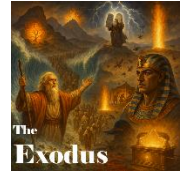




**Reflected Glory:  
Intimacy with God Always Leaves a Mark  
Exodus 34  
(Lesson #35)**



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**34:1 The LORD said to Moses, “Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke.**

Following the overwhelming revelation where Yahweh promised to let His “goodness” pass before Moses and proclaim His name, the narrative shifts to a practical restoration.

The Lord commands Moses to “**cut for yourself**” two tablets of stone like the first. This command signals the renewal of the covenant that had been shattered, both **metaphorically** and **physically**, when Moses broke the original tablets at the base of the mountain.

The preparation is deliberate: **Moses must labor** to provide the material, but the **authority remains divine**. Yahweh declares, “**I will write,**” ensuring that the content of the law remains unchanged and sovereignly dictated.

The “**words that were on the first tablets**” are to be preserved, demonstrating that while the people had been unfaithful, **God’s standards** remain steadfast.

This process is a reminder that **restoration** requires both human **repentance** and divine **initiative**.

**Vs 2-3 Be ready by the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me on the top of the mountain. 3 No one shall come up with you, and let no one be seen throughout all the mountain. Let no flocks or herds graze opposite that mountain.”**

Yahweh commands Moses to “**be ready by the morning,**” an instruction that carries the weight of spiritual and physical preparation. Often in the scriptures, the morning is presented as not only a new day, but a new start, a few examples (La 3:22-23; Ps 30:5; Lu 24:1-2).

The reference to morning, provides a picture of Yahweh providing a fresh restart for the nation of Israel.

Moses is to ascend Mount Sinai at dawn and “**present yourself**” to God at the summit. The Hebrew word is: נצב (**natsab**) is a military to that means to present yourself, to stand at attention, or to station yourself.

Notice also, he does not go empty-handed; he carries the two blank stone tablets he has hewn, ready to receive the re-inscription of the Law.

This second ascent is characterized by a stricter, more **absolute isolation** than the first. Yahweh issues a twofold command of separation: first, no human is to accompany Moses or even be seen anywhere on the mountain.

Only Moses can proceed. This one mediator typology of course points forward to the Lord Jesus (1Ti 2:5) . :

Second, this “no-fly zone” extends even to the animal kingdom; neither flocks nor herds are permitted to graze “opposite” or in front of the mountain.

**Vs 4 So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first. And he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand two tablets of stone.**

The verse opens with a direct echo of the divine command: “**So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first.**”

Despite his advanced age (80 -81 years old) Moses does not argue for a more convenient method of restoration.

Furthermore, Moses “*rose early in the morning*”, demonstrating a heart of urgency.

**APPLICATION:** In this event with Moses, we have a beautiful picture of the full circle of obedience: He prepared (cut the stones), he arose early (intention) and he climbed the mountain (execution).

*Vs 5 The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.*

As Moses nears the summit of Mount Sinai, the **atmospheric tension** of the mountain culminates in a **divine descent** and we are told Yahweh “**stood**” with Moses there.

We read that “*Yahweh descended in the cloud and stood with him there.*” The imagery is staggering: the Creator of the universe stoops to occupy the same physical space as His servant.

**AN IMPORTANT NOTE:** God always “comes down” to meet man; man never “reaches up” to pull God down. **Consider** (Joh 6:38; Joh 6:51; and 1Th 4:16-17).

While verse 2 commanded Moses to present himself at the “*top*” of the mountain, the specific mechanics of this meeting suggest a special place. First, we know that Yahweh intends to hide Moses in a cleft of rock (Ex 33:21-22). Second, we know there is a cave on Mount Sinai (1Ki 19:8-9).

This location carries immense biblical weight. It is highly probable that “*cave*” where Elijah later sought shelter while fleeing Jezebel is the very same spot where Moses now stood.

