

Rescued For a Reason!

Exodus 19:1-6 - Pastor Guy Gray

Rescued for a reason – God is forming a redemptive community for our broken world

Finally God's people come to their big moment of destiny. The whole story thus far has been a giant setup for this dramatic encounter with God at Mt. Sinai! It has taken them 3 months to get from Egypt to Sinai. But now they will remain at this mountain for just under one year and the next 59 chapters of the Bible are all devoted to what took place in that incredible year of revelation from God. (See Numbers 10:11.) So this is it. Now they are going to discover the reason for their rescue from Egypt. Now they are going to come to grips with their destiny in the plan and purpose of God! This is why Exodus 19:1-6 are such important verses in our Bible. It is here that God clearly summarizes His purpose for redeeming Israel from Egypt. It is all important for us to understand this passage, because it points to God's purpose for our lives as well. The last verse (19:6) seems to sum it up perfectly: "you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Here we learn the ultimate reason for their rescue—that God might form a redemptive community for our broken world. As we shall see, this is the reason for our rescue as well!

The priority of God's love and grace

Every good thing starts with God Himself. God's love and grace take the lead all the way in Exodus. God comes to His people who are oppressed, defeated and enslaved and takes the initiative to set them free. Exodus 19:4 teaches us the priority of God's love and grace. The image of being carried on eagles wings out of Egypt and to God himself is the all important starting place for the discussion of our calling and purpose. It reminds us that God has rescued and saved us by His grace through Christ, out of love. The miracle of our redemption as an act of God's love, comes first and sets the stage for our response of living in a new life with God.

Our highest calling – To know, love and serve the Lord

Exodus 19:4-6 reveals our highest calling. This calling begins with knowing and loving God. That's what it means when God says "I brought you unto myself." It reminds us of His promise in Exodus 6:7, "I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God." The beauty of this wilderness scene is that in that barren place they discovered that God redeemed them above all for a special relationship of love. In the wilderness there was nothing for God to really give them, except the gift of God Himself (see Jeremiah 2:1-2). Here on this mountain God will reveal His glory and His heart and ways to His people. *This is their (and our) first and highest calling: to know and love the Lord* (See John 17:1-3). Out of this will follow service to God in a broken world.

Living up to our calling - Obedience makes all the difference

Verse 5 contains the all important word “if”—and it speaks of obedience to God. Remember that this obedience does not bring us the gift of redemption (salvation). That miracle has already been achieved and given by grace (verse 4). This obedience is what will allow God’s people to live up to the full potential of their calling in the purpose of God for their lives. (See Ephesians 2:8-10.) God wants to use us greatly in this world, but this will only happen by real obedience to the Lord. It must be our choice to live up to the greatness of God’s grace and our calling (Ephesians 4:1).

A kingdom of priests – Living at the intersection of hurt & hope

The phrase that reveals the most about our calling is this: “a kingdom of priests.” A priest is someone who goes to God on behalf of people and goes to people on behalf of God. A priest is someone who lives in two worlds. They must live in the reality of God first and foremost—to know, love, worship and experience God. But they must also be in touch with the real life hurts and struggles of people in a broken world and represent the love and reality of God in that world. This is the ultimate calling of God’s people and the reason for our rescue! It is not only as individuals that we do this, but as a group... a nation...a “people”...a community of faith. (See 1 Peter 2:9-10.) Jesus died and rose again to create a redemptive community in a broken world. Exodus will teach us the details. But we must respond to His grace and love and choose to live up to the full potential of God’s purpose and calling for our lives! God will do great things in and through those who answer this call!

Questions for Further Reflection & Group Discussion

The Purpose of God

Respond to what you learned this week about God’s purpose for your rescue. How does it make you feel that God in His mercy saved you and wants to use your life?

In the calling of Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, we find a similar theme of God “choosing” a people that will be a blessing to the world around them. Why do you think God operates this way? What does it look like for God’s people to be a blessing to the world? What does it look like for you to be a blessing to the world? How does this glorify God?

The Priesthood of Believers

The idea of a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” is developed throughout scripture. This week, do some investigative work on what the Bible says about our role as the priesthood of believers, and God’s redemptive community in a broken world. Share your insights with your community group. Some scriptures to explore; 1 Peter 2:4-12, Revelation 5: 6-10, Ephesians 4:1-6, Colossians 1:9-14.

Upcoming:

FRIDAY 02/09

Friday Night Fellowship
4th & 5th Grade, 7pm,
RWLG

FRI-SUN 02/9-11

Junior High Retreat
Canby Grove

SATURDAY 02/10

Men's Breakfast
The Two Shall Become
One- Why Pray with your
Bride? 7:30am, RWLG

El Salvador Team Meeting
11am-5pm, RWCC

FRIDAY 02/16

Night Out: Evenings
Together at River West
Dave Iula Jazz Concert
7pm, RWGT

SATURDAY 02/17

High School Ski Day
Mt. Hood

SATURDAY 03/03

El Salvador Team Meeting
3:30-7pm, RWCC

SAT-SAT 03/10-17

El Salvador Mission Trip to
Nuevo Renacer