

# Exodus 19 – 20:17

## Day 1

Israel at Mount Sinai: Read Exodus 19:1-8



1. When and where did the events in 19:1,2 take place?

- What had God promised Moses earlier? 3:12 How do you think Moses felt when he came back to the mountain?

**FYI:** "Israel stayed in **the Wilderness of Sinai** until Numbers 10. More than 57 chapters of Scripture are devoted to what happened to Israel in the year they camped at Mount Sinai. 'The word conventionally translated 'wilderness' is not a sandy desert, but grazing country, not settled by man.' (Cole)" - David Guzik

"The exact location of Mount Sinai itself is still a matter of argument, although tradition has long associated it with the volcanic mountain called Jebel Musa, near the southern tip of the peninsula, where the Greek Orthodox Church's St. Catherine's Monastery was built in the sixth century A.D." - Henry Morris

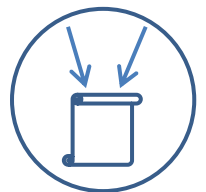
"According to Exodus 2:15, 3:1, and 3:12 this mountain was in the region of *Midian*, which was on the east side of the Gulf of Aqaba, east of the Sinai Peninsula. The ancient land of Midian is in the modern nation of Saudi Arabia. In Galatians 4:25, the Apostle Paul clearly described Mount Sinai as being *in Arabia*. Though some claim that this can also be understood as extending to the Sinai Peninsula, this isn't the normal understanding of where *Arabia* is, either in the modern or the ancient understanding. [Some] associate the Arabian mountain *Jebel al-Lawz* with the site of Mount Sinai." - David Guzik

2. How did God describe His deliverance of the people? 19:4

- What did Moses add to this description in Deuteronomy 32:10,11? (*Deuteronomy is a book that records speeches given by Moses recounting what God had done for Israel since the Exodus and His covenant with them.*)

**FYI:** "**I bore you on eagles' wings:** An **eagles' wings** are strong and sure; but they also speak of careful protection. It is said that an eagle does not carry her young in her claws like other birds; the young eagles attach themselves to the back of the mother eagle and are protected as they are carried. Any arrow from a hunter must pass through the mother eagle before it could touch the young eagle on her back." - David Guzik

3. What did God ask the people to do? 19:5 (This is a "conditional" covenant that involves two parties. Note the term "if.")



4. List the terms that describe the calling that Israel had.

- 19:5b (Cf. Deuteronomy 26:18-19)
- 19:6
- What do these descriptions indicate about the people's responsibility to God?

**FYI: 19:6 kingdom of priests** "Israel was called by God to be a peculiarly holy nation, as a witness to all other nations that either had already departed from acknowledging the true God of creation, or were in the process. In the sense of mediating between other nations and God, all the Israelites were to serve as a royal priesthood."  
- Henry Morris

"After rescuing Israel from slavery, God initiates a covenant relationship with Israel for the sake of the nations. This is a crucial moment in the development of the entire biblical storyline. God calls Israel to become a **"kingdom of priests"** who will mediate between God and all the nations. This is a development of the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. God will bring his blessing to all nations through Israel's covenant obedience and priestly role. Israel's obedience to the terms of the covenant\* is crucial to the plan of God's presence and character becoming accessible to the nations."  
- <https://jointhebibleproject.com/>

5. What insight does Deuteronomy 7:6-8 give into the Lord's choice of Israel for this special position?

6. How did the people respond? 19:8

- How did God feel about their response? Deuteronomy 5:28,29

7. In the following, underline what God wanted to do for this nation.

- Deuteronomy 5:29 Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever! NIV
- Psalm 81:13-14 "Oh that My people would listen to Me, That Israel would walk in My ways! 14 "I would quickly subdue their enemies And turn My hand against their adversaries." NASU
- Isaiah 48:18-19 "If only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea. 19 "Your descendants would have been like the sand, And your offspring like its grains..." NASU (For a fuller description of these blessings read Deuteronomy 28:1-14.)

**Applying the Word:** What does the work and care God took with the nation of Israel say about the relationship God desires to have with all people?

## Day 2

The Lord instructs Moses: Read Exodus 19:9-25

8. How did the Lord confirm Moses' leadership in 19:9? For what reason?
9. List the instructions Moses gave the people to prepare for the LORD's coming:
- 19:10
  - 19:11
  - 19:12,13a
  - 19:13b
  - 19:15

**FYI: Consecrate** OT:6942 *qadash*; "to be set apart, to be holy, to dedicate"  
 - The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament

"The thing or person consecrated is to be withheld from workaday use (or profane use) and to be treated with special care as a possession of God."  
 - Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words

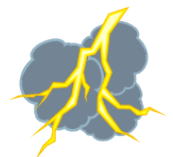
"To prepare for encounters with the holy, ancient people abstained for a time from all sorts of normal activities. This symbolized turning temporarily away from the commonplace and toward the holy." - Life Change Bible Commentary

