

### God's Gracious Renewal of the Mosaic Covenant

#### Exodus 34

Exodus 34 – *“And the Lord said to Moses, “Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> And no man shall come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain.” <sup>4</sup> So he cut two tablets of stone like the first ones. Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. <sup>5</sup> Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. <sup>6</sup> And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, <sup>7</sup> keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.” <sup>8</sup> So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. <sup>9</sup> Then he said, “If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we are a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance.” <sup>10</sup> And He said: “Behold, I make a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the Lord. For it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. <sup>11</sup> Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. <sup>12</sup> Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. <sup>13</sup> But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images <sup>14</sup> (for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), <sup>15</sup> lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, <sup>16</sup> and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods. <sup>17</sup> “You shall make no molded gods for yourselves. <sup>18</sup> “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. <sup>19</sup> “All that open the womb are Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock, whether ox or sheep. <sup>20</sup> But the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem him, then you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. “And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. <sup>21</sup> “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. <sup>22</sup> “And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year’s end. <sup>23</sup> “Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the Lord God of Israel. <sup>24</sup> For I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.*

<sup>25</sup> “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.

<sup>26</sup> “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.” <sup>27</sup> 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.” <sup>28</sup> 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.

<sup>29</sup> Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses’ hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. <sup>30</sup> So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup> Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them. <sup>32</sup> Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup> And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. <sup>34</sup> But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. <sup>35</sup> And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.”

## Background Notes

At the end of Exodus 33, Moses had requested to see God’s glory. The Lord told Moses that he could not see the full glory of God because no one could see the face of God and live. However, Moses was promised that he would see **some** of God’s glory, and in Exodus 34 that promise was fulfilled. The Lord revealed the glory of His presence and the glory of His character to Moses. No wonder Moses bowed low and worshipped -- and so should we!

What does the end of verse 7 mean? In that verse, God said that He visits “*the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.*” Sadly, it means that there is always bad fallout to sin! The effects of sin can ripple on down for generations. Drunkenness, gambling, abuse and divorce, for example, can have hurtful effects on children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren.

God told Moses to cut out two new stone tablets for the Ten Commandments. So, Moses cut out two new tablets of stone and ascended Mt. Sinai by himself with the blank tablets on which God would again inscribe the Ten Commandments.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. The Mosaic Covenant was renewed with special promises.

The grace of God is certainly seen here in this chapter. Even before Moses descended the mountain with the Ten Commandments for the first time, God’s Covenant with His people had been broken! The fact that God Himself was

willing to write the Ten Commandments a second time is evidence of His amazing grace. And not only that, but in answer to Moses' prayer, God forgave the people -- and He promised to continue in their midst and to own them as His special people. Amazing grace!

Look at what God promised in verse 10: "...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 you will see the work of the Lord..."

What were some of these "marvels" (miracles) that God promised to do for His people? Already He had parted the Red Sea. Already the manna was being given, and the pillar of cloud and fire were continually before them. But there was more to come! Think of the miracle of the Jordan River being cut off at the time of the Conquest of the Promised Land! Think of the fall of the walls of Jericho at the shout of the people and the sound of the trumpets! And think of the great miracle in Joshua 10, when the sun would stand still for the longest day in history. The people of Israel and the peoples of the surrounding nations would surely come to know about the awesome God of Israel!

And then look at what God promised His people in verse 11: "*Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite*" and the Bud Light! (laughter) (No, there's no Bud Light here; however, we could throw it in for a possible practical application!) All of the "ites" mentioned in this verse were enemies of Israel who were living in the land that God had given to Abraham years before. Now God promised that He would drive all of these enemies out before Israel if Israel would follow the Lord. So the Mosaic Covenant renewed with special promises.

Do you see an application or a spiritual lesson for us in these verses? In the same way, the Lord promises us that He will drive all the "enemies" out of our lives if we will follow Him and obey Him! If you have a problem with alcohol, for example, then (seriously speaking now) "Bud Light" would be an enemy that needs to be driven out of your life. And the Lord is willing to do that -- if you are willing to obey Him.

## **2. The Mosaic Covenant was renewed with stern reminders.**

For a second time, Moses spent forty days and forty nights on Mt. Sinai without bread or water -- total fasting (v28). Verses 12-26 list a number of the laws under the Mosaic Covenant. This was not the first time that these laws had been given, but God was reminding the people of the importance of these laws as He renewed His covenant with them. Don't make peace treaties with the heathen inhabitants of the land (v12)! Tear down the images to the pagan gods (v13)! Don't get involved in any way with pagan religions (v15)! Don't intermarry with unbelievers (v16)! Don't make idols (v17)! Why not? "*You shall worship no other god, for the LORD is a jealous God*" (v14). God is jealous -- that is, God is jealous in a good sense. He must be Number One in our lives!

On the positive side, God said, Don't forget to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread (v18). Don't forget that every firstborn belongs to Me (v19). The firstborn animals that were not sacrificed to the Lord were to be redeemed with money

that was given to the Lord, as in the case of firstborn sons (v20). Donkeys were not to be sacrificed to the Lord because donkeys were in the category of “unclean animals.” If you were not willing to redeem your firstborn donkey and give the money to the Lord, then the donkey had to be killed.

The Sabbaths were to be a time of rest (v21). The annual feasts were to be kept. The people were to go up to Jerusalem three times a year to keep certain feasts (v22-23). When the males left their fields to go up to Jerusalem, God promised that He would protect their houses and lands from looting and stealing (v24).

The Passover was to be celebrated properly, in accordance with the Law (v25). And they were not to forget to bring their first fruits of their crops to the House of the Lord. The Mosaic Covenant was renewed with stern reminders.

## **Practical Application**

### **Let your life radiate Christ!**

When Moses came down from the mountain, he had to put a veil over his face, because his face literally shone after he had been in communication with the Lord (v29-35). Moses’ face continued to shine anew every time he went in before the Lord to speak with Him without the veil on his face.

In 2 Corinthians 3:18, the apostle Paul drew a parallel to Moses’ experience: *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.”* As we walk and commune with the Lord, and as we stay in His Word, and as we love Him and obey Him, our lives will radiate Christ! We won’t sprout halos, or literally light up, but people will know that we’ve been with the Lord. Let your life radiate Christ!