This “cleft” serves as a protective barrier, a place where the finite can survive an encounter with the Infinite.

Then, breaking the silence of the heights, Yahweh “*proclaimed the name of the LORD.*” Before the Law is **re-written**, the Lawgiver reveals **His heart** and **His nature**, inviting Moses (and the reader) to look past the stone tablets and **into the character of the One who speaks.**

**The Shared Mountain (Moses and Elijah):** The connection between Exodus 34 and 1 Kings 19 is one of the most significant “**intertextual**” links in Scripture. Both men were mediators, both fasted forty days, and both encountered God on Horeb/Sinai in a time of national apostasy.

*Vs 6-7 The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7 keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”*

The narrative now reaches its theological climax. As Yahweh “*passes before*” Moses, the **protective hand of God** is momentarily lifted, allowing the mediator to witness the “**afterglow**” of the divine Presence. In this moment of intense “*after-glory,*” the silence is broken by a **thunderous self-proclamation!**

Yahweh defines Himself not by **His creative power** or **His cosmic distance**, but by **His covenantal heart.**

He begins by repeating His name—**Yahweh, Yahweh**—establishing the absolute constancy of His nature. He then unfolds a tapestry of **seven positive attributes:**

- 1) He is **merciful**. This Hebrew word describes a “**mother-like**” compassion—a deep, visceral feeling of love for a child.
- 2) He is **gracious**. He shows pity, He is the one who shows undeserved favor.
- 3) He is **slow to anger**. Literally, “long of nostrils.” In Hebrew, anger is depicted as “hot nostrils” (breathing hard). God is saying He has a “long nose”, in that it takes a very long time for His anger to get hot.
- 4) He is **abounding in steadfast love**. This is a love that is based on a promise, not a feeling.
- 5) He is **abounding in faithfulness**. The Hebrew word here is **אֱמֶת** (**‘emeth**). The word means faithfulness, reliability or truth.

- 6) His grace is not a fleeting emotion but a **generational commitment**, extending “**for thousands**” (of generations).
- 7) Finally, and likely most important as far as our needs go, He is a God who “*forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin.*”

**The Three-Fold Problem of Sin:** Here Yahweh uses three distinct Hebrew words for human failure, showing that His forgiveness covers **every category of wrongdoing**:

- **Iniquity:** Perversity or crookedness of character; the internal bent toward sin.
- **Transgression:** Willful rebellion or “stepping over the line”; a breach of the relationship.
- **Sin:** To “**miss the mark**”; failing to live up to the divine standard.

Yahweh’s forgiveness addresses the full spectrum of human sine, rebellion, and depravity.

BUT, His mercy is not lawlessness. He will “**by no means clear the guilty.**” Then we read: “**visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.**”

His holiness demands that sin be dealt with, and its consequences often ripple through families to the third and fourth generations. Consider (Ez 18:20).

Notice the math of grace: The lingering effects of sin can carry to the 3rd/4th generation, but **mercy** (steadfast love) goes to **thousands** of generations (Ex 20:6). **Grace outweighs judgment** by a factor of **250 to 1!**

**The DIVEN DILEMMA:** This passage creates a divine dilemma that only the **Cross can solve** (Ps 85:10).

**APPLICATION:** Here we find the definitive answer to the question, “**Who is God?**”

*Vs 8-9 And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. 9 And he said, “If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, please let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance.”*

The reaction of Moses to the **proclamation of the Divine Name** is **instantaneous**: he “*quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped.*” The Hebrew implies a swift, reflexive movement—there is **no hesitation** when the **finite meets the infinite**.

**APPLICATION:** When we hear our Father’s declaration about Himself. When we consider His mercy and grace, His love and patience, it should drive us to worship also.

