

Ex. 34:1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.

Ex. 34:2 And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount.

Ex. 34:3 And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.

The LORD continues to communicate with Moses. He tells him to hew / carve out two more tables of stone to replace the ones that had been broken. God is going to rewrite the contents of the first two tablets that Moses had broken.

The next morning Moses is to again go up Mount Sinai to meet with the LORD at the top of the mount. Moses is not to bring any other person with him. In fact, no men or animals are to be on or near the mount.

Ex. 34:4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

Moses obeyed.

Ex. 34:5 And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.

Ex. 34:6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

Ex. 34:7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

First, we note that the LORD comes down in a cloud to the mount. The word *stood* basically means that He established His position there. As God passes by Moses, He identifies Himself as:

1. LORD – YHWH, the self-existent and eternal One (This was the most sacred name of God to the Hebrews.)
2. God – “el,” strength, powerful, almighty
3. merciful - compassionate
4. gracious – kind, condescending
5. longsuffering – patient, slow to anger
6. abundant in goodness and truth – overflowing with kindness / mercy / pity and truth / trustworthiness / rightness
7. keeping mercy for thousands – guarding / protecting mercy / kindness for thousands. The entry for *thousands* was interesting in that it indicated that it could represent the number or the concept of family. Frankly, I tend to think that would be a better translation—“keeping mercy for His family.”
8. forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin – The entry for *forgive* implies lifting to a position of acceptance. The next three words appear to be redundant. As I look in the Hebrew, I make the following connections: iniquity = evil, transgression = rebellion, and sin = habitual offense

9. One who will not clear the guilty – God will not clear, pronounce clean, hold innocent “the guilty”; these two words are not in the original but are inferred in the meaning for the word “clear.”
10. visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. The entry from Strong’s for *visiting* follows:

6485. paqad, *paw-kad*’; a primitive root; to visit (with friendly or hostile intent); by analogy, **to oversee**, muster, charge, care for, miss, deposit, etc.:—appoint, x at all, avenge, bestow, (appoint to have the, give a) charge, commit, count, deliver to keep, be empty, enjoin, **go see**, hurt, do judgment, lack, lay up, **look**, make, x by any means, miss, number, officer, (make) overseer, have (the) oversight, punish, reckon, (call to) remember(-brance), set (over), sum, x surely, visit, want.

As I look at this entry with so many choices, the words that seem to make the most sense to me are *oversee*, *go see*, *look*. God tells us elsewhere in His word that each man is responsible for his own actions.

Ezek. 18:20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

As God is watching men practice sin as an example before their children, He can see that influence reflected in the lives of the children to the third and fourth generations. These children and grandchildren would then be held accountable for their own actions, which more often than not would mirror that of their parents or grandparents.

It is true that God tells the Israelites to kill ALL the inhabitants (including children) of the *promised land* as they enter and take control. This is because these nations had taken their sin to the nth degree, and He did not want their idolatrous, evil ways to influence His own people as they settled in the land. As we see later on, Israel suffers the consequences when they disobey God’s instructions in some instances.

The question becomes—Why did God decide to introduce Himself to Moses in this manner. Personally, I think it was more for the benefit of those who would read these words in the years to come as part of the Torah and the completed canon of scripture. The whole purpose of the scripture is to teach us about God (Father, Son and Spirit)—who He is, His love for us, and His expectations and guidelines for how we should live.

Ex. 34:8 And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

Ex. 34:9 And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.

Moses quickly bowed his head and worshipped. The Hebrew for the word *worship* indicates that he prostrated himself, fell down flat in reverence and honor before the LORD. Then he petitions the LORD. He is basically repeating a request that God has already granted (33:15-17). The main difference that I can see is that he is asking God to claim the Israelites as His personal possession again.

The LORD's anger had been taken to an extreme level by the people's sin. Moses saw that reaction and seemed to need special reassurance as the leader of the people. All of this is consistent with Moses' character, as shown when God first called him to go and lead the people out of Egypt.

Ex. 34:10 And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou *art* shall see the work of the LORD: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

The LORD tells Moses that He is going to make a covenant (agreement, contract) with the people. God is the one initiating the covenant. He will do marvels (wonderful things, hard things, miracles) before all the people; the kind of things that have never yet been experienced on earth. (Seems to me He has already done some of those things—parting the Red Sea, etc.) All of Israel will see these actions. The last phrase seems to indicate that these actions will inspire fear and reverence.

Ex. 34:11 Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

Ex. 34:12 Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:

A covenant, as stated above, indicates an agreement, which assumes more than one person. For Israel's part, they are to obey what God tells them to do. God is going to drive out/expel the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites from their lands and give the land to Israel. Israel is not to make any agreements with the inhabitants of the land; they would end up in a snare/trap if they did.

Ex. 34:13 But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:

Ex. 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

Ex. 34:15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and *one* call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;

Ex. 34:16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.

