

MONDAY *September 1* **Seeing God**

Read Exodus 24:9–18. What amazing experience were the children of Israel given here?

EXODUS 24:9

"THEN WENT UP MOSES, AND AARON, NADAB, AND ABIHU, AND SEVENTY OF THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL: AND THEY SAW THE GOD OF ISRAEL: AND THERE WAS UNDER HIS FEET AS IT WERE A PAVED WORK OF A SAPPHIRE STONE, AND AS IT WERE THE BODY OF HEAVEN IN HIS CLEARNESS. AND UPON THE NOBLES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL HE LAID NOT HIS HAND: ALSO THEY SAW GOD, AND DID EAT AND DRINK.

AND THE LORD SAID UNTO MOSES, COME UP TO ME INTO THE MOUNT, AND BE THERE: AND I WILL GIVE THEE TABLES OF STONE, AND A LAW, AND COMMANDMENTS WHICH I HAVE WRITTEN; THAT THOU MAYEST TEACH THEM. AND MOSES ROSE UP, AND HIS MINISTER JOSHUA: AND MOSES WENT UP INTO THE MOUNT OF GOD. AND HE SAID UNTO THE ELDERS, TARRY YE HERE FOR US, UNTIL WE COME AGAIN UNTO YOU: AND, BEHOLD, AARON AND HUR ARE WITH YOU: IF ANY MAN HAVE ANY MATTERS TO DO, LET HIM COME UNTO THEM. AND MOSES WENT UP INTO THE MOUNT, AND A CLOUD COVERED THE MOUNT. AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD ABODE UPON MOUNT

SINAI, AND THE CLOUD COVERED IT SIX DAYS: AND THE SEVENTH DAY HE CALLED UNTO MOSES OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE CLOUD. AND THE SIGHT OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD WAS LIKE DEVOURING FIRE ON THE TOP OF THE MOUNT IN THE EYES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. AND MOSES WENT INTO THE MIDST OF THE CLOUD, AND GAT HIM UP INTO THE MOUNT: AND MOSES WAS IN THE MOUNT FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS."

After the firm reestablishment of the covenant with God, Moses again climbed Sinai. In the beginning of this climb, Moses was not alone. He had the excellent company of 73 Israelite leaders. For the leaders, this was the pinnacle experience: they saw God (theophany), and twice the text underlines this amazing reality. It was also a time for the leaders, by eating together, to seal the covenant with God. This was a banquet, and the God of Israel was their Host. These leaders were deeply honored by God.

In the Middle East during biblical times (and to a certain extent today), eating together was a high experience, great honor, and privilege. It offered forgiveness and formed a bond of friendship. It implied being there for each other and staying together in times of crisis and problems. By eating together, they promised each other, without words, that if something should happen to one party, the other would be obliged to come

and help. To be invited to a meal was a special treat that was not extended to everyone.

Meanwhile, to refuse an invitation was one of the worst kinds of insults. This insight helps us to understand the stories in the New Testament where Jesus Christ was heavily criticized for eating with sinners (Luke 5:30). When believers celebrate the Lord's Supper, they also establish this close bond with other believers who are sinners like themselves. During this meal, we celebrate the forgiveness and salvation that we have in Jesus (see Matt. 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-25, 1 Cor. 11:23-29).

Tragically, some of the men who had gone up with Moses later fell into sin and lost their lives (see Lev. 10:1, 2, 9). Even though they had such a deep experience with God there, they were not transformed or converted by that experience. What a powerful lesson about how possession of truth and sacred privileges does not automatically mean conversion. Having experienced what they did, these men should have been the last ones to have done what they would later tragically do.

Dwell more on the story of these very privileged men, even sons of Aaron. What warning should this give to us, as Adventists, who, with the light we have been entrusted with, are indeed privileged?

2 Peter 2 - ENTIRE CHAPTER

JUDE = ENTIRE CHAPTER