

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

EXODUS 32-34

The last verse of Exodus 24 tells us that Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights on the summit of a fiery and glory-topped Mount Sinai. In the chapters since, we've learned what happened on the mountain top... Moses received two items: *the Commandments of God*, and *the blueprint for the Tabernacle*.

Tonight, we'll discover what happened at the base of the mountain – in the camp - during those 40 days... and how Moses reacts when he returns.

Chapter 32 begins, “Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

Notice, the infant nation had three problems that led them into idolatry... first, *a patience problem* - second, *a faith problem* - and third, *a knowledge problem*.

Israel waited 400 years in Egyptian slavery for God to send them a deliverer. Moses waited 40 years on the backside of the desert before God was ready to initiate that deliverance. Now the Israelites have been delivered, and they can't wait 40 days for Moses to consult with God and receive His marching orders.

Like many of us, the Israelites had a **wait problem** - a W-A-I-T problem.

They *strayed* when Moses *delayed*. Understand God's plan will almost always includes a strategic delay. And to follow God you've got to be able to handle them.

I've heard it put, "The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg, not by smashing it." If you're in a hurry tonight – if you're so anxious to get started you're about to leave God behind, then just *sit on it!*

Israel had a wait problem, but she also had a **faith problem**.

The Hebrews wanted a leader they could see – someone tangible, visible, and out front. But that's a problem. For God is not tangible, but spiritual - not visible, but invisible - and not always out front, often God works behind the scenes.

The impala is an interesting animal. It's a leaper! It can jump 10' high and cover a distance of 30' in a single stride. Yet, they are displayed in zoos behind 3' high stone walls. And the reason the wall keeps the animal enclosed is that impalas won't jump if they can't see where their feet will land. They have no faith.

Guys, we've got to be willing to *trust God*, even when we can't *trace Him*.

And also, Israel had a **knowledge problem**. Notice how they excuse their idolatrous desires... they say of Moses, "**we do not know what has become of him.**" Aaron should've looked at them and said, "*You don't really need to know.*"

One of the biggest reasons people become dissatisfied with God is they believe He's obligated to keep them in the loop. They think God needs to run all His initiatives past them... If they don't sign off on the plan, God can't precede...

This is sheer arrogance. Israel didn't know what had become of Moses, but God certainly did. *Hey, there's a lot God knows that we don't.* And God expects us to trust Him, even if He chooses not to brief us on the subject.

But instead of patience, and faith, and humility, Israel resorts to idolatry...

And Aaron responds in verse 2, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me. So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" ...the infamous golden calf.

So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD."

Remember the first commandment God wrote on the stone tablets, "You shall have no other gods before Me." This was obviously a violation of that command.

But that may not have been Aaron's intention. In verse 5 he builds the calf, and then proclaims "a feast to LORD." The

word translated “**LORD**” is “*Yahweh*” – the covenant name for God. This calf may’ve been a representation of the true God.

In Revelation 4 we’re given a glimpse of God’s throne in heaven, and around the throne are angels, or living creatures... and they have *the face of a calf*. Aaron may’ve tried to draw on that connection. In his mind, he was fashioning a graven image of the one, true God. Rather than a violation of the first command, the gold calf may’ve started out as more a breach of the second commandment.

Of course, God considered it idolatry. *In His eyes it was all a bunch of bull.*

Verse 6, “**Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings;**” Notice, they didn’t offer any sin offerings. They were blind to their sin. They’d swapped a miracle-working God for an impotent idol.

Just two months earlier these same people heard God thunder from Mount Sinai and speak in an audible voice, “**You shall have no other gods before Me.**” And, “**You shall not make for yourself a graven image...**” Hey, never think, “*If God would just speak audibly I’d obey.*” That didn’t happen for the Hebrews.

“**And the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.**” *Let’s party hearty...* The Hebrew verb translated “**play**” suggests sexual promiscuity.

The camp of Israel was transformed into a drunken orgy.

