

# Sermon Notes

## 19<sup>th</sup> January 2020

### Exodus 24:1-18

#### Covenant

- An agreement, a treaty, sealed by a solemn ceremony and a meal together.
- Starts with God and is driven by him. He gives the laws and the people promise to obey.
- Where does it come in the story? After he's rescued them.
  - The Passover, Red Sea, feeding in the desert – all happened first.
  - These are given to people he's already rescued.
  - Grace comes first.
  - This is a response to God's grace, not the cause of it.

#### God's holiness

- Not about limiting our freedom, taking the fun out of life.
- The key question – how can humans survive in God's presence?
- God is holy. His holiness burns like a fire.
- We are sinful. We cannot live in his presence (Ex 33:20).
- When God tells the people to keep away (Ex 19:12), it's for their protection.

#### God's laws

- v3 God gives them his laws, and they agree to obey (too glibly?).
- Just a short while later they're going to fail (chapter 32).
- God's laws (the 10 commandments and others) are good. They show us how to live.
- But we don't keep the law. In fact, we can't. All it can do is show us how we fail.
- The law by itself can't make us acceptable to God. This was the Pharisees' problem.
- Paul (Gal 3:24) describes the law as being 'in charge' (made a guardian, or teacher).
- It shows us how we should live, but also shows us that we need to be saved. So it points us to Jesus.

#### Sacrifice

- v4 After giving the law, the next thing Moses does is to build an altar.
- v5 Sacrifice is needed. Burnt offerings (for sin) and fellowship offerings (for peace).
- He calls this 'the blood' of the covenant (v8) and sprinkles the people with it (v6).
- All these images are picked up in the story of Jesus!
  - Jesus, our Passover lamb, sacrificed for us (1 Cor 5:7)
  - The wine at communion is 'my blood of the covenant' (Matt 26:28)
  - Jesus' blood is 'sprinkled' on the people (Hebrews 12:24)
- Sins are forgiven through Jesus' sacrifice, not by obeying the law.

#### Eating in God's presence

- v9-11 This is an extraordinary event. Such things are very rare, and people didn't expect to survive them (Gen 32:30, Ex 33:20).
- All they were able to describe was the colour of the ground under his feet (v10).
- They weren't there as especially holy people, but by God's grace.
- Eating together was a sign of a peace treaty having been made.
- A feast in God's presence has echoes throughout the Bible:
  - Is 25:6-8 God will prepare a rich feast for 'all the nations'
  - Matt 8:11 People will come from the whole world to share the feast.
  - Rev 19:9 The wedding supper of the lamb is the final blessing.

#### Come near with confidence

- Heb 10:19-24 Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith
- God made us to be with him.
- The Bible starts with us with God in a garden (Gen 1-2) and finishes with us with God in a city (Rev 21:1-4).
- It's only sin that separates us (Gen 3:8).
- It's Jesus who brings us back together again (Heb 10:19-23).
- One day we will see God face to face ourselves.
- Today, let's come near with confidence, because of the blood of Jesus.

#### Space for your notes

*Written by Ian McLenaghan, January 2020*