

Exodus 33-34 - “Show Me Your Glory”

The scene of last week’s study was an interesting one. The nation of Israel was quick to show their fickleness. And Aaron, the interim leader facilitated all of it. What I find intriguing, is that Aaron is the guy that God will still use to be the High Priest; the one to minister in the tabernacle and represent the people before God, and represent God to the people.

- I’m so glad that God gives us second chances!

How many people like to move? Not many I’m sure. In Exodus 33, God is getting Moses and the people of Israel prepared to move. To move from Sinai and start making their pilgrimage to the promised land. But there is one key element that Moses wants if he is going to move anywhere.

33:1-6 - *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.’² 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.³ 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.”⁴ And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.⁵ 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.’ ”⁶ So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.*

After sin had been dealt with (chapter 32) God was ready to move them on to the place He had for them. Sin will always keep us from God’s best.

It’s been said that “Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.” (R. Zaccharias).

It’s kind of funny that we see this ongoing dialogue between God and Moses over who’s responsible for the people. God says they are the people ‘***whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt...*** (33:1)’ Earlier they tried to pass the responsibility off on each other (see 32:7+11).

In verses 2+3 God reminds the people of His **promise** to give them the land of Canaan and tells them of His **power** to deliver it to them removing the current inhabitants. But this time He says His **presence** will not go with them.

Some might look at this whole account of God potentially consuming His people and conclude that God just isn't patient enough with His people.

Yet we read in the Bible that God is a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:29). In other words, anything that is not holy in His presence will be devoured. God is saying that if He were to lead them, He knows of their propensity to sin and rebellion, and under those conditions they would be consumed in His presence.

He says they are a **stiff-necked people**. That speaks of their stubbornness. God wanted to lead them one way, while they wanted to go a different way.

- God is essentially showing His mercy by not having His presence directly with them.

Notice how Israel responds to all this. They're filled with grief; **they mourned and no one put on their ornaments**. The people are beginning to get the importance of God's presence with them. They're beginning to see the importance of humility and reverence before God.

Ornaments we know to be the jewelry they received in coming out of Egypt. Interestingly this Hebrew word for ornaments can also mean trappings, or bridle of horses. This same word is used in **Psalms 32:9**, *"Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you."*

- You see, the Israelites are learning to put aside the things that might cause them to be pulled back (like a harness) to the things of the world. God has delivered them and set them free, but their freedom comes in worshipping God alone.

So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments...

This is what we're all called to do. We need to recognize the pull of sin, and we need to strip ourselves of the things that might easily ensnare us or trip us up.

Hebrews 12:1–2, *"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was*

set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

33:7-11 - *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. ⁸ 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. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.*

Moses now quite literally and radically says, *'If God will not be in this camp, I'll go to where He is!'*

So, he takes his tent and sets it up outside the camp to meet with God and worship. Moses had a heart for God; he was dependent on God.

It says in 33:9 that the cloud (God's presence) descended upon the tent.

- Sometimes it takes removing ourselves from certain environments that may be getting in the way of us communing with the Lord and enjoying His presence.
- **Proverbs 8:17**, *"I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me."*

...and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door (33:10).

This is interesting. It's a lot like people today. They may be interested in spiritual things, intrigued by them, maybe even have a reverence towards it all, but it's all done from a distance. They want to be worshippers of God but do it from out of a place of comfort. They don't want to press in or get too close. We miss out when we worship from a distance.

- "Everyone of us is as close to God as he has chosen to be." (J. Oswald Sanders).
- God will not take you one step further than you want to go. He doesn't violate your will. Sometimes I wish He would, because I need a push. But as

I look around and see people so spiritual, in tune with His Spirit, matured in their walk with God, I don't need to wonder why this is so. It's a direct result of their proximity to God. They've been the ones that have pursued God and taken time to meet with Him.

So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face... (33:11).

Here's the result of stepping out in wholehearted devotion to God: amazing intimacy! God spoke with ***Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.*** That's incredible. It's not that Moses literally saw the face of God. We're going to read later that God will tell Moses: *"You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live"* (33:20). This rather was a Hebrew idiom to speak of a free and open fellowship. This was about intimacy not a theophany.

- **1 John 4:12**, *"No one has seen God at any time..."*
- Though we may not see God, we have the privilege of knowing God. We get to have open fellowship with Him through our Saviour Jesus Christ. We get to spend time with Him in His Word and through prayer. We have the privilege of a spiritual face to face with God each and every day that we step out and seek Him.

Joshua was so impacted by the devotional life of Moses that he remained in the tent. Moses was an example to the nation of a true worshipper of God, but it had a special influence on Joshua, the future leader of the nation.

- I pray we may be looking at ways we can be that blessing and example to the next generation. May we set that example of worship and dependency on God.

