

## My Mountain

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Good morning.

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The title of our lesson this morning is ... "My Mountain."

Better yet ... "My Holy Mountain."

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If you're like most people ... myself included ...

You probably roll right over the names of places in the Bible.

Hard to pronounce.

A few are familiar ... but most are a mystery to us.

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If a passage of scripture were to read ...

"The Children of Israel marched from Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Tennessee ... up past Louisville, Kentucky ... crossed the Ohio River at Cincinnati ... and ended up on the shores of Lake Erie near Cleveland, Ohio ...

... we'd have a pretty clear picture of the journey.

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But when we read of the travels and happenings ... of the God's people in the Old Testament ...

... we don't register where the events took place ...

... let alone remember the names of the various places.

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Take Mt Moriah, for example.

Do we know it's located in and about the City of Jerusalem?

We may remember that Mt Moriah is where Solomon built the original Temple of the Lord ... around 3000 years ago.

What else happened there ... on Mt Moriah.

Remember when David angered God ... by going against His will ... and numbering the fighting men of Israel?

David caused Israel to pay an awful price ... when God sent a pestilence that killed 70,000.

David saw the Angel of the Lord ... with his hand outstretched ... about to destroy Jerusalem ...

... and pleaded with the Lord to stop.

God told the Angel ... "Enough!"

God instructed David to purchase the threshing floor ... where he encountered the Angel ...  
...and to build an Altar to the Lord.

It was on this threshing floor ... on Mt Moriah ... that Solomon built the Temple.

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What else?

Years earlier ... God tested Abraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac, the son  
promised to Abraham and Sarah.

"Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and  
offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell you" (Gen 22:2)

It was on Mt Moriah that this amazing scene unfolded.

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God does nothing by accident.

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Now ... let's take a look at "the" mountain ... that will be our main focus of the lesson this  
morning.

Mt Horeb.

You might recognize Mt Horeb by a more familiar name ... Mt Sinai.

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Mt Horeb is located near the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula

Today ... on the east ... the Gulf of Suez separates the Peninsula from Egypt.

This was so ... as well ... in the days of the Israelite captivity in Egypt.

On the west today ... the Gulf of Aqaba (the Red Sea) ... separates the Peninsula from Saudi  
Arabia and Jordan.

In the days of Egyptian captivity ... the land of Midian was on the other side of the Red Sea ...  
to the west.

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Remember where Moses fled ... when he was 40 years old ... after killing the Egyptian?

He fled Egypt and went to live in the land of Midian.

It was there he married ... and tended flocks for Jethro ... his father-in-law.

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After about 40 more years had passed ... .. and perhaps memories of his early life in Egypt  
had faded a little bit ...

... Moses was tending flocks over in the western reaches of Midian.

And guess where Moses was ...

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Exo 3:1-3 ... "Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian,  
and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.

So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up." You don't suppose God had His Hand in this, do you?

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This is the first mention of Mt Horeb.

Notice that Horeb is called the Mountain of God.

God's mountain!

Holy Ground. Moses was standing on Holy Ground.

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It was here that Moses was given the job of leading the Children of Israel ... about 2.5 million of them out of Egyptian slavery and captivity ...

... to travel to Horeb ... to worship the Lord

The descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob.

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Over a period of about ten months ... God visited awesome, miraculous plagues on the people of Egypt.

Moses told Pharaoh ... that God wanted His people to travel to Horeb to worship ... at His holy mountain.

Pharaoh said, "No way."

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After the plague of the Locusts ... and the plague of darkness ... ... Pharaoh said ... "okay ... you can go ... ... you can even take our little ones with you ...

... but you have to leave your flocks and herds behind."

Moses said "no," we will need our flocks and herds for sacrifices. We will not know what the Lord will require until we arrive at God's Mountain."

Mt Horeb.

"NOT ONE HOOF will be left behind."

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Pharaoh's heart hardened. He refused to let the Israelites journey to Horeb to Worship.

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We all know how it played out.

After the tenth plague ... the death of the firstborn of Egypt ... Pharaoh released the Israelites.

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The blood of the Passover Lambs ... the escape though the parted waters of the Red Sea ... and the march through the Wilderness of Sin ...

... brought the Children of Israel to Horeb ... Sinai ... God's holy mountain.

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The Law of Moses was given by God, Himself, from the top of Horeb.

On tables of stone written by the finger of God.

Many details were given by the mouth of the Lord.

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At the base of Horeb ... while Moses was up on the mountain ... Aaron allowed the people to fashion and worship a golden calf.

To say that God was angry ... is an understatement.

Back up on Horeb ... God replaced the tablets of stone that Moses had broken in anger when he learned what the people had done.

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It was on Horeb ... that God allowed Moses to view Him after He had passed by.

God covered Moses' face in the cleft of a rock.

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When the Israelites needed water ... God instructed Moses to strike the rock on Horeb ... to bring forth water.

Later on ... again at Horeb ... God instructed Moses to speak to the rock ... to bring forth water for the people.

It was there ... that Moses defied God ... in anger at the people ... and struck the rock again ... taking glory unto himself.

Because of this ... Moses was not permitted to cross the Jordan ... into the promised land.

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At Horeb ... the Tabernacle was constructed ...

