

## **Exodus 34:1-35**

### **“Back together again”**

#### **Outline:**

#### **I.) Intro.**

#### **II.) Vs. 1-9 The nature of forgiveness**

#### **III.) Vs. 10-28 You’re the love of My life**

#### **IV.) Vs. 29-35 Basking in His love**

#### **Intro.**

Israel has been caught in the act of spiritual adultery after God had proposed. She has repented of her failure and has recognized her sins but what will God do? Will God let Israel back into a relationship? Will that relationship be the one that He promised it would be? Amazed as we are at Israel sin I am even more amazed at God’s response in light of it!

#### **II.) Vs. 1-9 The nature of forgiveness**

Vs. 1-4 Moses had thrown down the first set of tablets in chapter 32:19 when he drew near the Israelites and saw them worshiping at the golden calf. It does not seem that this was against God in as much as it represented what Israel had done spiritually by breaking God’s law. But what will God’s response be to their failure and repentance?

Well God issues a renewal of the former covenant. What is important to realize is that this “new old covenant” offers no reduction of commandments neither is there any addition. What this tells us is that God will forgive the people of their sins without reduction of the standards or an addition to them. They failed the test but God does not make the test easier or harder. He simply reissues the agreement even though the people rejected Him He has not rejected them.

God does not forgive like we do! We forgive verbally but we hold a different standard up to the person who broke our trust. We either lessen it or make it more difficult, but not God. In Rom. 7:7 Paul asks a rhetorical question *“Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law.”* The problem is not the law it is what it has to work with our flesh! This is further emphasized by the fact that the first covenant in Exodus 19:8 was followed by the statements of the people as they said, *“All that the Lord has spoken we will do!”* This time the Lord did not give the people any opportunity to make this promise. One last difference stands out to me as well, that is there is a lack of emphasis on the lack of blessings upon failure. The blessings and benefits are still conditional but the “IF YOU WILL OBEY” is not recorded. All of this leads me to believe that God was showing them as well as us that our failure lies in our trying to obtain righteousness based upon our self effort rather than trusting in God and His nature. What God changes is their involvement not His! He tells them that He loves them. I’ve got to tell you I marvel at this! And as the ones who commit spiritual adultery God’s love and grace should always amaze us. So God not only forgives them He forever defines the meaning of forgiveness by treating them just as He did before they sinned!

Vs. 5-9 In verse 4 we see Moses going back up the hill with two stones and in answer to his prayer to know the Lord better He passes before Moses and declares His name. Whenever God states His name He is declaring His character. So God in doing this shows us that He forgives based upon His character and not ours! So often we hear things like, *“Old so and so is a good guy you should forgive him!”* It is hard to forgive someone who has wronged you no matter how good they are now and in the future! God does not forgive based upon any good in the future or any promise made in the present. **He forgives based upon His character.** That gives us hope and a reason to repent!

Vs. 6 God reveals Himself to Moses and us in a sevenfold description of His character. Notice that first He establishes that He is, “*The LORD, the LORD God*”, in other words He is the same God who appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

- 1.) **Merciful**: This is the first time in the Bible where this word is used and it means “full of compassion”. It is a word that does not just mean to feel another’s pain, rather it means to feel another’s pain and do something about it! God is full of this “love in action”.
- 2.) **Gracious**: The root of this word means to “*bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior.*” God gives us what we don’t deserve forgiveness and blessing. The word stands as the undeserved free gift of the Love of God!
- 3.) **Longsuffering**: He is patient and waits for our repentance. If you will God does not have a short fuse but rather a long one. He is not looking for the opportunity to whack you; He is waiting for the opportunity to bestow His grace upon you!
- 4.) **Abounding in goodness**: These next two attributes start out with the word “*abounding*” God’s not merely adequate in goodness He is abounding. I mean there is so much goodness in Him it’s flowing out every where.
- 5.) **Abounding in truth**: He is faithful and right. God loves truth and He is only truth. God’s words and deeds are one.
- 6.) Vs.7 **Keeping mercy for thousands**: Although sin has long lasting effects so too does His mercy. God’s supply of mercy just continues on, He will never say, “*I just gave out My thousandth piece of mercy I’m sorry I’m all out!*”
- 7.) **Forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin**: God covers both inward sins and outward sins. Literally they mean:
  - a.) **iniquity**: Bending or twisting of God’s will or purpose. If we repent God will forgive us bending or twisting His will or purpose.
  - b.) **Transgression**: This word is often translated “*rebellion*” and describes an open revolt against God’s word.
  - c.) **Sin**: This is the most common word and it means to miss the mark of what God has for us.

