

## EXODUS 34:1-9 (TAKE US AS YOUR INHERITANCE)

There is a whole lot going on in today's nine verses. We're still in the chiasm which has spanned these past five sermons. We're also still in an insert passage which belongs between two verses of chapter 33. We are also in the middle of Moses' request for grace in the sight of the Lord. It is something that has already been promised, but Moses is still struggling with the issue.

None of this has been easy to grasp, and none of it has come without a lot of careful consideration. Each of you who are here, meaning a part of this sermon – whether here at the Superior Word or at some other time by video or simply reading the sermon notes – is to be commended for sticking this one out.

The chiasm itself is enough to tantalize, but being able to appreciate all of what is presented is like trying to assimilate the footnotes in a chemistry textbook. It is hard work and it can be... yes, tedious. But what results from the tedium is a fuller appreciation of the marvelous heart of God who has given us such depth.

The entire thought of today's verses can be summed up in one word – LOVE. The law was given and it was a law of justice and punishment. God has a set of laws, and they must be enforced based on His just, righteous, and holy character.

Israel violated the law and was set to receive His punishment. However, there was mediation and appeal on their behalf. Moses' words brought in a new aspect of the Lord's revelation of Himself. But before that is given, two new tablets are requested to be made.

With the tablets will come a repeat of their inscription upon stone. It appears that this repeat inscription would then mean justice and punishment was again to be the expectation, would it not? But before the inscription is made, and before the

tablets are handed back, grace is received, mercy is granted, and the love of God is revealed. This love is then summed up in the final request of Moses that the sin of the people be pardoned and they be taken as His inheritance.

**Text Verse:** “I will declare the decree:

The Lord has said to Me,

‘You *are* My Son,

Today I have begotten You.

<sup>8</sup>Ask of Me, and I will give *You*

The nations *for* Your inheritance,

And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.” Psalm 2:7, 8

Israel was to be the Lord’s inheritance based on the covenant at Sinai. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Psalm, it says that the nations would be the inheritance of the Son of God. If the mediator of the first covenant was a mere man, and yet he obtained the grace and mercy of the Lord, how much more superlative is the expectation for the same from the Mediator of the New Covenant!

This is what is pictured in the second set of tablets which will be inscribed with the Ten Commandments. This is what we can put our trust and hope in – a greater hope than the law could ever provide. This is the wonder which is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

### **I. Tablets of Stone Like the First (verses 1-4)**

**1 And the LORD said to Moses, “Cut two tablets of stone like the first *ones*,**

Of these words, Charles Ellicott states –

“Something is always lost by sin, even when it is forgiven. The first tables were ‘the work of God’ (Exodus 32:16). The second were hewn by the hand of Moses.”

He cites for this Exodus 32:16 –

“Now the tablets *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God engraved on the tablets.”

Ellicott’s words are true in that the original tablets were formed by God and they were broken by Moses, but it was not the intent that the tablets alone were to be the focus of attention. Rather, there are all kinds of tablets in the world which look alike. For example, gravestones are pumped out one after another, each identical to the next. It is what is written on them that bears the difference and which causes them to be different.

If I walk through a cemetery and see two identical stones, but one says “Johnson” and the other says “Garrett,” I will naturally be more curious about the one which bears my name. If they both say “Garrett,” I will be equally interested in both.

These tablets which Moses is instructed to make will be “like the first ones,” and so they bear the same appearance. They will also be used for the same purpose as well. The fact that the Lord asks Moses to make the tablets, rather than being made by Him, shows that these are to be considered just as acceptable for the bearing of the law. Otherwise, He would have again made them Himself.

