

# GOD ON A MOUNTAIN AND GOD IN US

Acts 2:1-4

Like any well-crafted story, the Bible records dramatic moments that establish templates used to shape and inform other, later events. But rather than merely being a good storytelling technique, the Bible uses those moments to introduce important concepts that give insight into God's character and His relationship with humanity. Exodus' account of God's descent onto Mount Sinai offers one of those dramatic, template-forming events. Consider, therefore, the following passages and the ways they develop the ideas introduced at Mount Sinai:

## Exodus 19:16-20

God's descent on Mount Sinai demonstrated His desire to dwell among His people and introduced His covenant with them.

## Exodus 40:34-38

God indwelt the tabernacle in a way that echoed His descent on Mount Sinai, indicating the importance of the temple as His dwelling place in the midst of the nation.

## 2 Chronicles 5:13-14

God indwelt the temple in the same way He inhabited the tabernacle.

## Acts 2:1-4

The Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles in a way that echoed God's descent on Mount Sinai and His indwelling of the tabernacle and temple, indicating the importance of the event and the beginning of His new covenant with the church.

## Applications

- God's desire is - and always has been - to be in a relationship with His people.
- As Christians, we embody God's desire to be in relationship and He expects us to model the blessings of His desire to the people around us so that we can draw them into that relationship (*1 Peter 2:9*).
- Just as restrictions accompanied God's presence on Mount Sinai, in the tabernacle, and in the temple (*cf. Exodus 19:9-15; Leviticus 21:1-22:16*), so too do expectations accompany God's presence in us – we cannot be whoever we want to be (*1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-*

20); we have to become people whose identity reflects God's holy identity (*Leviticus 19:2; 1 Peter 1:13-16*).

- The Bible's story is not merely the account of things in the distant past; its story continues in our lives. Our lives then become a testimony to its truths and to the reality of the blessings it promises (*cf. Romans 12:1-2*).

While the Bible uses all the techniques of good storytelling, it is far more than merely a well-crafted narrative. In telling the story of God's relationships with people, the Bible reveals God's character and His plan for humanity in ways intended to draw us into His plan and to motivate us to want to become like Him. Given the goodness of God's person and plan and given our claim to be His temple in the world today, we should ask ourselves whether our lives reflect His character and whether we work to draw people into the blessings of His plan.