

Key:

Purple – Introduction, Conclusion, Main Points, and Sermon Thread

Blue – Explanation/Exposition

Red – Application

Green – Illustration

Brown – Quotation

Orange – Sermon Notes

## BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.

- Throughout your life, you'll meet a lot of people.
  - Some of those people will be notable.
    - Many will not.
- Some of you have already met someone notable!
  - Maybe you've met a politician.
  - Maybe you got a backstage pass to meet your favorite musical artist.
  - Maybe an athlete that you admire or another person of note.
- When people get to meet someone that they admire, they often report feeling starstruck.
  - Perhaps you've felt that way.
    - I had one friend tell me of how he met a famous actress in line at a coffee shop.
      - She turned around in line and asked him "What's good here?"
      - All he could do was say - very loudly - "I can't believe you're here!"
      - It was a delightfully awkward interaction.
- Other times when you meet someone that you really admire, you find yourself feeling disappointed.
  - You realize that they're not who you thought they were.
    - These people we look up to, they are normal people.
      - And that's....disappointing.
  - But it's not always that way.
    - And that certainly wasn't the case when Israel met God.
- Today we're going to read about the people of Israel meeting their God.
  - They are literally meeting their hero!
    - A holy, awesome, terror-inducing God.
  - Before we get into that story let's pray.
  - **\*Pray\***
- Alright - we're going to be in Exodus 19 today.
  - If you haven't already please turn there in your Bibles.
- If you're unfamiliar with the story that we're parachuting into here are the highlights from chapter 1-18.
  - The book opens with the people of Israel being enslaved by the ruler of Egypt who is called Pharaoh.
    - He feels threatened by their strength and so he oppresses them.
  - Despite this God blesses them and causes them to multiply.
  - Pharaoh, in an attempt to cut back their population attempts to coerce the Israelites into killing their own children by throwing them into the Nile river.
- In chapter 2 we meet Moses who is rescued from the waters of the Nile by the daughter of Pharaoh.

- Moses grows up in Pharaoh's palace, but then flees Egypt after he kills an Egyptian who was mistreating an Israelite.
- He goes to the wilderness of Horeb and meets God on a mountain called Mt. Horeb.
- God tells him to go back to Egypt to act as God's representative as God rescues his people out of slavery.
- Moses obeys God and goes back to Egypt.
  - He demands that Pharaoh let God's people go.
    - Pharaoh refuses, God sends 10 plagues that result in Pharaoh releasing Israel.
- The people of Israel travel into the wilderness and God miraculously provides manna and water for them.
- They're opposed by King Amalek, and God gives these untrained, newly freed slaves victory over a king and his army.
- Then three months [MAKE SURE IT'S THREE MONTHS] after they leave Egypt the people arrive at Mt. Sinai.
- Let's read Exodus 19:1-2

#### Exodus 19:1–2 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup>On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.

<sup>2</sup>They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain,

- So Israel arrives in the wilderness of Sinai.
  - They have just been witness to a series of incredible acts of divine protection and provision.
  - And now they're here.
    - How did they come to this place?
      - They didn't just start running for the hills.
      - They were led.
        - If you're able to look back at Exodus 13, take a look at verses 21-22.
        - It reads

#### Exodus 13:21–22 (ESV)

<sup>21</sup>And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

<sup>22</sup>The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

- It's God who is leading the people.
  - He is manifested here as a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night.
- And he leads them to a mountain.
  - This mountain is called Sinai.
    - But it also has another name.
      - In addition to Mt. Sinai this mountain is also called Mt. Horeb.
    - Which is the mountain on which God met Moses in the burning bush and commanded him to go to Israel.

