



God's Laws Enable Self Government October 8, 2017 Exodus 19:16-25

“As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him” (Exodus 19:19).

After God first spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, Moses made certain the Israelites in Egypt knew that the LORD was the same God who had spoken to and worked in the lives of their ancestors: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. As Moses strived to free the Israelites from slavery, they experienced God's work in their personal history through miracles, plagues, and the defeat of Pharaoh's army. After Moses led them to the foot of Mount Sinai, they saw God manifest His presence with lightning, thunder, a loud trumpet blast, and a thick cloud over the mountain. Without seeing any visible form of the LORD, a vision that might have led them to make and worship graven images of God before they eventually did, God gave them abundant evidence that He was with them. The LORD had been with their ancestors, but He was with them in more dramatic and greater ways. He saved them from oppression and eventually led them to possess the land as He had promised their fathers. But it was not until Moses spoke to the LORD that these Israelites heard the voice of God when the LORD answered him. Through Moses, God led the Israelites in ways radically different from what they had experienced as slaves. God spoke to Moses and gave them moral laws, summed up in the Ten Commandments, so they could learn how to govern themselves in obedience to God, without becoming slaves of God and living once again under a dictatorship. Moreover, God's laws were for their benefit and best suited to their human nature as created in the image of God.

Thinking Further

1. In what ways did the LORD manifest His presence to Moses?
2. In what ways did the LORD manifest His presence to the Israelites?
3. Why do you think God refused to allow the Israelites to see His form?
4. In what ways did God reveal His covenant and laws to the Israelites?
5. What are some of the ways God showed His concern for the Israelites?

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