The word translated as “cut” here is *pasal*. It means to carve into shape, whether wood or stone. This is the first of just six times it will be seen. Four of those are referring to these tablets, and once it is referring to the cutting of the stones for the temple in Jerusalem. This was in accordance with the word of the Lord to

build a temple, and the work was actually accomplished by Gentiles. This is seen in 1 Kings 5 and 2 Chronicles 2 –

“So Solomon’s builders, Hiram’s builders, and the Gebalites **quarried them**; and they prepared timber and stones to build the temple.” 1 Kings 5:18

Finally, it is used once concerning the carving of false images by the people of Israel in defiance of the word of God. That last one is found in Habakkuk 2 –

“What profit is the image, that its maker **should carve it**,  
The molded image, a teacher of lies,  
That the maker of its mold should trust in it,  
To make mute idols?

<sup>19</sup> Woe to him who says to wood, ‘Awake!’  
To silent stone, ‘Arise! It shall teach!’  
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,  
Yet in it there is no breath at all.

<sup>20</sup> “But the Lord is in His holy temple.  
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.” Habakkuk 2:18-20

And so we see a contrast in that the Gentiles were used to cut stone in a positive way for the building of the Lord’s temple where the Ark with its Ten Commandments would be kept, while the Jews carved out false images for themselves in defiance of the law written on those same Ten Commandments.

In fact, the passage in Habakkuk, which speaks of the apostasy of Israel, begins with these words concerning *lukhot*, or “tablets.” It is the same word used to describe these now made by Moses –

“Then the Lord answered me and said:

‘Write the vision

And make *it* plain on **tablets**,

That he may run who reads it.

<sup>3</sup> For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time;

But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.

Though it tarries, wait for it;

Because it will surely come,

It will not tarry.’” Habakkuk 2:2, 3

Immediately after this, the words of the Lord through Habakkuk, show us a marvelous truth concerning justification before the Lord –

“Behold the proud,

His soul is not upright in him;

But the just shall live by his faith.” Habakkuk 2:4

These passages are being tied together for a reason; one which is only realized in Christ Jesus. Further, the words for Moses are to cut two tablets of “stones.” The word is plural, not singular. They were hewn from two separate stones, not from one.

<sup>1</sup> (con’t) **and I will write on *these* tablets**

This verse may seem confusing when taken in connection with verse 27 of this chapter, which says –

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.” (vs. 27)

However, the words of verse 1 are speaking of the Ten Commandments on the tablets. The words of verse 27 are speaking of the laws spoken to Moses in verses 11-26, and certainly a copy of the Ten Commandments as well. This copy of the Ten Commandments, along with the other laws, would be for the people's use.

But the Ten Commandments in stone were to be kept separate and enclosed within the Ark of the Covenant. This is certain because we are specifically told in Deuteronomy 10:1-4 that the Lord wrote the words of the Ten Commandments upon the tablets and then they were placed in the ark.

Despite the tablets coming from man, the stone was still made by God. The shaping of them simply came through man. However, the original design was made by God as well. Moses was told to "Cut two tablets of stone like the first." Therefore, the pattern is already set by God. Further, the words to be written on them were to be solely the work of God...

#### **<sup>1</sup> (con't) the words that were on the first tablets**

These would be the identical words of the first tablets. They are God's eternal and irrevocable law. They are His standard which must be met in order to live in His presence. As it will say in Leviticus 18:5 –

"You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the Lord." Leviticus 18:5

Paul cites this verse in Romans 10:5 and tells us that no person can meet the demands of the law. In fact, in James 2:10, we read –

"For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all." James 2:10

That is bad news for all of us. They are God's standard, we cannot meet them, and they are written in stone. Is there no hope for us?

<sup>1 (con't)</sup> **which you broke.**

Of the breaking of the first tablets by Moses, Joseph Benson states –

“We may observe also, that although the first tables were broken, to show that there was no hope for mankind to be saved by their innocence, yet God would have the law to be in force still as a rule of obedience, and therefore, as soon as he was reconciled to them, ordered the tables to be renewed, and wrote his law on them. This plainly intimates, that even under the gospel (of which the intercession of Moses was typical) the moral law continues to oblige believers. For though Christ hath redeemed us from the *curse of the law*, yet not from the *command* of it, but still we are *under the law to Christ*.” Joseph Benson

Although that sounds like a reasonable explanation, it is not. First, the Bible never makes a distinction between the civil laws and the moral laws which are found in the Old Testament. There is one law. The fact that the Lord renews the covenant and then speaks out, in verses 11-26 of this chapter, many commands not in the Ten Commandments, shows us that they are all binding and a part of the same covenant.

Secondly, if we were to suppose that there was a distinction between the moral and civil laws, then it would mean that the Sabbath is still a required day of observance, which it is clearly not. If it were, then every one of us would be in violation of the New Covenant which is in Christ's blood; we are not. Paul and the book of Hebrews clearly and definitively shows this.

Therefore, if one of the supposed “moral laws,” meaning the Sabbath, is annulled in the coming of the New Covenant, then the entire law is so annulled. It cannot be a pick and choose thing when it comes to the annulling of the covenant. It is either annulled and set aside, or it is in full effect.

And so what we have here in these verses is a picture which has been developed by the Lord for us to see Christ. God made the first set of tablets. Upon them He wrote the Ten Commandments, the sum of His law for humanity, and upon which every other law finds its place.

These were given to Moses, but were destroyed by him when he saw the rebellion of the people. It is a picture of Adam who was created by the Lord. He was formed as a perfect man and was instilled with God’s perfect law. Though being in a state of innocence, he had the law of God given to Him, and yet he broke that same law. It doesn’t matter which law he broke either, he erred on one point, and the entire law was broken; shattered.

The second set of tablets was cut and formed by man, and yet the stones were originally made by God. These tablets picture Christ, who traces His humanity from the line of fallen man, but which was originally made by God – meaning Adam. Just as Moses was told to make the tablets like the first, Christ is a like-representation of Adam. This is seen revealed in Paul’s words of 1 Corinthians 15

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“There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.

<sup>46</sup> However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven.” 1 Corinthians 15:44-47

However, unlike Adam who broke the law, Christ fulfilled the law. The same perfect letters of the law were inscribed for both, but He never broke one of the commands of God. The law was secreted away in the Ark, which also pictures Christ. Thus Christ embodies that same law. It is fully contained in Him. This takes us back to the symbolism of the Mercy Seat.

In His perfect completion of the law, Christ died in fulfillment of it, and thus the law died with Him. The blood was shed, the law was fulfilled and annulled. This is what is being pictured in what is happening with the two sets of laws. It is showing the supremacy of the work of Christ in comparison to the failings of Adam. This is the meaning of Christ's words of Matthew 5 –

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” Matthew 5:17

Christ didn't come to smash the law of the tablets as Adam did. Rather, He came to embody them. This is why the following words of Christ are so relevant to us –

“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”  
Matthew 5:18-20

Though often misused by people who claim that the law is still in effect, Jesus shows that the very opposite is true for those who have received Him. God's law must be fulfilled, and fulfill it He did. The righteousness of the Pharisees is not

only exceeded by the righteousness of Christ, it is infinitely exceeded. For those who are “in Christ,” we are counted as having fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law, and we are granted His righteousness.

I asked a few minutes ago if there is any hope for us. The answer is that in Christ, there is not only hope, there is surety. This is all being pictured in what is presented to us now in this ancient passage.

**<sup>2</sup>So be ready in the morning,**

There is an interval of one day allowed for the shaping of the tablets. In the morning, they were to be taken up the mountain. It is reflective of the one day in the creation of Adam. He didn't evolve into Adam. Rather, he was fashioned by God, and on the same day the breath of life was breathed into him.

The humanity of Christ, coming in the pattern of Adam, stems from that same act of creation. Every human since Adam was potentially in Adam the moment that he came to be. This includes Mary, the mother of the Lord, and thus it includes the Human nature of Christ. Thus, the Human nature of Christ is reflected in the tablets themselves.

**<sup>2 (con't)</sup> and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai,**

The last time the mountain was mentioned by name was in the last chapter, verse 6. However, at that time it was called Horeb. Now, it is again called Sinai. When the name Sinai is used, it is normally referring to the on-going redemptive workings of God for His people.

When Horeb is used, it indicates the total dependence of the people on the provision of the Lord, or it indicates that which has been accomplished by Him already. In Chapter 33, the people needed the Lord to sustain them. They had fallen out of favor with Him, and so the term Horeb was used

Now, we are again seeing a picture of the redemptive workings of God in Christ, and so the term Sinai is used. What we tend to cursorily read and pass by without thought actually carries great significance to God. When understood, we find marvelous truths displayed in this precious word.

<sup>2</sup> (con't) **and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain.**

In the Bible, the top of the mountain is the place where much of the greatest business gets done. The law was received there; Jesus was transfigured there. It was from the top of a mountain that He ascended, and it will be to the top of the same mountain that He will return. Israel will later be told that it is at the top of the high mountain that they should seek the Lord –

“O Zion,  
You who bring good tidings,  
Get up into the high mountain;  
O Jerusalem,  
You who bring good tidings,  
Lift up your voice with strength,  
Lift *it* up, be not afraid;  
Say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’” Isaiah 40:9

It is to the top of Sinai where Moses is now, once again, expected to present himself to the Lord.

**<sup>3</sup> And no man shall come up with you,**

Nothing is said of Joshua in this account as it was in the last. Moses was to ascend alone for this magnificent revelation and manifestation of the Lord; it was only for him. The reason for this is to again make another picture of Christ and His redemptive works. This will be seen in what happens to Moses after beholding the glory of the Lord.

**<sup>3 (con't)</sup> and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain;**

After the enactment of the covenant, there was a covenant meal with the elders of Israel on Mount Sinai. That may have led the same people to assume that they could come up as far as that point on the mountain. However, this prohibition is made to expressly forbid any assuming of such a thing on their part.

The sin of the golden calf had alienated the people from the Lord and until the matter was resolved, no man was allowed to come to any part of the mountain for any reason.

**<sup>3 (con't)</sup> let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain.”**

This prohibition was to ensure that nobody would even have their animals close enough to stray up a part of the mountain. If they did, they might be tempted to go and get them, thus incurring guilt. And so to preclude any chance of this at all, they were directed to not even allow the animals to feed before the mountain.

**<sup>4</sup>So he cut two tablets of stone like the first ones.**

This is the second use of the word *pasal*, the first having been in verse 1. It was Moses who cut the tablets, or it was someone doing it at the direction of Moses, which is unstated. Either way, the picture of Christ is being formed by the cutting of stones like those cut by the Lord originally.

**<sup>4 (con't)</sup> Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him;**

Moses will be on the mountain for another period of forty days and forty nights. It is at this time that he would have directed the ark to be made. This is seen in Deuteronomy 10 –

“At that time the Lord said to me, ‘Hew for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to Me on the mountain and make yourself an ark of wood. <sup>2</sup> And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; and you shall put them in the ark.’

<sup>3</sup>“So I made an ark of acacia wood, hewed two tablets of stone like the first, and went up the mountain, having the two tablets in my hand. <sup>4</sup> And He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the Lord had spoken to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the Lord gave them to me. <sup>5</sup> Then I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and there they are, just as the Lord commanded me.” Deuteronomy 10:1-5

**<sup>4 (con't)</sup> and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone.**

The tablets would be small enough to fit into the ark, and light enough for Moses to carry up the mountain by himself. Once again, the Hebrew says *lukhot abenim*, “tablets of stones.” The plural is used to signify that they were fashioned from separate stones. This is unlike the tablets of Exodus 31:18 which were called *lukhot eben*, or tablets of stone. There it is singular.

