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Exodus 33 - 34



Exodus - Steve Gregg

Exodus 33-34 describes Moses' conversation with God, where he asks to see His glory but is told that no man can see His face and live. God promises to send an angel to lead the people into the Promised Land, but Moses insists on having God's presence with them. The people display true repentance and humility, and God proclaims His name and character as merciful, gracious, and forgiving. The section emphasizes the importance of both God's mercy and justice, as well as His leading characteristics of mercy, patience, and forgiveness. Ultimately, it sets the stage for the building of the tabernacle in future verses.

Transcript

So the story picks up again at Exodus chapter 33. Moses is on the mountain. The golden calf has been destroyed, crushed into powder, strewn upon the water.

People have drunk the water. They have come under a plague of God. Some of them have been slain by the Levites.

And in chapter 32, verse 31, it says Moses returned to the Lord and said, These people have sinned. And God said in verse 34, Now therefore, go lead the people to the place which I have spoken. Behold, my angel shall go before you.

Now, we shall find that God means that His angel will go instead of Him. And Moses does not like those terms and does not agree to that. But let's just pick up the narration in chapter 33, verse 1. Then Yahweh said to Moses, Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt.

Again, whom you have brought out. Sometimes God wants to blame Moses for it. Not really, but He kind of wants to distance Himself from the people because of their sinfulness.

To the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, I will to your descendants, I will give it. And I will send my angel before you and I will drive up the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hivite and the Perizzite and the Hivite, excuse me,

Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. 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.

So God had said in the previous chapter, in verse 34, that my angel will go before you. And now He confirms that it will be His angel, not Him. He has made a promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

He said, I'm going to keep the promise. I'll go ahead and I'll give you guys the land, but I'm not going there with you. You're going there without me.

I'm divorcing you guys. I'm not going to be in your midst anymore. I did make promises.

I'll go ahead and fulfill those promises. I can't just leave you guys out here in the desert to perish. I'll give you the land I promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for their sakes.

But my angel will go to drive out the people before you. I'm going to not go with you. I will not be with you.

Now, God, of course, is everywhere. This is not suggesting that God isn't some places. God's presence is universal everywhere in the universe.

There's no place that God could not be. Or He says, I will not go up in the midst of you. He's talking about His manifest presence.

He's talking about His being in relationship with them. You know, I will. I'll go ahead and clear the way for you guys.

My angel will get rid of the Hittites and the Jebusites and all those people, get them out of your way and you'll get the land, like I said, but don't count on me being with you guys because I'm just going to fulfill that promise I made and then I'm out of here. But the people didn't like hearing that. Verse four, when the people heard these grave tidings, they mourned and no one put on his ornaments for Yahweh has 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. So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb. So the people were grieved, and this seems like some kind of a true repentance because he had said he's going to go ahead and give them the land so they didn't have to be grieved about not getting their land.

He did say he's still going to drive their enemies out ahead of them so they don't be worried about their security. In other words, he said he's going to do everything for them that they were already expecting him to do, with the exception he's not going to live with them. He's not going to go there with them.

And the people apparently had at least enough of a heart for God that they didn't want to have all those tangible blessings and physical blessings without having God in their midst. And so they were grieved. They felt guilty.

They felt bad about what they'd done. The way they showed their remorse was that they took off their ornaments. In other words, they gave up their festivities.

They had gotten all dressed up for their dance and their party, the golden calf. And now they they kind of dress down into their ordinary, more, you know, humble clothes. And it says Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp.

This is Moses' personal tent. It would appear. I don't know if the tent they slept in or the tent that he, you know, worked in.

We remember from chapter 18 that there was a tent where Moses would sit and the people would come and bring their cases for him to adjudicate for them. This may be that tent. It says he 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 Yahweh went out to the tabernacle of meeting, which was outside the camp. Now, why they did that, we don't know. Apparently, I mean, we do we do find that the cloud was there.

Moses' tabernacle of meeting was not the tabernacle that we see described in great detail in the other chapters. It was not yet built. This is just the place where Moses would meet with God.

And apparently other people who wanted to see God could come there, too. This may have been the place. In fact, this might even be the time frame for chapter 18.

It may have been that people were coming to Moses to seek God's mind about certain cases they had to resolve. And that, you know, we saw in chapter 18 that Moses would have these people standing at his tent all day long waiting for him to make a decision about their cases. That could be during this time frame.

But we don't know. Somehow people came to meet with God or to seek God, either to seek the mind of God or to worship God. There was no tabernacle, such as we later read about, which became the normal means of worship.

So perhaps people just came out there to bow and and, you know, meditate on God and wanted to be in his presence. And that was outside the camp because God didn't want to be in the camp. Because the people were sinful.

