

# “Mt. Sinai”

Exodus 19:4

<sup>16</sup>On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. <sup>17</sup>Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. <sup>18</sup>Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently.

How many of you have a hard time driving up a mountain and looking over the edge? Maybe another way to ask the question is, “How many of you tremble when you look over the edge of a mountain?”

Yes the word I want you to associate with Mt. Sinai is tremble.

Mt. Sinai is one of the most famous mountains in the Bible. It is the place where God met Moses and called to him out of a burning bush to lead his people out of Egypt. It is the place where God told Moses he would bring the people and they would worship there.

When God made His appearance the mountain trembled and the people trembled. The mountain was roped off. It was holy ground just like the ground when Moses approached the burning bush.

So how would you feel if you were summoned into God's presence? His presence is roped off and you have been warned not to touch the mountain or you will die. There is smoke and fire. Is it possible you would tremble?

On his first trip up the mountain God reminded Moses and the Israelites that He has accomplished everything for them..

God had set them free and has allowed them to stand where they are. "You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself." Exodus 19:4)

The first message we hear from Mt. Sinai is about God's love and commitment to the Israelites. They are reminded that they are loved and they are the children of God.

Moses went up the mountain a second time to receive the Ten Commandments. Even those Ten Words for the Jews list start with

<sup>2</sup>“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. God love and commitment to us comes first because His love and commitment is the basis for our obedience to the commandments.

God continues to make clear to Moses and us how God’s people are to live. You shall have no other gods. Do not misuse my name. Keep the Sabbath. Honor your father and mother. Do not kill. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Do not covet. Write that in stone. Anyone who breaks these commands is going to die.

God was calling His people to love. Love the Lord Your God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself.

God was calling His people to love and to commitment. And the people said, ‘All that you have spoken we will do.’”

Mt. Sinai shows us that we are not very good at loving or at commitment. The giving the Law on Mt. Sinai didn’t change anyone’s heart. The Law and Mount Sinai caused fear, trembling, despair and hopelessness. Mt Sinai is a place to tremble because we stand under God’s judgment.

But there is another mountain that causes us to tremble.. On that mountain God provided His Son. He took our place under the Law and in death.

One of our hymns for Holy Week puts it this way:

1     Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

      Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

      Oh . . .

Sometimes it causes me to tremble,

tremble,

tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

2 Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

Oh . . .

Sometimes it causes me to tremble,

tremble,

tremble.

Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

3 Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

Oh . . .

Sometimes it causes me to tremble,

tremble,

tremble.

Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

Mt. Sinai again turns our eyes to Mr. Calvary. We who tremble at the Law tremble at God offering Himself on our behalf. Amen.