33:12-13 - 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.'¹³ 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. And consider that this nation is Your people."

Moses states that God has him leading the people out of Sinai, but he doesn't have any understanding of who God is going to send with them. Moses isn't content with some angel; He wants God or nothing!

Here's the interceding heart of Moses shining through again. God reveals potential courses of action, but it's to get Moses to pray and seek God's best.

- Moses says ***that I may know You*** (33:13).

- We can get very sidetracked with other things. We can settle for substitutes. But for Moses, only the presence of God would do. Let's be found seeking after God and walking in His presence. Let's not allow anything else to take His place.

Notice how Moses asks for these things: ***if I have found grace in Your sight...*** (33:13). This is the only way we can approach God and be accepted at all.

- **Hebrews 4:16**, *"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."*

33:14-16 - ***And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." 15 Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. 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."***

It's interesting the kinds of conditions we put on getting rest. 'Lord if you would give me a spouse, I'll be happy and find rest.' 'Lord if you would just give me that promotion at work, I'd find rest.' 'Lord if you do this or give me that...' We think that presents will satisfy, and bring rest, but it's simply being in the presence of God that we will find contentment and rest.

Moses felt so strongly about this that he said, ***If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.***

- This is the key for us. God if you're leading me and Your Presence is going before me, then that's where I want to be. That will be the best place for me.

This would be the distinguishing factor for the Israelites. This is what would set them apart from all other nations. All other nations worship false gods that can do nothing. Their gods were carried around with them. But God's presence would be a known thing that would cause other nations to fear (ie. Rahab and the Spies)

- **Joshua 2:8-11**, *"Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, 9 and said to the men: "I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. 10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more*

courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath."

33:17-23 - *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."* ¹⁸ ***And he said, "Please, show me Your glory."*** ¹⁹ ***Then He said, "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."*** ²⁰ ***But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."*** ²¹ ***And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. "*** ²² ***So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. "*** ²³ ***Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."***

Again, Moses receives a great blessing and promise from God not because of His goodness, but because of God's grace. Moses was faithful to seek God and intercede, and the fruit of it is evident here.

But Moses is not just content with being led by God's presence, he wants to know God even more. He says: ***show me Your glory...***

- The more that we know of God, the more of God we'll want to know.

I will make all My Goodness pass before you... God's glory is linked to his goodness, His glory lies in His goodness. If you can't see that God is good, then your understanding of God is incomplete.

- You may be wondering, how can that be so. I've been through such hard times; I've lost a child, lost a job, lost a spouse. How is God good in that? But we can continue on knowing that He takes all of those miserable moments or months and uses them to bring good; whether it's a better situation that will come into your life as a result, or a breakthrough in your own spiritual life that couldn't have come without the pain first. God knows and He sees the beginning from the end. We only see the immediate, and that is where we often get troubled and out of joint. But God is faithful and brings us through those tough times to a day of rejoicing where we're able to look back and see finally how God used each ordeal to better my life. Hindsight is always 20/20.

Notice how God would reveal His glory – by proclaiming the name of the Lord! He will preach a sermon to Moses – we'll see that in Chapter 34.

- The name of a person in Bible times was linked to their character and nature. God will reveal His nature to Moses by proclaiming who He is. This will give Moses a glimpse of His glory.

But He said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.

Again, God cannot show His face (an anthropomorphic term to mean His full glory) to anyone because they would die. God is completely sinless and holy. We would be consumed in that consuming fire. This is why we must be made new and lay these temporary tents aside for our heavenly habitation when we move into eternity.

But our desire now should be to ever be growing in the knowledge of God and seeking His glory. We have an advantage that Moses did not have:

- **John 14:9**, *"Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”"*
- **2 Corinthians 4:6**, *"For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

God afforded Moses something however that would have been such a blessing. He will give Moses an opportunity to catch a glimpse of His glory. God will place Him in a protective cleft of a rock.

- This is where Augustus Montague Toplady got his great hymn from: “Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.”

And notice, Moses didn't need to find this rock or crevice to stand in. God provided it and placed him there.

- So too, God has provided a place of safety for us to stand in – Jesus! He is our rock. He is the One which reveals God and brings us to God.
- **John 1:14**, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."*

34:1-4 - 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. ² 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. ³ 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.” ⁴ 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.

Moses had previously thrown down and broken the other two tablets when he saw the sin in the camp (32:9). This was representative of Israel breaking the covenant God made with them. But now we see the mercy and faithfulness of God in renewing His covenant with them.

Moses will go up alone as he once again acts as Mediator between God and the people. Moses lived a life of devotion and was blessed for it. He didn't miss out on anything but gained everything as a result.

34:5-7 - Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. ⁶ And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, ⁷ keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.”

The cloud again speaks of God's presence and glory. It was the cloud that led Israel by day, the cloud which previously covered Mt. Sinai, the cloud which came to Moses' tent in the last chapter.

