

A Holy People

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 November 2022

Preacher: Chad Bennett

[0 : 00] Please open your Bibles to the book of Exodus chapter 19. We're continuing our study in the book of Exodus.

We've now reached the 19th chapter. We're going to look today at the first eight verses. Probably more particularly the first six. But first eight verses of chapter 19.

So if you'll read there with me. On the third new moon, after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.

They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain. While Moses went up to God, the Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel, You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself.

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.

[1 : 31] And you shall be to me a kingdom, a priest, and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel. So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the Lord had commanded him.

All the people answered together and said, All that the Lord has spoken, we will do. And Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord. Let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we again ask that you would open your word to us, that you would give us understanding of the truths that are contained therein, and that you would be glorified in the preaching of the word.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. So we have in this passage, Moses and the people making it to Sinai, or in the wilderness in the area of Sinai.

And it speaks of Moses going up to the mountain. Verse 3, while Moses went up to God, that will be repeated four times in this chapter. We're only seeing one of those, but it will be repeated again and again.

[2 : 35] So this is kind of setting the stage for what's going on here. They made it to Sinai, and Sinai is the place in which they're going to meet God. Moses in particular, the people more broadly.

But as we look at this, Moses is really returning to where he first met God. If you remember the burning bush, Exodus 3.12, God says to Moses out of the burning bush, But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you.

When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain. And so as we see this, we see a fulfillment of God's promise. God has told them, or told Moses, that the people of Israel will leave Egypt, and that they will gather together, and that they will worship God at this mountain.

The very same place where he had met God before. Moses knew where to take the people, but I want you to see as well that God has kept his promise. And that's important because we see here the beginning of the Mosaic Covenant.

God's covenant with Moses and the people through Moses. And so we have a reminder going into this, God keeps his promises. And then what we see in the rest of the passage really is the beginning of God giving new promises.

[3 : 56] What he will do for his people. What they should do. And really the beginning of a new covenant. Which we haven't seen a covenant since the Abrahamic Covenant. Now God's reestablishing covenant with his people.

So I want to start looking at verses 1 through 4. At the covenant really introduction, the beginning of the covenant, and how that comes about.

If you look at verse 3, we see there in the second half of the verse, the beginning of what would be a formal covenant. And maybe I should just pause here and say, explain what do we mean when we talk about a covenant.

Well, a covenant is an agreement that's made between a lord and a vassal. And the vassal usually represents a larger people as does the lord.

So what would often happen was a king would make a covenant with another king that would be under him or below him. This king would rule over the other one. And the agreement would go something along the lines of, if you will do this for me, I will do this for you.

[4 : 59] And so the greater king would say something along the lines of, if you will serve me, and it may be that you help me fight battles, it may be that you give financially or give goods to help the kingdom, then I and my army with me will protect you.

We will make sure you're safe. And so that was a normal kind of agreement that was made throughout the lands in that day. And often this would be sealed in blood.

And what that would mean is, if one of us breaks this, we should be put to death. May we die if we break this. If you think of the marriage covenant, till death do us part, I think carries with it not just the meaning of we depart from one another at death, but the covenant idea that should we break this covenant, we're deserving of death.

And so here's this covenant agreement that he's beginning to make with his people. And he follows the typical pattern in verse three. The Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the people of Israel, You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on the eagle's wings and brought you to myself.

Now, therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.

[6 : 21] And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel. And so this is the formal beginning of the covenant. Now we're going to see more of the continuation of the covenant in the weeks ahead.

And we know the Ten Commandments kind of lay out the foundational law by which Israel was to live. But the pattern that's set before us, in verse four, we see the beginning of that covenant pattern.

There's a brief history often recounted in these covenants. Here's the history of our relationship. Remember what I did for you. It could even be negative. Remember how you rebelled against me in the past.

But there's a recounting of history. And so God says, remember what I did for you when I brought you out of Egypt and how I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you to myself.

Right? Then after that, the brief history of the past relationship, we see the future requirements in verses five and six. What does God, the Lord, expect from you?

