

The Giving of the Law

Exodus 16; 19–20

Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Sin. The whole congregation of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron and said to them, “You have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

The LORD said to Moses, “I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

In the evening, quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning, dew lay around the camp. When the people of Israel saw it, they said, “What is it?”

Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.”

The house of Israel called its name manna. It was like wafers made with honey. The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

On the third new moon,¹ after the people of Israel had gone out of Egypt, and came into the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped before the mountain. The LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate² them, and let them wash their garments and be ready for the third day.”

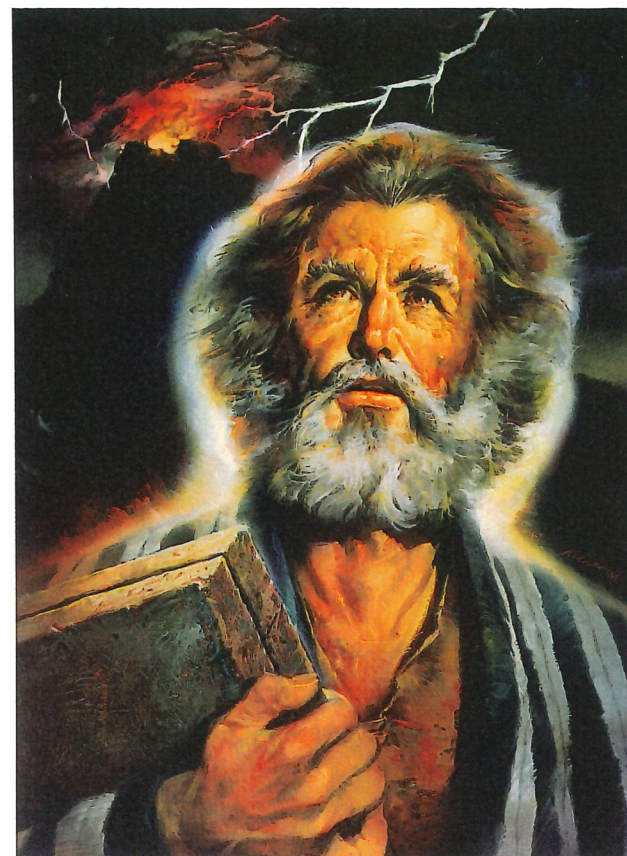
On the morning of the third day, there were thunders and lightnings and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of Mount Sinai, which was wrapped in smoke because the LORD descended on it in fire. The whole mountain trembled greatly, and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. And God spoke to them and told them the Ten Commandments.

The people were afraid, and they stood far off and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.”

Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain, and was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. God gave to Moses, when He had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony,³ written with the finger of God.

Explanatory Notes

¹Third month. ²Dedicate, prepare for worship. ³The Ten Commandments.



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For Reflection

1. God demonstrated His presence with smoke, fire, and the trembling of the mountain. How does God come to us today?
2. Moses went up the mountain to speak with God on behalf of the people. In what way does Jesus speak to God on our behalf?
3. God sent manna and quail to help the Israelites by giving them food. He helped them by giving them the Law. Explain.

Words to Remember

Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. *Hebrews 12:21–22*