- Do you see what's happening here?
  - God is leading his people back to himself.<sup>1</sup>
- And all along the way God is protecting, providing, and preserving his people.
- All Israel has to do is submit to his leadership.
- That's our first point this morning.
- **Submit to his leadership**
  - Israel's submission to God's leadership saved them over and over.
    - This is something Israel did and it's also something we *must* do.
      - We're not led around by a pillar of cloud like Israel was
      - God now uses different means to direct us.
  - But the importance of our dependence on his leadership is as important as ever.
  - He leads his people.
  - So follow him, church.
    - Just like he led Israel - he hasn't stopped.
  - You might be here and have no relationship with God.
- You're more like the Egyptians who denied his authority.
  - Maybe you even deny his existence.
    - But I can assure you, he is working in this moment in your life.
  - You may be here because of he is leading you to himself.
    - He may have led you here this morning so that you could meet him, just like Israel.
      - Are you fighting against his leading?
        - If you're here and you don't know God, you need to know that the same God who led Israel to himself, also provides a way for you to know him.
          - How can you know God?
            - It starts by acknowledging that you have need of a savior.
            - We all are guilty of sin and rebelling against God.
              - He is just to punish us for that sin, but instead he sent his son to stand in our place and take the punishment that we deserve.
              - It's by trusting in this that we can have peace with God and begin to know him.
    - Don't think that you're too far out of God's reach.
      - He saved his people out of slavery and will save you out of slavery to sin.
    - This is the living God.
      - He's a God who leads his people.
      - And he's a God who speaks to his people.
  - Let's read what he says to Moses, starting in verse 3:

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<sup>1</sup> God rehearses Moses's story with Israel. Both were saved through water. Both fled Egypt and ended up at the Mountain of God (Exodus 3:1). Both meet God and commit to obey him. The repetition of this pattern of salvation through water is seen first in Noah who was protected from the waters of death by the ark which came to rest on the top of a mountain (Genesis 8:4).

Exodus 19:3–6 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup>while Moses went up to God. The Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel:

<sup>4</sup>‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.

<sup>5</sup>Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;

<sup>6</sup>and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

- God refers to his work in rescuing Israel out of Egypt.
  - He helps guide the people’s response to his proposition by reminding them of how he has cared for them.
- He’s reminding them of the way that he “bore them on eagles wings”.
  - He draws this contrast between how he brought Egypt low, and elevated Israel.
    - By the power of God Egypt was plunged into darkness, afflicted with boils, deprived of their livestock and their crops which likely caused famine, and their firstborn children were killed - because Pharaoh refused to submit to God’s authority.
      - Pharaoh himself was then killed along with his military in the waters of the Red Sea, leaving Egypt without their leader.
  - Israel on the other hand was spared all of the plagues that afflicted Egypt.
    - They grew strong in Egypt and scripture says that they plundered the Egypt as they left, leaving wealthy and safe.<sup>2</sup>
  - God wants the people to remember how he’s led them and provided for them.
- God is endowing what he’s about to say with the significance of what he just did in saving his people.
  - So what does he say?
- He makes them a promise.
  - He tells them that they will be his treasured possession, they will be distinct among all the nations in his eyes, they will be a kingdom of priests, they will be a holy nation.
  - But there’s a catch to all of this do you see it there in verse 5?
    - God says “if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant”
      - The covenant that we’re reading about here is known as the Mosaic Covenant.
        - Because Moses is the mediator of this covenant, it’s associated with his name.
      - In the next chapter of Exodus God begins to lay out the ground rules of the Mosaic covenant that he mentions here.
        - That’s what we call the Ten Commandments.
      - The Mosaic covenant that we’re reading about here develops and adds to a previous covenant that God made.

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<sup>2</sup> Exodus 3:21–22; 12:35–36

- Way back in Genesis 12 God promised to Abram that he would make Abram's offspring into a great nation.
  - This covenant is called the Abrahamic Covenant.
    - He promises that he would create a great nation (Israel) out of Abram's offspring.
- Now, here in Exodus 19, he's making another covenant with Israel.
  - It doesn't replace the Abrahamic.
  - But it adds some color to the promises that God made to Abram.
    - God told Abram, who had no children, that his offspring would become a great nation.
    - And now God says to Israel that they will be his treasured possession.
      - There's a sense of special care and preciousness here that's a new development.
    - God also specifies that Israel will be a *holy* nation.
      - So if Abram was wondering - what kind of nation will my offspring be?
        - Here God answers that explicitly.
        - They're going to be a *holy* nation. One that's set apart.
        - They're going to be a holy nation, set apart that belongs to God.
  - There are also new elements that are unique to this covenant.
    - These are things that weren't present in the covenant that God made to Abram.
    - For one - it requires the people to obey God's voice.
      - God's covenant with Abram was a one-sided!
        - God gives no conditions to Abram.
          - He just tells Abram - "this is something that I'm going to do for you."
        - But now God tells Moses - "if you obey my voice and keep my covenant these things will come to pass."
      - That's new.
  - There's also this new detail about being a kingdom of priests.
    - What's that about?
      - It doesn't establish a universal priesthood among Israel.
        - It's not as if just anyone from Israel could offer a sacrifice or minister in the future tabernacle.<sup>3</sup>
      - This idea of a universal priesthood sets up Israel as distinct from all other nations.
        - As a holy nation, as a kingdom of priests - they will collectively relate to God in a closer, more intimate way.

