



### Exodus 35:1-39:43: All to the Glory of God

*Moses responded, "Then show me your glorious presence."*

*The LORD replied, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will call out my name, Yahweh, before you. For I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose. But you may not look directly at my face, for no one may see me and live." The LORD continued, "Look, stand near me on this rock. As my glorious presence passes by, I will hide you in the crevice of the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and let you see me from behind. But my face will not be seen."*

– Exodus 33:18-23 NLT

- **The case of the golden Yahweh**
  - Remember: This wasn't a new god
  - It was Yahweh in a **new form**

*Then Aaron took the gold, melted it down, and molded it into the shape of a calf. When the people saw it, they exclaimed, "O Israel, these are the gods who brought you out of the land of Egypt!"* – Exodus 32:4 ESV

*Aaron saw how excited the people were, so he built an altar in front of the calf. Then he announced, "Tomorrow will be a festival **to the LORD** [Yahweh]!"* – Exodus 32:5 ESV

- Moses returns to the camp

*Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand, tablets that were written on both sides; on the front and on the back they were written....And as soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, **Moses' anger burned hot**, and he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain..* – Exodus 32:15, 19 ESV

- **The intercessor becomes incensed**
  - Moses is shocked by what he sees

- It was far worse than he imagined
- He now understood God's anger
  - o God had threatened to **consume them**
  - o Moses forces them to **consume their sin**

*He took the calf that they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to powder and scattered it on the water and **made the people of Israel drink it.** – Exodus 32:20  
ESV*

- o They had to **ingest** their false view of God
- o It was either **consume** or be **consumed**

*Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is **a sin against your own body.** Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. – 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 NLT*

*"The sin was poured as it were into their bowels along with the water, as a symbolical sign that they would have to bear it and atone for it...In this manner the thing they had worshiped would become a product of their own waste, the very epitome of worthlessness and impurity." – Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy**

- **The blame game**

*And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought such a great sin upon them?" And Aaron said, "Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil. For they said to me, 'Make us gods who shall go before us.'" – Exodus 32:21-23 ESV*

- Aaron blames the **people**  
*"...they are set on evil!" – vs 22*
- Then he blames the **fire**  
*"...and out came this calf!" – vs 24*

- **Just desserts on a full stomach**

*And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the LORD's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. – Exodus 32:25-26 ESV*

- Moses organizes a "purging party"
- It was time to cleanse the camp
- The guilty had to be punished
- And the Levites stepped up

“At this point in the narrative, Moses displays a holy vengeance for the Lord’s reputation. Having seen the extent of the wickedness that had taken place in his absence, Moses knew that he had to intervene. God had been justly angry about the situation in the camp and now Moses shared that anger...

“Moses knew that this situation was going to require drastic measures. God had given him a plan for mitigating the damage done by the people’s actions and it was going to be painful and permanent in nature. The guilty were going to pay for their sins with their lives” – Ken Miller, *Devotionary™ on Exodus*

- The Levites acted as God’s agents
  - They executed the 3,000 ringleaders
  - Their efforts were prophylactic
  - Preventing further “infection”

*“Serve only the LORD your God and fear him alone. Obey his commands, listen to his voice, and cling to him. The false prophets or visionaries who try to lead you astray must be put to death, for they encourage rebellion against the LORD your God, who redeemed you from slavery and brought you out of the land of Egypt. Since they try to lead you astray from the way the LORD your God commanded you to live, you must put them to death. In this way you will **purge the evil from among you.**” – Deuteronomy 13:4-5 NLT*

- Purging will become a recurring theme
- Sin in the camp was not to be tolerated
- All forms of rebellion were to be excised

- **A second intercession**

*The next day Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the LORD; **perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.**” – Exodus 32:30 ESV*

- Moses returns to the mountain
  - He attempts to atone for their sins
  - Using his life as a bargaining chip

*“Either forgive them or kill me!”*

*But the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book. **But now go, lead** the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; behold, my angel shall go before you.” – Exodus 32:33-34 ESV*

- Moses’ mission was to **deliver**, not **die**
  - His life had a God-given purpose
  - And atonement was not part of it
  - He was called to **lead**, not **bleed**
  - His job was to get them to the land

- God's job was to determine who went

*Then **the LORD sent a plague** on the people, because they made the calf, the one that Aaron made. – Exodus 32:35 ESV*

- **The loss of God's presence**

*The LORD said to Moses, "**Depart; go up from here**, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...**Go up** to a land flowing with milk and honey; **but I will not go up among you**, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."* – Exodus 33:1, 3 ESV

- God had promised to dwell among them
- Now He threatens to leave them
- They will still have His angel
- But they won't have Yahweh

- **The Tabernacle postponed**

*Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. – Exodus 33:7 ESV*

- This is a different tent
- Located on the outskirts of camp
- Where God met "face to face" with Moses
  - Not literally, but figuratively
  - Refers to **intimacy** and **community**
  - They enjoyed a close relationship
  - But Moses longed for more

*"You have told me, 'I know you by name, and I look favorably on you.' If it is true that you look favorably on me, let me know your ways **so I may understand you more fully and continue to enjoy your favor.**" – Exodus 33:12-13 NLT*

- He feared the loss of God's presence
- He couldn't imagine life without God
- So, God reassured him

*"I will personally go **with you**, Moses, and **I will give you rest** — everything will be fine **for you.**" – Exodus 33:14 NLT*

- Another test for Moses
  - Would Moses be a **leader** or a **loner**?
  - Would his **personal walk** with God take precedence over his **personal responsibility** for God's people?

*“If you don’t personally go **with us**, don’t **make us leave** this place. How will anyone know that you look favorably on me — on me and on your people — if you don’t go **with us**? For your presence **among us** sets your people and me apart from all other people on the earth.” – Exodus 33:15-16 NLT*

- **A glimpse of God’s glory**

*Moses said, “**Please show me your glory.**” And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The LORD.’” – Exodus 33:18-19 ESV*

- Moses got the privilege of “seeing” God
- Along with the promise of His presence
- A new set of His laws
- And the renewal of the covenant

*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.” – Exodus 34:10 ESV*

- **The preparation for God’s presence**

- Chapters 35-39 are deeply significant
  - They had risked the loss of God’s presence
  - But God had “changed His mind”
  - He had gotten their attention
  - Now it was time to build His dwelling place

*Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished, and the people of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did.*

*According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the people of Israel had done all the work. And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so had they done it. Then Moses blessed them. – Exodus 39:32, 42-43 ESV*

- **When autonomy gives way to sovereignty**

- Obedience is the key to blessing
- Submission to God’s will brings satisfaction
- Enjoying God’s presence requires self-denial
- Their work was almost done
- But God was about to do a mighty work

“The most exciting part of the entire project was about to begin. Moses and the people of Israel were going to watch as the pieces were placed together, slowly transforming the parts into the whole. And soon, on the barren plains of the Sinai wilderness, the house of God would take form. The dream would become a reality. And once the Tabernacle was complete, the next step in the journey to the promised land could begin again.” – Ken Miller, *Devotionary™ on Exodus*

- **Discussion questions**

- If God were to suddenly remove His presence from your life, would it make any difference? If so, how?
- Why is it so significant that God renewed His commitment to dwell among the Israelites? How should that encourage us?
- Moses wasn't satisfied, but demanded to see more of God. What are you willing to do to know God more deeply and intimately?



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FALL SERIES 2023 – WEEK 11 HOMEWORK

**WEEK 11: *I Will Dwell with You* – Exodus 40**

It is fitting that the book of Exodus ends with the glory of God filling the recently completed Tabernacle. When His home was adequately furnished and ceremonially cleansed, God took up residence, illustrating His satisfaction with His new home and demonstrating His intention to remain with His people from Sinai all the way to Canaan. The power of this imagery needs to be stressed so that we, as New Testament believers, can understand the significance of God's permanent presence among us in the form of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

- Read Exodus 40. What jumps out at you in this chapter?
- This week's Devotional™ reading covers pages 417-423. This is probably one of the shortest Devotional™ readings we have had, but it is jam-packed with significance. Write down any insights you gleaned from what Ken had to say.
- In verses 1-16, who does God assign the responsibility for overseeing the actual erection of the Tabernacle and why do you think this is important?

Can you think of any reason God gave Moses the order for each phase of the construction? Why was He so specific about each task and the sequence in which Moses was to follow them?

- Verses 17-33 seem to repeat what is found in the first 16 verses. What could be the significance of repeating this same material twice? What is different or unique about the second version?
- Verses 34-38 are the most important verses in the entire Book of Exodus? Why?

Read Numbers 10:11-13. This passage represents the moment that God instructed Israel to break camp at Mount Sinai and begin their journey toward the Promised Land. What happens on this occasion and why is it important?

Now read Ezekiel 10. This is a prophetic passage written much later in Israel's history after they had been living in the land of Canaan for many years. They now had the Temple which Solomon had built. But the glory of God still dwelt in the Holy of Holies above the Mercy Seat on the top of the Ark of the Covenant. But what does Ezekiel describe happening in this vision?

Now, look at Ezekiel 11:5-12. What reasons does God give Ezekiel for the departure of His glory and what will be the consequences?

In chapters 40-43 of the same book, Ezekiel records another vision given to him by God. This time he sees a new Temple that has replaced the old one Read Ezekiel 43:1-12, and describe what is different about this vision? What happens in this case and what does this tell us about our God?

- Close your time by reading Revelation 21. Focus your attention on verses 22-27.