[7 : 27] And so he lays that out in verses five and six. If you will obey my voice, if you will keep my covenant, so those are the requirements upon Israel.

And then we see also the promises that are made by God for his people, how he will take care of them. And we're going to talk more about that in the next point. But for now, let's look at this introduction that he gives, the brief history of the relationship, what God has done for them.

He says in verse four, he bore them on eagle's wings and brought you to myself.

Well, this is probably not a picture we're very familiar with, but the idea is eagles will have their iry, their nest up on a high point, maybe a cliff, something like that. And when the babies begin to try to fly, they're not always successful.

That's not so big a deal when you think of a bird in your tree. But when you're talking about an eagle that could be thousands of feet up, that's dangerous. And so the bird tries to fly. It's unsuccessful.

[8 : 32] The mother eagle will swoop down and actually catch them on her wings and bear them back up to the nest to safety. And so that's a picture that's given to us of how God cared for them.

They were in a very dangerous place in Egypt being mistreated. And time and time again, God's rescued them. The Egyptian armies after them. And God leads them through the Red Sea and destroys the Egyptian army.

And so God has cared for them. And this loving care of a mother bird. But we can imagine, we know the care that a mother has for her child. God is saying, you're my children.

And I've cared for you in that kind of way. Remember this as you think about this covenant. Do not forget that I have been a father to you. I've cared for you.

I've brought you along. Deuteronomy 32, verses 10 through 12 uses a similar picture. Speaking of this, it says that, He found him in a desert land and in the howling wastes of the wilderness.

[9 : 36] He encircled him. He cared for him. He kept him as the apple of his eye. Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions.

The Lord alone guided him. No foreign God was with him. The hymn speaking there, the hymn he's speaking of is Jacob. It's Israel, the nation. And so we see how God cared for them.

He found them in a desert land. He protected them in this waste of wilderness, encircled them, cared for them, kept them as the apple of his eye, which probably has a correlation to what we're going to see in a minute of, his treasured possession.

And so we see God's care. And what does God do? He doesn't just bear them up on eagle's wings. It says that he brought them to himself in verse four.

I bore you on eagle's wings and I brought you to myself. I think as we begin to understand this, that the idea of God bringing them to himself is greater than the concept of him bringing them to Sinai or ultimately to the promised land.

[10 : 48] God is bringing them to himself to meet with him, to be in his presence, to have relationship with him. As we think about this concept, I've said this already in our study of Etsy, but I want to remind you again, what is being accomplished here?

What's the big picture? Maybe remember the beginning of, or the cover for your bulletin, from bondage to glory. What is it that God is doing?

Well, Adam and Eve had relationship with God in the garden. They walked with him. They talked with him. There was communion and fellowship with the holy sovereign God. And then sin happened.

They sinned. And were cast out of the garden. And so the relationship was, at the best I'd say, hindered. It was broken. It was damaged. God continued to have relationship with Adam and Eve after the fall.

But as for all people, we know there ended up being the two lines. There was a separation. There were those who had no relationship with God. But my question is, what have we longed for as a people ever since the fall?

[12 : 00] God's word, I think, makes it clear that our longing is for a relationship with God. We long to be with God again. How's God doing that?

Well, we're getting to see the picture here of how God's done that. He made covenant with Abraham that he would make him to a great nation and that through him all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

And now we're beginning to see the fulfillment of what that looks like. Here's Israel in bondage in Egypt and God rescues them and he brings them to Sinai. But ultimately, what is he doing?

He's bringing them to himself where he will meet with them. They are seeing him in a way that has never been seen since the fall. The pillar of cloud and fire. Now, what we're going to see, Lord willing, next week, God on the mountain, his holiness displayed for them.

His glory revealed. He's with his people. Later on, we're going to see really the culmination of that in the book of Exodus is the building of the tabernacle.

[13 : 02] That God would be in the presence. God's people surrounding the tabernacle. He's there in the middle of them. They're meeting with God. And so, they're getting the closest thing historically to the Garden of Eden that has been accomplished.

