



### 31. The Giving of the Law Sinai

#### Exodus 19-24

**The Preparation.** At the beginning of the third month after they left Egypt, the children of Israel entered the Wilderness of Sinai. Here Israel camped in front of the mountain. Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain “Tell the house of Jacob and the children of Israel You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles wings and brought you to Myself. Now, if you will obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My treasured possession, even though all the earth is Mine. You shall be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation for Me.”

Moses called all the elders of the people together and laid before them all these words that the LORD told him. “We will do all that the LORD has spoken,” the people answered together. Moses reported this answer back to the LORD.

The LORD said, “I will come to you in a thick cloud so that the people may hear when I speak with you. They will believe you forever. Sanctify them today and tomorrow. Let them wash their clothes so they are ready three days from now. On the third day I, the LORD, will come down so all the people can see Me on Mount Sinai. Set up boundaries and tell the people to be careful so that they do not go up the mountain or even touch its border; whoever touches the mountain shall certainly be put to death. Only when the rains horn is sounded a long time should they come to the mountain.”

**The Ten Commandments.** On the third day, in the morning, thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud were on the mountain. An exceedingly loud blast of the trumpet made all the people in the camp tremble. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God. They stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was completely covered with smoke because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, God called Moses to come to the top of the mountain.

Then God said, “I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, where you lived as slaves. You shall have no other gods. Do not make any

images to worship that look like something in heaven or on the earth or something that lives in the waters of the earth. Do not bow down to them or serve them because I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments. You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.

“Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy. Work for six days, but on the seventh day, the rest day of the LORD your God, do not do any work. Do not let your son, your daughter, your servants, not even your cattle or a stranger visiting you do any work. In six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; then He rested on the seventh day. That is why the LORD has blessed the Sabbath Day and hallowed it.

“Honor your father and your mother so that you may live a long time on the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

“You shall not murder.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house.

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, his servants, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

**Effect on the People.** When the people saw the lightning and the mountain smoking and heard the thunder and the blast of the trumpet, they moved far away from the mountain. “Speak with us,” they said to Moses, “and we will listen.

Don’t let God speak with us, or we will die.”

“Fear not,” Moses said to the people. “God is come so that you fear Him and do not sin.

The people stayed afar while Moses went near the thick darkness where God was. The LORD spoke to Moses, and Moses told the people all the words of the LORD, His judgments, and His instructions for the feasts. The people all said with one voice, “We will do all the things the LORD has told us.”

**The Covenant Made.** Moses also wrote all the words of the LORD. He got up early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain. He also made 12 pillars, one for each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Then he sent young men of the children of Israel to offer burnt offerings of oxen to the LORD. Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins; the other half he sprinkled on the altar. Then he read to the people from the book of the covenant. Again they said, “All that the LORD has said, we will do; we will be obedient.”

Moses then took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said, “Here is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you on the basis of what He has said here.”

“Come up to Me into the mount,” the LORD said to Moses, “and I will give you tables of stone, the Law and commandments that I have written, so that you can teach them to the people.”

Moses went up, taking along Joshua, his aide. Moses went up the mountain, and a cloud covered it. The glory of the LORD stayed on Mount Sinai. Moses stayed on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights.



## 67. The Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

### Daniel 3

**The Golden Image.** Nebuchadnezzar the king made a statue of gold that was 90 feet high and 9 feet wide.<sup>2</sup> He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, and then invited the princes, governors, captains, judges, treasurers, counselors, sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the statue. When they were all gathered, the herald cried out, “To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the comet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden

statue that Nebuchadnezzar the king has erected. Whoever does not fall down and worship shall in that same hour be thrown into the middle of a blazing, fiery furnace.”

So when all the people heard the sound of the music, all the people and those of all the nations and languages fell down and worshiped the golden statue. At the same time certain Chaldeans made accusations against the Jews. “You, O king, made a decree,” they said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “that every man who hears the sound of the music shall fall down and worship the golden statue; whoever does not fall down and worship should be thrown into the middle of a blazing, fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who have paid no attention to you. They do not serve your gods nor worship the golden statue that you set up.”