Again, a picture is being made for us to see. It is an indication of the many generations of humanity that led up to Christ, unlike Adam who was formed without any human genealogy. The tablets of stone were broken in Adam; the tablets of stones remain unbroken in Christ.

Moses is going up the mountain to meet with God and to receive a marvelous revelation from Him. In Eden, it seemed that Satan had won. He had brought an end to the close and personal fellowship between God and man.

At Sinai, the same was true. The devil stepped in, entered the hearts of the people, and they formed a god of gold. It seemed that the purposes of God were once again thwarted, but where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. That will be seen in the continuation of our passage...

*Tablets of stone which bring words of condemnation*

*Words which prick my very soul*

*How can I live up to such a standard? I see only damnation*

*How can my name ever be written on heaven's scroll?*

*The words stand against me and show me my sin*

*They were meant to bring life, but only death do they bring*

*The man who lives by them, who is he? We are all done in!*

*From where can life come? Show me such a spring*

*Words of life! I now fully see  
God Himself has condemned sin in the flesh, through Jesus  
Marvelous words of life, to God be the glory!  
Such a marvelous thing He has done for us!*

## **II. Yehovah El (verses 5-7)**

**<sup>5</sup> Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there,**

It is the cloud which would descend upon the tent of meeting when Moses was there that now descended and stood next to Moses. However, there is certainly more than what Moses observed in the tent. The effects of this meeting will be that which changes the countenance of Moses forever.

It will be the revealing of Christ to Moses in a way which would forever change the relationship of those who live by faith, and those who live by works. The cloud will, in fact, reveal Christ to Moses, but it will conceal more than it reveals. We know this because of what Paul says about this encounter in 2 Corinthians 3.

**<sup>5 (con't)</sup> and proclaimed the name of the LORD.**

This is the fulfillment of the promise from the previous chapter. The Lord said that He would proclaim the name of Yehovah to Moses, and that has come about. The noun, "name," is used for the pronoun, "My."

For Him to proclaim His name is to proclaim the very essence of His being, which is what the name represents. Moses is now being prepared for the most

magnificent display of splendor of his life. He is being alerted so that he will be neither surprised and thus terrified, nor will he blink and miss his chance at the awesome revelation of Yehovah.

## **<sup>6</sup>And the LORD passed before him**

It's a good time to stop and explain that what is translated in this passage as "the Lord" is literally the name of the Lord, Yehovah. Most translations do this, and they do it for a reason. It is to tie *the Lord*, Yehovah, of the Old Testament in with *the Lord*, Jesus, of the New. However, the name Yehovah has its own meaning. Thus it would probably be better for us to think of the name, rather than the title.

Yehovah, God's revelation of Himself, is passing before Moses. This is what He promised to do, and this is what He is now doing. In His passing, He again calls out a proclamation of Himself...

## **<sup>6</sup>(con't) and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God,**

*v'yiqra Yehovah, Yehovah el* - It is a double proclamation of His eternal being. He is the existent One, and He is the existent God. Further, the term *el*, or God, indicates power and might. Thus He is Yehovah the all-powerful. But what does that mean without a further explanation? How will He reveal Himself to Moses and thus to the people of Israel?

This is what will be learned, and it is in this coming revelation of Himself that will be explained all of His future dealings with Israel. Everything that He proclaims will be something that Israel can look to as a promise, and yet which will also serve as a warning.

<sup>6</sup> (con't) **merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,**

The first of His attributes is translated as “merciful.” The word is *rakhum*. It is an adjective which will be used 13 times in the Old Testament. It is always used when speaking of the Lord. It is from the same root as *rekhem*, meaning “womb.” One can see how just as a mother cares for the child in her womb, so the Lord is compassionate.

He is also gracious. The word is *khannun*. It is an adjective used for the second of 13 times. Again, it is always used when speaking of the Lord. When it is used, it gives the sense of hearing the cries of those who are vexed and cry out to Him. It is as if He is unable to hear such cries without responding to their need.