And he said, if I'm among you, I'm going to just get angry and consume you. And it was whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle. Now, of course, this is not the tabernacle

that we see described later on.

This is just this tent. His tent where he met with God and people who wanted to meet with God came out there. That when he went out there, all the people rose and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he'd gone into the tabernacle.

So Moses was revered by the people. And as he would walk through the camp on his way out of the camp to go to the tent, meaning people would stand in reverence to watch him go by and they'd remain on their feet until he disappeared from their view. And it came to pass when Moses entered the tabernacle that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle and Yahweh talked with Moses.

Now, this was visible to the people. They saw Moses going to the tent and they saw the cloud come down there. So they knew that Moses was meeting with God.

It tended to confirm his leadership beyond the shadow of a doubt in the mind of anyone who's paying attention that God was meeting every day with Moses and speaking with him. And the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door and they all the people rose and worshiped each man in his tent door. So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend and he would return to the camp.

But his servant, Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle. So we don't think I don't think Joshua was inside the tabernacle, but he was apparently standing guard at the tabernacle night and day. They must have brought him meals and things like that because he seemed not to have any off time.

Although Moses did, Moses would leave at night and go home, but go back out and he had a day shift. But Joshua, maybe Joshua just worked the night shift. You know, maybe he was got to rest during the day.

It's hard to say. Then Moses said to the Lord. On one of these occasions, apparently, when he was talking with 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've also found grace in my sight. 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. Now, he's saying, you've told me to leave these people, but I don't want to leave them if they're not your people. And if we don't have grace or favor in your sight and you've not even told me who you're going to send with me.

See, back in verse two, God said, I'll send my angel before you. But Moses, I don't even know who this angel is. You haven't given me the name.

You haven't identified who's going to be leading us. And after all, God, we want you to lead us now in verse 14. It says, God said, my presence will go with you and I will give you rest.

Now, it's strange to have this here because of what follows and because God seems to come to this point of promising to go with him after some requests that Moses makes in the next verses. There were times in the book of Genesis that there was a verse that would be given that kind of summarized what followed. It's like there'd be a conclusion of a story, but then the story leading up to that conclusion would be told afterward.

And it's almost like verse 14 could be like a heading to the next section, like this is the story of how God ended up saying, my presence will go with you and I'll give you rest. And it went this way. So that.

It's possible if it's seen as sort of a literary structural thing that God didn't say this at this point, but he said this at the end of the story that follows. And this is more like sort of a heading. Some of you probably have Bibles that have headings over paragraphs and stuff that kind of summarize what's in the coming paragraph.

This may have actually been a built in heading over what follows. I think from time to time, that's the best way to understand some of the statements in the narrative, because it'll say something and then it'll tell the story of how that something is happened. Because then he said to God, if your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.

Now, if you would leave out verse 14. And just have the narrative continue with Moses speaking, he said, you haven't told me who's going to go with us and we don't want to go unless it's you that go with us. And and this request that Moses makes ends up with God saying, OK, my presence will go with you and I'll give you rest because he says.

If your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here, 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 should be separate, your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth. And the Lord said to Moses, I will also do this thing that you've spoken for you have found grace in my sight and I know you by name.

Now, this agreement in verse 17 is essentially what was summarized in verse 14. It seems like Moses asked that God's presence would go with him and God says, OK, I'll do what you've requested. Namely, what? What verse 14 says, my presence will go with you and I'll give you rest.

It's the construction of the the narrative has its kind of rough spots, which is kind of hard to know exactly how we're supposed to understand the flow. But anyway, God, who had said he would not go with them, now changes his mind because Moses says we're not

going if you don't go. And God, I think, was waiting to be invited again.

Remember the stories about Jesus, how he was walking on the water and the disciples on the boat. And it says he he was going to walk past them until they cried out to him and invite him in to vote. Or when he was walking with the men on the road to Emmaus, and it says he would have gone by, he would have continued, but they invite him to stay.

There's times when God actually is waiting to be invited and he acts like he's not going to go or he acts like he's not going to be with them. Until they ask him and God said, OK, I'm not going to go with you. But he's waiting to be asked, begged even to go.

And Moses does beg, does say, I won't go without you. And so God says, OK, because you have found favor in my sight. That's what grace means.

And I know you by name. I will do this thing that you've asked me to do. Now, God knows Moses by name, but Moses wants to know God better by name.

And in verse 18, Moses said, please show me your glory. Then he said, I will make all my goodness pass before you and I will proclaim the name of Yahweh before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

But he said, you cannot see my face for no man can see me and live. And Yahweh said, here is a place by me and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be when my glory passes by that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and I will cover you with my hand while I pass by.

Then I will take away my hand and you shall see my back. But my face shall not be seen. Now, there's a number of things in this section here.