“**And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have**

corrupted themselves.” God calls them, “your people.” God is ashamed of Israel. “*Moses these are your people...*”

“They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!' ”

And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people! Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."

This is an incredible offer... God will wipe out Israel, and start over with Moses.

No doubt God is frustrated... He's experiencing the frustrations of a parent... At times I get frustrated with my kids, and threaten to ship them off to China...

It doesn't mean I will – I just could... I'm being honest with feelings I'll never act on. Here, I really don't believe God's promises to Israel were ever in jeopardy. The real issue here is not *God's faithfulness*... This will be a test of *Moses' faithfulness*.

If Moses had any inkling of selfish ambition he would've taken God up on His offer - but God is testing Moses' love for the people he's been chosen to lead.

The best *leaders* are *lovers*! Folks follow a pastor if they know he loves them. And Moses is about to prove his love for the children of Israel, once and for all.

Verse 11, “Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your

people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'?" God, why cause Your enemies to question your love and mercy? Moses is concerned with God's reputation.

"Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" Moses knew God's covenant with Abraham was based on God's grace, not Israel's goodness. The people at the base of Mount Sinai, despite their sin, were the descendants to Abraham and heir of the promises.

And verse 14 tells us how God responds, "So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people." *God changed His mind.*

Can God do that? If God relents, how does that impact the doctrine of God's sovereignty? *I'll let you and the theologians figure that out...* All I know is verse 14 says God changed His course of action in response to Moses' prayer...

Apparently, "God is immutable, not immobile." His nature never changes, *but God will alter His course* - which is a powerful encouragement to pray! A prayer born of love - and based on His grace and faithfulness - will influence God.

It's said, "Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscle of omnipotence." Our sovereign, supreme, all-knowing God somehow makes His plans vulnerable to our petitions. He invites us to participate in His work through prayer. God baits us to get involved by allowing our *puny prayers* to sway His *mighty movements!*

Verse 15, "And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides; on the one side and on the other they were written. Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets." Imagine, tablets penned with the finger of God. If we had them today we'd do handwriting analysis on them... and conclude they were written by a person full of love.

"And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp." But he said: "It is not the noise of the shout of victory, nor the noise of the cry of defeat, but the sound of singing I hear."

So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain." Literally, *Moses becomes the first man in history to break all Ten Commandments in a single act!*

In a rage he hurls the tablets on the rocks, and they smash into pieces.

Apparently, anger was a problem Moses had to deal with most of his life.

He got angry and killed an Egyptian... He got angry and broke these tablets... Later, he'll get angry and strike a rock... which costs him entrance into Canaan.

Verse 20, "Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it." He mixes gold dust with water and makes the Hebrews drink.

This is alka-seltzer in reverse. He wants their rebellion and sinfulness to make them sick to their stomach. It'll help them realize how God feels about their sin.

"And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?" How could Aaron have strayed this far?

On the mountaintop God told Moses that Aaron was to be priest. He would lead Israel in worship. At the bottom of the mountain he's the one who makes the idol.

"So Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil." He blames Israel and tries to pass the buck.

Listen to what he says next - It's such a flimsy excuse, it's humorous, "For they said to me, 'Make us gods that shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'"

And I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.' So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this

calf came out." I threw the gold in the fire, and presto, "this calf came out." There's no mention of his "engraving tool" and his efforts at "fashioning" the calf. Aaron is trying to duck all responsibility.

Verse 25, "Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies), then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on the LORD's side, come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.

And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" Apparently, Moses drew a line in the sand. He called for the people to choose sides – and the Levities killed everyone who opposed the Lord.

"So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about 3000 men of the people fell that day." The idolatry involved the whole camp, but apparently, there were 3000 people who refused to repent and come over to the Lord's side.

It's ironic, in the New Testament the grace of God is poured out at Pentecost and *3000 people are saved*. When the law of God is given *3000 people die*.