**Vs 9** - Yet, from this posture of prone adoration, Moses **immediately pivots** to his **role as mediator**. He offers a surprising and **deeply humble petition**, asking that **if** he has truly **found favor**, the Lord would “*go in the midst of us.*”

While this matter seemed settled in the camp (Ex 33:17), Moses’ repetition of the request reveals the heart of a true intercessor. He does not take God’s grace for granted; he presses into the promise. **Most remarkably**, Moses changes his terminology, addressing God as אֲדֹנָי (**Adonay**) (Lord/Master) rather than Yahweh.

Notice, Moses **identifies himself fully with the rebels**, praying “*pardon our iniquity and our sin.*” Moses, with his head bowed to the ground, likely the crown of his head touching the ground, he intercedes for Israel and asks **Adonai** to forgive their iniquity and their sin. Two words used by God to describe Himself!

Like Jesus, who “*was numbered with the transgressors*” (Is 53:12), Moses refuses to distance himself from the people’s failure.

Moses does not stand **above** the people in judgment but **beside them** in need, pleading that Yahweh would not only forgive them but “*take us for your inheritance.*” He asks that a “*stiff-necked*” people be transformed into God’s own treasured possession. Take us as your treasured possession. This is yet another **audacious request!**

**QUESTION:** Have you ever come to the realization that you need your sins, iniquities, and transgressions forgiven? Have you ever come to the realization that God will do that? Have you ever cried out to Him by faith?

*Vs 10 ¶ And he said, “Behold, I am making a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or 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.*

Yahweh’s response to Moses’ plea is both immediate and staggering: **“Behold, I am making a covenant.”** Any lingering doubt regarding Israel’s status is swept away by this divine initiative. Yahweh commits to a partnership characterized by **“marvels”** that have no earthly precedent.

Yahweh promises deeds **“such as have not been created in all the earth.”** This points forward to the conquest of Canaan, the stopping of the Jordan, and the falling of Jericho’s walls. It reminds the people that while they were unfaithful, their God is uniquely powerful and He is faithful.

This is so that **“all your people”** and even the surrounding nations will see the work of Yahweh!

Yahweh describes His upcoming actions as **“an awesome thing.”** This term carries the weight of **“fearful splendor”**—acts so powerful they command reverence and dread.

The English word “awesome” is often overused in modern English, but here it retains its biblical force.

He promises that the work He will do **“with you”** will serve as a global testimony to His relationship with Israel.

By framing the future in terms of a renewed covenant, Yahweh transforms **Israel’s “second chance”** into a spectacular display of His own glory and faithfulness.

**QUESTION:** Are you looking for God to do a “marvel” in your life? Remember that His greatest **“awesome work”** wasn’t parting a sea, but the renewal of a broken covenant through a mediator. If God can bring a “stiff-necked” people back into His presence, He can handle whatever “marvel” you and I need today.

*Vs 11 “Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.*

Yahweh begins His specific instructions with a call to vigilance: **“Observe what I command you this day.”** The covenant is not a **passive insurance policy**, but an **active relationship** requiring the people’s response.

They are called to observe **“this day.”** The same is true for you and I.

To encourage this obedience, Yahweh provides a powerful incentive: He assumes the role of the Divine Warrior. He promises to **“drive out”** the six dominant nations who currently occupy the land of promise. As noted previously, these six nations serve as a representative list for the total inhabitants of Canaan.

This reminds us that the nations in Canaan have lost their **“legal right”** to the land because of their iniquity (Gen 15:16). **Their removal** is not merely a matter of real estate, but also of spiritual purification.

**The promise is clear:** if the people **“keep”** the commandments, Yahweh will clear the path before them.

**BRINGING THIS HOME:** Yahweh promised to **drive out** the enemies before the people. Just as those six nations represented every enemy in the land, what are the “nations” currently occupying the territory God has promised you? Are they “Jebusites” of pride, “Amorites” of fear, or “Canaanites” of lust?

But I would remind us where this begins: **“Observe what I command you this day.”**

*Vs 12 Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a snare in your midst.*

Yahweh begins His specific warnings with a call to extreme vigilance: **“Take care,”** this is more than a casual suggestion; it is a command to be on guard against the subtle danger of political and social alliances.