**"Do not come near your wives:** The rest of the Scriptures do not teach that there is any inherent uncleanness in sexual relations. This command was peculiar for this event. In this situation, God wanted the people to demonstrate their desire for purity by putting on clean clothes and restraining desires, even legitimate desires." - David Guzik

10. Describe what the people experienced. 19:16,18,19. (See also Deuteronomy 4:11,12)

Heard	Saw	Smelled	Felt

11. How did the people react when the Lord came down? 19:16b (What do you think you would have found most intimidating?)



12. What instructions did the LORD give Moses on his second trip up the mountain? 19:20-23 How did Moses react? (Why do you think God kept giving this warning?)
13. Note the phrases that describe the penalties for touching the mountain. 19:12,13,21, 22,24. What does this say about approaching a Holy God? (*Later when Jesus came, He invited all to come to him, and said He was “gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:29). How would you explain how these revelations are compatible in their revelation of who God is?*)
14. What would be the benefit(s) of having Aaron with Moses on the mountain? 19:24
15. Because of Christ, how close can we come to God? Underline the phrases that describe the approach we can have, or Christ’s relationship with us.
- John 14:20 If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” NIV
  - Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.
  - Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in [Christ] we may approach God with freedom and confidence.
  - Ephesians 3:17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; NASU
  - 1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? NASU

**Applying the Word:** *Although, in Christ, we can approach the Lord “boldly”, and “with freedom and confidence”, what are ways that your words and actions can demonstrate to others a reverence for God and an appreciation for His holiness?*

## Day 3

First Four Commandments – Man’s Relationship with God: Read Exodus 20:1-11

16. How did the people learn God’s instruction at first? 20:1 (See 19:9)



**FYI:** “God begins to give Israel the Torah (instruction,; teaching), which makes clear the terms of the covenant which Israel is expected to keep It begins with the Ten Commandments and is followed by a block of laws that will shape Israel’s social, economic, and worship life together. Living by these laws will make Israel a nation of justice and generosity that reflects God’s own character.”

- <https://jointhebibleproject.com/>

17. What thought did God begin with before giving the law? 20:2

19. How does the 1<sup>st</sup> commandment (“You shall have no other gods before Me” 20:3) lay a foundation for all the rest?

**FYI: “No other gods before Me:** ... the idea is that there are to be no other gods before the sight of the true God in our life. According to Cole, **before Me** is literally, *To My face*. This means God demands to be more than *added* to our lives. We don't just add Jesus to the life we already have. We must give Him all our life.” - David Guzik

20. Why would the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment (20:4,5a) be needed after giving the first?

- What reason did God give for the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment 20:5b,6

**Digging Deeper**  
Read Isaiah 44:9-20 describing the folly of idolatry.

What led to the downfall of the nation? 2 Kings 21:1-9

**FYI: Idol/graven image** “God does not wish to be represented in any way that reduces his greatness by making Him into an object that people can imagine that they can control in some way. He is invisible, without form, and thus cannot be represented by any objects.” - The Africa Bible Commentary (110)

“God was not to be viewed by Israel as one God among many nor as the best of the gods. He was and is the only living God....a **jealous** God...He has a zeal for the truth that He alone is God.” - The Nelson Study Bible (135)

“The word **jealous** does not mean ‘suspicious’ or ‘envious.’ Rather, God is **zealous** to protect what properly belongs to Him. The right understanding of His nature and deeds leads to exclusive worship. That understand and worship are both lost when anything He created becomes an object of devotion.” - The Woman’s Study Bible (130)

21. What does using the Lord’s name vainly (20:7) mean to you? Why do you think there is such a serious warning attached to it?

**FYI: in vain** (NIV “*misuse*”) *shav*; Strongs #7723 “emptiness, vanity, evil, ruin, uselessness, deception, worthless, without result, fraud, deceit.” - The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament (1107)

“In vain has the idea of ‘for nothing, uselessly, falsely’...The Lord’s name includes His nature and reputation, which the Israelites were to guard...To take the Lord’s name ‘in vain’ amounted to denying the reality of His existence or moral character. More than verbal profanity is prohibited here (See Matt. 6:9).” - The Woman’s Study Bible (132)

“There are at least three ways this command is commonly disobeyed.

