

Old Testament Application, Part 1

By Greg Smith

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Use an online Bible dictionary, such as the one at <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries>. You may also use a printed Bible dictionary, such as *Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Your church library or pastor might have such a dictionary. Look up the word *Sinai*. Prepare to share a brief report on the background and geographical context for Israel's encampment at Mount Sinai.

Assignment Two

Use a printed study Bible or an online tool such as <http://www.openbible.info/labs/cross-references>. Use the Scripture cross-reference tool for Exodus 19:5 and the term "My own possession" or "treasured possession." Discover where those phrases occur in other biblical passages (see especially Deuteronomy 4:20; 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Psalm 135:4; Titus 2:14; and 1 Peter 2:9). After studying other passages, prepare to share more fully what the term "special treasure" means.

Assignment Three

Use an online or printed Bible commentary. Your church library may have a printed one, or your pastor may be able to direct you to an online one. Study the discussion on Exodus 19:5–6. Prepare to share about Israel's new status as a "treasured possession" and her future responsibility to be the Lord's "kingdom of priests" and "holy nation."

Scripture to Memorize

For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach His statutes and rules in Israel. Ezra 7:10

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand how to use basic study resources for an inductive Bible study.

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In his free time he loves going on camping adventures with his wife, Ellen, and two kids, James and Hannah. He also loves singing, playing guitar, and watching hummingbirds in his backyard. Please feel free to contact him at gsmith@swbts.edu.

It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

Your pastor has asked you to lead a Sunday school lesson for the senior adult class in your church. You discover that you are filling in for a teacher who prepares an original lesson each week and does not follow a curriculum. You are beginning to feel a little overwhelmed with the task, especially because the passage of Scripture you've been asked to teach, Exodus 19:1–6, comes out of the Old Testament. What can you do to be more prepared to teach this passage?

Read Exodus 19:1–6 out loud.

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week may now illustrate how a Bible dictionary provides background information for Bible study. They will share a brief report on the background and geographical context for Israel's encampment at Mount Sinai.

Studying the Passage

Verse 1. wilderness of Sinai. Three months out of Egypt, Israel camped near Mount Sinai and remained there for about one year. Israel was still in her infancy as a new nation and experienced firsthand the awesome power of the Lord through His work to save Israel from the Egyptians. At Sinai, Israel was at a crossroad and needed some timely encouragement and direction.

Discussion Questions

Reflect on Israel's three-month journey out of Egypt. What kind of challenges would Israel have faced in the wilderness? What kind of encouragement would you expect the Lord to offer Israel at this early stage in her journey?

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week may now illustrate how a Scripture index tool provides background information for Bible study. They will share more fully what the term "treasured possession" means.

Studying the Passage

Verse 4. eagles' wings. The Lord was compared to an eagle, swooping down and carrying Israel out of Egypt, thus forming a vivid image or picture of salvation.

Verse 5. possession. This Hebrew term can be translated "special treasure" and conveys the unique and special status Israel now had with the Lord. In the ancient world, the "treasured possession" represented the most prized and special item taken out of the "warehouse" of all a king might own. Building on the covenant the Lord had made with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Exodus 2:24), the Lord both extended and redefined that covenant at Mount Sinai with the new nation.

Discussion Questions

What is the special significance of Israel's status as a "treasured possession" in light of the Lord's status as the King and Creator of the universe?

Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week may now illustrate how a Bible commentary provides background information for Bible study. They may share about Israel's new status as a "treasured possession" and her future responsibility to be the Lord's "kingdom of priests" and "holy nation."

On Your Own

A Bible cross-reference guide shows that Peter applied the term "treasured possession" to believers in 1 Peter 2:9. In the space below, write how it impacts you to know that you are a "treasured possession" to the reigning King of the universe.

Studying the Passage

Verse 6. kingdom of priests. The implication of being in covenant relationship is that the nation Israel was to express that relationship as a showcase to the nations. Mount Sinai marked the beginning of the teaching ministry Moses was to have with the people, offering specific instructions for how covenant obedience would be expressed in the promised land. **holy nation.** Israel's covenant obedience would also demonstrate and reflect the holiness of her God. Thus, holiness would permeate every detail of life in the promised land— eating habits, worship, household relationships, and treatment of the orphans, widows and the poor in the community. All activities would be defined on the foundation of a holy God.

Discussion Question

What is the relationship of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1–17 to Israel's role as a "kingdom of priests" and a "holy nation"?

On Your Own

God gave the Ten Commandments to Israel so that Israel could accomplish His purposes. Today, God knows your holiness and lifestyle are essential to your accomplishing His purposes as His special treasure. In the space below, ask the Holy Spirit to give you strength and courage to address lifestyle issues that are a challenge for you.

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to. . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to. . . ."

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

Prayer

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

At Home: Nail It Down

Our study of Exodus 19:1–6 was enhanced with the use of a Bible dictionary, a Scripture cross-reference and a commentary. As students and teachers of God’s Word, disciples need to use the best resources available.

In this age of digital resources, disciples can access a world of solid biblical resources on the Internet. In addition to these free online resources, students of God’s Word should build a library of their own resources, both print and digital. This is preparation for a lifetime of fruitful study of the Word of God (see Ezra 7:10).

A beginning biblical resource library could include the following:

- A good study Bible (i.e., NASB, ESV, or NIV study Bibles)
- An exhaustive concordance (i.e., *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*, *Nave’s Topical Bible*)
- A word study dictionary (i.e., *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*)
- A Bible dictionary (i.e., *The New Bible Dictionary*, *The New International Bible Dictionary*)
- A survey of the Old and New Testament (i.e., *Old Testament Today* by Walton and Hill)
- A Bible atlas (i.e., *Holman Bible Atlas*)

Follow up Question

How can I help you begin building a biblical resource library?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.