

Lesson Fifteen: *Covenant Ratification*
Exodus 24:1-11

Themes:

Covenant under Moses (19-24): God, who is holy, gives the law to guide His redeemed people.

Exodus 24: A holy God must be approached with the commitment of obedience.

I. (1-2) **Invitation**

- a. *Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders...*
- b. The nature of the invitation:
 - i. Yahweh initiates contact with His people (Gen 12:1; Rom 8:30; Eph 1:3-6).
 1. The grace of the Lord's invitation
 - ii. Yahweh is approached on His terms (cf. 19:10-24).
 1. The distinctions are based on *God's* choice (Rom 9:21).
 - iii. Yahweh is accessed through a mediator.
 1. A mediator is *faithful* (Num 12:6-7).
 2. A mediator *knows* the Lord (Num 12:8).
 - a. Jesus is the greater Mediator (I Tim 2:5; Heb 3:2-6).
- c. The purpose of the invitation:
 - i. Ratification
 1. A covenant meal
 2. Two parties: God and the people of Israel (represented by the elders)
 - ii. Before a covenant can be ratified, the terms must be rehearsed and acknowledged.

II. (3) **Recounting**

- a. *Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD...*
 - i. God's word is vital to the peace and prosperity of His people.
 1. *Word / Ordinances:* the Ten Commandments (20:1-17) and the Covenant Code (20:22-23:19)
 - a. Together they form the book of the covenant (v.7)
 2. What is to be done with the word of the Lord?
 - a. (3) *Recounted:* to rehearse the word of the Lord
 - i. The necessity of repetition: centrality (Deut 6:6-9; Ps 119:9, 11) and renewal (Deut 6:7)
 - ii. How must God's people respond to His word?

III. (3) **Obedience**

- a. *All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!*
 - i. *The LORD has spoken:* the people acknowledge the spoken word of the LORD.
 1. Authoritative and binding (II Tim 3:16-17)
 - ii. *We will do:* the people will make it their purpose to fulfill all that the Lord has commanded (John 14:15).
 1. Obedience will be demonstrated through symbolic, preparatory acts.

IV. (4-8) **Preparation**

- a. *Then he arose early and in the morning, and built an altar...*
 - i. Covenant ratification requires preparation.
 1. (4a) *Wrote down:* to record the word of the Lord
 - a. An aid in covenant ratification (the present people of Israel)
 - b. An aid in Covenant renewal (future generations)
 - c. An aid in teaching (children and proselytes)
 - d. An aid in legal disputes (judges, cf. 18:17-27)

2. (4b) *Altar*: the presence and glory of God among His people
 - a. Presence: Yahweh is Israel's covenant Father
 - i. Yahweh chose them, redeemed them, adopted them, protected them, and dwelt with them.
 - b. Glory: God is to be honored among His people
 - i. First things
3. (4b) *Twelve pillars*: the twelve tribes of Israel
 - a. The *particular* people of God
 - i. *Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance* (Ps 33:12).
4. (5) *Offered burnt offerings*: atonement
 - a. Covenant fellowship is preceded by sacrifice.
 - i. The wrath of God is "settled" through blood sacrifice (Gen 3:21; Heb 9:22).
 - b. The symbolism of the offerings:
 - i. *Burnt*: nothing will be withheld from God
 1. Our lives as a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1)
 - ii. *Peace*: the people enjoy communion with God
 1. Communion is only restored through sacrifice.
5. (6) *Sprinkled on the altar*: the benefits of atonement
 - a. The first party of the covenant:
 - i. A Godward focus (v.4b)
 - ii. The satisfaction of divine wrath (primary)
 1. The context for covenant relationship
 2. The context for covenant obedience
6. (7) *The people said*: ratification
 - a. To recite the word of the Lord (*lectio continua*)
 - b. The people ratify the covenant by declaring their obedience.
 - i. *We will be obedient*: a commitment to a present and ongoing obedience according to God's word
 - c. Can God's people fulfill their promise?
7. (8) *Sprinkled on the people*: the benefits of atonement
 - a. The second party of the covenant:
 - i. Restored communion (Rom 5:1)
 - ii. Cleansing from sin (I John 1:9)
 1. Israel's failures are redeemed by the blood.

V. (9-11) **Confirmation**

- a. *Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel...*
 - i. (10) *They saw the God of Israel*:
 1. God manifests Himself:
 - a. As a divine comfort
 - b. As an expression of His pleasure in their obedience
 - c. As confirmation of His willingness to enter into a covenant relationship with them
 - ii. (11) *He did not stretch out His hand*:
 1. Though worthy of judgment, they are preserved by God's grace
 - iii. (11) *They ate and drank*:
 1. The meal confirms the ratification of the covenant (Luke 22)
 2. Those in a covenant relationship with God will dine with Him

Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God! (Luke 14:15).