Moses said, please let me see your glory. And he said, no, you can't see my face. Now, that that makes it clear that earlier.

In verse 11, when it says the Lord spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend, that that's just a figure of speech. Moses didn't really see God's face. Nobody can see God's face and live, God said.

But he spoke intimately. That's what face to face means in that place. It doesn't mean that he actually saw God's face.

And there is something of the glory of God that Moses knew he had not seen. Now, he'd seen the pillar of cloud. He'd seen the shekinah glory as a pillar of fire at night.

Certainly, there were times when the glory of God was visible not only to Moses, but to everybody. But he realized that that was veiled. It was not really seeing God straight on.

He was not seeing God face to face literally. And that's what he wanted to see. He wanted to see the radiance that is God without any of these contrivances to shield or to filter that glory.

And God said, I can't give you that. I can't let you see me like that now because you'll die if that happens. So I'll do the next best thing.

But what he said he will do in verse 19 is I will make all my goodness to pass before you, which is apparently almost synonymous to the glory that Moses wants to see. Show me your glory. I'll cause my goodness to pass by and I will proclaim the name of the Lord.

Now, proclaiming the name of Yahweh, of course, remember Moses already knew the name Yahweh. So did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But proclaiming the name of Yahweh is really, as I said before, the name refers to the character and the reputation and the identity of the person himself, not just the word by which he's known, not just the word by which he's called.

And God ends up actually proclaiming his name in the next chapter. In verses six and seven, you can see what it means that he proclaims the name of Yahweh. It says in Chapter 34, verses six and seven, Yahweh passed before him and proclaimed Yahweh.

Yahweh Elohim, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abounding in goodness and truth, 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 fourth generation. Now that's proclaiming his name. But really, what he's doing is describing the kind of person he is.

It's his character. His name is simply a reference to his reputation or character. And that is true almost throughout the Bible, that the word name when applied to the name of God or even in some cases, the names of people is a reference to their character.

Down in Chapter 34, verse 14, he says, for you shall worship no other God except for Yahweh, whose name is jealous. Yahweh, his name is jealous. Well, what it means is his character is that of a jealous husband over his wife, which, by the way, is a is a is part of love for a man to be jealous over his wife means that he's he loves her and he values the covenant enough that he is possessive of that.

And so God, because of his love for Israel, is jealous over Israel. But the point here is that the name of the Lord proclaimed is really a proclamation of the kind of God, the kind of person that God is. And Moses said, I want to see your glory and God said, I can't let you see my glory.

Exactly my face. But I can let you hear of it. I can describe it to you.

I can proclaim what my character is like. That is my glory. My character is my glory.

And that's the best I can do for you. I'll also cause my goodness to pass by you. Now, what that means is there's a place in this mountain here, this cave, this cavern here.

You go in there and I'll cover it somehow so that you can't see me while I pass by. Apparently, God visually went by. It's almost like if somebody had been looking, they would have seen God and died.

But Moses was not permitted to look. The cave was covered with Moses. And when God had went by, God was able, I mean, Moses was able to look out and see, perhaps in the distance, the backside of God.

What some people understand this to mean is the afterglow after God had passed by that the whole the whole ground and they had taken on a temporary glow from his going by. It's not clear. But I think that when Paul talks about this in 2nd Corinthians, Chapter three, he would probably suggest that the backside of God is that side which is revealed in the Old Covenant.

His face and his favor is shown in the New Covenant. But the law, what Paul calls the ministry of condemnation, is really God's backside. There it is an aspect of God, but it's not the most glorious aspect.

It's not the part that is that really reveals his character and his face to you supremely as it does in the face of Jesus. Now, I'm just jumping ahead here. We see in Chapter 34 that as a result, apparently, of seeing the glory of the backside of God, Moses' face had taken on some of that glory and was glowing.

We'll read about that in the last verse of Chapter 34, verses 29 through 35. We won't get there now. I don't want to talk.

I don't want to read that now. We'll read that later. But but apparently, as a result of not even seeing the face of God, but just seeing the back of God, that glory was so intense that it was infectious.

And Moses' face itself took on that shine. It lasted apparently for days, if not weeks, although it did fade eventually. And yet that's from seeing only the backside of God.

Now, Paul, over in 2 Corinthians, Chapter 3, wants to make an issue of this whole thing of this glowing face of Moses and connected, actually contrasted with the glory of the new covenant. You see, glory is an interesting word because on one hand, glory means radiance. Paul, in another place, talks about the radiance, the glory of the sun is one glory and the glory of the moon is another glory.

The glory of the stars is different from each other. He means the radiance, the brightness. The word glory does have that meaning of brightness or radiance, but it also has the meaning, as we know, of honor and prestige and so forth.