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<sup>3</sup> Duane A. Garrett, *A Commentary on Exodus: Commentary*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2014), 460: "The language does not imply a "universal priesthood," as though there would be no need for an Aaronic, specialized priesthood. It does not suggest that anyone could officiate at the sanctuary."

- There are no other nations that will be like this.
- There's a special relationship that Israel will have to God.
- It's similar to how the priests within Israel had special access to God.
- But that special access also requires special obedience.
- It requires that his people be holy.
- The next 5 chapters of Exodus lay out what the beginnings of obedience and holiness looks like.
  - And it all starts with the 10 commandments.
  - We won't be looking at those today, but I would encourage you to read them later or maybe talk about them over lunch with someone today.
- In Exodus 19 he speaks to Moses.
- The way that God spoke to Moses was unique.
  - Few if any other saints in scripture had experiences like this.
    - Moses even attests to this in Exodus 33, he says that he spoke with God face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.
- I think it's tempting for us to bemoan the fact that God doesn't speak to us like this anymore.
  - Wouldn't it just be easier if God talked to us?
  - Wouldn't it be great if we could hear from him whenever we want?
  - But I think we have it backwards.
  - I actually think that Moses and the people of Israel would be jealous of the position that we're in.
  - Friends, we can hear from God whenever we want.
  - He's given us his word.
  - He's given us the Holy Spirit inside of us.
  - Do you want to hear from God?
    - Give yourself to reading his word.
    - If you want God's direction for your life, set yourself before his word.
    - Just reading his word is not enough though - you have to respond.
  - Let's see how Israel responds to God's word.
- Starting in verse 7:

Exodus 19:7–8 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup>So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the Lord had commanded him.

<sup>8</sup>All the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do."

- So Moses gathers together the elders of the people, he sets them before him and then tells them God's proposition.
- And how does Israel respond?
  - "All that the Lord has spoken we will do"!
- This is a hearty affirmation of the terms of the covenant.

- They don't even know what will be asked of them, but they commit to obey!
  - Wouldn't you if you had walked through the Red Sea on dry ground?
  - Or tasted manna from heaven?
- Now some of us might be feeling tempted to shake our heads at their hasty affirmation.
  - If that's you I would invite you to do some introspection.
    - How many times have you actually read the "Terms and Conditions" of an agreement?
    - If you've ever bought a house, have you taken the time to read every word of every piece of paper that you signed?
    - Or what about when you sign up for Amazon Prime, or make an email account, or use an iPhone?
      - All those things carry with them terms and conditions.
      - We are constantly agreeing to mini-covenants without reading the fine print.
      - We could be signing our life away!
        - And we do it so we can get two day delivery.
    - That's a pretty small payoff.
  - In light of that consider Israel's commitment to obey the covenant.
    - They have just experienced 2 months of miracles and now the all-powerful doer of all those miracles is promising ongoing blessing and provision.
- I think Israel makes a lot of mistakes in Exodus, but this isn't one of them.
  - This is a wise choice.
- They commit to obedience.
- That's our second point this morning.
  - **Commit to Obedience**
- Israel choose to follow God without knowing exactly what that would entail.
  - And we should do the same.
    - Church commit to obey the Lord.
      - Make the decision now before the pressure is on.
  - Scripture praises those who commit to obedience.
- Hebrews 11 is full of those who committed to obey the Lord without knowing exactly what he'll ask of them.
  - Noah built an ark without having ever seen rain.
  - Abram left everything, following God, not knowing where he was going.
  - And Moses, when God told him to go, didn't enumerate all the hardship that would lay before him.
    - If God told him how hard his task would have been, I'm not sure that he would have done it.
      - He committed to obedience and got after it.
  - Noah, Abram, Rahab, Moses, Sarah - all those in Hebrews 11
    - They - in faith - trusted that whatever they had to go through in the course of obedience would be worth it.