**Profanity:** Using the name of God in blasphemy and cursing.

**Frivolity:** Using the name of God in a superficial [flippant, trivial] or stupid [silly] way.

**Hypocrisy:** Claiming the name of God but acting in a way that disgraces Him”

- David Guzik

22. Who was to participate in the Sabbath? 20:10

- Why? 2:11

**FYI:** “Reasons for obedience are prominently tied to who the Lord is and what He does (vs. 2, 5-7,11,12).” - The Woman’s Study Bible (130)

23. What did Jesus say about the Sabbath? Mark 2:23- 3:5

**FYI: 20:10 the seventh day.** "The Hebrew word for "Sabbath" does not mean "Saturday" or "seventh day;" it means 'rest' or 'intermission.'" - Henry Morris

"God declared the essential humanity and dignity of **women, slaves, and strangers**, and said they had the same right to a day of rest as the free Israeli man. This was certainly a radical concept in the ancient world." - David Guzik

***Digging Deeper***

How is Jesus the ultimate rest from work? Hebrews 4:9-11; Ephesians 2:8,9

24. Underline the words and phrases that describe the commandments/precepts/laws of God.

- Psalm 19:7-9 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. NASU
- Romans 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. NASU
- Nehemiah 9:13 "Then You came down on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven; You gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments. NASU

25. Underline the standard for right and wrong on which the commandments are based:  
(See also Exodus 15:26)

*Deuteronomy 12:28 "Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God. NASU*

***Applying the Word:*** People often want to define and follow their own moral code. What makes it hard to answer the question "why" for any moral standard apart from God's "divine revelation of morality?"

## Day 4

Last Six Commandments – Man's Relationship with Man: Read Exodus 20:12-17

26. Why do you think a warning is added to the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment to "honor your father and mother?" 20:12

**FYI:** "Honor means 'to treat with significance.'" - The Nelson Study Bible (136)

- The Nelson Study Bible (136)

27. As opposed to (intentional/premeditated) *murder* (20:13), what provisions did God make for accidental killing? Ex. 21:13

**Digging Deeper**

What did Jesus say about the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment?  
Matthew 5:21-26

**FYI:** "You shall not murder: In Hebrew as well as in English there is a distinction between to **kill** and to **murder**. As opposed to killing, **murder** is the taking of life without legal justification (execution after due process) or moral justification (killing in defense)." - David Guzik

28. What did Jesus say about the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment "You shall not commit adultery" (20:14)? Matthew 5:27-30

- How did He deal with this sin? John 8:3-11

**FYI:** "Generally, the term 'adultery' refers to a sexual relationship involving someone who is married to someone else. Some might thus argue that this commandment does not apply to a sexual relationship in which neither of the partners is married. But 'fornication', which is the word used to refer to such a relationship, is also the word used to refer to all sexual sin, regardless of the marital status of those involved (1 Cor. 5:1 KJV). God's will is that sex be within a marriage relationship (Heb. 13:4)." - The Africa Bible Commentary (112)

29. How did Jesus accuse the nation of breaking the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment "You shall not steal?" Matthew 21:12,13

**Digging Deeper**

For more laws on *stealing* see  
Leviticus 6:2-7;  
19:35,36.

- What do we owe God? 1 Corinthians 6:20 (i.e. How can we rob God in non-monetary ways?)

**FYI:** "Stealing or robbery makes for social instability. The one who steals is sending a message that he or she is envious and has no respect for other people. This truth applies to thieves who are mere robbers, and to those who use trickery to obtain or retain what belongs to others...The Bible is not concerned simply with spiritual matters, but also instructs us in what make for healthy relations between people." - The Africa Bible Commentary (112-113)

"This command is another important foundation for human society, establishing the right to personal property. God has clearly entrusted certain possessions to certain individuals, and other people or states are not permitted to take that property without due process of law." - David Guzik

30. Although we may think of the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment "You shall not bear false witness" (20:16) in the context of legal proceedings, how seriously should this be observed in informal matters and daily life? (e.g. How can we bear false witness in subtle and underhanded ways? How damaging can that be?)

**Digging Deeper**

What title did Jesus give to Satan? John 8:44

What part did false witnesses play in Jesus' life? Mark 14:55-59,64

31. How does the tenth commandment “thou shall not covet” (20:17) raise the level of obedience beyond behavior?

**FYI:** “**Covet** means ‘to have a strong desire for.’ Coveting was not merely an appreciation of something from a distance, but an uncontrolled, inordinate, selfish desire.”  
- The Nelson Study Bible (136)

“Covetousness can be expressed towards all sorts of things; it is the itch to have and to possess what someone else has. It speaks of a dissatisfaction with what we have, and a jealousy towards those who have something better.”  
- David Guzik

32. What is the antidote to coveting? Hebrews 13:5 (Do you see any connection between this commandment and the first?)
33. How did Jesus sum up the intent of all the commandments? Matthew 25:35-40 (See the higher principle that Paul gave in Galatians 5:13,14.)
34. Try stating the “*shall not*” commandments positively.
- #6 “You shall not murder” *e.g. You shall regard life as sacred and seek to preserve it.*
  - #7 “You shall not commit adultery”
  - #8 “You shall not steal”
  - #9 “You shall not bear false witness”
  - #10 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s....”

**Applying the Word:** *Imagine for a moment what our country would be like if people followed just the last 6 of the commandments concerning relationships with each other? How much of a difference do you think it would make? What value do these commandments place on people (i.e. their relationships, their reputations, their possessions...)?*

Questions and Discoveries: