

LESSON 14: EXODUS 33:7-34:35
DECEMBER 21, 2011

OVERVIEW

- . The Tent of the Meeting – Exodus 33:7-11
- . Moses' Three Requests – Exodus 33:12-18
- . The Lord Reveals Himself to Moses and New Tablets are made – Exodus 33:19-34:29
- . The Radiant Face of Moses – Exodus 34:29-35

THE TENT OF THE MEETING – EXODUS 33:7-11

- . Temporary structure set up and used by Moses until the more permanent could be Constructed
- . The fact it was outside the camp was significant
 - . The location highlights the separation that existed between God and His people because of His holiness and their sin
 - . By now God has presented His ceremonial law and the way to repent for their Sins
 - . However, until the new Tabernacle could be built and the ceremonial law deployed, the “tent” needed to be outside the camp
- . Later, when the new Tabernacle was built and the ceremonial law in place, the “tent” would be in the very center, or the heart, of the camp
- . Whenever Moses went in to the “tent” and the pillar of cloud was present, the people would stand outside their tents and worship Him

MOSES' THREE REQUESTS – EXODUS 33:12-23

- . “Teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you” – Exodus 33:13-14
 - . What does it mean to know something?
 - . Know can mean a simple awareness of a mere fact, like knowing where someone lives
 - . Know, in a deeper sense, can mean knowing about someone or Something
 - . Know in the deepest sense of the word is knowledge by which someone is changed

- . God wants us to desire to know Him intimately
 - . “Knowing God involves, first, listening to God’s word and receiving it as the Holy Spirit interprets it, in application to oneself; second, noting God’s nature and character, as His word and works reveal it; third, accepting His invitations, and doing what He commands; fourth, recognizing and rejoicing in, the love that He has shown in thus approaching one and drawing one into the divine fellowship” – J.I. Packer from Knowing God
- . Pursuing God
 - . To know God in this way requires serious effort and a cost one must be willing to pay
 - . Moses appears to be pursuing God fervently here in a manner that recognizes change will need to take place and a willingness to make that change
 - . God knows Moses’ sincerity and acknowledges it
- . The only way to truly know God in the manner that Moses is asking is to commit oneself to having a personal relationship with God
- . Moses feels it would be impossible to lead the people without God being present and pleads with Him to “go with us”- Exodus 33:15-17
 - . The Lord hears this request and grants it
 - . “I will do the very thing you ask because I am pleased with you and know you by name” – Exodus 33:17
- . Anyone in Christian leadership needs to think as Moses did and not proceed forward without the assurance of God’s presence
- . “Now show me your glory” – Exodus 33:18
 - . Once again, we see Moses’ boldness as he asks God to reveal Himself completely so he can see every aspect of Him

THE LORD REVEALS HIMSELF TO MOSES AND NEW TABLETS ARE MADE – EXODUS 33:19 – 34:29

- . God makes it clear to Moses He won’t reveal certain aspects of Himself Exodus 33:19-20
 - . God replies that He will not be able to show His face to Moses because no human being can see God’s face and live
 - . Is this a contradiction with other places in scripture, where others claim to have seen God
 - . Exodus 24:9-10, Genesis 32:22-30, Isaiah 6:1
 - . In all these examples they describe an interaction with God, without ever seeing His face

- . There are certain “uncommunicable attributes” of God that we will never Understand
 - . Self-existence, self-sufficiency, eternity
- . Although God tells Moses He can’t reveal His face, He gives Moses one of the most significant revelations of Himself and His nature to be found anywhere in scripture
 - . By revealing Himself in this manner He is saying it’s more important to disclose my nature than my vision
 - . The application for us today is that God would rather have us focus on getting to know His nature through scripture than going in pursuit of miracles or iconic images of Him
 - . In these verses God reveals His “communicable attributes” to Moses – goodness, mercy, compassion, grace, slowness to anger, love, faithfulness
 - . When God made us in His image, these are attributes that He gave us the ability to possess
 - . As we learn His ways and grow in our likeness to Him, these attributes will become the visible fruit our relationship with Him
- . God also reveals His justice and wrath
 - . God delivers a solemn declaration of His nature by proclaiming He reserves the right to have mercy on whom He will have mercy and to have compassion on whom He will have compassion – Exodus 33:19
 - . “Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished” – Exodus 34:7
- . Making New Tablets – Exodus 34:1-4
 - . Moses chisels out two new tablets and takes them up the mountain so God can write on them – Exodus 34:1
 - . Over the years, scholars have argued who really wrote on these tablets, God or Moses
 - . The words in Deuteronomy 10:4 clearly state that God wrote on these Tablets
- . The renewal of the covenant and its’ demands – Exodus 34:10-28
 - . In these verses God restates many of the points laid out in previous covenants with the Patriarchs and Moses himself

THE RADIANT FACE OF MOSES – EXODUS 34:29-35

- . Moses face was glowing when he came down from the mountain
 - . The people were afraid to approach him, so Moses had to cover his face with a veil until the glory faded

- . The Bible uses the word radiant to describe his face
 - . The Hebrew word for “he radiated” is qaran
 - . There is a similar word, qeren, which means horn
 - . One of the Medieval Latin interpreters mistook qaran for qeren and used that in some of the translations
 - . As a result some of the translations said “Moses had horns coming out of his head”
 - . This explains why some ancient art, like Michelangelo’s famous “Moses” depicts him seated with horns coming out of his head

NEXT LESSON IS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2012: EXODUS 35 - 40