Moses warns the people not to **“make a covenant”** with the current inhabitants of the land. Yahweh identifies such alliances as a **“snare.”** Like a hidden trap in the wilderness, these covenants would appear harmless or even beneficial at first, but they would ultimately entangle the heart of the nation.

By making a pact with the Canaanites, Israel would be making a pact with their idols, inevitably leading to a repeat of the golden calf disaster.

**QUESTION:** Is there an area where you and I have “settled” or made peace with something God told us to drive out? If so, we know what we **must do**, before it becomes a snare!

***Vs 13 You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut down their Asherim***

The Israelites are commanded to dismantle the altars of foreign gods, shatter the sacred pillars dedicated to pagan deities, and chop down the cult poles erected in honor of Asherim—a prominent Canaanite fertility goddess.

***Vs 14-16 (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 when they whore after their gods and sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice, 16 and you take of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters whore after their gods and make your sons whore after their gods.***

The underlying reason for the prohibition against foreign alliances is rooted in the very character of God: **“for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”** This is not the petty, insecure jealousy of a human, but the fervent, zeal-driven protection of a husband for his bride.

Yahweh’s “Name” is Jealous, meaning exclusivity is not just something He *demand*s, but something He *is*.

Yahweh warns that if they make alliances, they will eventually be invited to “eat of his sacrifice”—a gesture of friendship that constitutes a participation in demonic worship.

This social blending inevitably leads to intermarriage, where the **“daughters”** of the land lead the **“sons”** of Israel into apostasy. The term **“whore after”** is used intentionally to shock the conscience; it frames idolatry as a violation of a marriage contract.

**God’s warning is clear:** We cannot invite the culture into our home without eventually inviting their gods into our hearts.

***Vs 17 “You shall not make for yourself any gods of cast metal.***

Yahweh concludes this section of prohibitions with a command that must have stung the collective conscience of Israel: **“You shall not make for yourself any gods of cast metal!”** While this was already articulated in the “Ten Words” (the Decalogue), its repetition here is both a reminder and a warning.

By specifically forbidding **“cast metal”** images, Yahweh points directly back to the golden calf.

In the context of covenant renewal, this verse serves as a **“never again”** clause, reminding Israel that the path to restoration begins with the **absolute rejection** of the very sin that caused the initial breach.

**CONSIDER:** The word for **“cast metal”** suggests something poured into a mold. There is a deep theological irony here: God wants to *mold* His people into His image, but the people often try to *mold* God into theirs.

***Vs 18 ¶ “You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month Abib, for in the month Abib you came out from Egypt.***

Yahweh now reintroduces the **festal cycle**, beginning with the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**. For seven days, the people are to eat bread without leaven, precisely as commanded during the original Exodus. This is to happen at the *“time appointed”* in the month of **Abib** (later known as Nisan).

This feast is inseparable from the Passover; while Passover marks the *moment* of salvation, Unleavened Bread marks the *week* of separation that follows.

By observing this in the month they *“came out from Egypt,”* Israel is called to a perpetual “re-living” of their birth as a nation.

Leaven is often a biblical symbol for the pervasive spread of sin or old influences; by eating unleavened bread, the people are physically acting out their commitment to leave behind the **“leaven of Egypt.”**

**The Seven Feasts of Israel:** As we have discussed before, this is the “head” of the festal year. In the full Levitical cycle (Lev 23), the seven feasts are: **Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost/Weeks, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles.**

*Vs 19-20 All that open the womb are mine, all your male livestock, the firstborn of cow and sheep. 20 The firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. And none shall appear before me empty-handed.*

Yahweh reiterates a foundational claim: *“All that open the womb are mine.”* This divine ownership extends to every male firstborn, whether human or livestock (Ex 13:1-2; Ex 13:15).