... the priesthood was established... ... sacrificial worship was instituted (blood sacrifice).

... the people vowed to honor the covenant with the God who delivered them from bondage...

... and this was where the march to the promised land began ... in full force and readiness.

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Sadly ... you know what happened not long after. The people lost faith and fell back at Kadesh Barnea.

Many were lost because of this.

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We hear about Horeb again in 1 Kings 19.

The prophet Elijah had embarrassed Queen Jezebel's prophets of Baal on Mt Carmel.

You remember how Elijah poked fun at her false prophets ... as they vainly tried to call down fire upon their sacrifices? "Maybe Baal is napping?"

After the Living God sent down fire and consumed Elijah's sacrifice.

The people were aroused by the truth and the power of God ... and rallied and put to death 450 prophets of Baal.

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Jezebel was fuming. She declared that Eijah would be dead before 24 hours had passed.

Elijah was afraid. He fled. He felt all alone and no longer of any use. He wanted to get as far away as fast as he could.

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But Elijah didn't run just to any old place. He headed south. From Jezreel to Beersheba was a distance of about 100 miles. On foot.

From Beersheba Elijah traveled about a day's distance into the wilderness.

And from there ... over a period of 40 days and nights ... sustained by God ... he journeyed to Mt Horeb.

Elijah eventually sought refuge in a cave on Horeb. God's Mountain.

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You know the story ... how dejected Elijah was.

God spoke to Him in the wind and rain and in an earthquake ... telling him that he was far from alone.

The Lord had 7000 in Israel that had not bowed a knee to Baal.

"Get up!" "Get back in the fight!" "I am with you all the way."

"All the way ... Savior leads me," out Hymn goes.

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Mt Horeb! God's Holy Mountain during the time of the Law of Moses.

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We could end our story here this morning. It's a glorious story of how God plans and cares for His own people.

How His covenant centered around Horeb (Sinai) ... His Holy Mountain. How everything centered around His presence, authority and power.

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But God's plans are more far reaching.

Mt Horeb was preparing the world for the arrival of Jesus Christ ... God in the flesh.

He was preparing the world for Mt Zion ... and for the establishment of the Church

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The book of Hebrews connects the dots for us ... especially chapter 12.

The Israelites drew near to Horeb.

It was a physical mountain.

Christian draw near to Mt Zion ... a spiritual Mountain

The Heavenly city of the living God.

The Church.

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Just think of all the beautiful similarities.

God sent Moses down into Egypt to bring His people up out of slavery

God sent His own Son into the depths of Hades to deliver the world from sin.

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God used the blood of innocent lambs to break the bond of Egyptian slavery.

God's Son ... offered His own blood to break Satan's hold on us.

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Not one hoof was left behind in Egypt.

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Not one foot can be left in sin. Satan may be willing to share us with Christ ... but Christ will have no part of Satan.

We're either all in ... or we're all out ... in service to Christ.

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God used the passage through the Red Sea ... to bury the past in Egypt for good. In the Red Sea ... the Israelites were united with Moses in his God-given purpose.

God uses baptism to bury the old man or woman of sin.

Not one part of the old man or woman ... can be brought forward into service to Christ.

In Baptism we are united with Christ in the Church.

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At Horeb ... the Law of Moses was given ... written on tables of stone.

At Mt Zion ... the Gospel was given ... written on our hearts.

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At Horeb ... Moses was allowed a careful glimpse of the glory of God.

At Zion ... We clearly see the Father because we have seen Jesus.

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At Horeb ... the Tabernacle was built.

At Zion ... the church was built.

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At Horeb ... the priesthood of Aaron was established. Animal blood was to be shed for sin.

At Zion ... Christ's unending priesthood was established. The blood of Christ forgives all sins for all time.

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At Horeb ... the journey to the Promised Land began.

At Zion ... the Christian journey to Heaven begins.

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At Horeb ... water freely flowed from the rock.

At Zion ... loving water flows feely from Christ.

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At Horeb ... Elijah was told to take heart ... and get back into the fight.

At Zion ... God calmy tells is, "You are alone, for I am always with you." "Rise up and stand firm." "I have many faithful standing with you."

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From Horeb ... although many died in the wilderness when they fell away ... many others crossed the Jordan and received the promise.

From Zion ... We can reach the Home of the Soul.

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Under the Old Law ... all things pertaining to righteousness under the Old Covenant sprang from Horeb.

Today ... under the Law of Christ ... all things pertaining to righteousness and salvation spring from Christ ... from Zion ... in the Church.

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The Law of Moses ... from Horeb (from Sinai) ... became the Old Law ... and passed away ...  
... when Christ took His place as King of Zion ... the Head of the Church.

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How wonderful and marvelous is that?!?!

Psa 2:6-7 ... God declared that He had raised His Son from the grave and had set Him on Zion ... on His Holy Mountain ... as King of Kings ... and Lord of Lords.

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Thank you!!

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Imagine a life that is safe in the arms of Jesus. Imagine an eternal home in Heaven with loved ones ... free from the cares and trials of this temporary life.

It's not a dream ... or should I say ... it's not ONLY a dream ... it's a promise that Jesus has made **to you**.

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Invitation.

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