

Sunday, February 3

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Exodus 17:8 - 19:15

17 8 While the people of Israel were still at Rephidim, the warriors of Amalek attacked them. **9** Moses commanded Joshua, "Choose some men to go out and fight the army of Amalek for us. Tomorrow, I will stand at the top of the hill, holding the staff of God in my hand." **10** So Joshua did what Moses had commanded and fought the army of Amalek. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of a nearby hill. **11** As long as Moses held up the staff in his hand, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he dropped his hand, the Amalekites gained the advantage. **12** Moses' arms soon became so tired he could no longer hold them up. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side of Moses, holding up his hands. So his hands held steady until sunset. **13** As a result, Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle. **14** After the victory, the LORD instructed Moses, "Write this down on a scroll as a permanent reminder, and read it aloud to Joshua: I will erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven." **15** Moses built an altar there and named it Yahweh-Nissi (which means "the LORD is my banner"). **16** He said, "They have raised their fist against the LORD's throne, so now the LORD will be at war with Amalek generation after generation."

18 1 Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, heard about everything God had done for Moses and his people, the Israelites. He heard especially about how the LORD had rescued them from Egypt. **2** Earlier, Moses had sent his wife, Zipporah, and his two sons back to Jethro, who had taken them in. **3** (Moses' first son was named Gershom, for Moses had said when the boy was born, "I have been a foreigner in a foreign land.") **4** His second son was named Eliezer, for Moses had said, "The God of my ancestors was my helper; he rescued me from the sword of Pharaoh.") **5** Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, now came to visit Moses in the wilderness. He brought Moses' wife and two sons with him, and they arrived while Moses and the people were camped near the mountain of God. **6** Jethro had sent a message to Moses, saying, "I, Jethro, your father-in-law, am coming to see you with your wife and your two sons." **7** So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. He bowed low and kissed him. They asked about each other's welfare and then went into Moses' tent. **8** Moses told his father-in-law everything the LORD had done to Pharaoh and Egypt on behalf of Israel. He also told about all the hardships they had experienced along the way and how the LORD had rescued his people from all their troubles. **9** Jethro was delighted when he heard about all the good things the LORD had done

for Israel as he rescued them from the hand of the Egyptians. **10** “Praise the LORD,” Jethro said, “for he has rescued you from the Egyptians and from Pharaoh. Yes, he has rescued Israel from the powerful hand of Egypt! **11** I know now that the LORD is greater than all other gods, because he rescued his people from the oppression of the proud Egyptians.” **12** Then Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices to God. Aaron and all the elders of Israel came out and joined him in a sacrificial meal in God’s presence. **13** The next day, Moses took his seat to hear the people’s disputes against each other. They waited before him from morning till evening. **14** When Moses’ father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he asked, “What are you really accomplishing here? Why are you trying to do all this alone while everyone stands around you from morning till evening?” **15** Moses replied, “Because the people come to me to get a ruling from God. **16** When a dispute arises, they come to me, and I am the one who settles the case between the quarreling parties. I inform the people of God’s decrees and give them his instructions.” **17** “This is not good!” Moses’ father-in-law exclaimed. **18** “You’re going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. **19** Now listen to me, and let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you. You should continue to be the people’s representative before God, bringing their disputes to him. **20** Teach them God’s decrees, and give them his instructions. Show them how to conduct their lives. **21** But select from all the people some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as leaders over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. **22** They should always be available to solve the people’s common disputes, but have them bring the major cases to you. Let the leaders decide the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. **23** If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace.” **24** Moses listened to his father-in-law’s advice and followed his suggestions. **25** He chose capable men from all over Israel and appointed them as leaders over the people. He put them in charge of groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. **26** These men were always available to solve the people’s common disputes. They brought the major cases to Moses, but they took care of the smaller matters themselves. **27** Soon after this, Moses said good-bye to his father-in-law, who returned to his own land.