The text provides a specific protocol for different types of **“firsts.”** Clean animals, such as the **cow and sheep**, are given directly to Yahweh through sacrifice. However, an unclean animal like the **donkey**, presents a dilemma. It must be **redeemed** with a lamb, or its life must be forfeited by breaking its neck.

Most importantly, the **firstborn sons** must be redeemed. God does not demand child sacrifice; He demands the recognition that the child belongs to Him, bought back through a substitute.

**REDEMPTION AND SUBSTITUTION:** This passage is a clear “shadow” of the Gospel. The “clean” (the lamb) dies in the place of the “unclean” (the donkey), and a price is paid so the son may live.

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

Yahweh reiterates the command for the seventh-day rest with a specific, practical qualification: *“Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.”*

By highlighting these **two seasons**, the Lord addresses the moments of greatest economic temptation. Plowing time represents the anxiety of the **future**, while harvest time represents the pressure of the **present**.

By commanding rest even during these critical agricultural windows, Yahweh is teaching Israel that He, not their labor, is the ultimate provider.

*Vs 22 You shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year’s end.*

Following the instructions for the Sabbath, Yahweh introduces two additional pillars of the Hebrew year: the **Feast of Weeks** and the **Feast of Ingathering**.

The Feast of Weeks marks the celebration of the **firstfruits** of the **wheat harvest**. Though the specific timing is not detailed here, we read about it in (Lev 23:15-16). This festival, which we know as **Pentecost**, transformed the physical ingathering of grain into a spiritual act of gratitude.

The third great pilgrimage festival mentioned is the **Feast of Ingathering**, occurring at the “year’s end” (the transition of the agricultural cycle in the autumn). Known also as the **Feast of Tabernacles** or **Sukkot**, this was the final harvest celebration when the olives and grapes were brought in.

*Vs 23 Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel.*

Yahweh now codifies the “**Pilgrimage Mandate**”: three times a year, these three festival days, every male in Israel is commanded to “*appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel.*”

First notice the **Titles of God**: אָדוֹן (**‘adown**), יְהוָה (**Yahweh**), אֱלֹהִים (**‘elohiyim**) of Israel.

This command is the “missing link” for understanding the New Testament landscape.

It explains why Jerusalem was overflowing with “*God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven*” during the crucifixion of Jesus (the Passover/Unleavened Bread season) and the birth of the Church (Pentecost).

*Vs 24 For I will cast out nations before you and enlarge your borders; no one shall covet your land, when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year.*

Yahweh reinforces His commitment with a threefold promise of security and expansion.

First, He reaffirms the **expulsion** of the nations: “*I will cast out nations before you.*” This was not a random act of violence, but a **judicial eviction** (Gen 15:15-16).

God is patient, waiting four generations for the Amorites to repent. Only when their sin became “complete”—reaching a point of no return, did He authorize the expulsion.

Second, He promises **expansion**: “*I will enlarge your borders.*” Israel was not to be a stagnant people; as they **grew in faithfulness**, their **territory would grow** to match their needs.

The final promise, however, is the most staggering: “*no one shall covet your land*” while the men are away at the feasts. Here Yahweh promises a **supernatural peace**. He does not just promise to *defeat* the invaders; He promises to *restrain the desire* of the enemies.

**APPLICATION:** Never forget what Solomon tells us in (Pro 21:10).

**APPLICATION:** Sometimes the greatest miracle isn't God winning the battle; it's God preventing the battle from ever starting.

*Vs 25-26 “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover remain until the morning. 26 The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.”*

Yahweh provides **two commands** regarding the purity of blood sacrifices and two regarding the handling of the harvest and livestock.

**First**, the blood of a sacrifice must never be offered with anything leavened. As leaven typically represents corruption or the “old life”, it has no place alongside the blood, which represents the **life and atonement**.

Second, the Passover sacrifice must not “*remain until the morning.*” This echoes the **original Exodus command**; the meal was to be eaten in haste, and any leftovers were to be **consumed by fire**.