**The Fiery Furnace.** Then Nebuchadnezzar, furious in his anger, commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought to him. When they were brought before him, Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Now if you are ready to fall down and worship the statue when you hear the sound of the music, things will be all right with you. But if you do not worship the image that I have made, you shall be thrown immediately into the blazing, fiery furnace. Who is the God who shall deliver you out of my hands?”

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered, “Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves in this

matter. If we are thrown into the furnace, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the blazing, fiery furnace. He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. Even if we are not delivered, you should know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden statue that you have set up.

Then Nebuchadnezzar became enraged. His anger showed in his face, and his attitude toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego changed. He commanded that his men should heat the furnace seven times more than it had been heated. Then he commanded the mightiest men in his army to tie Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing, fiery furnace. The men, wearing their coats, all their clothes, their hats, and their other garments, were bound and thrown into the blazing, fiery furnace. The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so exceedingly hot that the flame of the fire killed the men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The three fell, bound, into the blazing, fiery furnace.

**The Men Delivered.** Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished. He sprang to his feet in amazement and said to his counselors, "Didn't we tie up and throw three men into the fire?"

"Certainly!" they answered.

"Look," he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the middle of the fire. They have not been hurt. The fourth one looks like a son of God."

Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the opening of the blazing, fiery furnace and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the most high God, come out!

Come over here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire.

The princes, governors, captains, and king's counselors saw that the fire had had no effect on the men. Not a hair of their head was singed, their coats weren't scorched, and no smell of fire was on them. "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego," Nebuchadnezzar said, "who has sent His angel to deliver His servants who trusted in Him. They disobeyed my word and were willing to give up their lives so that they wouldn't have to serve and worship any god but their own God. There is no other god that can rescue like this." Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.





## 11. The Offering of Isaac

### Genesis 21—22

**Birth of Isaac.** When Abraham was 100 years old, the LORD caused Sarah to conceive, as He had said. She gave birth to a son of Abraham at the time God had indicated. Abraham named his son Isaac and circumcised him when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.

**God's Command.** After these things, God decided to test Abraham, so He said to him, "Abraham!"

Abraham replied, "Here I am."

Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and sacrifice him as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell you of."

**Abraham's Obedience.** Abraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey. He took two of his young

men and Isaac, his son, with him to cut the wood for the burnt offering. Then he went to the place that God had told him. On the third day of the trip Abraham looked up and saw the place some distance away, so Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey. The lad and I will go over there and worship. Then we'll come back to you."

So Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on his son, Isaac. He took the fire in his hand and a knife, and they walked together. Soon Isaac spoke to Abraham, his father, saying, "My father."

"I'm here, my son," he answered.

Isaac said, "I see the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

Abraham replied, "My son, God will provide Himself with a lamb for a burnt offering." So they went on together. Soon they came to the place that God had told him of, and Abraham built an altar there. He laid the wood in order and then bound Isaac, his son, and laid him on the wood on top of the altar. Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

**The Purpose of the Trial Revealed.** Then the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

He said, "I'm here."

The angel said, "Don't touch the boy, and don't do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God. I have seen that you have not refused to give your son, your only son, to Me."

Abraham looked around and saw behind him a ram caught

in a thicket by its horns. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering instead of his son. He called that place Jehovahpreh, which means “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.”

**The Promise Renewed.** Then the angel of the LORD called to” Abraham out of heaven a second time, saying, ““I swear by Myself, says the LORD, ‘because you have done this and have not refused to give your son, your only son, I will bless you. I will give you as many descendants as there are stars in the sky and as there is sand on the seashore. Your descendants will capture their enemies cities. In your Descendant shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed My voice.”

So Abraham returned to his young men, and they went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived in Beersheba. . .

**Sarah’s Death.** When Sarah was 127 years old, she died in Kirjatharba or Hebron, in the land of Canaan. Abraham buried Sarah in the nearby cave of Machpelah, which he had bought for 400 shekels of silver.



