

18-19 Bible Study # 21

2/19/19

Exodus 32 (Cont)

The Golden Calf

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:11-12**

- Father asked that we put a Roman numeral I here (at **Exodus 32:11**) as Moses will intercede for the people three times Father pointed out that only Moses is still in a confidential relationship with God
- Look at the reversal of the language from before
- Moses pointed out to God what the peoples in the regions will say
- After all, they are God's people and if He kills them the pagans are going to question His motives
- They will say that He brought them out to the wilderness to destroy them all *

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:13-14**

- At this point, Moses interceded for the people who have broken the 1st Commandment and are under the wrath of God
- The difference between “this” people and the people in the nations surrounding them (i.e., the *Philistines*) was that they had made an agreement to worship the God of Israel alone
- They were polytheists who had broken their promise to God and were under His wrath
- Moses interceded to keep them from being killed by God

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- By this action, Moses restores them to the same level as the *Philistines* (they were merely polytheists)
- But at that point they were not going to the Promised Land and He was not going to dwell among them in the tabernacle
- Judgment was about to come upon them and Moses was begging God for mercy
- All that Moses accomplished was to stop God from killing them

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- It is important to understand this to follow the rest of the story
- Once God's wrath had been averted, Moses told Him that he would go down and deal with "this" people
- He took the two tables, written by the finger of God on the front and back, with him
- This was the Covenant that the people had just broken *

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:15-19**

- Moses meets Joshua and moves down the mountain until they can see what is going on
- Notice that the calf is never called an image of *Yahweh*
- Moses broke the two tablets because he understood that the people had broken the covenant
- God, however, did not tell him to do this
- As we saw earlier, Moses had an anger problem which will ultimately cause him not to be permitted to enter the Promised Land *

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:20**

- Moses was able to burn the golden calf because it was made of wood and only overlaid in gold
- He then mixed the ash, mixed with gold plate in the water which he made them drink
- This was the water flowing out of *Mount Sinai*
- Why would Moses do that?
- Remember that Moses chose to intercede for the people and God agreed not to kill them
- They were, however, still in sin
- Look at **Romans 5:6***

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:21-24**

- At this point, we know that the people were set on evil as they wanted Aaron to make an image of an Egyptian god (most likely *Apis*)
- Aaron said that he threw the gold (earrings) into the fire and it came out as the “golden calf”
- Who was Aaron kidding?
- Father asked that we put a note here to **Deuteronomy 9:20**, where we see Moses explaining how God wanted to destroy Aaron, but he interceded for him*

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:25-26**

- Aaron passed the buck to Moses who had to deal with the people who Aaron had let “break loose”
- Moses asked the people who was on Yahweh’s side?
- Who was on the side of the God of Abraham?
- He wanted to know which side the people had chosen
- The Levites gathered themselves to Moses
- As we remember, Moses was from the tribe of Levi and therefore he was their guy
- So, Moses gathered them together and told them to take action against those who apostatized *

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:27-28**

- To put a sword on your side meant to arm yourself
- Then he told them to kill them all (everyman his brother and neighbor,; make no distinction)
- The Levites followed Moses directions and killed 3000 men!
- What? There were over 600,000 men who left Egypt!
- Father told us to draw a line from 3000 men to verse 20 where he made the people drink the water mixed with the ashes of the idol*

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- St Ephraim * gives a great explanation as to what was going on here
 - He refers the reader to **Numbers 5 7**
 - The water here was the holy water coming out of Mt. Sinai

Numbers 5

- **Numbers 5:5**

- Directs anyone who commits a sin to confess and make full restitution

- **Numbers 5:11-15**

- This deals with a woman who a husband suspects that his wife committed adultery but no one knew about it or witnessed it
- He is required to take her, along with an offering, to a priest

Numbers 5 (Cont)

- **Numbers 5:16-22**

- The priest was to mix dust from the floor of the tabernacle with the Holy Water that the priest used to wash his hands and feet when he entered the tabernacle
- He then required the woman to drink this mixture
- If she was innocent, nothing would happen to her and she would be declared innocent
- However, if her body swelled up, she was guilty of adultery and was stoned

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- St. Ephraim said that this was what Moses was doing
- He took water mixed with the powder from the ground up golden calf and made the people drink it
- The Levites then went through the camp and executed all those whose bodies were swollen and sick
- Remember the relationship in the Old Testament between adultery and covenantal idolatry

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- This story will again play out in the **Book of Acts** when we hear about what happened at the Feast of *Pentecost* at the hands of the newly ordained priests
 - **Acts 2:41** ₄ *

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:29**

- This is the moment that began the setting apart of the tribe of *Levi*
- Up to this point, only a few individuals like Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons had been set apart from the rest of the tribes of Israel for a special mission
- After this point, the entire tribe of *Levi* will be set apart from the rest of the tribes to protect the holiness of *Yahweh*

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32:30 -33**

- At this point, Moses goes back up *Mount Sinai*
- All that had been accomplished was that he kept God from killing all of them
- The plan for Israel to enter the Promised Land was off
- Upon reaching the top of the mountain, Moses acknowledges that Israel had committed a grave sin by making a graven image of a pagan god *

Exodus 32 (Cont)

- **Exodus 32: 34-35**

- Moses told God that if He would not forgive the people He should kill him
- After all, should God not have forgiven them what would Moses do with all those people stuck in the wilderness of *Sinai*?
- So he begged God for mercy
- By God deciding not to kill him or them, Moses restored the ability of Israel to enter the Promised Land
- But note, God did not say that He would go with them
- In fact, He told Moses that **he** (Moses) should take the people into the Promised Land