"Then Moses said, "Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for

every man has opposed his son and his brother." The Levites' learned when you stand for the Lord – it often puts you in opposition to the people you love. Imagine their agony - they had to draw swords on their own relatives... It's still tough today - whenever faith divides a family.

Verse 30, "Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin - but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written." *Moses, do you realize what you're saying?* This is mind-boggling! Moses will go to hell, if it means the Hebrews can go to heaven.

Hey, I've got to be honest, I love you guys, a lot – but I'm not ready to risk eternity in the smoking section for any of you. I would suffer in a lot of ways to show God's love for you, but to go to hell? *Sorry!* Moses is demonstrating extraordinary love.

It's difficult for us to begin to grasp the depth of love Moses possessed.

But, even though, I can't say I've *mimicked* Moses' love – I can say I am *moved* by His love. Moses' love motivates me to have a greater love for the lost.

Do you realize, every 10 seconds, 15 people exit this world? Each hour, across the globe, 5,417 people enter eternity to meet their Maker. Add to that an alarming statistic... 95% of Christians go their whole life and never lead anyone to Jesus.

Now you understand the seriousness of the situation.

God isn't asking us to go to hell for someone – He's just asking us to get down on our knees and pray for a friend – or go across the street to share the Gospel with a neighbor - or go out of our way to give an offering to a missionary. Do we love the lost? Have we forgotten we were once members in the same fraternity?

“And the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.” Only Jesus will was sinless and could die in place of the people.

“Now therefore, go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin.” Their lives are spared, but Israel doesn't go unpunished. God disciplines whom He loves. “So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.”

Chapter 33, “Then the LORD said to Moses, “Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' And I will send My Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way for you are a stiff-necked people.” God renews His promise of protection and guidance, but He imposes a temporary distancing...

God had intended to dwell among His people as they made their way to the Promised Land. The glory of God would've been visible in the camp, but now until the tabernacle is constructed, God will dwell outside the camp of Israel.

“And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.” This was not a time for the people to be joyous - to wear their party hats - fun clothes - fancy jewelry. This was a time to mourn over their sin.

”For the LORD had said to Moses, "Say to the children of Israel, 'You are a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you.'" So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.”

Folks seeking God for revival and victory aren't just interested in thrills, and good times, and spiritual gifts – *ornaments, if you will* – they strip off their ornaments and trivial preoccupations. They're sorry for their sin.

We're told in verse 7, “Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp.” Remember, the tabernacle of meeting is not the Tabernacle.

It was an interim home for God's glory - outside the camp - until Moses could gather the materials and build the Tabernacle shown to him on the mountain.

“So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle. And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door”

Whenever Moses met with God it became a spectator event. The faithless nation who had bowed to a golden calf, marveled at the intimacy Moses had with the Almighty.

“So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend”

The expression “face to face” doesn’t mean Moses gazed at God eyeball to eyeball. It’s figurative language. They spoke freely and candidly like two friends.

This is the kind relationship we can have with God through Jesus.

“And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.” Roman Catholics are quick to point out that Joshua’s father’s name was Nun... He was not the son of a nun.

But this is an important insight. Here’s why Joshua was chosen as Moses’ successor. He loved to hang out in God’s presence. He longed for the glory God revealed to Moses. He prayed that some of the anointing would rub off on him.

Verse 12, “Then Moses said to the LORD, “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’

“Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight.” Notice, God’s grace is not an end in itself – it entitles us to God’s blessing. Grace brings with it the knowledge of God - an awareness of His presence – His favor and gifts.

Don’t be content with *God’s grace* – use it to know *the God of that grace!*

“And consider that this nation is Your people.” Moses is concerned that God withdrew Himself from the nation. He resides only in the tent outside the camp.

But God assures Moses in verse 14, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Then Moses makes a beautiful statement to God, in verse 15, “If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.” Hey, Moses would rather be in the desert with God, than in a land of blessing without Him.

Remember, when God told Moses to go to Egypt, Moses balked, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh” God answered him, “I will certainly be with you...”