What is God doing? He's leading them to the promised land. Why? Because there they will settle. They'll build a temple. God's presence will dwell with them in that nation. But even that's not the greatest display of that, is it?

We, as Christians, have known an even greater fulfillment of that covenant in the new covenant that we have relationship with Jesus Christ. That he has sent his spirit to indwell us so we don't need to gather in one location where God physically is revealing his presence.

But rather, we worship in spirit and truth wherever we gather together. His spirit is in us and we are there in the presence of God. And so, what we're doing here in worship is a holy expression of God's presence with his people.

Much like them gathering at Mount Sinai. But as great as that is, that's not the greatest display of that, is it? Listen to Revelation 21 verses 1-4.

[14 : 18] Then I saw a new heaven and new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Speaking of the church, God's people, universally throughout all history, the church is the new Jerusalem, a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.

He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more.

Neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away. And so we're getting a glimpse of this, a greater revelation of this in this Mosaic covenant.

Each subsequent covenant, we see more and more of what God's doing. But ultimately, what's the goal? It's not just, and I say that carefully because there's not much greater blessing we can imagine as a Christian than the Holy Spirit indwelling us.

[15 : 37] But it's not just the Holy Spirit in us. It's not just the promised land or Mount Sinai. Ultimately, it's that God will make a new earth with new skies in which he will dwell with his people forever.

All the consequences of sin, the fallenness of the world, the briars, the thorns, the tears, the mourning, the pain, will be gone. And he will be there with his people to dwell with them forever.

That's what we're longing for. Not just the Garden of Eden 2.0, but something far greater. Right? Not a remake of what we had before, but even greater than what Adam and Eve had in the garden when they walked with the Lord.

We will be a glorified people not able to sin. And so as we see this picture taking place, we're seeing the beginning of that.

God has saved them to bring them into his presence. I have brought you, I bore you on eagle's wings to myself. And so they're getting a taste of that blessing.

[16 : 45] They're enjoying something that greater than what has been enjoyed in the past since the fall and really foreshadowing what's to come. even as they head for the promised land.

We talked about how their journey is similar to the journey of salvation. They're in bondage like we're in bondage to sin. God rescues them out of that. He leads them through the waters which later is connected with the waters of baptism.

They wander through the wilderness of this world ultimately to be brought into God's land where he will meet with them. And so too we're walking that journey now and we see a picture of this as God meets with them along the way but ultimately along for something greater that they could be in God's presence the promised land and we know even greater in eternity.

So that's really the beginning of this covenant. Now I want you to see what he says about God's covenant people. The blessings that come with the covenant. So with the covenant there's always blessings and curse.

If you obey if you do what the Lord asks of you then you will be blessed. If you disobey there will be cursing. So the blessings for obedience we see really begin in verse 5.

[18 : 01] Now therefore if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples for all the earth is mine and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation these are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.

So here we have the proclamation of the blessings for obedience given in the passage. It's very similar to what we see the Abrahamic covenant we see a very similar type of blessing Abraham in Genesis or Abram in Genesis 12 1-3 Now the Lord said to Abram go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

So we have there the requirement what was he to do? He was to leave his people and go to a foreign land that he did not know following God in this. What happens if he obeys?

And I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Now we've seen some of this already haven't we? How the people have interacted with the Israelites has determined whether or not God blesses them or God curses them. But we see there obey and there will be blessing for you and what is the blessing?

[19 : 22] He's going to make him into a great nation a great people and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him. And so what's promised here? Again this isn't taking the place of the Abrahamic covenant it's expanding on it.

What does it mean for God to make his people into a great nation? Well we see the first blessing there in verse 5 that Israel is to be God's treasured possession. What does God possess of the things of the world?

Of the peoples of the world? He says all the world is mine. It's all mine. But of all the world you will be what I treasure the most.

A treasured possession. I think you guys can understand that if you think about the things you have there are some things that have special value to you. Maybe sentimental value.