But when we pray for God to be glorified, we're not praying that he'll become more radiant, but rather that his reputation, his fame, his prestige will be increased among men. But Paul kind of uses this to show that the old covenant had a certain prestige and a certain honor and a certain majesty to it, a certain glory associated with the old covenant. And he used the double entendre because the glory also is radiance.

He talks about the radiance, the glory of the old covenant is seen in the fact that Moses face glow, although that glow faded and what Paul is pointing out is that the old covenant faded to that glory was an inferior glory. There's a greater glory of the new covenant, and that also is said to be like radiance in a sense. As we shall see, if you look at Second Corinthians chapter three, he says in verse six, that God has made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit.

He means the letter is the old covenant. The spirit of the new covenant for the letter kills that is the old covenant condemns and kills, but the spirit, which is the new covenant, gives life. We saw that, of course, in the fact that 3000 people were killed at Mount Sinai, whereas 3000 people were saved on when the spirit was given at Pentecost.

But if the ministry of death written and engraved on stone, he's got the Ten Commandments here in mind, but they stand for the whole law, not just the Ten Commandments, but the whole law, including the Ten Commandments that he calls the ministry of death. Why? Well, it condemns people to death when they violate it. If that was glorious so that the children of Israel could not look steadily on the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away.

How will the ministry of the spirit that is the new covenant not be more glorious? For if the ministry of condemnation, that's the old covenant had glory, the ministry of righteousness, the new covenant exceeds much more in glory. And that we're going to skip down some here and we'll come back to this later. But he then says in verse 12, therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech, unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.

But their minds were hardened for until this day, the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament for the old covenant because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, the veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless, when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Now, the Lord is that spirit where the spirit of the Lord is. There is liberty. But we all with unveiled face.

Unlike Moses, we don't veil our faces. We're beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. We're being transformed into the same image from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord.

Now, he says, unlike the old covenant, which is a fading glory, and that's emblemized by the fact that the glory of the old covenant in a sense came on to Moses face, but it faded like the old covenant. They saw the glory faded. It was a temporary glory.

The glory of the new covenant is the opposite. We as we do not wear a veil and we look at Jesus, we're changed into greater and greater degrees of glory. This glory doesn't fade.

It intensifies. We are changed from glory to glory into the image of Christ as we behold the glory of the Lord. So what he's saying is the old covenant gave something of a glimpse of the glory of God.

Certainly not the best glimpse one could hope for. We have a better glimpse of that in the face of Jesus. In fact, 2 Corinthians 4, 6 says, God, who called the light to shine of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

So Christ's face is where we see the glory of God, the character of God, the glory of God and the character of God are the same thing. It's the character of God seen in Christ. When we are changed from glory to glory into Christ's image, it's our character that's changed.

We don't really have glowing on our face. People don't see light on our face, but our character is being transformed in the image of his character, his glory, his name, his character. These are all kind of interchangeable ideas.

And Paul takes them and says the old covenant. It revealed something of the character of God, but not the most desirable part. It was his backside, so to speak, though Paul doesn't use that expression.

But he does say it was the condemning side. It was the deadly side of God. It was the harsh requirement side of God.

But in Christ, we see the other side of God, a glory that is superior to the glory of the old covenant. And so these ideas are kind of mixed together in this narrative of God's name, his goodness. These things are his glory that Moses desires to see, and Moses is going to see something of that.

But he's not going to see the face of God. We see that in Jesus Christ. We receive the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus.

It says in 2 Corinthians 4, 6, Moses never did see the face of God as we do in Christ. The smiling face of that, so they saw the harsh side of God. Now, in this section at the end of chapter 33 of Exodus, there is a verse that is quoted in the New Testament, and it's there at the end of verse 19.

Exodus 33, 19. God says, I will be gracious to my will be gracious and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. This is quoted by Paul in Romans nine when he's talking about election, really.

And again, the question of what kind of election Paul has been disagreed upon by different people. But in Romans nine verses 14 and 15. It says, What should we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not.

For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion. So it's not of him who wills or of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. Now, what is this? God shows mercy on whoever he wants to show mercy on and compassion on whoever he wants to show compassion on, of course.

That's the nature of mercy. Mercy, it's not owed. It's offered for free.

If it's owed, then it's not mercy, it's justice. Mercy and compassion are things that are offered out of the goodness of someone's heart when they have goodness in their heart towards somebody. So Paul is saying that God has the right to show mercy to whomever he wishes.

Unfortunately, many people feel that this is saying that God arbitrarily shows mercy to some without anything that he sees in them. But that's not suggested at all. God shows mercy on whoever he wants to show mercy.

But is there any description of what categories of people God wills to show mercy on? Well, of course, in one of the Beatitudes, Jesus said, blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Repeatedly, Jesus said, if you forgive others, God will forgive you. That's him showing mercy to you because you showed mercy to others.

But he said, if you don't forgive others, he won't forgive you. So mercy is shown to those who have mercy toward others. To say that God shows mercy on whoever he wants to show mercy doesn't mean he wants to show mercy arbitrarily without any reference to the persons who are receiving it.

He shows mercy when he sees fit to do so. And when he sees fit to do so is when he finds people who are meeting the conditions for receiving his mercy. If they are merciful, then he'll be merciful to them.

He gives grace to the humble, but he resists the proud. And certainly those who put their trust in Christ are among those that receive his grace and his mercy because we are saved by grace through faith. So to have Paul quoting this verse as if he is saying God shows mercy and compassion kind of arbitrarily on the basis of some kind of a pick that he made before the earth began and without reference to anything in the people is to make Paul contradict his own teachings elsewhere and the teachings of Jesus.

Paul knew very well that God doesn't show mercy on people unless they meet the conditions of faith in Christ and humility and those other things that are conditioned. So just because God said I'll have mercy on or I'll be gracious toward whoever I'll be gracious and so forth doesn't mean he's saying this is an arbitrary decision on his part. It just means that he has the right to show mercy on whatever people he wants to and to not on others.

If he doesn't want to show mercy on the proud, then he doesn't have to do it. And after all, back in Exodus chapter 32 and verse 33, God had already said, whoever has sinned against me, I will blot him out of my book. That is to say God's anger and judgment comes on those people who deserve it.

And so he does take into consideration things in people in his decision to show mercy or not. But no one can insist upon him showing mercy if he doesn't choose to. Mercy is never owed to people.

Now, moving on to chapter 34. Says Yahweh said to Moses, cut two tablets of stone like the first one, and I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. So Moses had to actually make the second group of tablets.

God made the first ones. So Moses had to replace. You break it, you bought it.

You got to replace it. But God nonetheless wrote on it for him because that would be harder. So be ready in the morning to come up in the morning to Mount Sinai and present yourself to me there on top of the mountain and no man should come up with you and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain.

Let neither flocks nor herds feed before the mountain. So he cut two tablets of stone like the first one. That is, Moses did.

Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai as the Lord had commanded him, and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. Then Yahweh descended in a cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name of the Lord, as he had promised in a previous chapter he would do. This was in response to Moses saying, show me your glory.

Well, this is the closest that's going to get the Lord passed before him and proclaimed Yahweh, Yahweh, Elohim, merciful and gracious. Now, he also talks about his wrath, but he begins with his leading characteristics. His leading characteristics are mercy and grace and long suffering, which means patience, abounding in goodness and truth.

This phrase abounding in goodness and truth, many scholars feel that John is quoting it or alluding to it. In John, chapter one, when he's describing Jesus incarnation in John one, 14, which probably many of you can quote, it says the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of

grace and truth. Now, full of grace and truth is thought to be in the Greek, perhaps John's way of giving the equivalent of this phrase abounding in goodness and truth, full of grace and truth, abounding in goodness and truth.

If that is true, then John is deliberately likening Jesus to certain things in this story. After all, he does say there in John one, 14, the word became flesh and in the Greek is that he tabernacled among us and we beheld his glory. The reference to Jesus flesh as a tabernacle in which the glory of God dwelt definitely is reminiscent of the tabernacle in the wilderness where the glory of God was seen, was beheld.

God, God came and dwelt among us like he did among Israel. He tabernacled in the days of Moses in the tabernacle and they saw his glory in the pillar of cloud, the pillar of fire. Well, we have seen something even better.

We've seen God dwelling among us, tabernacling in Christ and his glory was seen too. And just as the glory of God was declared to Moses as being abounding in goodness and truth, so we saw this same glory in Jesus. He was full of grace and truth.

And so there would appear to be many deliberate allusions here in John one, 14 to this tabernacle narrative. We haven't even read yet about the building of the tabernacle, but Exodus has already prior to these verses were reading described what the tabernacle would be like. And therefore, the idea of the tabernacle is the place where God dwells among his people.

And and his glory being what is here described in Exodus 34, verses six and seven, perhaps echoed in that verse is definitely making a connection between Jesus as the place where God dwelt among us. After the incarnation corresponding to the tabernacle in the Old Testament, where God's glory dwelt among Israel. Now, back to Exodus 34, verse seven, continuing, describing it so that he keeps mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but then also by no means clearing the guilty, but visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and fourth generation.

That third and fourth generation thing came up earlier in the Ten Commandments when he gave the Second Commandment about making graven images. He described people who do that as those who hate him, and he will visit the iniquity of those people to the third, fourth generation on their offspring. But here, notice how many words are used to speak of his generosity of spirit, his compassion.

Merciful, gracious, long suffering. Abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy, forgiving iniquity. That's like what? Seven different designations of his kindness and his graciousness.

But then by no means clearing the guilty, presuming this means the unrepentant guilty.

He does not overlook that. He is gracious, forgiving, but he also will punish severely those who are unrepentant.

These are the two sides of God, the goodness, we could say, and the severity of God. Paul tells us that we should be paying attention to both those aspects of God's character over in Romans chapter 11 and verse 22. Romans 11, 22, Paul said, therefore, consider the goodness and the severity of God.

Why? Because both are aspects of his character. God's goodness is his leading characteristic. Severity is actually part of his goodness.

It's sort of the backside of God in a way. But it's nonetheless part of him. It's the other side of the coin.

It is because God is good that he has to be severe toward evil. A surgeon who is not severe toward cancer cells is not a good surgeon. A good surgeon is heartless toward a cancer tumor.

He goes in and removes it because it damages and threatens the life of the body. Because he is good, because he is loving, he has to remove the cancer. So also sin and unrepentant sinners are like a cancer in the human race.

Because of his goodness to spare the human race, he must deal with sin and eradicate it. And so Paul says, be consider the goodness and severity of God on those who fell severity, but toward you goodness, if you continue in his goodness, otherwise you also be cut off. So it is a good thing for Christians to consider both sides of God, his goodness and his severity.

Why? Well, he has shown goodness to us. That should be appreciated. But his severity should be observed, too, because he will cut us off also if we don't continue his goodness.

We see his judgment upon sinners. And that is supposed to be something that's obviously something that's also true of God for us to keep in mind. In Romans chapter one, he also made reference to these two.

Well, not those same two. Well, pretty much the same two things, because he said in verse 17, Romans 1, 17, for in it, he's referring to the gospel, which he had mentioned the previous verse in the gospel. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth and their unrighteousness. There are two things revealed about God. His wrath, his wrath is revealed toward those who suppress the truth.

But in the gospel, his righteousness, his goodness is revealed. So Paul wants us to know from the beginning of the book of Romans and even later in chapter 11, that both sides of God need to be considered. We see both in Jesus.

Some people think there's a contrast between Jesus and the father. That is, Jesus, the manifestation of God in the New Testament and the manifestation of God in the old. People often think in the Old Testament, God's the wrathful God, the mean God, the intolerant God.

Whereas Jesus is the good guy, God, the bad cop and the good cop. But actually, Jesus has wrath, too. You only have to read the book of Revelation to see many references to the wrath of the lamb.

And Jesus showed his anger on certain occasions in the Old Testament, where we do see a lot of the wrath of God and the judgments of God. Yet we see the goodness of God also on the patience of God and the forgiveness of God when he has an excuse to forgive. He does so.

And so even in the Old Testament, when God declares his name, that is his character to Moses, the leading characteristics are his mercy, his graciousness, his patience, his forgiveness. But there's also the other side. There's also the severity of God.

He mentions that secondarily because it's it's secondary. It's not the leading aspect of God's character in the Old Testament or the New. Now, when God declared his name to Moses like that, it says in verse eight, Exodus thirty four, eight.

So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. 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 stiff necked people and pardon our iniquity and our sin and take us as your inheritance. And God said, behold, I make a covenant.

Before all your people, I will do marvels such as I have said 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 Yahweh, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. Observe what I command you this day.

Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. 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. But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars and cut down their wooden images, for you shall worship no other God, for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God.

Lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they play the harlot with their God and make sacrifice to their God and one of them invites you and you eat of his

sacrifice and you take of his daughters for your sons and his daughters play the harlot with their God and make your sons play the harlot with their God, you shall make no molded image, no molded God for yourself. It's clear that God has reason to be concerned about this. Israel has already shown their propensity to worship false gods and he's emphatic.

The Canaanite gods will attract your people. Why? Because the Canaanite gods were worshipped with orgies. And they attracted the lusts of the people.

They were parties. They were drunken orgies, the kind of things that carnal people are drawn to do, whereas God was calling his people to be holy and righteous and pure. So he said, listen, if you allow any of these Canaanites to live and their religions to continue, even if we practice in some little corner of the land, Israel is going to be drawn away by it.

So you need to wipe them all out, destroy every vestige of their religious systems. Now, he says the Feast of Unleavened Bread, you shall keep seven days. You shall eat unleavened bread.

This is verse 18, as I commanded you in the appointed time of the month of Abib, in the month of Abib, you came out of Egypt. All that open the womb are mine and every male firstling among the livestock, whether ox or sheep. But the firstling of a donkey you shall redeem with the lamb.

And if you will not redeem him, you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. And none shall appear before me empty handed.

Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. Even though there's work to do, you still take a day off and don't work. And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks of the first fruits of the harvest and the Feast of Engathering at the year's end.

Three times in the year, all your men will appear before the Lord and Yahweh, the Lord God of Israel. Now, here we have only repeats of what he has said on numerous occasions, but God has found it helps to repeat himself because the people are very quickly forgetful. Remember, he told them not to gather manna on the Sabbath and then the Sabbath came and they went out and gathered manna.

He told them not to store up the manna overnight. They did anyway. He told them not to make images.

They made a golden calf. And if we think God's been too repetitious, we might argue that he's not being repetitious enough because people quickly forget what he said. And he knows that it bears repetition.

Now, one thing I'd point out to you, everything we read at the first born in the Sabbath and that we've encountered before, even these three feasts, these three times a year that the men of Israel to appear before God, they are listed here again as they were back in chapter 23. But back in chapter 23, I pointed out to you that they sometimes are called by different names. It's in chapter 23, verses 14 through 17 that we have these same three feasts mentioned.

One difference is the primary difference in these two lists, and there will be other differences in other listings of them because they will be listed multiple times in the future of the Pentateuch also. But I mentioned that the Feast of Pentecost has a variety of names. In chapter 23, verses 14 through 17, the three feasts are called the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which, as I said, is also the Passover feast, then the Feast of Harvest in verse 16, and then the Feast of In-Gathering.

Now, the Feast of Harvest is Pentecost. Feast of In-Gathering is the Feast of Tabernacles. They have various names.

But as you turn over to the passage we're looking at in Exodus 34, the names are the same pretty much. In verse 18, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is Passover. But when you get down to verse 22, instead of the Feast of Harvest, that second feast, which is actually Pentecost, is called the Feast of Weeks.

So that's yet another name for it. It will be called Pentecost on other occasions. It is here called the Feast of Weeks.

In chapter 13, chapter 23, 16, it was called the Feast of Harvest. And then you have the Feast of In-Gathering again mentioned here in verse 22, which is Tabernacles. Verse 24 says, 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. So all the Israelites are going to have to leave their farms unattended three times a year and go away for a week and go to wherever the Tabernacle is. And they say, well, what if someone moves in on my land and squats there while I'm gone or moves the boundaries while I'm not looking? Well, God says, I'll look to that if you're obedient to me, if you're keeping these covenant requirements, I'll see that no one covets your land while you're away.

So God would protect their land when they are not there to watch it. Verse 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. The first of the first fruits of your land you shall bring to the house of Yahweh your God.

You should not boil a young goat in its mother's milk. Again, all of these things we've read before, so he's repeating them. Verse 27, Then Yahweh said to Moses, write these

words for according to the tenor of these words, I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.

So it was. Excuse me. So he was there with the Lord 40 days and 40 nights.

He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets that his God wrote on the tablets, the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. Now, Moses spent this 40 days and 40 nights on the mountain, neither eating or drinking.

Likewise, he had done so earlier when he first received the first tablets. He had been 40 days and 40 nights up there and he had not eaten or drunk. And as near as we can tell when he came down from the mountain, broke the commandments, burned the calf and so forth.

We don't we don't know if he ate in between. Some people think he went a solid 80 days. But I would say there's a suggestion that he was down at the foot of the mountain for a while and therefore probably had meals while he was down there, because in Chapter 33, after he came down and broke the first tablets, we read about him taking his tent and pitching it outside the camp in Chapter 33, verse seven.

And it talks about in verse eight, whenever Moses went out of the tabernacle that the people rose, it sounded like there was like an ongoing period of time that Moses was on the ground there before he went back up on the mountain, during which time he was probably eating. So it's not really made clear. But even if he went 40 days without food and water, this is this would require essentially a miracle, because naturally speaking, a man cannot live more than a few days without water to fast from food for 40 days is not that difficult for a person of average body weight.

And Jesus did that, but he drank. Jesus drank water during his 40 day fast. And that would be something you would have to do if you're going to fast for 40 days, because you can't go 40 days without water.

I know of only one exception to that was that Brother Yun, when he was in prison, apparently went 100 days or more, it seems like, without water. But he was just laying there, wasting away. He became shriveled like a raisin during that time.

It's a miracle, no doubt, that he lived without taking any liquid in. It's this Chinese Christian in prison who didn't eat or drink anything for, I forget the length of time, it seems like it was over 100 days, as I recall. And his survival was a miracle.

But he didn't look very good at the end of that time. His wife visited him. She said his ears looked like raisins.

They were the size of raisins. So, I mean, all his soft tissues were just all dehydrated. And he was just shriveled up.

I forget he weighed 60 pounds or something when he came out of there. It's still miraculous that he could live that long, but Moses was in good strength and he wasn't shriveled up and so forth. This is a truly a miracle that he went so long without water.

