

Exodus 32-34

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 30 Instructions concerning:

- The altar of incense
- Census offering
- Bronze laver
- Spices and anointing oils

Chapter 31

The craftsmen appointed:

Bezalel and Aholiab to be in charge of construction of the tabernacle and its service

- God put his spirit of wisdom in them to complete the task
- Remembrance of the Sabbath—a sign between God and his people

After 40 days

Exodus 31:18

¹⁸And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

Exodus 32—introduction

(A Guide to the Pentateuch, Gordon Wenham)

“Abruptly and without warning we plunge into the greatest crisis in divine-human relationships since the flood”

(A Guide to the Pentateuch, Gordon Wenham)

“In a parody of Chapter 25:1-9 where God tells the people how to make a tabernacle to symbolize his presence with them, the people make a golden calf to do just that. In doing so they flout the first two commandments”

(BKC) “God had repeatedly manifested His power and compassion, but they were soon forgotten”

There is a great lesson in this story—God rejects blending false [pagan] religion to worship him

Chapter 32

¹ 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.”

“Come, make us gods that shall go before us”—
revealed their inadequate faith as they waited for Moses

Acts 7:39-40

And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt,
⁴⁰saying to Aaron, ‘*Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.*’^f

“this Moses, **the man...**”

(Jewish Study Bible, Tanakh) “In the people’s view, Moses disappeared because he was a mortal; that is why they want ‘a god’ to replace him”

²And Aaron said to them, “Break off the golden earrings which *are* in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring *them* to me.”

³So all the people broke off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron.

⁴And 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!”

v. 2-3 “golden earrings”—probably part of the ‘spoils’ they received from the Egyptians

v. 4 ‘he fashioned it’

(The Bible is History, Ian Wilson) “Fascinatingly, the copper workings in the southern Sinai could have provided the furnaces for such work”

v. 4 “made a molded calf”

(Expositors) “probably by applying gold leaf over a wooden form....thus it could be burned [v.20]”

v. 4 “Calf” —one of the gods they were familiar with in Egypt

(Bible is History) “The more accurate rendition in Hebrew is ‘**young bull**’, which was one of the forms taken by the Canaanite god Baal”

How could Aaron, one of God's principal servants to deliver Israel from Egypt do such things?

1) He may have given up hope that Moses would return (like the people)

2) Some of the commentaries say that Aaron was afraid of the people...

(Matthew Henry) The Jews have a tradition that his colleague Hur opposing it, that the people fell upon him and stoned him (and therefore we never read of him after) and that this frightened Aaron into a compliance.

v.5 (first part) So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it.



(Expositors) "Instead of 'he built an altar' [v.5]... the Pesitta changed the vowels and read, 'Then Aaron became afraid and built an altar'. The idea fits the context even if it is unattested"

3) Aaron sinned as well

v. 22 "You know the people, they are bent on evil"—blames the people
He excuses himself by the wicked spirit of the people, intimating that he was obliged to follow their desires

⁵So when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, “Tomorrow *is* a feast to the Lord.”

(Companion) “All done under the cover of ‘religion’”

“**a feast to the Lord**”—[**syncretism**

Aaron blended paganism with the true worship by supposedly worshipping God by means of an idol

(BKC) “Since only one idol was made, the word **gods** [v.1, 4, 8, 23, 31] may refer both to the idol *and* to God whom it supposedly represented”

Ezekiel 20:8 (first part)

⁸But they rebelled against Me and would not obey Me. They did not all cast away the abominations which were before their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt.

⁶Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

“offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings”—mixing some of the rites of true worship to “worship” the true God along by idolatrous means

v. 6 “to play”= to make sport; to dance: lasciviously. This was part of idolatrous worship (Companion)

(Keil and Delitzch) “in the same manner in which the Egyptians celebrated the feast of Apis”

(Old Testament Times, R.K. Harrison)

“The whole multitude indulged in an orgy of idolatrous veneration reminiscent of the cultic rites found in the worship of the bull Apis at Memphis...”

⁷And the Lord said to Moses, “Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted *themselves*.

⁸They 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!’”

“your people”

v. 7 (Jewish Study Bible, Tanakh) “God normally refers to Israel as ‘My people’ whom I brought out of Egypt. Here he feels alienated from them and speaks of them as Moses’ people”

v. 7 “have **corrupted** themselves”

The same verb used for the corruption of Noah’s day [Genesis 6:12 “all flesh had corrupted their way”]

⁹And the Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and indeed it *is* a stiff-necked people!

¹⁰Now 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.”

v. 9 “stiff-necked”= ‘headstrong’

v. 10 “let me alone”

(Tanakh) “God implies that Moses can restrain Him from destroying Israel.....by praying on Israel’s behalf and making the case for sparing them. Prophets frequently and appropriately play this intercessory role” [I Sam. 12:23; Jer. 18:20; Ps. 106:23]

Psalms 106:23

²³ Therefore He said that He would destroy them, Had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach, To turn away His wrath, lest He destroy *them*.

Moses in verses 11-14 pleads to God for mercy towards Israel because: the testimony to the Egyptians [v. 12] and his promises to the patriarchs [v.13]



¹¹Then 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?

¹²Why 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’? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people.

¹³Remember 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.’”^f

¹⁴So the Lord relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

v. 11-14 (JSB, Tanakh) “In Jewish practice this passage and 34:1-10 are read in the synagogue on the public fast days that commemorate national disasters or near-disasters”

v. 14 “The Lord relented”

(The Pentateuch, W.H. Griffith Thomas)

“God’s change of attitude is naturally expressed in human language”

(Expositors) “God’s relenting is an anthropomorphism (a description of God in human forms) showing us that he can and does change his actions and emotions when given proper grounds for doing so, and thereby does not change his basic integrity or character”

¹⁵And 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.

¹⁶Now the tablets *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God engraved on the tablets.

(Expositors) “This is the only passage that informs us that the ‘two tablets of the Testimony’ were inscribed on both sides. [v. 15]

That ‘the tablets were the work of God’ emphasizes their divine origin” [v. 16]

(BKC) “As Moses descended the mountain with the two tablets of the Decalogue, he rejoined Joshua, who apparently was partway up the mountain, and was not aware of what the Israelites were doing”



¹⁷And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, “*There is a noise of war in the camp.*”

¹⁸But 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.*”

v. 18 ‘shout’... ‘cry’... ‘sing’
(Companion) “same Hebrew word” –[singing]

“As in the worship of Apis”(Companion)

¹⁹So 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.

“Breaking the tablets expresses not only Moses' rage but (as in Mesopotamian law) the annulment of the covenant....the equivalent of tearing up a contract” (JSB, Tanakh)

²⁰Then 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*.

(JSB, Tanakh) “Rabbinic exegesis, followed by modern scholars, takes the forced drinking as a kind of ordeal to identify the guilty”

(BKC) “By this action he demonstrated both the powerlessness of the calf-idol and God’s wrath. Drinking it symbolized that the people had to bear the consequences of their sin.

²¹And Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?”

Aaron had been left in charge [24: 14] and must account for his actions

²²So Aaron said, “Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they *are set* on evil.

²³For 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.’

²⁴And 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.”

v.22-24

Aaron blames the people

Then lies by saying the ‘calf came out’...when he had formed it

Deuteronomy 9:20

²⁰And the Lord was very angry with Aaron *and* would have destroyed him; so I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.

²⁵Now when Moses saw that the people *were* unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to *their* shame among their enemies),

²⁶then 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.

“unrestrained”

(Expositors) “The idea of the verb, is that of loosening or uncovering. It would appear that there was a type of religious prostitution connected with the people’s worship of the golden calf”

To restore order in the camp Moses ordered those who were for the Lord to step forward

(NSB) “The first to respond were men from the tribe of Levi, an act that drew them more fully into the Lord’s service”

²⁷And 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.’”

²⁸So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.

²⁹Then 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.”

(NSB) “Moses sent the Levites to kill the people engaged in evil (most likely sexual degeneracy). It was painful for a Levite to slay his brother...his companion...his neighbor. But the wicked, even if they were relatives, had to be destroyed, lest the whole camp perish under God’s judgment”

(Expositors) “Following God then as now sometimes requires denying one’s family and being cut off from them”[Luke 12:51-53; 14;26]

³⁰Now 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.”

(Expositors) “Even though the people had repented, atonement for sin was still needed. Moses would attempt to ransom or deliver the people from certain judgment of their sin by offering a substitute—himself”

³¹Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Oh, these people have committed a **great sin**, and have made for themselves a god of gold!

“a great sin”—They had broken the first two commandments and the syncretism involved is emphasized as a great sin

³²Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”

v. 32 “Your book”

(Expositors) “The roster of professing believers who stand in covenant relationship with God, though apostates among them may have their name removed from this list”

Malachi 3:16

¹⁶ Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard *them*; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name.

(Expositors) “The book or scroll is called the ‘book of the living’ in Psalm 69:28 and is referred to in Isaiah 4:3 as ‘recorded among the living’, the roll of those inheriting eternal life” [Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 20:12]

³³And the Lord said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.

Psalms 69:28

²⁸ Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous.

³⁴Now 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.”

³⁵So the Lord plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.

v. 34 God instructs Moses to lead the people to the promised land and His angel would go before them

v. 35 “the Lord plagued the people”

This may be a reference to the slaying of the 3,000 or it may be an additional punishment that is not stated.

The lesson is that sin exacts a punishment

Lessons

1) Israel had quickly forgotten God and His commands

1 Corinthians 10:11

¹¹Now ^fall these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

2) God rejects the blending of false pagan religion in worshipping Him

3) Aaron—one of God's principal leaders fell into the trap of sin

1 Corinthians 10:12

¹²Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Chapter 33

Mediation of Moses

¹Then 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.’

After the golden calf incident, God instructed Moses to depart with Israel for the promised land

²And 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.”

v. 3 “I will not go up in your midst”

God would not be in the middle of their camp—the pillar of cloud and fire would lead them but not in the midst of their camp

(paraphrase) “and stripped themselves of their ornaments

⁴And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.

‘ornaments’

(Expositors) “In seasons of mourning it is customary with Eastern peoples to lay aside...and divest themselves of their jewels...”

⁵For 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.’”

⁶So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.

v. 5 (Expositors) “They were asked to take off their ornaments, the ones they were already wearing, as a test of their repentance”

“that I may know what to do”—whether to inflict judgment or not, depending upon their penitence

v. 6 (Keil and Delitzch) “Thus they entered formally into a penitential condition”

⁷Moses 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.

God descended in the pillar outside the camp—so Moses set up a tent called ‘the tabernacle of meeting, outside of the camp

- This tent was **not the tabernacle**
- God would not come in the midst of the people at this juncture of time

⁸So 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.

⁹And 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.

(BKC) “The size and contents of this tent are not known, but it reminded the people that their sin was an alienating force in their relationship with God”

¹⁰All 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.

(BKC) “They could worship God from a distance; He was outside of their community”

¹¹So 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.

v. 11 “**face to face**”—Moses spoke to God [pre-incarnate Christ] as a friend

[V. 20] “My face shall not be seen”—Contradiction?

(BKC) “face to face is a **figurative** expression suggesting **openness and friendship**”

Moses, acting as intercessor for the people was himself a type of Jesus Christ

Moses [as friend of God] intercedes for the people: 3 requests—v. 13; v.15-17; v.18

¹²Then 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.’

v. 12 Moses says that God has not told him who will accompany him [and the people]

Moses 1st request

¹³Now 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

v. 13 “show me your way”—your intentions for your people

¹⁴And He said, “My Presence will go *with you*, and I will give you rest.”

(Tanakh translation) “I personally will go and deliver you to safety”

“My presence”/I personally—a reversal of this threat not to go with them at all [.v3-5]

2nd Request of Moses

¹⁵Then he said to Him, “If Your Presence does not go *with us*, do not bring us up from here.

¹⁶For 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.”

v. 15 Moses asks that they move no further unless God goes with them

(NSB) v. 16 “Only the Lord’s Presence would demonstrate to surrounding nations that Israel’s deliverance was really the work of the true and merciful God”

¹⁷So 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.”

God agrees to Moses request to accompany the people and assures him that he has pleased him

Moses 3rd request

¹⁸And he said, “Please, show me Your glory.”

‘glory’ [Heb. *Kabod*]= literally weight
(Tyndale) “This is a prayer to see God as he is”

(Companion) “The glory could not have been endured; grace comes first, glory is reserved for the future”

Chapter 34: 5-7

¹⁹Then 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.”

²⁰But He said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.”

(Tyndale) “God’s revelation will be of his ‘name’ (that is, his nature) proclaimed in terms of his deeds to man.

God’s nature is here defined as ‘goodness’...further describes as ‘grace’ and ‘mercy’”

(Tanakh) “on the top of mount Sinai”

²¹And the Lord said, “Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock.

²²So 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.

²³Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but **My face shall not be seen.**

(Tyndale) “man may see only where God has passed by and so know him by his past doings and acts.

For a full revelation of what God is like, man must wait until Jesus Christ (John 14:9)

v. 23 “my face shall not be seen”

(Tanakh) “According to Numbers 12: 8, Moses sees God’s ‘likeness’ [Heb. Temunah] which appears in poetic parallelism with ‘face’ in Psalm 17:15”

Numbers 12: 8

“ I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the Lord.”

Psalm 17: 15

“As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness;”

Chapter 34

Restoration of the covenant

¹And 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.

²So 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.

³And 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.”

God in his mercy writes the commandments again despite Israel’s unfaithfulness—he was willing to renew the covenant relationship with them

(Tanakh) “As when the terms of the covenant were first proclaimed, access to the mountain is restricted in preparation for God’s descending to it”

⁴So 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.

⁵Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.

God would pass before Moses and show him part of his glory—while doing so He proclaims the glory of His character...the foundation of His character

⁶And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,

- ‘merciful and gracious’ convey the idea of overwhelmingly gracious
- “longsuffering—Hebrew idiom conveys the idea of being slow to anger
 - “goodness”—means loyal love
 - “truth”—means faithfulness, truthfulness and constancy

⁷keeping 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.”

“by no means clearing the iniquity”—sin has its consequences

⁸So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.

Moses upon receiving an up close and personal view of God's great character it brought him to his knees and sought after God

⁹Then 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."

After having heard the description of God's glory Moses asks again for forgiveness on behalf of the people and asks for God's continued presence to be with them

¹⁰And 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.

¹¹Observe 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.

After Moses' prayer of intercession God forgives Israel at one their darkest moments God **renews** the covenant relationship with the announcement that He will drive out the Canaanite people

God's stern warning of avoiding the Canaanite religious practices

¹²Take 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.

¹³But **you shall destroy** their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their **wooden images** [NIV—Asherah poles]

‘wooden images’ [groves OKJ] (Heb. *Asherah*)
(Companion) “denotes a phallic image, worshipped by libidinous rites and lascivious practices”

(Expositors) “The Asherah were probably sacred trees or wooden poles placed alongside Baal’s altar.

With the pagan religious objects removed, there would be less temptation to ‘worship any god’”

¹⁴(for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God),

¹⁵lest 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,

¹⁶and 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.

v. 14 “jealous”

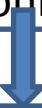
(Expositors) “illustrates the parallel between idolatry and adultery”

Snares are described: v. 15 “invites you to eat of his sacrifice” and “take of his daughters” [as wives]...both of these leading to ‘play the harlot with their gods’—idolatry

He repeats ‘harlot’ because to be involved with these other religious practices is spiritual adultery

¹⁷“You shall make no molded gods for yourselves.
(Like they had already done)

(Expositors) “The way of obedience balances prohibitions [idolatry] with admonitions:”



¹⁸“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; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt.

(Tanakh) “In view of the people’s recent religious sin, these terms restate their religious duties

¹⁹“All that open the womb *are* Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock, *whether* ox or sheep.

²⁰But 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.

Connecting the dedication of the first born with the Exodus and Unleavened Bread

²¹“Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.

(JSB, Tanakh) “The Sabbath takes precedence even at the business time of the agricultural year, as it does when building the tabernacle” [31: 12-17]

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.

²⁴For 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.

God promised a special blessing for those who kept his Feasts—no one would move boundary markers or steal from their land

²⁵“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.

Two emphasized instructions concerning Passover—no leaven and the consumption of the entire Passover meal

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.”

‘boil a young goat in its mother’s milk’

Pagan fertility rite connected with crops and harvest—they did this at the end of the harvest and sprinkled it on the fields to make them more fruitful the next year

²⁷Then 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.”

²⁸So 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 ^fTen Commandments.

(Expositors) “That Moses was able to go for this length of time without food or water was a miracle requiring the Lord’s supernatural care”

²⁹Now 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.

³⁰So 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.

³¹Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them.

v. 29 'his face shown'

A muted reflection of God's glory from being in God's presence

³²Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai.

³³And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.

³⁴But 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.

³⁵And 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.

v. 35 (Expositors) "Moses' radiance was only visible to the people when he was acting as the oracle of God. At other times he kept his face veiled."

(NSB) "The veil Moses wore concealed the glow of his face. This supernatural glow was enhanced on each subsequent encounter with the Lord. Paul taught that Moses wore the veil because the glow faded, a sign of imperfect glory. (II Cor. 3: 7, 13)"

Lessons

Moses interceded on behalf of the people because of their sin

➤ He was a type of Christ—who intercedes on our behalf when we sin

God was willing to renew the covenant relationship despite Israel's unfaithfulness

➤ Reminds us of God's great mercy he extends to all

“by no means clearing the iniquity”

➤ God is merciful and forgiving...but sin has its consequences