

Text: Ex 19.4-6

Proposition: There is an Israelite mediator for the nations.

For our communion service this week, I want to call your attention to one of the most important passages in the OT. It is in the book of Exodus, and it forms an important revelation of God's intentions among the nations to bring men from all nations back to himself.

We don't have time to explore all of these thoughts in detail, but I'd like to start with some propositions/presuppositions.

- "God exists and is unified, self-consistent, and ordered."¹
- God not only exists, but expresses himself in revelation to his creatures.
- God's special revelation is given through divinely appointed men, beginning with Moses.
- "Moses prepared the written Torah as instruction on the origin, purpose, and destiny of the people Israel."²
- The theological center of the Torah is the meeting of the nation with God at Sinai: the establishment of the covenant.

Now, having made those propositions, I want to add another statement from Merrill's article on the Pentateuch:

"The text of that covenant is introduced in Exodus 20:1 and continues through 23:33, but its purpose is outlined in 19:4–6, a passage that is crucial to the understanding of the function of Israel and of the Sinaitic Covenant in biblical theology."³

That brings us to our text, Ex 19.4-6 (read)

Proposition: There is an Israelite mediator for the nations.

I. The unconditional redemption of Israel (4)

- A. What God did to the Egyptians: broke the bonds of captivity
- B. What God did for Israel: bore them on eagles' wings (Red Sea experience)

¹ Eugene H. Merrill, "A Theology of the Pentateuch," in *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, ed. Roy B Zuck, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 9.

² *Ibid.*, 12.

³ *Ibid.*

C. Where God brought Israel: to the foot of the Mount of meeting

II. The conditional placement of Israel between God and the nations (5-6)

A. God's purpose for Israel

1. To be God's possession among all the peoples
2. To be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation
3. Essentially, then, to be a nation among nations

B. The concept of priesthood

“Whatever else might be said of the office, the fundamental notion that comes to mind in considering the ministry of the priest is that of mediation and intercession. A priest stands between God and a person (or persons) who is in need of making contact with God.”⁴

1. A priest stands between God and man
2. A priest *mediates* between God and man
3. Theological term: “mediatorial”

“The function of a mediator is to intervene between two parties in order to promote relations between them which the parties themselves are not able to effect. The situation requiring the offices of a mediator is often one of estrangement and alienation, and the mediator effects reconciliation.”⁵

- a. Mediatorial is an adjective describing the character of a mediator's position in an adversarial relationship.
- b. Or, in other words, all the activity involved in bringing two warring parties to peace is mediatorial

⁴ Ibid., 12–13.

⁵ J. M., “Mediator,” in D. R. W. Wood and I. Howard Marshall, *New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 746.

C. Since the fall, man is at an adversarial relationship with God

1. This is true for individual men
2. This is true for the nations, as we see at Babel and following
3. Israel was chosen out of the nations to function *mediatorially* as the peace-maker between God and the nations

D. Israel's position as the mediator between God and the nations (kingdom of priests) was conditional

1. "If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant" (5)
2. How did Israel do with that?
 - a. Within days, the golden calf
 - b. Moses himself couldn't obey God at all times
 - c. The Judges!
 - d. Saul!
 - e. David!
 - f. And on and on it goes...

As a mediator, the nation of Israel failed...

Nevertheless, we have this revelation:

1 Timothy 2.5 For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus,

III. The conditions satisfied: there is One mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2.5)

A. The man Christ Jesus kept the covenant

1. Whatever the Father does, the Son does (Jn 5.19)
2. Christ is the end of the Law (Rm 10.4)
3. Christ came to fulfill the Law (Mt 5.17)

In other words, the conditions of the covenant are kept perfectly in one person, therefore *he* is the mediator.

God's purpose in choosing the nation is fulfilled in Christ

B. The men who are at war with God can lay down their arms

1. The mediator has satisfied the wrath of God
2. The mediator has won the approval of God
3. Anyone who comes to God *in Christ* will be received by the Father and will have fellowship with Father and Son

Conclusion:

Proposition: There is an Israelite mediator for the nations.

We are pleased to call him our God and King!