

Living as God's People

Who are we and what are we here for?

Our Identity and Mission

Exodus 19:1-6



What story are you living in?

S Exodus 19:1-6 - a small part of Israel's story - which is a part of **God's BIG story**

Exodus 19:4-6

- S** 4. You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.
- S** 5. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. For the whole earth is mine,
- S** 6. and you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Exodus 19:4-6

- S** God addresses Israel, his people:
- S** explains the **past**,
- S** points to the **future**, and
- S** calls for response in the **present**

1. Past grace – God’s salvation (v. 4)

S “You have seen what I have done...”

S God’s grace came first

S All of our life as Christians, including our work of mission, must be founded on God’s grace.

2. Future grace – God’s mission

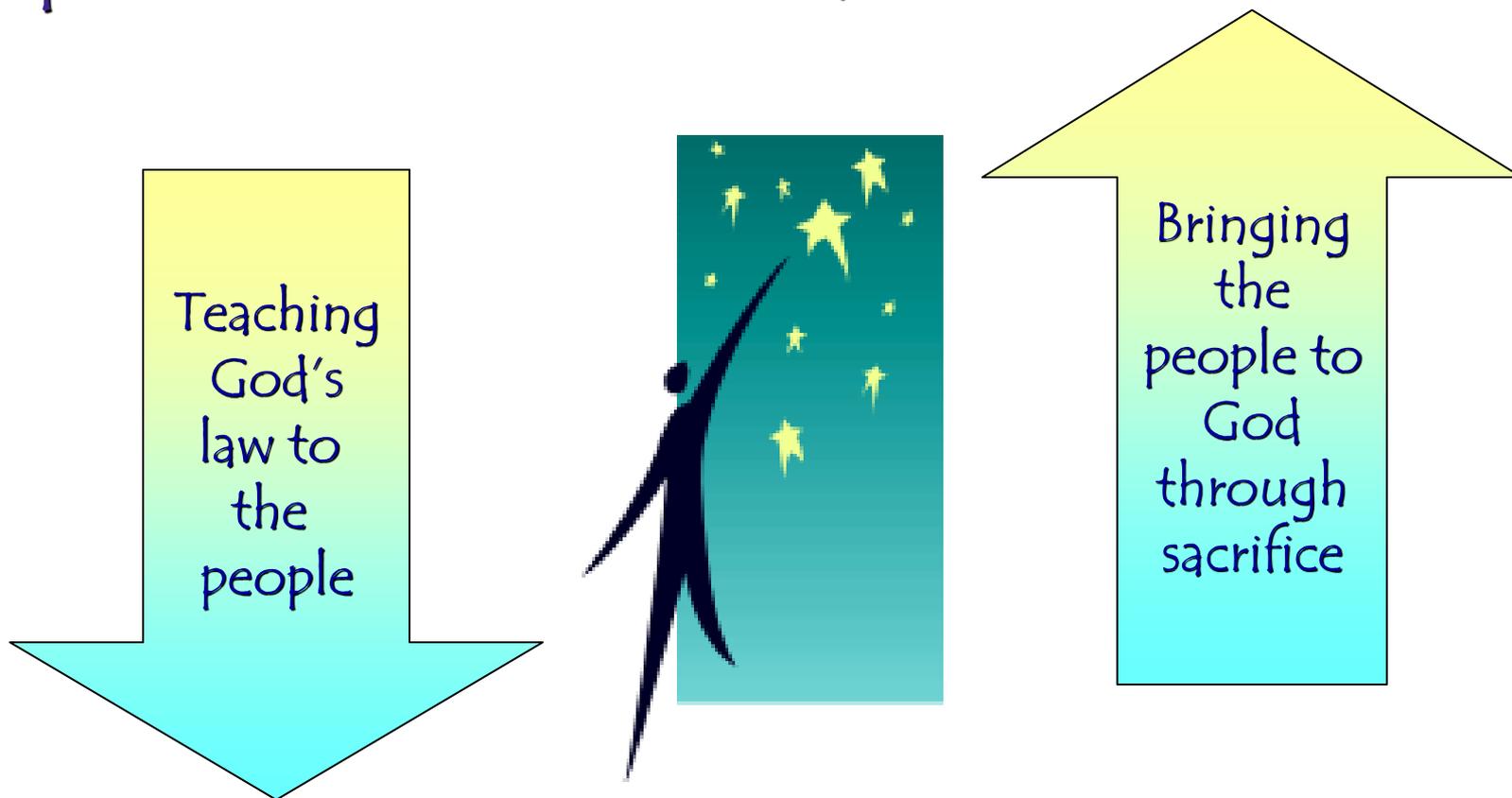
v. 5

- S “all nations ... the whole earth is mine”
- S This is the **God of Abraham** speaking – the God who promised to bless all nations.
- S God envisages the whole universal future.
- S All our lives are ‘framed’ by what God has done in the past (to save us), and what God plans to do in the future (to redeem all creation).

3. Present grace – God’s people living in God’s world v. 6

- S “You will be for me a kingdom of **priests** and a **holy** nation”
- S What was the job of the **priests** in Old Testament Israel?

The priest : between God ...



...and the people

God's *priestly* people

- S The job of the priests, as God's representatives, was:
 - S To bring God to the people
 - S To bring the people to God

- S “You will be for me to the rest of the nations what your priests are for you”

God's *priestly* people

- S Rom. 15:16** - Paul's missionary work = 'my priestly service'
- S 1 Pet. 2:9-10** - The task of all Christians
- S** We are called to be *the living representatives of the living God*; to bring God to people, and to bring people to God
- S** That is *our* mission.

God's *holy* people

- S To be “holy” means to be “different”
- S Lev. 18:1-5; Lev. 19:2
- S How? “If you will obey me fully” (Ex. 19:5)
- S Remember the double context of *grace*.
Obedience is always response to the grace of God.

God's *holy* people

- S Obedience is not a condition of *salvation*. But it is a condition of *mission*.
- S The grace of *obedience*, responding to the grace of *salvation*, living in the grace of God's *mission*
- S We cannot earn our *salvation* by obedience and good works. But we cannot fulfil our *mission* without the obedience of faith that includes good works.

Who are we and what are we here for?

1. We are people who have experienced the past grace of God's saving work.
2. We are people whom God wants to use for the future grace of God's mission to bring people of all nations to salvation
3. We are people who are called to live in the present grace of obedience to God, for God's glory in all the earth.