Ex. 34:17 Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.

The Israelites are to:

1. destroy their altars
2. break their images
3. cut down their groves

These are all things associated with the worship of idols.

Israel is only to worship THE LORD God. He emphasizes this point by naming Himself Jealous (intolerant of rivalry; expecting exclusive devotion).

If they are totally devoted to God, they will not make agreements with the inhabitants of the land. This would protect them from spiritual fornication. God explains His meaning in graphic language that they cannot misunderstand. That "whoring" would

include sacrificing to other gods and eating things sacrificed to other gods during fellowship with those people.

If they are totally devoted to God, it will protect the sons of Israel from being tempted by the women of these idolatrous peoples, which would eventually result in the sons of Israel “whoring” with their gods.

The people of Israel are not to make molten gods, idols (i.e., the golden calf).

God expects our complete devotion for our own protection because of His love for us. If we will just choose to obey His word, we will be able to avoid many of the terrible consequences that result from disobeying His word.

Ex. 34:18 The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt.

God reminds Moses that Israel is to keep (observe, preserve) the feast of unleavened bread. (We first learned about this feast in chapter 12.) It’s a yearly reminder of God’s deliverance from the land of Egypt.

Ex. 34:19 All that openeth the matrix is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male.

Ex. 34:20 But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty.

This is a reiteration of the teaching in Exodus 13:13-16.

Ex. 34:21 Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.

This is another statement regarding the command to keep the Sabbath. The emphasis is made here that there are to be no exceptions. Reaping the harvest would be a very important time of year, but it is not an acceptable reason for not keeping the Sabbath.

Ex. 34:22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end.

Ex. 34:23 Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel.

Three times each year all the men are to come before the LORD God of Israel.

1. feast of weeks (harvest) – discussed in Exodus 23. This is the feast associated with Passover.
2. firstfruits of wheat harvest – This is the feast associated with Pentecost.
3. feast of ingathering at year’s end – also called feast of tabernacles/booths. It began five days after the Day of Atonement and marked the end of the harvest and Israel’s wanderings in the wilderness.

Ex. 34:24 For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year.

When the men are obedient to God's command to appear before Him these three times each year, He will protect them and their land from surrounding nations and enemies.

Ex. 34:25 **Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.**

Leaven (which represents sin) is not to be used in sacrifice. None of the meat from the Passover sacrifice was to be allowed to remain until morning. It is to be consumed by fire (Ex 12:10).

Ex. 34:26 **The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.**

Restatement of Ex 23:19.

Ex. 34:27 **And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.**

Evidently the words of this covenant were not included on the tablets that God had written. Moses is instructed to write these words.

"after the tenor" = according to

These are the stipulations for the covenant God is making with Moses and with Israel.

(Moses is singled out since he was so persistent that God take Israel as His inheritance—verse 9.)

Ex. 34:28 **And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.**

It would appear, as I look back through the chapters in this book, that the two tablets that Moses originally broke, the ones written by God, contained the information from chapters 25-32. Here we are told that Moses wrote down the words of the covenant and the "ten commandments." (The wording in this verse seems to make them part and parcel of one—which could be. It's just that all of the "ten commandments" (cf Ex 20) are not reiterated to us at this point in Moses' writing.)

Moses was again on the mountain with the LORD for forty days and forty nights. During that time, he did not eat or drink.

I have never even come close to going that amount of time without food or water. I have, however, gotten so caught up in studying the Word that I have forgotten meals. Moses was *with* the source of the bread of life and water that will cause you never to hunger or thirst. I can't wait!

Ex. 34:29 **And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.**

Ex. 34:30 **And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him.**

When Moses came down from the mount, he was again carrying the two tables of testimony. His face was glowing with God's reflected glory, but he wasn't aware of it. When Aaron and the Israelites saw his face, they were afraid to come near him.

Ex. 34:31 And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them.

Ex. 34:32 And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai.

When Moses realized that he was being avoided, he called out to Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation. So they came to him and Moses talked with them. He then called all the people to come together so that he could command (present with authority) the things that the LORD had told him on Mount Sinai.

Ex. 34:33 And *till* Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face.

Ex. 34:34 But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel *that* which he was commanded.

Ex. 34:35 And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

The whole time that Moses was speaking with the people, he covered his face with a veil. When Moses went into the tabernacle to speak to the LORD, he took the veil off. Then he came back out to speak to Israel according to all that God had commanded him. Again, the people saw that Moses' face was glowing with God's glory; so Moses covered his face with the veil again until he went back in to speak with God.

I think there is a point being made here. Obviously, God was not bothered by Moses' appearance of reflected glory; in fact, I believe He is pleased to see Himself reflected in us in such a way that is obvious to everyone else. When we go before God, we go just as we are. Even if we were to try to hide a part of our being, it would be useless because He sees all—straight through to the depths of our soul.