- And they were right.
- Are you more willing to blindly obey an agreement with men than to obey in faith the one who created you?
- **Commit to obedience, church.**
- Follow Israel's example here.
- So after Israel's agreement to the covenant, Moses goes back up the mountain.
- Let's keep reading in verse 8

Exodus 19:8–9 (ESV)

<sup>8</sup>All the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do." And Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord.

<sup>9</sup>And the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever." When Moses told the words of the people to the Lord,

- Moses tells the Lord that the people agree to the covenant, and then God warns Moses that he's coming to speak to Moses in the hearing of all the people.
- He doesn't say what they're going to talk about.
  - But he does give Moses a hint about what to look for.
  - God says he's coming as a thick cloud.
- He probably chooses to do this because that's how Israel would recognize him.
- That's the only way that God has visually revealed himself to the people Israel.
  - They've been following a pillar of cloud.
  - So if that same God is going to come and speak with the people we should expect that he'll adopt a similar appearance.
- And then Moses zooms in on this interaction.
  - He recounts again telling the words of the people to the Lord at the end of verse 9
    - God responds with some more commands.
  - Let's read starting in the second half of verse 9

Exodus 19:9–11 (ESV)

<sup>9</sup>And the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever." When Moses told the words of the people to the Lord,

<sup>10</sup>the Lord said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments

<sup>11</sup>and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

- So what do we make of this?
  - God is giving them some things to do before they meet him.
- Think about this like an invitation to an event.

- We see
  - A location - the foot of the mountain
  - A date - the third day
  - In the next verse we'll read what time they're to meet
    - When the trumpet sounds a long blast
    - There's even a dress code - clean garments.
- Why is God being so formal about all this?
  - What's with this preparation?
    - The people's obedience to these rules communicates the importance or the holiness of the person they're going to meet.
  - The person that Israel is going to meet is the God of the universe.
    - The one who parted the Red Sea.
    - The creator of light and dark.
    - This is the God of their fathers.
    - The one to whom they owe their existence.
  - This God is unknown to them - they haven't heard his voice before.
    - He has delivered them from Egypt, but the terms of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel have not been set.<sup>4</sup>
  - So they would do well to present themselves in the best way possible.
- Then God says something unexpected.
  - Take a look at verses 12 and 13:

#### Exodus 19:12–13 (ESV)

<sup>12</sup>And you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, 'Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death.

<sup>13</sup>No hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain."

- So despite the preparations that God has the people do, he *STILL* requires there to be distance between himself and the people of Israel.
  - Why?
- In short - his holiness.
  - The warning helps us understand what would happen if he let the people approach him.
    - They would die.
  - He is mercifully defining a boundary that the people can stay behind where they will be safe from the consuming fire of God's glory.
    - If anyone transgresses that boundary he is to die.

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<sup>4</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 98.

- Such a breach would belittle the command of Yahweh which deserves death.
- I have a feeling that we might be a little uncomfortable with this.
  - Our lives don't work like this.
    - People are only executed if they do something really bad.
      - But crossing a boundary up the mountain....doesn't seem that bad.
    - But what we fail to realize and what Moses is emphasizing here is that the majesty and purity of God's glory is of such worth, it's of such supreme value, that even the slightest denigration is an offense deserving death.
  - We don't have anything on this earth as sacred as what Israel is about to experience.
    - There's no person, place, or thing that demands such reverence and respect.
- And now Moses has to get the people ready.
  - Verse 14

#### Exodus 19:14–15 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup>So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments.

<sup>15</sup>And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman."

