



Understanding the Parsha

Exodus 19:1 – 25

We will Learn how to

- 1) **interpret the main theme** (subject) of a Parsha (weekly reading from the Torah),
- 2) **make thematic connections to that Parsha** (study the Scriptures related by a common theme [subject], line upon line and precept upon precept)
- 3) **learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha we are looking at through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.**

What are the plan's for Israel at Mount Sinai?

I. From time to time we have outlined different Parshiot (Parsha, plural- weekly reading from the Torah) to show us how outlining helps us follow the flow of events. As we study the Torah it helps to be able to see the big picture so that we know where we are in the flow of events. In Exodus 6:6-8 it says:

6 Therefore say to the children of Israel: "I am the LORD; **I will bring you out** from under the burdens of the Egyptians, **I will rescue you** from their bondage, and **I will redeem you** with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 **I will take you as My people, and I will be your God.** Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 And **I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage:** I am the LORD."

2) they must **S** separate themselves and **W** wash their clothes before they draw near to Adonai,

3) boundaries are set up around the **m** mountain to prevent them from drawing near to Adonai,

4) people are threatened with the **d** death penalty if they try to ascend (go up) the mountain, and

5) they must wait for the **S** shofar signal before drawing near to Adonai.

In verses 21-22 and 24 the people are once again threatened with death if they try to approach the wrong way.

Remember, Adonai never acted this way with the Patriarchs... He is making Himself known in a manner the Patriarchs never experienced.

B. What part of His character is He making known to Israel?

His **H** holiness and the need for holiness on the part of man before

d draw **n** near to Him!

This is a very important theme, and we will continue to follow it as we move on through the Torah.

C. We know that Adonai has intense love for the people of Israel, the offspring of the Patriarchs. And, we know that the main theme of this section of Scripture is about to how He wants to enter into covenant relationship with them. When you read Exodus 19, did you notice that Adonai refuses to speak directly to the people, the object of His affection? Did you notice how He keeps telling Moses to talk to them? Have you noticed how the people always have to send messages to Him through Moses?

How is this behavior thematically related to how Adonai is making Himself known as a Holy God?

It is thematically related to his **h** holiness because it shows that He can

not be approached by just anyone. Not only can you not **d** draw **n** near to Him,

you can't even talk to Him! Trying to talk to this God is serious business. Even trying to talk to Him may cost

you your **l** life!

Once again, we see that the Torah is trying to teach us about the Holiness/Set-Apartness of our God.

III. The Atmosphere Surrounding the Giving of the Torah—

We know that Adonai will descend (come down) upon Mount Sinai and that the people are to meet Him there.

How does the Torah describe the mountain as they approached? Circle the right words below. There were

thick clouds rain thunder snow lightening floods

shofar blast joyful music fire volcanic activity



How is this thematically related to the time when Moses' first met with Adonai as He began to make Himself known as YHVH for the first time (Exodus 3:1-6)?

In both encounters something was on f five.

So, we see that at the giving of the Torah, and even the things that happened in nature, support the theme that YHVH is not easily approached. These are some of Israel's first lessons on the characteristic of Adonai that He had not made known to the Fathers when He revealed Himself as El Shaddai/Elohim. Hopefully, our study of this story has shown you how forcefully Adonai is trying to convince us that **no one approaches Him except on His terms**.

Moses' Part at the Giving of the Torah

I. The Torah paints many pictures for us. Sometimes, however, we can miss them unless we look for the themes.

As you read Exodus 19:1-25, what is the primary physical activity Moses seems to be engaged in?

He seems to be running dn p and n upop that mountain over, and over, and over and over, and over, and over, and OVER!

A. Many times the Torah teaches us by its repeated use of words or themes associated with that word.

For example, have you noticed how many times the words up/ascend and down/descend were used with concerning Moses? Do you know how many times he went up and down the mountain in those three days?

He went up the mountain at least f five times; therefore, he had to have come back down the mountain f five times! That's ten trips either up or down a mountain. What an athlete!

B. Considering that Adonai only speaks to the people through Moses, and the people can only speak to Adonai through Moses, what is the Torah trying to teach us about the role Moses is fulfilling?

M Moses is fulfilling the role of a mediator (acting as a go-between).

Now, considering the fact that Adonai isn't exactly making Himself available to the people, how is Moses' role as a mediator thematically linked to Adonai's Holiness?

Adonai's holiness prevents Israel a approaching Him, EXCEPT through a mediator. He will not talk directly to Israel

C. To prove to you how strongly Adonai was limiting contact with the people, except through mediation, look at how Adonai says He will give Israel the commandments.

So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. 9And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever." So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD (Exodus 19:8-9).

This is amazing. The children of Israel were to hear the voice of Adonai, but only because He was speaking to Moses loud enough so that they could hear for themselves, and then believe the words that Moses spoke to them. This is also confirmed in Deuteronomy.

4 The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. 5 I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain (Deuteronomy 5:4-5).

Moses again confirms that Adonai spoke the words to him. He then spoke the words to Israel. Adonai spoke to the mediator of the covenant (Moses), who then spoke to Am Yisrael. Yet He spoke to Moses loud enough for them to hear and believe that the words came from Adonai, not Moses.

In summary, the main subject of this Parsha describes the way Adonai will "take you as My people, and I will be your God." This was done through the set up of the covenant with Israel. This required that Adonai give them the Torah, the Way through which they would become his special, holy nation of priests. And because we used thematic analysis of these verses, we see that this passage has a great deal to teach us concerning the Holiness of Adonai and the need for a mediator so that the children of Israel were able to draw near to Him.

A	M	X	D	R	A	W	N	E	A	R	DRAW NEAR
L	I	G	H	T	N	I	N	G	M	G	ADONAI
M	U	H	S	L	U	N	J	L	T	N	MEDIATOR
E	L	P	O	E	P	Y	M	A	D	I	MY PEOPLE
D	F	Y	C	L	O	U	D	S	A	A	HOLINESS
I	I	E	R	G	I	B	B	V	D	T	ISRAEL
A	R	C	O	V	E	N	A	N	T	N	MOUNTAIN
T	E	Y	S	M	O	K	E	G	U	U	COVENANT
O	J	I	R	A	F	O	H	S	M	O	FIRE
R	L	E	A	R	S	I	I	O	S	M	CLOUD