## 48. David and Goliath

### 1 Samuel 17

**Goliath’s Boast.** Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. The Philistines were on a hill on one side of the valley, Israel’s men were on the other side, and the valley was between them.

A champion who was about 10 feet tall, named Goliath, came out of the Philistine camp each day. On his head he wore a bronze helmet and a coat of bronze armor that was about 150 pounds. He wore plates of brass on his legs and carried a bronze javelin on his back. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver’s beam, and the spearhead weighed about 15 pounds. Someone carrying his shield always went ahead of him.

Goliath stood and shouted at the army of Israel, “Why do

you come out and line up for battle? Choose a man and have him come down here. If he can fight and kill me, then we will be your slaves. If I defeat and kill him, you shall be our slaves. I defy the armies of Israel this day. Choose a man to fight me.”

When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and terrified. The Philistine made this challenge each morning and evening for 40 days.

**David Learns of Goliath.** The three oldest sons of Jesse, Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah, had followed Saul into battle. David, the youngest, went back and forth between serving Saul and caring for his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.

One day Jesse said to David, “Take your brothers this corn and these 10 loaves of bread. Give these cheeses to their captain. See how they are doing.”

David left early in the morning, leaving the sheep with a keeper. He followed Jesse’s directions and arrived at the encampment as the army was going out to the battle line shouting their battle cry. David left the things he had brought with the quartermaster, ran to where the army was, and greeted his brothers. As he talked with them, Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, stepped out of the Philistine army line and shouted his usual challenge. David heard what he said. When they saw him, all the soldiers of Israel were terrified and ran away.

**The Brave Spirit of David.** David asked the men who stood near him, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel?”

The people answered him, “The king will make the man who kills him rich, give him his daughter to marry, and make

his whole family exempt from paying taxes in Israel.”

“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” David exclaimed.

**David Sent for by Saul.** People who heard David speak told Saul what he had said, so Saul sent for David. “Let no one be discouraged,” David told Saul. “Your servant will go and fight this Philistine.”

“You can’t fight against this Philistine,” Saul said to David. “You are only a boy. He has been a warrior from his youth.”

“Your servant has been caring for his father’s sheep,” David said to Saul. “When a lion or a bear has come to take a lamb from the flock, I have gone after him, killed him, and freed the lamb. If it attacks me, I grab it by the hair and kill it. I have killed both lions and bears. This uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God. The LORD who delivered me out of the paws of the lion and the bear will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.”

“Go,” Saul said, “and may the LORD be with you.”

**Saul Puts His Armor on David.** Then Saul dressed David with his own armor, and he put a bronze helmet on his head. David fastened on the sword and tried walking around, for he was not used to all the armor.

“I can’t go with all this,” David said to Saul. “I’m not used to them.” So David took them off.

**The Shepherd Boy Challenges the Warrior.** David took his own staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones out of the brook and put them in the shepherd’s bag, and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. The Philistine walked

toward David with the man who carried his shield. When he saw David, he disparaged him because he was so young and handsome. “Am I a dog, that you come to battle me with sticks?” he shouted. Then he cursed David by his gods. “Come on,” he said, “I will give your flesh to the birds in the air and the animals in the fields.”

“You come to fight me with a sword, a spear, and a shield,” David replied, “but I come in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you defy. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands. I will kill you and cut off your head. I will give the dead bodies of all the Philistines to the birds of the air and the animals in the fields. All the earth will know that there is a God in Israel. Everyone will know that the LORD doesn’t use sword and spear to save. This battle is the LORD’s. He will give you into our hands.”

**God’s Victory.** As the Philistine came closer, David ran toward him and the Philistine army. He put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, and slung it, striking the Philistine in his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground. Not having a sword, David ran to the Philistine, stood over him, drew his sword from its sheath, and used it to cut off his head. When the Philistines saw their champion dead, they fled. The men of Israel and Judah gave a shout and chased the Philistines out of the valley, all the way to Gath and Ekron, leaving many wounded along the way. When they returned, they destroyed the camp of the Philistines.