- The people start this process of cleansing.
- They clean themselves and their clothes and prepare themselves for their meeting with Yahweh.
  - There's also this interesting command from Moses "do not go near a woman".
    - This isn't included in what God says to Moses, but it's an apt illustration of what this sort of consecration entailed.
- You might have already guessed this, but this is not a command to not be near a woman.
  - Like all the women on that side of the room all the men on this side of the room.
    - This is Moses telling the people of Israel not to have sex.
      - The reason for this is not because sex is sinful.
        - God created sex!
          - It's a good thing inside of a marital relationship
            - It's God's plan A for how more image bearers will be made.
        - The reason that Moses tells the people to abstain from sex is because they are to be completely focused on and devoted to their God whom they will meet.
        - One scholar says this was a time that demanded "special, focused, self-denying attention to God."<sup>5</sup>
  - Normal life couldn't continue because these people were about to be face to face with Yahweh.
  - And so after 2 days of preparing themselves we read this - in verse 16:

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<sup>5</sup> Douglas K. Stuart, Exodus, vol. 2, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 426.

Exodus 19:16–19 (ESV)

<sup>16</sup>On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled.

<sup>17</sup>Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.

<sup>18</sup>Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.

<sup>19</sup>And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder.

- I bet nobody slept very well the night before meeting Yahweh.
  - Especially not Moses.
- If the anticipation wasn't enough there's thunder and lightning and a supernatural trumpet sound.
  - I want to try as best I can to paint the picture of they might have seen.
- In the morning on the third day began thunderings and lightning.
  - Imagine - the sun hasn't come up - the sky is black with terror filled clouds.
    - Mount Sinai can only be seen when the lightning flashes.
      - And when the lightning flashes and you see glimpses of the mountain and
      - It's wrapped in roiling smoke.
    - And the people are walking towards this supernatural event to meet the God that has saved them and they've sworn to serve.
- And then the trumpet begins to sound.
  - It's not blown by a man.
    - It's the escalating announcement of God's presence.
      - And it's getting louder and louder.
      - The people are going to meet God.
- The people are unsteady on their feet and as the sun rises in the dim light they can see that the mountain is shaking.
  - The earth is trembling under the weight of the presence of Yahweh.
  - It is as though the elements and the dimensions are strained and would crack under the burden of the weight of the glory of God.<sup>6</sup>
- There's a loud clap of the thunder and the mountain in front of them is engulfed in flames.
  - Yahweh is here.
  - The people are trembling with fear.
- Moses, closest to the mountain, speaks to God and is answered by thunder.

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<sup>6</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 98.

- Let's read what happens next
- Verse 20-25

Exodus 19:20–25 (ESV)

<sup>20</sup>The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

<sup>21</sup>And the Lord said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the Lord to look and many of them perish.

<sup>22</sup>Also let the priests who come near to the Lord consecrate themselves, lest the Lord break out against them.”

<sup>23</sup>And Moses said to the Lord, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, ‘Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.’ ”

<sup>24</sup>And the Lord said to him, “Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the Lord, lest he break out against them.”

<sup>25</sup>So Moses went down to the people and told them.

- After this awesome display of glory - God tells Moses to repeat the warning to the people.
- God is reemphasizing his holiness here.
  - Make sure they know not to come too close or many of them will die.
    - Even the priests.
      - At this time Israel had a nascent priesthood which would be formalized later.<sup>7</sup>
- Moses says “I already did that.”
  - And God replies “Go Down, and come up bringing Aaron with you.”
  - And Moses makes the smart choice obeys
    - He goes down to tell the people
    - I bet many of them were thrilled to be told to keep their distance.
      - But not all.
        - Some must have been curious - wanting to see the being who is behind this supernatural phenomena before them.
    - And God warns Moses that if someone comes to look - many will perish.
      - As you keep reading in Exodus and Numbers, people die because they don't respect God's holiness.
      - Some die by plague, some die by the sword, some are swallowed up by the earth, some die in a blaze of fire that explodes out God's dwelling place.
      - But all these died because they flouted God's holiness.
    - And this doesn't stop happening in the New Testament.
      - It's not as if God's holiness only matter in the Old Testament.

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<sup>7</sup> Garrett, *Exodus*, 463: “The significant point here is that Israel already had priests (against the common notion that the priesthood did not begin in Israel until after the consecration of Aaron and his sons in Exod. 40).”

