

The Glory of the Covenant: From Sinai to the Savior

In Exodus chapter 24, we find ourselves at a monumental moment in the history of Israel. It is a scene of incredible awe—the thunderings of Sinai have given way to a formal ceremony. God is establishing a covenant with His people, and as we look at this text, we see the beautiful, yet sobering, contrast between the Old Covenant of Law and the New Covenant of Grace.

The Problem of Human Performance

In the first few verses, Moses recounts the words of the Lord to the people. Their response is immediate: *"All the words which the LORD has said we will do."* Now, friend, words are cheap. We often have the best of intentions, don't we? We stand in a place of emotional high and say, "Lord, I'll never stumble again," or "Everything I have is Yours." But the reality of the human heart is that we lack the capacity to keep those promises. The Old Covenant was a bilateral agreement—it was predicated on the people's performance. The problem wasn't with God's Law; the Law is holy and perfect. The problem was with the "doing." This covenant eventually failed because man is unfaithful.

The Blood of the Covenant

Notice in Exodus 24:8 that Moses took blood from the sacrifices and sprinkled it both on the altar and on the people. He said, *"Behold, the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you."* This is a powerful picture. In the biblical economy, there is no approach to a holy God without the shedding of blood. This pointed forward to a much greater reality. While the blood of bulls and goats could only cover sin temporarily, it was a shadow of the substance to come.

We see the fulfillment of this in the New Covenant. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, did not just sprinkle us with the blood of animals; He shed His own precious blood on the cross to wash us white as snow.

The Difference: The Old Covenant failed because it depended on man's faithfulness to God. The New Covenant succeeds because it depends on God's faithfulness to man through Jesus Christ.

A Vision of God

In Exodus 24:9-11, something remarkable happens. Moses, Aaron, and the elders go up and "see" the God of Israel. They describe a pavement of sapphire, clear as the heavens.

Now, we know from John 1:18 that *"No one has seen God at any time."* So, what did they see? They likely saw a "theophany" or a vision of God's glory—a glimpse of the King upon His throne. The most beautiful part of this passage is found in verse 11: *"They saw God, and they ate and drank."* This is fellowship. God's desire has always been to dwell with His people, to sit at the table with us.

Practical Application for the Believer

For those of you who have already put your trust in Christ, there is a vital lesson here in Exodus 24:18 as Moses enters the cloud for forty days.

- The Lesson of Waiting: Moses had to wait six days before God spoke to him out of the cloud. Often, we want the "glory" experience without the "waiting" period.
- The Shift from Doing to Resting: Stop trying to relate to God based on your own "doing." If your peace depends on how well you kept the rules this morning, you are living under the Old Covenant mindset. Shift your focus to what He has done. Your standing with the Father is secured by the finished work of Jesus.

A Challenge for the Church

I want to challenge you this week: Are your words matching your walk? The Israelites said, "All the Lord says, we will do," and yet they were making a golden calf just a short time later. Don't be a "Sunday-only" Christian. Let the reality of the blood of Jesus transform your Tuesday afternoon and your Thursday morning. Let your life be a "living sacrifice," holy and acceptable to Him.

An Invitation to New Life

Perhaps you are reading this and you realize you've been trying to "climb the mountain" on your own. You've been trying to be "good enough" for God, but you're exhausted.

The Gospel is not about what you can do for God; it's about what God has done for you. Jesus Christ died on that cross, shedding His blood to pay the debt for your sins. But the story didn't end in a grave. His resurrection declares with absolute authority that He is God, Savior, and Lord.

If you want to move from being "afar off" to sitting at His table in fellowship, you can do that today. Repent of your sins—turn away from your own efforts—and put your faith in Jesus Christ alone.