The narrative then shifts to the agricultural “**best**”: the “*best of the firstfruits.*” must be brought to the “*house of the LORD.*” This is a call to **radical giving**, giving not just the first, but the **premium portion** of the **first**.

Finally, Yahweh repeats a seemingly **obscure prohibition**: *“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.”* This was likely a pagan fertility rite practiced by the Canaanites. Equally, while the prohibition against boiling a kid in its mother’s milk became the basis for Jewish dietary laws, its primary theological point likely has to do with perverting God’s natural order.

**APPLICATION:** God not only asks for our best, but he asks for the best of our firsts.

*Vs 27 And the LORD said to Moses, “Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.”*

The divine encounter culminates in a **command for documentation**: *“Write these words.”* This instruction signifies that the verbal revelation Moses received on the mountain is the official **“charter”** for the nation.

Yahweh declares that *“in accordance with these words,”* He has solidified the covenant with Israel.

This is a profound moment of legal restoration. It is not a **“new”** covenant in the sense of a different agreement, but a **“reset”** of the original Sinaitic bond that was **shattered by the golden calf**.

Yahweh is offering a “divine mulligan”—a fresh start born out of His marvelous grace and the tireless intercession of the mediator.

The **“sense of loss”** that hung over the camp when Yahweh threatened to withdraw His presence has been replaced with the tangible weight of **new tablets** and a **written record**.

The expectation is that this brush with spiritual catastrophe would serve as a sobering reminder to the people.

This written record ensures that the **terms of the relationship** are never in doubt, serving as a **constant witness** to both **God’s high standards** and His even **higher mercy**.

This is the foundation for the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura*—that **God’s written word** is the **final authority** for the life of the believer.

**APPLICATION:** Have you ever felt like you’ve exhausted God’s patience? Exodus 34:27 reminds us that if God can reinstitute a nation that built a golden calf while, **He can certainly provide a fresh start for you today**.

*Vs 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.*

For the **second time**, Moses remains on the **heights of Sinai** for *“forty days and forty nights.”*

This duration in Scripture often signifies a **period of testing**, and **preparation**. During this time, Moses underwent a total fast, eating no bread and drinking no water—a feat physically impossible for a human under normal circumstances. This proves that Moses was being supernaturally sustained by Yahweh.

In this state of heightened spiritual communion, the final act of the “reset” is completed: *“And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.”*

This ensures that the core moral law—the Decalogue—remains the unchanging center of Israel’s identity.

*Vs 29 When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.*

As Moses makes his **descent** from the **heights of Sinai**, he grips the **“two tablets of the testimony”**—the physical proof of the renewed covenant.

However, a more startling proof has been **etched onto his very person**. Moses is unaware that *“the skin of his face shone.”* The Hebrew term suggests a **transformative radiance** that **emanated from his skin**.

This *“shining”* was the direct result of *“talking with God.”* Moses had become a human moon, reflecting the sun-like glory of the Creator. He came down as the **mediator of the Word**, but he appeared as a **witness to the Glory**.

This is the **Old Testament** version of the **Transfiguration** (Mt 17:1-2). Just as Jesus’ face shone like the sun on Mount Hermon, Moses’ face shone on Sinai. It proves that proximity to God inevitably **leaves a mark**.

**APPLICATION:** There is a profound beauty in the fact that Moses *“did not know”* his face shone, but others could see it. I believe there are two points worth teasing out. **First**, can others see, that you and I have been with Jesus? **Second**, true spiritual maturity is marked by an unconsciousness (a humility) of one’s own radiance.

*Vs 30 Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.*

As Moses approaches the camp, the initial relief of the people is quickly eclipsed by **overwhelming dread**.

Aaron and the leaders of Israel see Moses and *“behold, the skin of his face shone.”* The sight was so unsettling that *“they were afraid to come near him.”*

The people had become *“accustomed”* to the extraordinary—the pillars of cloud and fire, the manna, and the split sea—but this was different. This was a **human being** transfigured by the Divine.