19 1 Exactly two months after the Israelites left Egypt, they arrived in the wilderness of Sinai. **2** After breaking camp at Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and set up camp there at the base of Mount Sinai. **3** Then Moses climbed the mountain to appear before God. The LORD called to him from the mountain and said, “Give these instructions to the family of Jacob; announce it to the descendants of Israel: **4** ‘You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You know how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. **5** Now if you will obey

me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the peoples on earth; for all the earth belongs to me. **6** And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.’ This is the message you must give to the people of Israel.” **7** So Moses returned from the mountain and called together the elders of the people and told them everything the LORD had commanded him. **8** And all the people responded together, “We will do everything the LORD has commanded.” So Moses brought the people’s answer back to the LORD. **9** Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will come to you in a thick cloud, Moses, so the people themselves can hear me when I speak with you. Then they will always trust you.” Moses told the LORD what the people had said. **10** Then the LORD told Moses, “Go down and prepare the people for my arrival. Consecrate them today and tomorrow, and have them wash their clothing. **11** Be sure they are ready on the third day, for on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai as all the people watch. **12** Mark off a boundary all around the mountain. Warn the people, ‘Be careful! Do not go up on the mountain or even touch its boundaries. Anyone who touches the mountain will certainly be put to death. **13** No hand may touch the person or animal that crosses the boundary; instead, stone them or shoot them with arrows. They must be put to death.’ However, when the ram’s horn sounds a long blast, then the people may go up on the mountain.” **14** So Moses went down to the people. He consecrated them for worship, and they washed their clothes. **15** He told them, “Get ready for the third day, and until then abstain from having sexual intercourse.”

Matthew 22:34 - 23:12

22 34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. **35** One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: **36** “Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?” **37** Jesus replied, “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ **40** The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.” **41** Then, surrounded by the Pharisees, Jesus asked them a question: **42** “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They replied, “He is the son of David.” **43** Jesus responded, “Then why does David, speaking under the inspiration of the Spirit, call the Messiah ‘my Lord’? For David said, **44** ‘The said to my Lord, Sit in the place of honor at my right hand until I humble your enemies beneath your feet.’ **45** Since David called the Messiah ‘my Lord,’ how can the Messiah be his son?” **46** No one could answer him. And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

23 **1** Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, **2** “The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. **3** So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don’t follow their example. For they don’t practice what they teach. **4** They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden. **5** “Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra long tassels. **6** And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues. **7** They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called ‘Rabbi.’ **8** “Don’t let anyone call you ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one teacher, and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters. **9** And don’t address anyone here on earth as ‘Father,’ for only God in heaven is your spiritual Father. **10** And don’t let anyone call you ‘Teacher,’ for you have only one teacher, the Messiah. **11** The greatest among you must be a servant. **12** But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Psalms 27:7 - 14

27 **7** Hear me as I pray, O LORD . Be merciful and answer me! **8** My heart has heard you say, “Come and talk with me.” And my heart responds, “ LORD, I am coming.” **9** Do not turn your back on me. Do not reject your servant in anger. You have always been my helper. Don’t leave me now; don’t abandon me, O God of my salvation! **10** Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close. **11** Teach me how to live, O LORD . Lead me along the right path, for my enemies are waiting for me. **12** Do not let me fall into their hands. For they accuse me of things I’ve never done; with every breath they threaten me with violence. **13** Yet I am confident I will see the LORD ’s goodness while I am here in the land of the living. **14** Wait patiently for the LORD . Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the LORD.

Proverbs 6:27 - 35

6 **27** Can a man scoop a flame into his lap and not have his clothes catch on fire? **28** Can he walk on hot coals and not blister his feet? **29** So it is with the man who sleeps with another man’s wife. He who embraces her will not go unpunished. **30** Excuses might be found for a thief who steals because he is starving. **31** But if he is caught, he must pay back seven times what he stole, even if he has to sell everything in his house. **32** But the man who commits adultery is an utter fool, for he destroys himself. **33** He will be wounded and disgraced. His shame will never be erased. **34** For the woman’s jealous husband will be furious, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge. **35** He will accept no compensation, nor be satisfied with a payoff of any size.