Next, He states He is *arek appayim*. It is translated by the NKJV as “longsuffering” which gives the sense of “slow to anger.” He is willing to put up with the grief His people give Him without immediately destroying them. This is the first use of the word *arek*, and it is almost always used of the Lord’s slowness at being aroused to anger.

The word *appayim* means “nostrils.” This gives a more vivid description for us to understand. He is slow to getting in an angry huff where the nostrils flare and snort. It is His nature to retain a calm composure even when anger is what should be anticipated.

After this, He proclaims *v’rav khesed*, “and abounding in goodness.” The word *khesed* is deep and rich. It is a word often translated as “lovingkindness.” It indicates favor, merciful kindness, and even pity. The Lord proclaims that he doesn’t just possess this, but He possess it in abundance.

And along with that, He includes *emeth*, or truth. This is what indicates certainty, or that which establishes. There is no changing in Him, and there is no variance in Him. He is firm and fixed in His dealings.

**<sup>7</sup> keeping mercy for thousands,**

*notser khesed la'alaphim*. This explains the *rav'khesed*, or “abounding in goodness.” Even though He has lovingkindness in abundance for some, He has enough for many. His lovingkindness is never fully exhausted. Further, this goes both laterally and horizontally. His mercy extends to the multitude at any given time, and at all times. His mercy endures forever.

**<sup>7 (con't)</sup> forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,**

*notse avon va'phesha v'khataah* – Man offends God in many ways. Each of these described here indicates an offense of some sort. *Avon*, or iniquity is immoral or grossly unfair behavior. *Pesha*, or transgression, is some breach of trust or rebellion. And *khataah*, is what we would simply call “sin.” It is missing the mark in doing right, and thus causing offense.

The Lord is willing to forgive these things, not because it is deserved, but because – as He has already said – He is compassionate. He is willing to not mete out the punishment which is rightly deserved.

**<sup>7 (con't)</sup> by no means clearing *the guilty*,**

*v'naqqeh lo y'naqqeh* – “and clearing, no will clear.” The word “guilty” is inserted, but it is correct. Though the Lord will forgive those who are contrite and humble, He will not allow the guilt of those who trample on the Lord’s goodness to be

cleared. They will suffer the full measure of His justice. In other words, the Lord is implying His just and righteous character in His proclamation of Himself. He will not let this attribute of Himself be forgotten by His creatures. This thought is repeated many hundreds of years later by the prophet Nahum –

“The Lord *is* slow to anger and great in power,  
And will not at all acquit *the wicked.*” Nahum 1:3

What we have so far in verse 7 is a theological truth. No one can make atonement for himself because he already bears his own sins, and thus Paul reveals to us what this means, “All have sinned and all fall short of the glory of God.”

**<sup>7 (con't)</sup> visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.”**

These words cause consternation to many, but they bear a truth which cannot be escaped. When a father sins, the sin will often travel to the children, and to the next generation afterwards. A person who steals will most likely raise a thief.

A drunk will often raise children who are drunks. The visitation of iniquity is as much self-inflicted as it is imposed. As the Lord does not interfere with the transfer of this iniquity, He thus implicitly visits it upon the next generations.

However, Ezekiel 18 shows that when a son turns from the sins of the father, the Lord accepts him. And when a son turns from the righteousness of his father, the Lord judges him. These words show us a fairness in the Lord which allows man to make their own beds and lie in them, and even bring along their descendants if they so wish.

This has been seen in the exiled people of Israel for the past 2000 years. When one sins in his rejection of Christ, the children naturally follow in this, but for those who turn to Christ, they receive the benefits of the Lord's mercy and lovingkindness.

At the burning bush, on this same mountain some time earlier, the Lord revealed Himself to Moses as the great deliverer of His people. He is the self-existent God who determines all things according to His set purposes. Now, in this second revelation of Himself, He radiates out as the kind and loving Savior who is willing to forgive His people, thus taking their actions into account as He moves through His plan of the redemption of mankind.

