

## Exodus 34

Verses 1-4

**Now the Lord said to Moses, “Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered. <sup>2</sup> So be ready by morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. <sup>3</sup> No man is to come up with you, nor let any man be seen anywhere on the mountain; even the flocks and the herds may not graze in front of that mountain.” <sup>4</sup> So he cut out two stone tablets like the former ones, and Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and he took two stone tablets in his hand.**

**Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered.**

God had made the first set of tablets but he required Moses to cut out the new tablets which may indicate some disapproval that Moses broke the first set.

See Exodus 24:12

**<sup>12</sup> Now the Lord said to Moses, “Come up to Me on the mountain and stay there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the Law and the commandments which I have written for their instruction.”**

However, God did the writing on this second set as he did on the first set.

**<sup>3</sup> No man is to come up with you, nor let any man be seen anywhere on the mountain; even the flocks and the herds may not graze in front of that mountain.”**

When Moses received the first set of tablets Joshua was allowed to go part way up the mountain with Moses but this time only Moses was allowed on the mountain.

See Exodus 24:1

**<sup>13</sup> So Moses got up along with Joshua his servant, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. <sup>14</sup> But to the elders he said, “Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a legal matter, have him approach them.”**

Verses 5 - 9

<sup>5</sup> The Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord. <sup>6</sup> Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; <sup>7</sup> who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.” <sup>8</sup> Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. <sup>9</sup> Then he said, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your own possession.”

<sup>6</sup> Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;

At the end of the previous chapter God had promised Moses that He would forgive Israel for their sin of idolatry with the golden calf.

At that time he told Moses the following:

<sup>19</sup> And He said, “I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion to whom I will show compassion.”

Because God is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving kindness, He will renew the covenant with Israel that they had broken.

<sup>7</sup> who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave *the guilty* unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations

When the people sinned with the golden calf 3,000 people died that day and God punished those who had been spared by striking the people with a plague. We are not told what the plague was or how many other people may have died because of the plague but God did punish the guilty at that time and also said He would further judge them at some point in the future.

<sup>8</sup> Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. <sup>9</sup> Then he said, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your own possession.”

Even though Moses had nothing to do with worshipping the golden calf, he identified himself with the people who had sinned (our iniquity and our sin). And then Moses made two other important requests.

1. Let the Lord go along in our midst
2. Take us as Your own possession

Verse 10

<sup>10</sup> Then God said, “Behold, I am going to make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth nor among any of the nations; and all the people among whom you live will see the working of the Lord, for it is a fearful thing that I am going to perform with you.

God will make another covenant with Israel, but this generation will not benefit from it.

Israel had seen many great miracles up to this point.

1. The 10 plagues.
2. The crossing of the Red Sea.
3. Food from heaven.
4. Water for 3 million people and their animals in a desert.

But God promises that even greater miracles will take place. The following are just a few that God may have been referring to.

1. The fall of Jericho

Joshua 6:6

<sup>20</sup> So the people shouted, and the priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, everyone straight ahead, and they took the city.

2. Sun and moon stood still.

See Joshua 10:12 – 14

<sup>12</sup> Then Joshua spoke to the Lord on the day when the Lord turned the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

“Sun, stand still at Gibeon,  
And moon, at the Valley of Aijalon!”

<sup>13</sup> So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped,  
Until the nation avenged themselves of their enemies.

3. Sennacherib’s army destroyed by an angel

See 2 Kings 19:35 - 36

<sup>35</sup> Then it happened that night that the angel of the Lord went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when *the rest* got up early in the morning, behold, all of the 185,000 were dead. <sup>36</sup> So Sennacherib the king of Assyria departed and <sup>[o]</sup>returned *home*, and lived at Nineveh.

4. Shadow goes back 10 steps

See 2 Kings 20:11

<sup>11</sup> Then Isaiah the prophet called out to the Lord, and He brought the shadow on the stairway back ten steps by which it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz.

Verses 11 - 17

<sup>11</sup> “Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you, and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. <sup>12</sup> Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst. <sup>13</sup> But *rather*, you are to tear down their altars and smash their *sacred* pillars and cut down their Asherim for you shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God— <sup>15</sup> otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice, <sup>16</sup> and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons *a/so* to play the harlot with their gods. <sup>17</sup> You shall make for yourself no molten gods.

<sup>12</sup> Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst. <sup>13</sup> But *rather*, you are to tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their Asherim for you shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

God is ready to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan so he reminds Israel that they should not make a covenant with any of these pagan nations but rather destroy every part of their religious system. God, as creator of the universe, has every right to judge these pagan nations and use Israel to destroy them for their idolatry.

<sup>15</sup> otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice, <sup>16</sup> and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons *also* to play the harlot with their gods.

Having a close relationship with pagan nations was dangerous for Israel because they were so prone to worshipping false gods. If Israel gave their sons and daughters to these pagan people they would worship their false gods and they would become guilty of playing the harlot (being unfaithful to their true husband – The God of Israel).