Maybe there's actual financial monetary value to the thing. But there are things in our life that we have that we treasure greatly. The other day I played golf with my son and he got a ball out to play with us like don't use that ball.

[20 : 27] He said why? I said I still remember when my dad gave that ball to me and I gave it to you and I'm scared we'll lose it. It's a golf ball. Right? It doesn't really matter but there was one Christmas I received that and it just reminds me of my dad.

and so it has a treasured place in my heart. So sometimes there's sentimental value that something that's of little to no worth becomes of great worth to you. And of all the peoples in the earth God says you will be my treasured possession.

I will value you. I will treasure you. I think just let that sink in for a moment. What a blessing that is. The God who possesses all things would hold them his people the church as his greatest treasure in all the world.

And so he begins with that. Israel is God's treasured possession. Verse 6 he says I will make you to be a kingdom of priests. Now I'll put some New Testament application on this.

You guys are likely familiar with what Martin Luther said of the priesthood of all believers. God has made us all priests. Now what does that mean? Well first it doesn't mean that we should all be called fathers.

[21 : 39] or have some holy reverence from one another. Right? It's not the Catholic view. I think they've twisted the understanding of what it means to be a priest. What was the role of the priest in the Old Testament?

When the Old Testament the priests were the ones that would bring the sacrifice to God and really on behalf of the people they would be the ones leading in worship.

The worship of the God. And so listen to God's word here. All are anointed. We see in Etzis 24 verses 7 through 8.

A really striking passage. But listen to what it says here. Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people and they said all that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will be obedient.

So he's reading what we have here in Etzis 19 and 20 and following and the people hear it and say that's what we'll do. We're going to do that. And Moses took the blood and he threw it on the people and said behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.

[22 : 58] Now that's pretty weird isn't it? Just imagine I'm up here preaching and I say here's what God calls you to do and you say amen we're going to do that. Great. Throw blood on all of you. That's kind of awkward isn't it?

Well first what does the blood symbolize? The blood symbolizes the blood of the covenant. And so as Moses throws blood on them what he's saying is if you write these words what's going to happen to you?

Don't you think that'd be a good reminder for you? If you disobey the Lord and you still have that robe maybe in the closet at home with blood stains on it and every time you look at it you think I promise that I would obey God and if I don't what's going to happen to me?

That blood symbolizes your blood that you would die. But there's also an anointing aspect of it. The only other place in the Bible where we have blood being ritually applied to a large group of people at once is in the consecration of the priest in Exodus 29 five chapters later.

The priests are consecrated for the Lord's service by throwing blood on them. And so as this covenant is given it's not just a reminder I think it's symbolically an anointing of God's people to say you are a kingdom of priests to me.

[24 : 17] You are my people who are worshiping me in a unique way. I think we can think of that as well in terms of the role of Israel in relation to the world.

God possesses the whole world. Israel his treasure possession. They are to be a kingdom of priests to him. So we expand this a little bit larger. We think about in Israel there were those who were specifically called to be priests who alone could do the sacrifices for God's people.

Yet they are a kingdom of priests. The whole nation is a kingdom of priests in the world. So what is the role of Israel as a people in relation to the world? They are relating to God on behalf of the world.

They are the ones that are sacrificing to God that are worshiping God as a message to the world around them. They represented the world and Israel.

I'm sorry. They represented the Lord to the world and just like Israel would represent the world to God. So it went two ways. They modeled for the world.

[25 : 26] This is what it's like to be a part of God's people. This is what God is like. And they also set before God the world.

I mean they intervened on behalf of the world. They should. They were to be the means by which the world was to be reached. The nations were to reach the gospel through God's people. In Abraham's descendants all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

And so a fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. They are to be priests to the world around them. They are a special people set apart for God. In John 4 22 Jesus says salvation is from the Jews.

And we know it's ultimately from God but what he's saying is it's going out from the Jews to the world around them. And so therefore to do this we see the next thing he says not just that they will be a kingdom of priests but that they will be a holy nation in verse six.

Of all the peoples of the earth they are set apart to be treasured by God to be loved by God but also the idea of setting apart is that idea of holiness. Right.