Verse 29, 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. The word shone or shined in the Hebrew means sent out rays or horns. And it may be something you've observed in some classical paintings of Moses, he has like ram's horns.

Have you ever seen those pictures where they depicted him having horns on his head? It's because of the double meaning of this, the verb to shine means to send out rays or to radiate rays or to grow horns or send out horns. It's just a word that we use in different applications. It certainly does not mean that Moses grew horns.

It's talking about the radiance, the shine of his face, the rays. But because the Hebrew word can also mean to grow horns for some reason, certain artists. I guess if you're painting Moses, it's hard to paint his face glowing, so it's easy to grow horns on him.

But it seems weird that any artist would depict him with horns on his head. But it's because of this. If you've ever wondered, why do they have horns on Moses head? It's because of this word here.

So in Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone and they were afraid to come near him. It's too eerie. Then Moses called to them and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him and Moses talked with them.

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. And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, apparently in the tent of meeting, he would take the veil off until he came out and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whenever whatever he had been commanded.

And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses with the skin of his Moses face shown, then Moses would put the veil on his face again until he went in to speak with him. So it sounds like what happened was that Moses felt like this shining on his face was distracting to people when he spoke to the people. So he covered his face to to obscure the glow.

Now, we are not told in the book of Exodus or elsewhere in the Old Testament that this glow stopped glowing. However, Paul, as we saw in 2nd Corinthians, Chapter three, indicated that the glowing on Moses face was a glory that faded and that some people have understood Paul to be saying that the reason that Moses covered his face when he

faced the people was because the glow was fading and he didn't want them to see that it was fading. In other words, he was kind of proud of the fact that his face had this glory on it.

But when he noticed it was fading, he didn't want the Israelites to see that it was fading. So he wore this veil over his face. Preachers say this all the time.

In fact, I've hardly ever heard this preached on without that point being made, although I don't think the Bible makes that point. Um, they're basing it on 2nd Corinthians, Chapter three, where it says in verse 13, 2nd Corinthians 3:13, unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the Children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. Now, what was passing away in this case is the glow that was on his face.

And and that that glow that was passed away was actually going to come to an end. But it says Moses put a veil over his face so the Children of Israel could not steadily look at that glow. That glow is what he refers to as what was passing away.

He didn't want the Children of Israel to see that glow, which was passing away. He didn't want and which came to an end. Now, it doesn't say he didn't want them to see it because he didn't want them to see it pass away.

Paul is the one who is saying that it was passing away. All he's really saying is that this glory that was on his face was indeed passing away. But Moses didn't want the Children of Israel to look on that glow.

That's what the Old Testament tells us. And Paul doesn't have a source of information other than the Old Testament about this. There's nothing in the Old Testament that says that Moses didn't want the Children of Israel to see the glow fading.

He just didn't want them to see the glow. Paul's one who adds and that glow was, in fact, fading away. And I think what he's saying about that is that glory was temporary and therefore, obviously, inferior to the glory of the new covenant, which is permanent and ever increasing.

And he's saying, just consider how great the glory of the new covenant is, if even the glory of the old covenant was so great, although it was fading away, that Moses covered his face so people couldn't look at it. That is because they were unnerved by it. They found it distracting.

It was bright enough, in other words, that had to be covered in order not to distract people. Now, if Moses was also concerned that he didn't want the people to see that it was fading, I don't think this verse necessarily says that point. It's true.

Paul's wording is a bit odd, but he does not necessarily tell us anything about Moses motives for covering his face, except he didn't want people to see the glory that was

fading. But it's not the fadingness of it that he didn't want them to see. It's the glory itself.

Which Paul says happened to also be fading and the fading is not even stated in the Old Testament. Paul deduces it assumes that, you know, since the stories of Moses continue for many years beyond this point in Exodus, that it's rather unreasonable to believe that Moses spent all his time with a veil over his face. So it must have been a temporary glow.

And Paul making that deduction is trying to make the connection that the old covenant is temporary, too, and faded away, although it was engraved and carved on stones. Paul says it was faded away anyway, and the glory of it faded as well and is replaced by a new glory of a new covenant. Anyway, this is the.

This is actually the last historical information in the book of Exodus until you get to around chapter 39, 40, when, well, actually, the rest of the book of Exodus has information about them building the tabernacle and its furniture. But the next actual event of interest is when they erect the tabernacle in chapter 40 and the glory of God comes and inhabits it. But we have yet between now and then to look at the tabernacle and we will look at it in some detail, but not in as much detail as some people do.

I have read a number of books by authors who take every detail of the tabernacle and try to assign meaning to it. I don't have confidence in all of their opinions, but some things they say are interesting and may have some validity to them. And so I want to take some time to give some of the details about that, but we'll save that for a separate treatment.

And so we'll stop here.