

Do we look to God to worship Him or do we expect God and everything else to serve us? God had redeemed Israel out of the bondage of slavery in Egypt with the purpose that they worship Him. Regular, scattered indications of God's desire for Israel to worship Him becomes the focus throughout Exodus and Leviticus beginning in Exodus 24. As God ratifies His covenant with Israel, three actions of God point to His desire that His people worship Him.

**I. God's invitation to worship demonstrates that desire (24:1–2).**

A. *The meaning of worship:* From the word itself worship means to bow down, i.e., to humbly submit before God. From the context worship included sacrifice and offering, the former being for the atonement of sin, the latter being in recognition and enjoyment of fellowship with God.

Jesus also invites us to come, but to give Him full reverence (Philippians 2:9–11) and to submit to His yoke (Matthew 11:28–30). There is humble submission to Jesus required in His invitation to come, which is true worship.

B. *The hindrance to worship:* God is separated from the people and distant, because God is holy and man is sinful.

C. *The implied solution for proper worship:*

1. Sacrifice and the application of its blood to the altar pointed to acceptance by God on the basis of that sacrifice.

2. There is also the need for a mediator (*cf.* Job 9:33). Moses functioned as a mediator between God and the nation of Israel, even seeking to make atonement for the people (Exodus 32:30). But he was an imperfect mediator (Numbers 20:24).

Both mediator and sacrifice are found for us in Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5; Romans 3:25). God desired the worship of Israel and He invites us to come and worship.

**II. God's provision for proper worship demonstrates His desire (24:3–8).**

A. *Clarification of Israel's responsibilities:* God communicated orally directly and via Moses (Exodus 19:5; 24:3). The people agreed to obey. As was customary, it was also put in writing (24:4) and again read and affirmed (24:7). Israel entered into the covenant with God with full knowledge of their responsibilities.

B. *Instructions for the necessary consecrating atonement:* The sacrifices and the sprinkling of the blood in two portions indicated the dual nature of the covenant.

1. The half sprinkled on the altar represented the divine side of the covenant, picturing atonement (*cf.* Exodus 30:10) and pointing to God's acceptance of that offering with His gracious forgiveness.

2. The other half of the blood was sprinkled on the people representing the human side of the covenant, picturing consecration or sanctification (*cf.* Exodus 29:19–21). The people of Israel were being set apart to God when the blood of the covenant was sprinkled upon them, symbolically representing God's declaration: "You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exodus 19:6).

"This is the blood of the covenant" (24:8) correctly brings to mind similar NT words, since the blood of the old covenant foreshadowed that of the new covenant. Their sacrifice did not take away sin (Hebrews 10:4), but the perfect sacrifice of the Son of God does. His blood atones for sin and sets apart believers unto God to be a royal priesthood and a holy nation (1 Peter 2:9).

God desired the worship of Israel and demonstrated that in providing what was needed for them to do so.

**III. God's pleasure at their worship demonstrates His desire (24:9–13).**

A. *God revealed Himself to Moses and the representatives of Israel and allowed them to live.* Since no one can see God face to face and live (Exodus 33:20), and none have done so (John 1:18), it is possible that the elders, like Isaiah, saw a pre-incarnate Christ (Isaiah 6:1; John 12:41). Having come at God's invitation, they were there for God's pleasure which He showed in His willingness to reveal Himself.

B. *God granted them fellowship with Him as symbolized in the meal.* Eating together was a prescribed part of the fellowship offerings, representing the fellowship which the person had with God. The elders even ate and drank in the visible presence of God.

The most high God was pleased to have Israel worship Him and offered fellowship with them.

God desires our worship, but as He defines it. He invites you to accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as fully sufficient to care for your sins and to set you apart from the world.

God desires your worship and offers you fellowship now. As Jesus concluded His message to the seventh church in Revelation 2–3, He makes this statement. "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20 NIV) He offers fellowship. He desires and requires worship that includes repentance and whole hearted devotion.