golden calf issue, we see today that man has started to worship things instead of God.

What should we do? What will God do? Over the next 10 Sundays we will look at each of God's commandments that He gave to His people and see if we are following God in our lives and community. We will look at what God wants us to do today.

Let's pray!

¹Jackie Perseghetti, pg. 64

²Navpress, pg. 103

³Jackie Perseghetti, pg. 64, 65

Bibliography:

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