[26 : 36] Certain things would be set apart to be holy. They're not like everything else. They're set apart. They're different. And so God setting them apart makes them a holy nation.

But there's also the moral aspect to that. There's to be moral purity in them. We know what's coming next. The Ten Commandments are to be a model of that.

You are to obey all that I command you. Why? Well at least one reason is it models to the world around them. This is what God is like. Our God is a holy God.

I entitled this sermon a holy people. Lord willing next Sunday we're going to see a holy God as he gathers at the mountain. And we're really that's happening right now.

He's making them into a holy people to model to the world around them this holy God. Listen to Leviticus 19 to speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them you shall be holy.

[27 : 38] You guys know what comes next. What does he say? For I the Lord your God am holy. So why are God's people to be holy? Because God's holy. Why does that matter?

Because we like they model to the world around us what it means to be part of God's people. Or we could say what our God is like.

We're showing the world around us what our God is like. As we think about this, this really is a preface to the Ten Commandments. It's preparing the way for what's to come in the Ten Commandments.

Tim Chester said this. He said the Ten Commandments were missional. They were given to shape the life of Israel so that as a nation they displayed the goodness of God.

God was creating one area in the world where the goodness of his rule could be seen. His people were his prototype, his working model, his proof of concept. And as he says that, he's not saying that this was one form and he was going to do it differently.

[28 : 42] What he's saying is he's modeling in Israel what he will accomplish through Christ in his church. They were to be the model of what it's like to be a holy people. A foretaste of what God will do in Christ.

And so they were to be holy. And we see as well in this that he's rescued them or saved them for his glory. They are to bear or take to the world his glory.

Now how does all this apply to us? A few points of application as we consider this. One, I want you to understand that, well, let me just ask, we see in this passage, look at verses seven and eight.

So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the Lord had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, all that the Lord has spoken, we will do.

And Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord. Now remember again what we saw with the anointing. He took the book of the covenant and read it in their hearing.

[29 : 47] And they said, all that the Lord has spoken, we will do and we will be obedient. And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, behold, the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.

As you think about that, how many of you would have been willing to say all that you said, I will do. Now, I want to be careful.

We don't want, we don't want to be critical of the Israelites because we're like them. Maybe through further revelation, we understand just how much like them we are, then they would know that.

But here's Moses saying, here's what God commands of you. And at this point he would have read the entire book of the covenant, which included the 10 commandments. So if I just limited it to the 10 commandments and said, God calls you to obey.

And if you disobey at one point, he's going to kill you. I don't know about you guys, but you remember if you've ever bought a house at the mortgage table, you sign the papers and they give you the stack.

[30 : 51] Sure. You know what I'm talking about. They give you a stack of 60 pages or whatever. And you got to sign your name about that many times. And you begin to think, what am I doing? What have I signed up for? What are the consequences if I can't pay this?

If we think that's scary or children, if your parents say you're going to have discipline, if you disobey and you know, you don't want that discipline, but God saying, here's the blood that's going to be your blood.

Should you break my covenant? And they're like, yeah, we'll do that. Sure. This sounds great. Right? I think sometimes we look at the benefits.

We want to be a kingdom of priests, a treasured possession of the Lord, his holy people without thinking through what's that going to mean? Or I could ask it this way.

How did Israel do with this? Did they obey the commandments? The people that are making this commitment today die without ever getting into the promised land.

[31 : 57] God doesn't allow them in because of their disobedience. And so they don't realize at this point, but this commitment they just made, they're going to fill up miserably.

Just like we do. None of us can obey the Ten Commandments perfectly. All of us fell on that. We're going to see that as we look at the Ten Commandments in weeks ahead. But listen to Revelation 5, 9 through 10.

And they sing a new song saying, Worthy are you to take the book and to break its seals. For you were slain and purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nations.

And you have made them a kingdom of priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth. And so these people were to be a witness to the whole earth. And they do a lousy job of it.

