

Into the Promised Land
Joshua's Story
Lesson #4 – Ascent #7
• H a n d o u t •

► We pick up our narrative the day following the disaster of the Golden calf and the death of those who blatantly chose not to stand for the Lord. Moses announced to Israel: “You have committed a great sin, so now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin. Moses' return to the top of the Mountain represents Ascent #7.

Q: What did Moses have in mind when he told Israel that he would return to the top of the Mountain and perhaps he could make atonement for their great sin?”

Ascent #7 • Moses returned to the Mountain Top to speak to the Lord ...

Exodus 32:31-35 • So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Oh, what a terrible sin these people have committed. They have made gods of gold for themselves. But now, if you will only forgive their sin -- but if not, erase my name from the record you have written!"

But the Lord replied to Moses, "No, I will erase the name of everyone who has sinned against me. Now go, lead the people to the place I told you about. Look! My angel will lead the way before you.

And when I come to call the people to account, I will certainly hold them responsible for their sins." Then the Lord sent a great plague upon the people because they had worshiped the calf Aaron had made.

Q: What was Moses' request?

Q: What is the LORD's response to the plea of Moses?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Q: God separates “calling the people to account” from “the great plague” in this passage. Should the two be understood as separate occurrences, or are they really one and the same?

The Lord Keeps His Covenant Promise made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and tells Moses they are free to begin their journey to the Promised Land. But ... there will be some changes ...

Exodus 33:1-6 • The Lord said to Moses, "Get going, you and the people you brought up from the land of Egypt. Go up to the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I told them, 'I will give this land to your descendants.' And I will send an angel before you to drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Go up to this land that flows with milk and honey. But I will not travel among you, for you are a stubborn and rebellious people. If I did, I would surely destroy you along the way."

When the people heard these stern words, they went into mourning and stopped wearing their jewelry and fine clothes. For the Lord had told Moses to tell them, "You are a stubborn and rebellious people. If I were to travel with you, for even a moment, I would destroy you. Remove your jewelry and fine clothes while I decide what to do with you."

So from the time they left Mount Sinai, the Israelites wore no more jewelry or fine clothes.

Q: Who is the angel?

Q: How did the people receive this news?

Q: Why no jewelry or fine clothes?

Moses established the Tent of Meeting ...

Exodus 33:7-11 • Now Moses used to take his tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the "tent of meeting." Anyone inquiring of the Lord would go to the "tent of meeting" outside the camp. And whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood at the entrances to their tents, watching Moses until he entered the tent.

As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke with Moses. Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to his tent. The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend.

Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide, Joshua son of Nun, did not leave the tent.

Q: Moses has been given instructions and the detailed plans to build a tabernacle for the Lord. But here we find him setting up a tent, pitching it outside the camp and calling it "The Tent of Meeting." What is going on?

Q: What do we learn about Joshua in this passage?

Q: What does it mean: “The Lord would speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend?”

**With great vulnerability, Moses opens his heart to the Lord and prays.
He asks to see the Glory of the Lord!
The Lord answers ...**

Exodus 33:12-18 • Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people."

The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

Q: Why does Moses say that God hadn't let him whom God was sending with Moses and the people on their journey to the Promised land? In verse 2 of this chapter God had already said He wasn't going with them, but that He would send His angel with them. So why is Moses pressing the issue after being told what God had decided?

Q: How does God respond?

In Moses's desire to draw even closer to the Lord, so he asks for one more thing ...

Exodus 33:18-23 • Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory." And the Lord said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim My Name, The LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

Then the Lord said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

Q: When Moses asked to see God's Glory, God agreed to allow Moses to see His Goodness. Is there a difference between God's Glory and God's Goodness?

Q: In the contents of this scripture passage, how should we understand the statement: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion?

Q: From what did God say he was protecting Moses?

Q: What provision did God make for Moses?

God will call Moses to ascend Mt. Sinai one final time and the Covenant between God and Israel will be Renewed. This is where we will pick up the story next time.



Next Time • Lesson #5
"Ascent #8 – The Final Ascent"

