

# THE STORY OF MOSES

Aunt Hattie's Bible Stories

by

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There is a free paraphrase of Scripture passages in use quite frequently throughout this book in the interest of youthful minds.

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## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

### SINAI AND THE LAW

Israel journeyed again, this time from Rephidim to the desert which lay around Sinai.

It was now three months since they had crossed the Red Sea. What thrilling experiences they had been having, and in every one God showed His grace to them in a new and wonderful way.

When the camp was settled at last Moses went up on Mt. Sinai where God called to him and said,

*“Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bare you on eagle's wings and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if you will obey my voice, indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for the earth is mine; And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. Tell the children of Israel these words.”*

God reminded them that He had destroyed their enemies and carried them over the sea, as tenderly as an eagle carries the baby eagles upon her wings. He had brought them unto Himself. They had done nothing to save themselves. He had done it all.

Then He told Moses His purpose for the nation of Israel.

They were to be to Him a treasure, something precious; a kingdom of priests, that is, they would have the right to go to God in behalf of other peoples and go to other peoples and tell them of God.

They were to be a holy nation, or a nation set apart for God. He, Himself, was to rule over them.

Could anything be more wonderful for any nation? The only condition was obedience. Who wouldn't want to obey a God who had done such great things? They had been delivered from their enemies, provided with water and food, protected from dangers, not that they were worthy but because of God's grace.

Moses returned to the people and told them the words which God had spoken to him. They very carelessly and without thought replied, "**All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.**"

That meant they chose to have a definite law laid down to follow.

Which would you rather have to rule over you, your father or the judge of your district court? I know your answer is "My father." He loves you and when he corrects you because of your disobedience, he has love in his heart. But when the judge rules over you and you disobey, all he can do is to pronounce sentence upon you.

I think the people of Israel should have said that they wanted God to rule over them just as He had been doing, and that they would do their best to be obedient and walk with Him in love.

To answer that all the Lord had spoken to them they would do, was to be self-confident and it also showed they did not fully appreciate what the Lord had been doing for them.

God took them at their word, as much as to say, "***All right, if you would rather have Me to be your judge, then I will give you a law to govern you.***"

And God said to Moses, "**Lo, I come to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak to you, and believe you forever.**"

Did He say He would come to them in a thick cloud? That does not sound like being carried on eagle's wings. All is now changed. Under the grace of God they had been carried, loved and petted like little birds, but under the law, God is in a thick cloud on a smoking mountain, showing His justice and His majesty.

God gave Moses instructions for the people that they might know how to approach a holy God.

They were to wash their cloths and by the third day be ready.

The Lord was to come down in the sight of all the people on Mount Sinai. He told them to make a fence or a boundary line on the mountain side and no one, on penalty of death, was to go beyond that line.

Anyone who reached out his hand to touch the line while God's presence was on that mountain would be killed.

Let us think what this camp must have looked like.

If their tents had been pitched in rows, side by side, with streets running between the rows and blocked off like our city squares, then it would have taken a section of land at least twelve miles each way to care for all of these three and a half million people.

But that could not have been because the country around Sinai was very rugged, with hills, valleys and great rocks. Israel must have been scattered for miles around the foot of Sinai.

**“And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; and all of the people that were in the camp trembled”** (Exodus 19:16).

And Moses called the people and they came and stood on the side of the mount.

I am sure it was a very serious multitude of people who looked that morning upon Mount Sinai.

As they watched they saw smoke pour from its top like a great furnace and the whole mountain shook.

Moses, whom God called to go up on the mountain, spoke and God answered him.

The Lord came down upon the mountain and told Moses to go back to the people and warn them again not to break through the boundary line.

Moses went down to his people and reported all that God had said.

What an eventful morning and what an audience!

Included in it were those who had seen God’s mighty power working in the judgments of Egypt!

Those who had walked dry-shod through the sea, between walls of water sustained by His hand; whose thirst had been quenched and hunger satisfied by the sweetness of His love and grace?

Now on this memorable day those same people were to behold His presence on the mountain and, most of all, to hear His voice as it pealed forth in words of majesty and power.

I think a silence must have fallen upon the waiting, trembling throng like the stillness of night, with only the barking of a dog or the mellow, morning song of a bird, to be heard.

Perhaps they had been waiting since early dawn, when suddenly, out from that rocking, smoking mountain came the voice of the trumpet which sounded louder and louder as though announcing or introducing the Great Speaker!

The trumpet ceased and lo, God, Himself, spoke in a voice loud enough to be heard by every man, woman and child in all the great camp.

With what adoration and fear they must have listened when God said,

**“I am the Lord your God, which have brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage.**

**Thou shalt have no other gods before me.**

**Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . .**

**Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain . . .**

**Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy . . .**

**Honor thy father and thy mother . . .**

**Thou shalt not kill.**

**Thou shalt not commit adultery.**

**Thou shalt not steal.**

**Thou shalt not bear false witness . . .**

**Thou shalt not covet . . .”**

And all of the people were afraid when they heard the words of God and saw the fire. They ran away from the mountain and when Moses came to them they said, **“You speak with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.”**

Were they being led to see what it meant to reject the God of grace, what it meant to seek the God of law?

Foolish Israel, from now on their history is one continual disobedience to that law they had so lightly agreed to obey.

**“And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that you sin not.”**

Then Moses went again to the mount of God, and God gave to him, in great detail, many more laws. There were instructions for masters and servants; for injuries to persons; for rights of property; for crimes against humanity; for the land and the Sabbath; for the then three national feasts, and for what they should do when they reached Canaan.

And Moses wrote all the law which God had given him in a book. He built an altar with twelve pillars around it, one for each of the tribes of Israel, and appointed young men to offer sacrifices upon the altar. And Moses took of the blood of the animals and sprinkled it upon the book of the covenant and also upon the people according to the New Testament (Hebrews 9:19).

I wonder why he did that.

The blood of an animal or person is its life. In sprinkling the blood upon the book and the people, God, through Moses, was saying that he who broke that law must die.

When Jesus Christ died upon the cross He took upon Him the curse of all who had broken His law and that means every human being. All those who believe on Him are freed from the law and actually live under the grace of God.

More wonderful plans of God for His people are in the next chapter.

**~ end of chapter 22 ~**

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