

## That the World May Know: Fire on the Mountain – Session 4: The Mountain of God

### Tested and Trained to Be God's Message

Like other people of their time, the Israelites were familiar with the cultural practice of seeking God (or gods) on high places. So they naturally understood that God would call them to mountaintops so that they could worship him and he could teach them. God related to his people through mountain experiences just as he related to them through other familiar cultural icons and practices, such as temple worship, priests, sacrifices, offerings, altars, and prophets.

1. We can view the places where God chose to meet with his people during biblical times. And we can learn valuable lessons from what took place.  
Genesis 22:1 – 14  
1 Chronicles 21:1 – 6  
1 Chronicles 22:1 – 2

What happened on this mountain during the time of Abraham?

2. What is God's purpose in the following passages?

Ezekiel 28:13 – 15 Why was it so significant that Adam and Eve hid from God?

Exodus 3:1 – 12 and 19:1 – 6 What was God's purpose in drawing Moses and the Israelites to this mountain?

Numbers 20:22 – 29 Why might God have wanted to gather Aaron, the high priest, from a mountaintop?

Joshua 8:30 – 35 What kind of statement was Joshua making by building the altar and renewing the covenant on a mountain?

### The Israelites Come to Mount Sinai

Israel arrived at Mount Sinai at the beginning of the third month. They camped at the foot of Mount Sinai for nearly a year as God revealed to them the response he expected of them. They had celebrated him as their king at the Red Sea, and now they needed to learn how to accept his reign as their Lord.

1. What did Moses do immediately after reaching Mount Sinai? What revelation did God give him to share with the people?  
Exodus 19:1 – 8

How did the people respond to what God revealed to them through Moses?

Given the Israelites' previous response and commitments to God, is this how you would have expected them to respond?  
Exodus 4:29 – 31  
Exodus 14:29 – 31

2. According to Exodus 3:7 – 10, Exodus 5:1, and Exodus 7:4, did Israel come to Sinai to *become* God's people or were they already God's people before arriving there?

Why was God committed to caring for the Israelites? What promises had he made concerning them?  
Genesis 17:1 – 8  
Exodus 2:24  
Exodus 6:1 – 8

### Recognizing the Presence of God

Imagine how the Israelites felt as they prepared for God to come down on Mount Sinai. They had seen God's power in the plagues and had followed his presence in the pillar of cloud and fire. They had been warned about getting too close to Mount Sinai and limits had been placed around the mountain to protect them

1. What is the distant as well as recent history of the Israelites would have led them to recognize their God in the symbol of fire?  
Genesis 15:9 – 21  
Exodus 13:20 – 22  
Exodus 14:23 – 25

2. Why did God speak to his people out of the fire on the mountain?  
Deuteronomy 4:10 – 12  
Deuteronomy 4:35 – 40

What did the Israelites experience when Moses led them out of the camp to meet God at the foot of the mountain?

What impact did it have on them?  
Exodus 19:16 – 19

How did the Israelites respond to having this close encounter with their God?

How convinced were they that the Lord is God?  
Exodus 20:18 – 19  
Deuteronomy 4:33  
Deuteronomy 5:1 – 5  
Deuteronomy 5:23 – 27

## Enthroning God as King

God made a covenant with Abraham more than 400 years before Israel stood at Mount Sinai and received his gift of the Torah. He promised Abraham that his descendants would be God's chosen people forever and that he would bless them for Abraham's sake—and bless the entire world through them. God did not demand obedience from the Israelites as a precondition for their redemption from slavery; they were already God's people. He demanded their obedience because the future direction of his kingdom depended on whether or not they would enthrone him as their Lord and King.

1. After freeing the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery and providing for Israel in the desert, where did God lead the Israelites? What was his purpose for taking them there?  
Exodus 19:1 – 6

What might Israel have seen and experienced thus far in their journey with God that would make accepting their role in his kingdom and his requirements for obedience more compelling?

2. How did the Israelites respond to God's call for obedient participation in his kingdom?  
Exodus 19:8  
Exodus 24:3 – 7  
Deuteronomy 5:27

Are you willing to say to God, Everything you command I will do?"

## Moses Kept Climbing the Mountain

When Moses reached Mount Sinai, he was at least 80 years old. He had been a shepherd for 40 years, he had courageously challenged Pharaoh, and he had faced the Israelites' unbelief, anger, rebellion, and fear in the desert. Moses faced new challenges at Mount Sinai, including climbing up and down the mountain multiple times! Notice how much effort Moses put into obeying God.

1. As soon as Moses arrived at Mount Sinai, he began the first of many trips up the mountain to meet with God. Remember the video and the scenes of the climb up Jebel Katarina. What does this say about the effort God expects from his people? In what ways must God have provided for Moses?  
Exodus 19:1 – 6

2. Take the time to read the record of Moses' trips up and down Mount Sinai.

How long would it take to read this message in comparison to how long it took to obtain it?

Exodus 19:3 – 8

How long did this communication take?

Exodus 19:8 – 14

What was the first thing God asked when Moses reached the summit?

Exodus 19:20 – 25

Why was Moses unafraid to approach God when the people were afraid to even hear his voice?

Exodus 20:18 – 21

What did God provide for Moses and the elders during this trip up the mountain?

Exodus 24:1 - 11

## Scripture References

Genesis 1	Psalms 78
Genesis 3 – 4	Psalms 87
Genesis 11 – 12	Psalms 119
Genesis 15	Isaiah 2
Genesis 17	Isaiah 4
Genesis 19	Isaiah 8
Genesis 22	Isaiah 10
Exodus 1 – 20	Isaiah 24
Exodus 24 – 25	Isaiah 56
Exodus 32	Isaiah 66
Leviticus 2	Jeremiah 19
Leviticus 9	Jeremiah 31
Leviticus 21	Ezekiel 6
Leviticus 23	Ezekiel 28
Leviticus 26	Micah 4
Numbers 9	Zechariah 8
Numbers 11 – 12	Malachi 3
Numbers 20 – 21	Matthew 2 – 5
Numbers 33	Matthew 9 - 10
Deuteronomy 4 – 9	Matthew 13
Deuteronomy 12	Matthew 17
Deuteronomy 18	Luke 2
Deuteronomy 26	Luke 9
Deuteronomy 30-34	Luke 22
Joshua 8	Luke 24
1 Kings 3	John 1
1 Kings 4	John 3
1 Kings 12 – 19	John 6
1 Kings 22	John 14
2 Kings 12	Acts 1 - 3
2 Kings 14	Acts 7
2 Kings 17 – 23	Acts 19
1 Chronicles 21	Romans 5
2 Chronicles 1 - 7	Romans 8
2 Chronicles 14	1 Corinthians 3
2 Chronicles 28	1 Thessalonians 1
2 Chronicles 33 – 34	Titus 2
Psalms 19	Hebrews 3
Psalms 43	Hebrews 5
Psalms 48	Hebrews 12
Psalms 67	1 Peter 2
Psalms 74	Revelation 20