Verses 18 - 24

<sup>18</sup> “You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt. <sup>19</sup> “The first offspring from every womb belongs to Me, and all your male livestock, the first offspring from cattle and sheep. <sup>20</sup> You shall redeem with a lamb the first offspring from a donkey; and if you do not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck. You shall redeem all the firstborn of your sons. None shall appear before Me empty-handed. <sup>21</sup> “You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest; *even* during plowing time and harvest you shall rest. <sup>22</sup> You shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks, *that is*, the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year. <sup>23</sup> Three times a year all your males are to appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel. <sup>24</sup> For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the Lord your God.

Almost all of this paragraph is a repeat of previous chapters.

Verses 18 and 22 were covered in Exodus 23.

1. The Feast of Unleavened Bread
2. The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)
3. The Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles)

Verses 19 and 20 were addressed in Exodus 13.

These were the laws that governed the sacrifice and/or redemption of the firstborn males.

Verse 21 was covered in Exodus 20.

Just one comment needs to be added here. The Sabbath was to be observed even during plowing time and harvest.

Verse 24

**<sup>24</sup> For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the Lord your God.**

Israel did not need to worry about their land being invaded while they were at the three feasts that all males were commanded to attend.

Verses 25 - 26

**<sup>25</sup> “You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread, nor is the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover to be left over until morning. <sup>26</sup> “You shall bring the very first of the first fruits of your soil into the house of the Lord your God. “You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.”**

All four of these commands are mentioned in Exodus 23

Verses 27 - 28

**<sup>27</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with 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 did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.**

It is impossible for a human being to go without water for 40 days and nights so this had to be a miracle from the Lord.

It also confirms that, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes out of the mouth of God”.

See Matthew 4:1- 4

**Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> And after He had fasted for forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. <sup>3</sup> And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” <sup>4</sup> But He answered and said, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes out of the mouth of God.’”**

When it says that he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, who does the “he” refer to. It would be natural to assume it was Moses since God told Moses to “write down these words”. However, in verse 1 of this chapter, we are told that God said, I will write on these tablets. This is confirmed again in Deuteronomy 10:1- 5.

**“At that time the Lord said to me, ‘Cut out for yourself two tablets of stone like the first *two*, and come up to Me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood for yourself. <sup>2</sup> Then I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you smashed to pieces, and you shall put them in the ark.’ <sup>3</sup> So I made an ark of acacia wood and cut out two tablets of stone like the first *two*, and I went up on the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. <sup>4</sup> Then He wrote on the tablets, like the first writing, the Ten Commandments which the Lord had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly; and the Lord gave them to me. <sup>5</sup> Then I turned and came down from the mountain, and I put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and they are there, just as the Lord commanded me.”**

Knowing this, it seems that the “he” in verse 28 should be capitalized.

Verses 29 - 35

<sup>29</sup> It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony were in Moses' hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him. <sup>30</sup> So when Aaron and all the sons 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 in the congregation returned to him; and Moses spoke to them. <sup>32</sup> Afterward all the sons of Israel came near, and he commanded them *to do* everything that the Lord had spoken to him on Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup> When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. <sup>34</sup> But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded, <sup>35</sup> the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

<sup>29</sup> It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony were in Moses' hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him.

Before Moses went up the mountain he did two things. He made an ark out of acacia wood and he chiseled out two stones tablets.

See Deuteronomy 10:1, 5

**“At that time the Lord said to me, ‘Cut out for yourself two tablets of stone like the first two, and come up to Me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood for yourself.**

**<sup>5</sup> Then I turned and came down from the mountain, and I put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and they are there, just as the Lord commanded me.”**

It was a temporary ark until the Tabernacle and all of its equipment was built.

<sup>30</sup> So when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

The Vulgate renders this as Moses had horns. The verb for shone closely resembles another Hebrew word which means to be horned.



That is why Michelangelo's statute of Moses depicts Moses as having horns.

See Pics 3405



The Vulgate is the Latin edition of the Bible translated from Hebrew and Greek mainly by St. Jerome at the end of the 4th century. It was revised in 1592 and adopted as the official text for the Roman Catholic Church.

Michelangelo's statute of Moses is in Saint Peter's Basilica, a church in Vatican City.

See video 3410      Saint Peter's Basilica

<http://www.levickfamily.com/9.14.html>

The following are a few pictures of Saint Peter's Basilica

See pics 3415      View of the front



See pic 3420      View from Above





See pic 3425

The Bronze Canopy



See pic 3426

Close up of the Bronze Canopy





See pic 3430

The Clock



See pic 3435

The ceiling





See pic 3440

The Dome



See pic 3445

The Columns



<sup>33</sup> When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. <sup>34</sup> But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded, <sup>35</sup> the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

When Moses spoke to the Lord he would take the veil off but when he spoke to the people he would put it back on.

Paul uses this custom of Moses to make a point about his people.

See 2 Corinthians 3:15 -16

<sup>15</sup> But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts; <sup>16</sup> but whenever *someone* turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.