

CHANGING WANDERERS INTO WORSHIPERS

From the Exodus to the Promised Land

From Eagles' Wings to Hornets' Stings

Exodus 19:1–20; 23:20–33

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Whether you're constructing a home that's three thousand square feet, organizing an event for five hundred people, hosting your friends for dinner, or building a dog house, you must prepare. All projects require preparation—and the bigger the project, the more groundwork you need.

The parting of waters and destruction of the Egyptians were only the beginning of the Israelites' journey from wanderers to worshipers. They still needed preparation, so God did not immediately march them north into the promised land after their rescue. Rather, He stationed them at Mount Sinai for nearly a year so they could prepare to be His holy nation.

Today, we'll land at the foot of Mount Sinai with the Israelites and encounter the fiery presence of God so that we, too, may learn to take God seriously and trust Him completely.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Imagine walking where Moses walked, near Mount Sinai, upon the sand, tending sheep. Then, out of the corner of your eye, you spot a flaming bush. Seeing no one around, you approach the bush, notice that it's engulfed in fire but isn't blackening, and then you hear a voice from within the bush call out your name and say, "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground."

We find that scene in Exodus 3 as God initiated the removal of His people from Egyptian tyranny. God said to Moses,

"I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain." (Exodus 3:12)

After the frogs, the hail, and the days of night, God led the Israelites out of Egypt with the Egyptians' gold, took His people through walls of water, and brought them to Mount Sinai—the very mountain where Moses received His commission, the very mountain where all the Israelites would soon experience the same awesome fire and receive their own calling.

Quotable

*Take God seriously
and trust God
completely. The
Israelites then,
like us today,
needed these two
commitments
in place as they
became worshipers
of the one,
true God.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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Observation

We begin our study of *Exodus 19:1–25 and 23:20–33* with a slow reading of each section. To aid you in each step of the *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study method, refer to the chart provided in the first study of this series, “A New Beginning—Worth Waiting For.”

Rendezvous at Sinai—Exodus 19:1–9

Slowly read this passage.

Where were the Israelites, and how long had it been since they left Egypt (Exodus 19:1–2)?

How did the Lord describe His deliverance in 19:4?

In 19:5–6, what three promises did the Lord offer Israel if they kept His covenant?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

In what form did the Lord say He would appear before the Israelites, and what did God intend for them to do once He appeared according to 19:7–9?



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Using your observation tools, record any other significant details you find.

God's Arrival—Exodus 19:10–25

According to Exodus 19:10–15, what were the instructions God gave the people via Moses to prepare for His coming?

What would happen to the people or the animals if they didn't follow God's instructions (Exodus 19:12–13)?

According to 9:16–20, what were the signs of God's presence?

According to 19:19, after Moses spoke to God, what did God's voice sound like from the mountain?



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Using your observation tools, record any other significant details you find.

Looking Ahead to the Promised Land—Exodus 23:20–33

Slowly read this passage.

In Exodus 23:20–23, what did God say the angel would do for the Israelites? Describe the relationship between God and the angel.

Let's see what God promised to do if the people obeyed His commands. How many times did God say, "I will," and what accompanied each promise in 23:22–33?

Using your observation tools, record any other significant details you find.



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Did you notice that God said, “I am sending an angel before you to . . . lead you safely to the place I have prepared for you,” (Exodus 23:20)? Makes you think of Jesus’ words to us:

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.” (John 14:1–3)

The exodus of Israel foreshadowed God’s later work of redemption in Jesus Christ.



Interpretation

During interpretation, we determine what our passage means and how it is significant for us today. Remember to consult your *Bible dictionary* and commentaries to look up key ideas. Also, Constable’s Notes are a wonderful free resource available on *Lumina*.

In Exodus 19:3–10, why did God give the Israelites special instructions to prepare for His coming?

The Israelites came out of Egypt’s polytheistic milieu. What statement in Exodus 19:5 challenged the Egyptian worldview?

Why is this important even for you and me today?



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What did God mean when He said Israel would be His “special treasure,” “kingdom of priests,” and “holy nation” (Exodus 19:5–6)?

What should the Israelites have learned about God from His appearance to them in 19:16–20?

Record any additional interpretive notes, and summarize how Exodus 19 is important for us today as we think about God’s attributes and character.