*The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious  
Longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth  
Keeping mercy for thousands, mercy so spacious  
His forgiveness to us is surely the proof  
He forgives iniquity and transgression and sin  
But the guilty He will not clear, they will see a bad end  
He will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children  
This is the warning which His word to us does send  
But His word also shows us where His pardon to find  
In the giving of Christ He has granted it to us  
Be sober in thought and of a reasonable mind  
Search out His goodness in the face of Jesus*

### **III. Take Us as Your Inheritance (verses 8 & 9)**

**<sup>8</sup>So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.**

In verse 18 of the last chapter, Moses said to the Lord, “Please, show me Your glory.” Now that the glory of the Lord is passing by, he removes his eyes from seeing what he most desired to see. Instead, he realized that it was not his right to see what his heart yearned for.

The Lord had told him that he would be hid in the cleft of the rock, and that He would cover him with his hand. It says nothing of that now. Rather, it simply says that Moses demonstrated humility and voluntarily looked away from the glory which was passing before him.

He realized that the proclamation itself was sufficient. The essence had been revealed in the cry of proclamation. How can we know that this is the correct interpretation? Because Paul explains it in the New Testament. We have to get ahead of ourselves, and thus repeat a portion of a sermon in the days ahead, but what happens to Moses becomes an object lesson to those who turn to Christ. In 2 Corinthians 3, he writes –

“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.” 2 Corinthians 3:18

What is it that we see and behold as in a mirror? It is the glory of the Lord. And what is it that allows us this sight? It is the Lord’s proclamation of Himself in Scripture. In other words, the calling out of the Lord concerning Himself, is what causes the change in Moses.

It was not an external sight, but the understanding of the essence of who the Lord is. We have that same radiance **handed to us**, we carry it around with us and we open it to see its magnificence, or we close it up, put it on a shelf, and allow it to become dusty. At the same time, our souls darken, and the glory of the Lord fades from our minds.

Moses never forgot the proclamation, and it radiated forth from him in a manner which is actually remarkable. How many of us are willing to radiate out the glory of the Lord as He has revealed it to us in His word? Thank God for those who attend the Superior Word! I thank God for you because of your desire for a pool of depth and lasting glory rather than a shallow puddle of temporary delight.

**<sup>9</sup>Then he said, “If now I have found grace in Your sight,**

In chapter 33, it is twice said that the Lord had told Moses that he had found grace in His sight. And twice in between those verses, Moses questioned how he could know if he had found grace in the sight of the Lord. First in verse 13, he said

–

“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.” Exodus 33:13

Therefore, this verse should be translated as “*Since* I have now found grace in Your sight.” The Lord has shown him His way. However, after his first appeal, and just a few verses later, he spoke his second petition to the Lord –

“If Your Presence does not go *with us*, do not bring us up from here. <sup>16</sup> 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.” Exodus 33:15, 16

Therefore, based on the first grace, he petitions for the second. It is that grace which he desperately longs for in the full acceptance of Israel as His people once again...

<sup>9 (con't)</sup> **O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we *are* a stiff-necked people;**

The word “among us” is *qerev*, meaning “in the midst of.” It is what the Lord decided He would deny Israel in verse 33:3 –

“*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.”  
Exodus 33:3

Now, Moses acknowledges the truth of the statement once again, but he has heard the proclamation of the Lord. He has looked into the essence of his Creator as revealed to him in the divine proclamation, and he knows that the Lord is willing to forgive. Therefore, he anticipates the Lord’s forgiveness with our final words of the day...

<sup>\*9 (fin)</sup> **and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance.”**

Moses asks for *salakh* or pardon. It is the first of 47 times that the term will be used, and it is *always* ascribed to the pardon of the Lord. Moses has seen the Lord’s compassion in His spoken word. As His word is the revelation of Himself, he knows that the Lord is by nature compassionate. And so, he asks for that which He knows the Lord possesses in unlimited abundance.