- Ananias and Saphira are struck dead because they lie to God.
- Some of you might remember when Pastor Tony preached about Herod's death in Acts.
  - He was allowing himself to be worshipped as God and we read in Acts 12:23

Acts 12:23 (ESV)

<sup>23</sup>Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.

- The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament is the God of today.
  - Don't let anyone tell you that the God of the Old Testament was angry and the God of the New Testament is super nice and he just wants to be buddies.
    - Our God is an all-consuming fire and he is jealous for his glory.
  - Take his holiness seriously.
- That's our last point this morning.
  - Take his holiness seriously
- If you're feeling a little confused about how Exodus 19 is supposed to apply to us today don't worry.
- Let me draw the connection from Exodus 19 to us today.
- It matters for us because the same holy God that saved Israel from Egypt has saved us from sin.
  - This God who made a covenant with Moses has made another covenant.
    - Jesus refers to this covenant as the "new covenant" during the last supper.
      - So when you hear people talk about the new covenant you can think of it as everything that Jesus's death accomplished on the cross.
    - Hebrews says this covenant supersedes the Mosaic covenant.<sup>8</sup>
      - The Mosaic covenant is obsolete.
  - But there is a major similarity between new covenant and the one that's passing away.
    - Just like under the Mosaic covenant God required Israel to take his holiness seriously by living in a way that reflected him, we are likewise commanded to be holy.
      - Remember, church - The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament is the God of today.
  - His holiness hasn't depreciated.
- The New Testament reflects this viewpoint.
- Turn with me in your Bibles to 1 Peter 1:14-19
  - Peter is writing to believers in Jesus Christ
    - People like us who are beneficiaries of the new covenant.
      - He says

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<sup>8</sup> Hebrew 8:13

### 1 Peter 1:14–19 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup>As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,  
<sup>15</sup>but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,  
<sup>16</sup>since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”  
<sup>17</sup>And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile,  
<sup>18</sup>knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold,  
<sup>19</sup>but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

- Peter recognizes this similarity between the Mosaic covenant and the new covenant.
  - We’re hearing the echoes of Mosaic covenant here.
    - He’s quoting Leviticus where God is reminding the people that he saved them from Egypt and then commands them to be holy as he himself is holy.
  - Here’s why this matters:
    - The Holy Spirit through Peter is applying this Old Testament expectation of holiness to New Testament believers.
  - In fact later in chapter 2 verse 9 Peter writes,

### 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV)

<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

- Peter is using these similar terms to communicate that we should take his holiness as seriously as Israel did.
- We are to be holy because God is holy.
- Do you see that continuity between the Mosaic covenant and the new covenant?
- But what about when we fail?
- What happens then?
  - If you’re familiar with the Old Testament you know that Israel failed.
    - And there were serious consequences for their failure.
- What about us?
  - We will fail to take his holiness seriously.
    - Just like Israel.
- What happens to us when we fail?
  - We receive forgiveness.
- Our participation in the new covenant doesn’t rest upon our obedience to a set of terms.
  - It rests on Christ’s perfect obedience to the Father and his sacrificial death.

- It's through Christ's life, death, and resurrection that we have forgiveness of sin.
  - New birth.
  - Spiritual transformation.
  - Eternal life.
  - Endless joy.
- And it's available now.
  - Jesus Christ is the most important person you will ever meet.
  -
- And as we stumble towards glory we take part in this new covenant by **submitting to God's leadership**.
- We consider all that we have gained from Christ's death and all the reasons we have to trust God.
  - And as we do that we **commit to obedience**.
  - And we strive to give God the glory he deserve by **taking his holiness seriously** and seeking to reflect him by living holy lives.
- We can trust that he will help us in this joyful pursuit.
  - Please pray with me.

- Father
- You are the God whom Israel met on mount Sinai.
- You are holy.
- And you are loving.
- You are transcendent.
  - Full of majesty.
- And you are immanent.
  - You have made your home inside us.
- You are with us in our hardship, our struggle, our pain.
- You offer us the grace we need to overcome the brokenness of this world and the brokenness of ourselves.
- We thank you for being our God.
  - We trust you in all things.
- Amen.