According to Exodus 23:22, why should the Israelites have trusted that God would be with them and give them the promised land?

According to *Genesis 15:16*, why did God remove the tribes from the land as He mentioned in Exodus 23:23?



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What did God mean when He said He would send “terror” or “hornets” ahead of the Israelites to drive out the peoples in the land (Exodus 23:28)?

What were the Israelites to guard against once they entered the land according to 23:24, 32–33?

Record any other important interpretive details in 23:20–33, and summarize why this text is important for you and me today?

They witnessed the mountain ablaze, heard the thunderous voice from the smoke, and felt the ground shake. That day, the Israelites learned that God controls more than drops of water in the sea. He's the God who owns the earth. Astonishingly, this same God cares about our days and how we live our lives, and He wants to bless us—to do good things for us. Let's never lose our sense of awe for God.



Correlation

During correlation, we compare our main passage with other biblical passages to better understand the topics our text addresses. Today, we'll examine 1 Peter 2:1–12.

The apostle Peter wrote this letter a few decades after Jesus' resurrection. Peter wanted to help Christians on their spiritual journey.



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First, slowly read through *1 Peter 2:1–12*.

How does *1 Peter 2:1–3* relate to our main passage, and why are Peter's instructions significant for you and me today?

How did Peter describe the church in *2:5*; *2:9*; and *2:11*? How does this relate to our main passage, and how does it differ? Why are the differences important?

By the grace of God, we can say that He's called us out of darkness into His marvelous light through Christ our Lord.



Application

Now let's internalize the text in our own lives so that we may "grow into a full experience of salvation" (*1 Peter 2:2*).

Chuck Swindoll helpfully provided two key takeaways for today's lesson.

1. *Take God seriously.*

To take God seriously, we first need a heart that is holy—a heart consecrated to God, devoted to His ways, attentive to His instructions, and confident in His promises. Consider these four descriptions: *consecrated*, *devoted*, *attentive*, and *confident*. Which of these words stands out as an area in which you need improvement? Write down ways taking God seriously in this area can help you grow in holiness.



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2. *Trust God completely.*

Chuck says we can do this by focusing on the objective God has given us rather than the obstacles hindering us and by doing what's courageous rather than expecting a freebie. Do either of these principles strike your heart as you consider your season of life? Jot down what these would look like during your days as you seek to trust God completely.

We never move beyond our need to take God seriously and to trust God completely. As Peter mentioned, our worldly desires wage war against our very souls. So we fight this war with the power of God's Word by God's Spirit in order to remain vigilant in our walk with Him. He's promised to walk with us the entire journey.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, how awesome was Your presence at Mount Sinai before Moses and the people of Israel. How even more amazing it is to think of Your Son, Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, hanging on splintered wood for my sins. Because of His sacrifice and through His resurrection power, please help me to take Your Word seriously and to trust You completely because You are worthy. I pray this in Jesus' name, amen.



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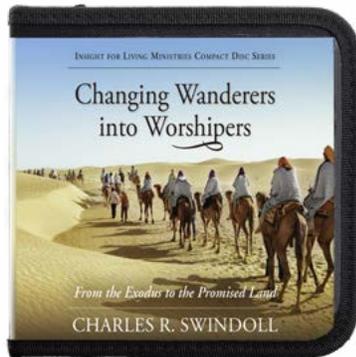
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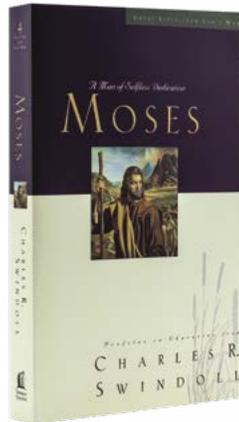
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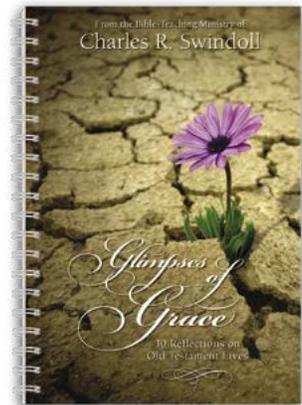
Tools for Digging Deeper



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For the 2018–2019 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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