At the time that wasn’t enough for Moses, he came back with more excuses. But now he’s learned – when God is with you, you have all you really need. If Moses becomes assured of God’s presence, He knows nothing is impossible.

Now you know why it meant so much to His disciples when Jesus told them just before He ascended into heaven, “Lo, I am with you always...”

That’s also God’s promise to us. In Hebrews 13:5 God says to every believer, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” We all have the promise of God’s presence.

Verse 16, “For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.” Some nations were known for their geographic advantages – or natural resources – or military might – or political systems – or intellectual achievements – but one thing set Israel apart.

Israel had one distinction... the presence of God dwelt among the Hebrews.

This is also a distinctive characteristic of the Christian – we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Everyone who is born of God - the Spirit of God dwells in Him.

Verse 17, “So the LORD said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.”

And he said, “Please, show me Your glory.”

God promises Moses His presence, but Moses isn’t content with just an awareness of God’s presence. Moses wants all that grace entitles Him to receive... *He wants to see the full blaze of God’s magnificent glory!*

Exodus 33:18 expresses the desire of every heart that hungers for God. Moses has talked to God as a man talks to a friend, but he's no longer content with just the warmth of God's presence. He wants to see God unveiled and in full regalia.

How content have you become in your relationship with God? When was the last time you asked God something this bold and daring, **"Show me Your glory."**

Here's an old quote that challenges me each time I read it, **"I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please, not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk, or a snooze in the sunshine. I don't want enough of God to make me love a man of a different color, or pick beets with a migrant worker. I want ecstasy, not transformation. I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please."** Are you content with \$3 worth of God, or do you want all that grace entitles us to receive? I dare you to ask God to show you His glory!

God answers Moses in verse 19, **"I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."**

In response to Moses' request to see His glory, God gives Moses His name.

In Bible times names revealed a person's nature, thus God's name revealed His glory. And God labels Himself as gracious

and compassionate. In essence, God's glory is seen in His grace. His glory is bound up in His compassion.

Of the light that shines from God's throne the brightest and hottest rays are those that reveal His love. See His grace and you've seen His glory.

God is about to answer Moses' request, and show His glory, but God tells Him in verse 20, **"You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."**

The full burst of God's unshielded, undiluted grace is far too much for any mortal man to handle. If you or I saw the visible, physical glory of God with our naked eye we'd be burned to a crisp. We'd be disintegrated - turned to dust.

So the Lord designs some personal protection for Moses. Verse 21, **"And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock..."** Or literally, a fissure, or crack in the rock. **"And will cover you with My hand while I pass by."**

And notice the double protection – the *rock of God* and the *hand of God*.

And this rock that overshadowed Moses pointed to a future rock, Jesus. For it's in Christ that we're perfectly positioned to behold the glory of God.

Augustus Toplady understood this imagery, and drew on it when he wrote in his famous hymn, **"Rock of Ages, cleft for me; let me hide myself in Thee."**

God says to Moses in verse 23, “Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.” What a phenomenal experience that must’ve been. A full, frontal view of God would’ve been lethal, but God revealed as much of Himself as Moses could handle. Moses knew God in a way no one else would, until a few disciples met God walking on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

Guys, no matter how long you’ve been a Christian – or the extent of your past encounters with God - there is far more of Him to experience than what you’ve received. Go home tonight and ask Him, “Please, show me Your glory!”

Chapter 34, “And the LORD said to Moses, “Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. So be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain.

And no man shall come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain.” It was off-limits.

“So he cut two tablets of stone like the first ones. Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.”

And here is God’s name, “And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and

gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin..." God is love, *but His love doesn't ignore sin.*

For God also is "by no means clearing the guilty..." He is "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." In other words, some sin has consequences that are passed down to succeeding generations – and God doesn't shelter your kids from the results of your sin. If you want to pass on a corrupt legacy to your kids God will let you.

This past week I walked into the roller hockey rink, and past a High School hockey player smoking a cigarette with his dad... I wondered what in the world was this dad thinking... Was he trying to be cool by his permissiveness? I'm sorry, but to me, leaving your kids a legacy of bad habits is not my idea of being cool!