And they fail. And it happens over and over again. And so God sends the Davidic covenant. And the people fail in keeping the Davidic covenant.

[33 : 01] And ultimately, even the Israelites in the promised land are exiled from the land. They're kicked out because of their failure to obey. Ultimately, their idolatry, their worship of false gods, they're kicked out.

Later, God brings back a remnant. But in the succeeding months, years, they too turn away. And Christ comes.

And it seems as though in all Israel there are few who are looking for his coming. They're still longing for the Messiah. But Christ comes and he perfectly fulfills the covenant. We could spend a long time looking at this, how he in many ways lived out what the Israelites went through.

As a child, he went into Egypt. He was brought out of Egypt back. He wandered in the wilderness for 40 days, symbolizing the 40 years. He was tempted by the devil and yet never sinned.

And so our hope is not that we're going to obey God's commandments perfectly. What makes us a kingdom of priests, what makes us a holy nation is Christ has fulfilled the covenant for us on our behalf, that we put our trust in Jesus Christ and his righteousness counts as ours.

[34 : 16] That's our hope. And so can we make this commitment today? Can we say, God, I will obey your commandments? Yeah, we can. Even though we know we're not going to do it perfectly.

Why? Because Christ is my obedience. Christ has done it. That doesn't get me off the hook. I'm still to obey. But when I fail, I know one, I have forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

And two, I have his perfect obedience credited to my account. And so Christ fulfills his force. Likewise, I hope you saw in Revelation five, they are to be a witness to the nations around them.

Ultimately, God brings the nations in. And how does he do it? To the blood of the lamb. You are slain and purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

I'm not sure what this is going to look like. I lean toward it not being universal in terms of every single person on the face of the earth will be saved. But listen to what it says.

[35 : 18] You purchase men from every tribe. Every individual tribe, whatever that might look like. Even in Israel, they were broken up into their tribes, their nations, I mean their families.

So tribe could be as small as familial units. Families. And every tongue. The tongue just means language.

So every individual language. Dialects in which the gospel cannot penetrate from one to the other. God will ultimately penetrate that and there will be some sustainable witness among those people in that language that know the Lord and trust in him.

And people and nation. Those are probably larger, wider categories. But I think together, what does it make? It makes it clear that there's going to be no people group that will be unreached with the gospel. There will be some people saved among every people group by the blood of the land.

They are purchased for God by Christ's blood. And so, Jesus accomplishes what Israel was made for, what the church was ultimately made for.

[36 : 31] And what does he do after he purchases them? He says, And you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth. So I want you to see the ultimate fulfillment of this passage.

That God will make them a treasured possession and a kingdom of priests isn't ultimately in the nation of Israel. The ethnic people. God has a remnant.

A faithful remnant within Israel. And ultimately, we see it's the church universal. Throughout all time, throughout all nations, those who are saved become to him his kingdom, his priests, to be with him in his presence forever.

So, that was just point one of the application. Praise God for Christ and how he fulfills what's being set out for us here because they don't obey the covenant and we don't obey the covenant.

Secondly, in light of all that we've seen in Sunday school what we've been looking at, I thought about what is our identity in Christ? Who are we in Jesus Christ? What does this passage teach us about who we are today as Christians in Jesus Christ?

[37 : 40] Well, hopefully we saw those three realities that he promises in the covenant which they break and don't deserve which we break and don't deserve but Christ has fulfilled the covenant and so the covenant blessings are ours if you trust in Jesus Christ.

In Christ, we receive the promises and so what does that mean? It means Christian that in Christ you are a treasured possession of God.

As we thought about that before, we were visualizing it for the Israelites. What would it mean for them to be a treasured people? But internalize it. Personalize it now. Just imagine for a second of all peoples of the world, God treasures you.

we are a priest for his kingdom. Again, what does this mean?

It doesn't mean that he's dissolved the office of elder. There's still that office, still that distinction, but we are to be a witness to the world around us. We're to take the gospel to the world around us. We're to be those who worship God now in spirit and truth.