The verses are ended and we are seemingly left hanging as to whether the request will be granted or not. But have we forgotten our previous sermons so quickly? It is at this point in the narrative that the insert of the verses between Exodus 32:33 and 32:34 end. With the promise secured, we can take up the narrative with the words of Exodus 32:34 –

“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.”

Everything since Exodus 32:33 until now has been an insert account. The request of Moses is granted, in its fullness, by the words of Exodus 32:34. It is realized in the word *Malaki*, or “My Angel.” Rather than merely *malak* or any given “angel” the words confirm that the Divine Presence, the Angel of the Lord, will be the one who goes before Israel.

The tabernacle will be built, the Presence of the Lord will be in their midst, and Israel will have been shown to receive the grace which Moses so greatly desired for his people. This then brings us to my closing words of the day for you.

If the Lord was willing to grant to a fallible, human mediator His assurances of covenant blessings and grace, how much more willing do you suppose He is to grant the same to us because of the perfect, and unsullied petitions of Christ on our behalf?

We have trusted in Him, and He is there, even now petitioning His Father for us when we commit our own transgressions against Him. We set up idols and we bow down to them. We turn our stiff necks away from Him and exercise our own stubborn wills in doing what we wish rather than what He commands.

And yet, because of the Lamb who was slain, we have the perfect forgiveness of a far better covenant. We have the absolute and pure assurances of the word of God concerning the ministering of Christ Jesus on our behalf. Is the Lord in our midst? You betcha. He has sealed us with His Holy Spirit – our guarantee of redemption.

He has taken us as His inheritance. As this is so, let us not waiver in our confidence even when we waiver in our devotion. We are certain to fall, but He is more certain to forgive. It is a promise from the very foot of Calvary to all who believe. It is the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Closing Verse:** “Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, <sup>16</sup> do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: <sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of **His inheritance** in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, <sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.”  
Ephesians 1:15-21

**Next Week:** Exodus 34:10-26 *The Lord has spoken and He will surely not relent...*  
(Behold, I am Making a Covenant) (95<sup>th</sup> Exodus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean lies ahead of You, He can part the waters and lead you through it on dry ground. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

## **The Lord's Inheritance**

And the LORD said to Moses  
Cut two tablets of stone like those at the first  
And I will write on these tablets the words  
That were on the first tablets which you broke in your outburst  
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, by and by

And no man shall come up with you  
And let no man throughout all the mountain be seen  
Let neither flocks nor herds feed  
Before that mountain where you and I will convene  
So he cut two tablets of stone like the first ones  
Then Moses rose early in the morning, at dawn of the day so new  
And went up Mount Sinai  
As the LORD had commanded him to do

And he took in his hand the two tablets of stone  
And thus he ascended all alone  
Now the LORD descended in the cloud  
And stood with him there

And proclaimed the name of the LORD  
A sight and sound both precious and rare  
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, mercy so spacious

Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, it is so  
By no means clearing the guilty, they will be done in  
Visiting the iniquity of the fathers, even though  
Upon the children and the children’s children  
To the third and the fourth generation  
A warning to Israel the nation

So Moses made haste  
And bowed his head toward the earth  
And worshiped  
Yes, he worshiped the LORD of infinite worth  
Then he said, “If now I have found grace in Your sight  
O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us; give us this chance  
Even though we are a stiff-necked people  
And pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance  
O Lord God, how glorious You are; glorious in all ways  
You are grandiose and holy, robed in majesty

And so we shall pursue you with all of our hearts, for all of our days  
And praise You with all of our souls; yes Lord God Almighty

Thank You for how You have revealed Yourself to us  
You proclaimed the name of the Lord, and came in the Person of Jesus

Hallelujah and Amen...