Verse 8, "So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. Then he said, "If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we are a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance." Moses is inviting God to rejoin the people - from the tabernacle of meeting back to the center of the camp.

"And (God) said: "Behold, I make a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the LORD.

For it is an awesome thing that I will do with you."

What a word from God to us... God has a plan for your life – for your family – for our church... God would say to us tonight, **“For it is an awesome thing that I will do with you”...** Yet in return Israel is to maintain their end of the deal...

And for the sake of time let's summarize some of the nation's responsibilities...

Verses 11-17, Israel should tear down the pagan altars. If they associate with idolaters they'll end up worshipping idols. One compromise leads to another.

Verses 18-25, Israel needs to keep the three major feasts - Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Weeks in the springtime – and the Feast of Ingathering in the fall.

Then verses 19-20, they need to dedicate their firstborn to the Lord.

And verse 26, let's read it, **“The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God.”** This was a tithe. The first and best belonged to the Lord. And **“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.”** This is the second time this is mentioned. Let me refer you to my comments in 23:19.

Verse 27, **“Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.”**

God made His covenant with Israel **“according to the tenor”** or *“spirit”* or *“intent”* of these words. Fast forward to the time of Jesus and a sect of Jews known as the Pharisees become experts at keeping the letter of the Law, yet violating its intent.

God never approved of a wooden, mechanical, heart-less interpretation of the Law. The Law was spiritual. It was always intended as an expression of love.

Under the Old Covenant, God would do awesome things, but the people had to obey – and this was *the flaw with the Law* – it depended on man’s performance.

The Law required a tag-team righteousness. It was God’s part and man’s part – *and because man had a part* - the Old Covenant was doomed from the beginning.

The genius of the New Covenant is that man’s participation is not required in the production of righteousness. The work is done by Christ alone. The Law says *do*, Jesus says *done!* Our part is to look on His finished work and have faith!

Verse 28, “**So (Moses) was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water.**” This was another 40 days and nights. And this time he fasted – bread and water. A person can live 40 days without bread, but not water. This was obviously, a supernatural, one-of-a-kind encounter with God.

It needs the disclaimer... *Please don’t try this at home.*

“**And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.**” God rewrote the tablets Moses had broken.

Verse 29, “**Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses’ hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he**

talked with Him.” Moses had seen God’s glory, and it continued to radiate from his face.

Call it *the divine shine!* The *Mo glow*. It was a *spiritual Son burn*.

Understand the human spirit is like a Bounty paper towel – the commercial use to call it the *quicker-picker-upper*. It’s highly absorbent. Soak it and the towel ends up saturated. The same is true with us. The more time we spend soaking in God’s presence – beholding His glory - the more saturated with Him we become.

It’s been said, “**There is still, in the countenances of God’s most advanced servants a brightness, a gladness, a beaming radiance, which comes only from long communion with the Lord.**” God wants us to be like a lampshade. He wants to reveal in our hearts His glory - then let that glory shine through our lives to others.

In Acts 6:15 it was said of Stephen that he had a “**face as the face of an angel.**” Stephen also had the *divine shine*. How about you? Does your life shine? Do you spend so much time in God’s presence that you radiate His grace and glory?

“So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.” Living under the Law caused feelings of unworthiness. Israel could never meet the Law’s demands. Trying to keep the Law caused condemnation, and the fear of God’s glory.

“Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with

them. Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.” It symbolized their separation from God under the Law.

Verse 34, “But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.”

2 Corinthians 3 is a great commentary on this passage. Paul says the veil Moses used to cover God’s glory symbolized Israel’s condition under the Old Covenant. They felt unworthy of God... thus Moses kept the glory hidden.

But Paul says at the moment “one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.”

When our sin is forgiven the veil is lifted. Our feelings of unworthiness vanish. A person who receives the righteousness of Christ is as worthy as he can get.