[38 : 47] Each one of us can take our prayers to God not needing an intercessory because Christ intercedes for us. And thirdly, we are to be a holy people in Christ.

He has made us holy. He has set us apart. His spirit is working in us to put to death sin, but he also calls us to holiness. Be holy for God is holy. And as we think about who we are and what the message is for the world, my third point is that the world sees the church and not the invisible God.

Our world doesn't see the invisible God. They see his power. It's revealed in his creation, but we don't see God. What do they see? They see the church. And so we're to be a visible witness of the character, the person of God.

Think of the idea of priest and holy. Revelation 1 says, to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priest to his God and Father, to him be the glory and dominion forever and ever.

Amen. Now just in case you were wondering, I read before Revelation 5, 10. There's two places there that says he's made his people to be a kingdom of priest. As we think about that identity and tie it all in together, listen to 1 Peter 2, 9 through 10.

[40 : 04] But you, speaking of the church, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. What do you think Peter has in mind there? Is there any possibility he has in mind anything other than this passage?

You are a chosen race. God is, all the peoples are mine, all the earth is mine, but you are my treasured possession. So, to the church, Peter says, you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.

Royal priesthood even brings in the idea of kingdom, a king, priesthood, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. This is what he says at the church as we think of what's true of Israel.

They weren't a nation. God made them a nation and brought them out of darkness into his marvelous light. So, too, that's true for us. And I would say even to a greater degree as we understand those blessings in Christ.

[41 : 14] And what was the purpose, though? That you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Why, if you are a Christian here today, why has God chosen you among all the peoples of the earth?

Why has he made you a treasured possession, a priesthood, a royal priesthood, a holy people, that we may proclaim to the world around us the excellencies of him who's brought us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

It's so that we may be a proclamation of this to the world around us. What does it mean, then, for the Christian who is silent, who doesn't proclaim these things?

Well, one, it's not what you were saved for. It's not what God has worked salvation in you for. But secondly, I think, have we really understood the blessings of being brought out of darkness into his marvelous light?

Do we not need to contemplate more on the gospel, what it means for us, even to understand what it means to be a treasured possession, that we would rejoice in telling others about that, in seeing others brought in, that they too would become God's treasured possession, that they too would know those blessings.

[42 : 28] in that same book, 1 Peter, this is preceding it, chapter 1, verses 14 through 16, Peter says, as obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy. So again, a repetition of why does God cause people to holiness?

Because we model, we show the world around us the holiness of our God. And so we're to be a light to the nations. I read to you, 1 Peter 2, 9 through 10, once you were not a people, now you are God's people, that passage continues on.

The next two verses say this, Beloved, I urge you, as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

And so, I want to encourage you that God's calling us to this. One, if you don't know Jesus Christ, if you never trust in him, my prayer is that you would today, that you would know the blessings that are spoken of here, that you would become one of his treasured possession, his priesthood, his holy people.

[43 : 50] But secondly, if you have trust in Jesus Christ, take that marvelous light to the world around us. Live in such a way that they may have no ground of accusation against you when they make charges against you.

I think about how many people I've known, whether they have legitimate reason or not, but who have said, I'm not a Christian because I know Christians. They're hypocrites.

They don't live out what they preach. They live just like I do. They're living for the same things that I'm living for. And I think as much truth as there is in that indictment, let us not be a part of that.

By God's grace, by spirit working in us, be holy as he is holy, that the world around us may see God's holiness and that the day of visitation, they would glorify God.

Let's pray together. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that you are a holy God and that as a holy God, we know that we are deserving of your judgment.

[44 : 56] And Lord, we thank you that even though we are deserving of that judgment, you have been gracious to make us your treasured possession, a royal priesthood, a holy people.

Lord, we deserve none of that. We know that each of those statements is not true in and of ourselves. We have no right to be treasured. We are not a priesthood.

We are not a holy people. And yet, by your grace, by your spirit working in us, by the work of Jesus Christ, you have made your people such. Lord, let us live like it. Let us testify of this to the world around us.

And we pray that those who have not known that would this very day. We pray this all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.