God would have you know, that His character is one that we can draw near to. Don’t allow the enemy to rip you off twice! If you blow it in your relationship with the Lord repent He is waiting for you!

Vs. 7b People struggle with this verse quite a bit, but what God is declaring here is that He will by now means clear the guilty. If His love and forgiveness is rejected, He will judge and if those descendants continue to reject Him then they too will be judged. Just because God is loving, gracious and merciful does not mean that He is not Holy and righteous. God’s righteousness and love are displayed in His Son dying for our sin!

Vs. 8-9 So how does Moses respond to God's revelation of His nature? Well he worships Him. Notice it says that he made haste! In other words, Moses wasted no time in worshipping the Lord.

Also look at verse 9 here as Moses after hearing the nature of the Lord uses first person pronouns in describing the sin of the nation. He does not say "*they*" but rather "*we, our and us*" If our standard is towards our fellow man as far as goodness goes then we can at some time say, they and them. But our standard is God therefore we are all sinners in need of God bestowing His character on us. May I just suggest to you that all of us are in desperate need of a fresh glimpse of His character. If you do happen to have that realization two things will take place:

- 1.) You will realize how great God is.
- 2.) You will realize how much a sinner you are.

### **III.) Vs. 10-28 You're the love of My life**

Vs. 10-11 Here is what God again promises to do on their behalf. This is His covenant and they are invited to join, but there will be no negotiations.

- a. Do marvels: All the nations will see God at work in them. His plan is to use them to reach the nations. Either the great things would be blessings upon them so that others would want to know the Lord. Or they would be a curse so that others would fear the Lord.
- b. I am driving out: God promises what they could not do on their own.

Vs. 12-14 So God says, "*I'm going to make the benefits of My covenant just like before. I will still perform miracles, keep my promise to drive out the inhabitants of the land.*" But

You need to make sure that you separate yourself from what they worship, from how they govern themselves even from any form of society.

So God says that He is a jealous God, meaning that He will have no rivals for their affection. You see God does not want to have to share Israel or us with others, He wants us all to Himself. But in so doing it is for our benefit

Vs. 15-28 Just like before in chapter 24 Moses went up on the Mountain for the Lord to give him again the covenant in fact what is recorded is just a repetition of what we have already seen. So in repeating this God is saying, "*I love just like before!*" Like a husband who renews his vows of love and faithfulness to his wife God reaffirms His love to Israel!

God makes this covenant new and fresh by reestablishing it with them. Man think of this despite Israel sin and rebellion the Lord still wants to have a relationship with them. So to with us no matter where you are with Him He still wants us to come back to Him in fact that is His very nature! These verses form a love letter of God for His special treasure Israel and it is all based upon His nature and not theirs.

#### **IV.) Vs. 29-35 Basking in His love**

Vs. 29-35 The result of God revealing more of who He is to Moses is God rubs off on him. Is that not cool or what? When we draw near to the Lord we are always changed more into Him. But that kind of closeness to the Lord freaks out the nation. Hey, not everyone wants hang around people have been changed more into the Lord. Perhaps they saw their sin a little more easily? Now look here as well that he removed his veil when he went into the presence of the Lord but when he went out to speak to the people he would put it on. Now Paul tells us that this was so that the people would not see that the glory was fading. You see, God's presence in our lives fades if we are not constantly in His presence. It's because we have this thing called the flesh and Moses didn't want them to see that He had to be in constant presence of the Lord for

the glory of God to be visible. There can be no mask of spirituality that we wear, you know? We have to be in consistent fellowship with the Lord if you want Him to rub off on you.