

What Would Motivate You?

“Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” (Exodus 19:3-6): Would this motivate you?

Jehovah was in the process of making a covenant with the children of Israel, wherein Jehovah declares good promises to Israel, which Jehovah would perform, and duties which Israel would be called upon to perform: thus Jehovah binds Himself, and the people bind themselves: “And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which Jehovah commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do. And Moses reported the words of the people unto Jehovah” (Exodus 19:7-8). In this text the people of Israel are represented by those who represent them, i.e., their elders.

When the covenant was ratified, the scriptures saying, “And he said unto Moses, Come up unto Jehovah, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off: and Moses alone shall come near unto Jehovah; but they shall not come near; neither shall the people go up with him. And Moses came and told the people all the words of Jehovah, and all the ordinances: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which Jehovah hath spoken will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of Jehovah, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the mount, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto Jehovah. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words” (Exodus 24:1-8), the children of Israel bound themselves to the conditions of the covenant.

Throughout Israel’s history Jehovah sought to bring Israel into compliance to the terms of the covenant. Jehovah utilized three methods to do so:

- (1) Reward: “if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples” (Exodus 19:5).
- (2) Fear: “And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled” (Exodus 19:16), cf., Deuteronomy 18:15-16, saying, “Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of Jehovah thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of Jehovah my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.”
- (3) Love: “And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).

Remember the words of Jehovah, to Israel, saying, “Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; him shalt thou serve; and to him shalt thou cleave, and by his name shalt thou swear. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen” (Deuteronomy 10:20-21).