God comes now and shows Moses His glory, but not through an act of might or an earth shattering display of power, He does so rather by a revelation of His character. He proclaimed His glory by Word!

- Don't ever underestimate the power of God's Word. You're not sitting down reading some historical book written by man, you're coming into contact with the living God who has proclaimed His glory through His Word.

“Moses wanted to know God's glory more, so God proclaimed His name to him. This shows us that to know God's glory, we must know something of God's attributes, God's perfections, God's nature—as He has revealed them to us in His Word.

It is no exaggeration to say that Exodus 34:6 is one of the most important verses in the Bible. It is repeated numerous times in Scripture (Pss 86:15; 103:8; 145:8;

Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). When someone wanted to know what God was like, they could quote this verse. After saying His sacred name “Yahweh,” which God revealed to Moses at the burning bush—denoting His self-sufficiency and self-existence—He explained the meaning of that name more fully by highlighting several attributes of Himself. This could be a sermon in itself, but just consider them briefly for now.”¹

When we see the name Lord in the Bible, not only is it capitalized, but it is the sacred name used of God derived from His proper name. In order to keep the proper name of God sacred and holy, the Jews made a tetragram, a word of 4 letters. They took out the vowels and spelled God’s name as YHWH, as an act of reverence. This name was a very Holy and revered name. But over the years of not speaking it fully, so as to not profane it, the children of Israel actually forgot the pronunciation of this name. So today nobody really knows the correct name, whether it’s Jehovah or Yehovah, Jahweh, or Yahweh. Whenever a Jewish student or scholar sees this tetragrammaton they will read Lord in its place which is the Hebrew word *adonai*.

- Jehovah or Yahweh means “the existing One”. He is our all in all. That’s why when Moses asked God, ‘who shall I say is sending me?’ God said, “I AM WHO I AM.” God was saying, I am the existing One, I am all that you need, I am everything to you.” When Jesus spoke those words, it caused the Jews to go wild, because Jesus was putting Himself equal with God.

So, we may not know the exact name of God, but we do know His nature and character:

- 1) **Merciful** – Mercy is not getting what we deserve. We deserve hell, judgment, punishment. But He has kept us free from all that. Notice that this is the first thing that speaks of God. Mercy is the centerpiece of the character of God.
- 2) **Gracious** – Grace is getting what we don’t deserve. We didn’t deserve forgiveness, we didn’t deserve His love, we don’t deserve eternal life, but yet it’s been given to us based solely on His grace.
- 3) **Longsuffering** – This means that God is slow to anger. He doesn’t have a short fuse like some of us have. It’s very contrary to the perception people have of God. I wonder so often, God why don’t you just come back, this

¹ Merida, T. (2014). *Exalting Jesus in Exodus* (p. 212). Holman Reference.

world is wicked and needs to be judged. Yet His nature is longsuffering; slow to anger. He wants none to perish (2 Peter 3:9).

- 4) **Goodness** – God’s glory, as shown in Exodus 33:18-19, is linked to His goodness. We serve a God that is good. It may not always seem like it at times, but based on these first three descriptions of the character of God, not many could refute His goodness. And we may not always understand how in the present, but “*all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose*” (Romans 8:28).
- 5) **Truth** – I love that God’s nature is truth. I don’t need to question Him, doubt Him, or wonder if I’m having the wool pulled over my eyes. He is truth. And as I seek Him, I begin to have more of the truth in me. Jesus said in **John 8:31-32**, “*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*”
- 6) **Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin** – God does not want us to continue in sin. Sin is damaging and brings a separation in our relationship with God. Thus, He has provided a way for our forgiveness. It’s not reserved for just a few, but it’s available for all who ask.

“Three different words are used in verse 7 for wrongdoing. **Iniquity** has to do with perverting the ways of the Lord. **Transgression** means rebellion against God. **Sin** is literally “offense,” primarily by missing the mark which God has set. They all convey the idea of falling short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).”²

The words ***the guilty*** is in italics in verse 7. Meaning it’s not in the original text. It’s been added by translators presumably to give understanding to the next phrase: ***visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children***... Yes God is just and righteous, and the guilty don’t get a free ride, but what I believe is meant here is that God will not clear away what He’s just said.

- Many have used this verse to teach the doctrine of generational curse. ‘*This battle with sin I have is because my great great grandfather battled with that sin.*’ This is hogwash. This teaching fosters people making excuses, and placing blame, rather than accepting responsibility and dealing with it properly through repentance. God addressed this in His word:

² MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (A. Farstad, Ed.; p. 126). Thomas Nelson.