**POINTING TO JESUS:** While Moses reflected the light, **Jesus is the light!**

*Vs 31 But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them.*

The scene is indeed striking—almost comical—as Moses stands radiant and Aaron and the leaders of the congregation hover at a distance. Moses must *“call to them”* to overcome their initial fear.

Ultimately, the leaders *“returned to him,”* and the silence of the mountain was replaced by the intimacy of conversation. Moses *“talked with them,”* de-briefing the extraordinary events of the last forty days.

Before the law could be issued to the nation, it had to be established among the leadership. This was not a lecture from a distant deity, but a dialogue between a man who had met with God.

**APPLICATION:** Glory is meant to be shared, not just observed. By *“talking with them,”* Moses begins to “transfer” the revelation from the mountain into the community.

*Vs 32 Afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he commanded them all that the LORD had spoken with him in Mount Sinai.*

Notice the language Moses uses here: *“people of Israel came near,”* moving from a posture of distant dread to one of attentive assembly.

Moses stands before them as the living bridge between heaven and earth. He does not merely offer a summary or a personal reflection; he *“commanded them all that the LORD had spoken with him.”* This was a **comprehensive download of divine instruction**.

By delivering these commands while his face was still radiant, Moses provided a visible “seal” of authenticity to his words. The people weren’t just hearing the Law; they were seeing the physical impact of the Lawgiver.

This assembly served as the official **“re-launch”** of the nation’s mission, ensuring that every man, woman, and child understood the terms of the “mulligan” they had been granted through the grace of Yahweh.

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

The moment Moses “*had finished speaking with them,*” he performed a deliberate and symbolic act: “*he put a veil over his face.*”

While the glory of God was necessary for authenticating the message, Moses recognized that its continued, brightness was a distraction, and perhaps a source of discomfort for the people. Consider (2Co 3:7-8).

*Vs 34 Whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded,*

A consistent pattern is now established for Moses’ ongoing leadership: “*Whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would remove the veil.*”

In the presence of the Source of Light, there was no need for a covering. Moses would stand before Yahweh, absorbing the radiance of the Divine Word with an open countenance. The “*went in*” is likely into the tent of meeting.

However, the pattern shifted the moment he exited the presence: “*And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded,*” he did so with the glow fully visible.

It is a **critical detail** that Moses did **not** wear the veil while delivering God’s commands. He wanted the people to see the light as he spoke the truth, ensuring the authority of the message was backed by the evidence of the encounter.

Only after the “telling” was done and the “commanding” was finished would the veil return.

**APPLICATION:** As we look at this through the lens of the New Testament consider (2Co 3:18).

*Vs 35 the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him.*

The text leaves us with a final, lingering image: the people of Israel looking at Moses and seeing that the “*skin of Moses’ face was shining.*” This served as a constant, visible reminder that their mediator was truly in contact with the Divine.

However, as soon as the official word was **delivered**, Moses “*would put the veil over his face again.*” This cycle continued “*until he went in to speak with Yahweh.*”

The conclusion of the chapter emphasizes that the **Source** of the glory was the presence of God, not the merit of Moses. The veil served as a “boundary marker” between the common and the holy.

This final verse ensures we understand that the “mulligan” given to Israel was not just a legal document on stone, but a living, glowing reality that stood in their midst every single day.

**THE NEW TESTAMENT EQUIVALENT:** Consider (2Co 2:15-16).

**FINAL THOUGHTS:** Exodus 34 starts with broken stones and ends with a glowing face. That is the **trajectory of Grace**.

God takes the broken pieces of our failure and, through the work of a Mediator, turns them into a radiant witness of His goodness.

Also, intimacy and close communion with God always leaves a mark. People, especially believers can sense a real, legitimate, and vibrant relationship with Jesus. They can smell His goodness in our lives. How do we smell to other believers?