- **Ezekiel 18:1–5, 9**, *"The word of the Lord came to me again, saying, ² 'What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge'? ³ 'As I live,' says the Lord God, 'you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. ⁴ 'Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die. ⁵ But if a man is just And does what is lawful and right; ⁹ If he has walked in My statutes— And kept My judgments faithfully— He is just; He shall surely live!' Says the Lord God."*

By God *"visiting the iniquity"*, it simply means, He's not going to give up on those to come. He's going to continue to visit them, and show them their need for Him, that they may repent and have life in His name.

- Yes, there are repercussions of sin that can affect the generations to come. But because your grandfather was an alcoholic doesn't mean it's in your genes. God won't condemn you for your parents or grandparents sin. It's not an inherited problem or behavior but rather a learned behavior.
- But God won't let you suffer in your sin, remember He's merciful and gracious. He'll visit with you and reveal Himself to you, so that you may turn from your path of destruction and walk in His marvelous light!

34:8-9 - *So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. ⁹ 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."*

What led Moses to bow down in worship? Not a display or glimpses of outward glory. Rather it was the wonder of the Word. Don't seek after signs or experiences to motivate you to worship. Just get into the Word and let His love and grace amaze you.

- If you've been struggling to worship, get to know Him through His word and let it inspire you to be a worshipper like Moses.

Notice Moses' humility. He could have easily separated himself from the people. But here he interceded on behalf of the people, including himself, and says: ***we are a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance.***

34:10-17 - And He 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. ¹¹ Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. ¹² Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. ¹³ But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images ¹⁴ (for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), ¹⁵ lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, ¹⁶ and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods. ¹⁷ “You shall make no molded gods for yourselves.

As God gets ready to move them on He reiterates the law to remind the people that there are things that can get in the way of our seeing the glory and goodness of God. God wants the best for them. The law is not meant to be a hindrance, it’s meant to be a protection so they don’t corrupt and defile themselves and bring pain upon them. So He goes through in summary what was covered in Ex 21-23.

Wherever they go they are not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land. Israel was to be distinct and separate. God knows that they will be tempted to adopt the practices of the heathen nations. So, God says to destroy all their false forms of worship. Don’t give any room for temptation and sin.

In verse 14 we read that God’s **name is Jealous**... And this is not about God being jealous **of** us, but jealous **for** us. He wants us for Himself, not out of selfishness but out of an understanding that our peace and joy depend on a loyalty and commitment to Him.

34:18-24 - “The Feast of Unleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the month of Abib [around April]; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt. ¹⁹ “All that open the womb are Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock, whether ox or sheep. ²⁰ But the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem him, then you shall

break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. “And none shall appear before Me empty-handed.”²¹ “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.”²² “And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year’s end.”²³ “Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the Lord God of Israel.”²⁴ For I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.

All this was covered in more detail earlier in our study of Exodus.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) along with Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Ingathering were the 3 main feasts that Israel was to observe.

They’re reminded to dedicate their firstborn to him. This was mentioned in Exodus 13:11–13 and 22:29–30.

- What was the purpose of that? This was to be a reminder of God’s deliverance out of Egypt and sparing their firstborn.

34:25-28 - “You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven, nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning.”²⁶ “The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of the Lord your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.”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.”²⁸ So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Anything offered to God must not be mixed with anything that could defile it.

- “The prohibition against cooking a **young goat in its mother’s milk** (23:19; cf. 34:26; Deut. 14:21) may have been because of religious practices in which the Canaanites cooked goats in their mother’s milk in a fertility rite. God did not want His people to partake of anything related to idolatrous worship. Or the prohibition may have been against the inhumane treatment of young goats. In the Feast of Ingathering (Ex. 23:16b) the Israelites may have been tempted to follow the common bedouin practice of cooking the meat of young goats in goat’s milk, whereas the young goats should have been left with their mothers. In other words, perhaps the prohibition meant

that the Israelites were not to take what was intended to promote life (goat milk) and use it to destroy life. This stipulation may be the basis for the present Jewish custom of not mixing milk products with meat.”³

40 days and 40 nights! How did he survive without water? A typical person can go more than 3 days without water. If this is to be taken literally, then God sustained Moses supernaturally.

God once again wrote out the 10 commandments on the tablets Moses brought. And Moses was on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights, like the first time. Only this time the Israelites did not panic and make a new god for themselves, rather they waited patiently and Moses returned with a glowing report.

34:29-35 - *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.³⁰ 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.³¹ Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them.³² 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.³³ And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.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.³⁵ 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.*

Moses came down with a glowing face. Why? He was in the presence of God, he's encountered His glory. That should have an effect.

2 Corinthians 3 is a great commentary on this passage. This glory attached with the giving of the law brought a glow. But how much more should the new covenant that we now have bring about a greater glow and effect in our lives?

³ Hannah, J. D. (1985). Exodus. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 144). Victor Books.

- **2 Corinthians 3:18**, *"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."*