Exodus 33

The Command to Leave Sinai

Exodus 33

- **Exodus 33:1-3**

- At this point, because they have worshipped another god, the idea of God dwelling among His people is off! Forget it
- He was very angry with these people
- Yet, because of Moses 2nd intercession, God agreed to allow the people to go into the Promised Land, but only under the leadership of Moses *

Exodus 33 (Cont)

- **Exodus 33:4-11**

- God told Moses to warn the people to take off their ornaments for it was not a time for celebration
- In fact, it was a time for mourning
- At this point, the author (Moses) breaks in and gives us a bit of history in order to prepare us for what is next
- He reminds us that, at that time, Moses would go and talk with God in the Tent of Meeting which was located outside the camp *

Exodus 33 (Cont)

- **Exodus 33:12-14**

- This is Moses third intercession with God, who agrees once again, to go with this people to the Promised Land
- So Moses succeeded in getting God to go along on the journey
- But notice that God agreed to go with Moses (He said that He would “go with you”)
- Moses recognized what God was saying here *

Exodus 33 (Cont)

- **Exodus 33:15-17**

- Moses told God that if He would not go with them, He might as well just leave all of them on *Mt. Sinai*
- This is Moses' third intercession for the people of Israel
- God basically said, "Ok, fine, I will go!"
- By this Moses has basically convinced God to restore the entire package
- The people were (sort of) no longer under His wrath; will be going to the Promised Land, and He would dwell among them

Exodus 33 (Cont)

- Unfortunately, it was not exactly as it had been before
- It was like breaking an expensive tea cup, and then supergluing it back together
- We will see that the covenant had been restored, they were about to leave *Mt. Sinai*, but things were still a bit different
- There remained some tension between God and His people

Exodus 34

New Tablets of Stone

Exodus 34

- **Exodus 34:1-8**

- This is **Exodus 19** all over again
- God is starting over with Moses at the top of *Mt. Sinai* within the “glory cloud”
- But, it was implied that they still had some punishment coming
- They were not going to get off “scot free” *

Exodus 34 (Cont)

- **Exodus 34:9-10**

- This is the restoration of the Covenant that was lost due to the Golden Calf incident
- It is **Exodus 19-24** all over again
- Starting in **Exodus 34:11f**, we are again introduced to the 10 Commandments *

Exodus 34 (Cont)

- **Exodus 34:11-16**

- At this point, God warns them not to make a covenant with the gods that they will encounter when they enter the Promised Land
- God is not going to take a chance that this people will do this all over again
- Yet, as we know from our study of the Prophets, this prohibition is exactly what ultimately happened to the people of Israel
- Look at the huge expansion of **Exodus 20:1-3** *

Exodus 34 (Cont)

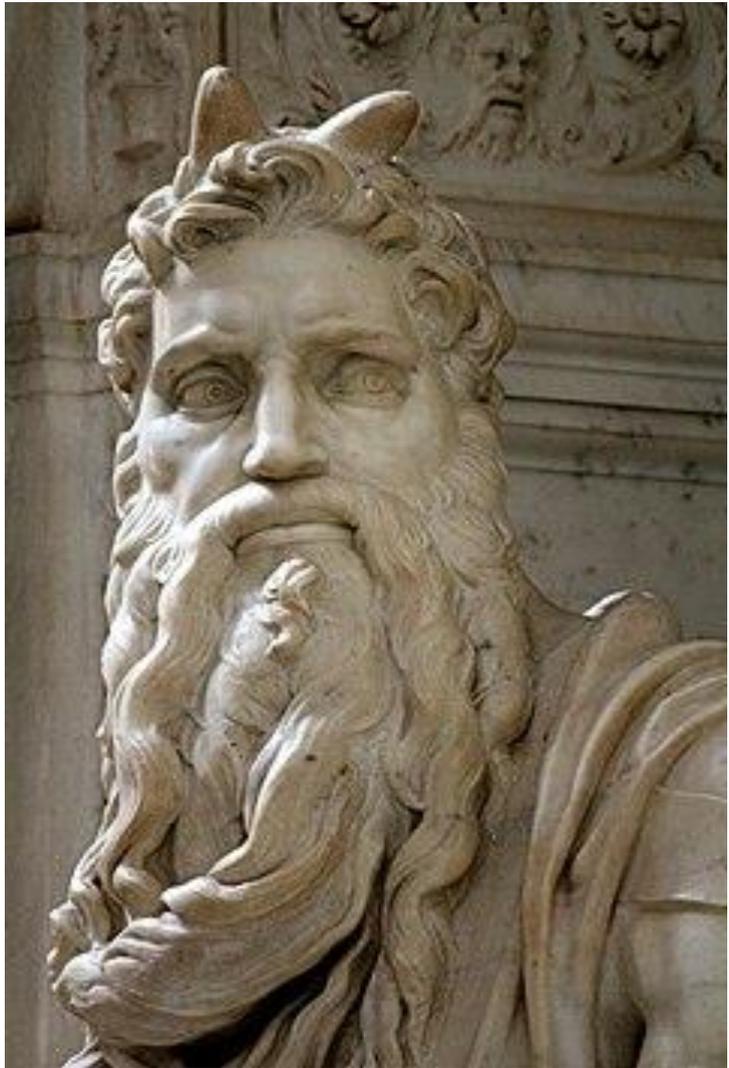
- **Exodus 34:17-27**

- Again, the requirements for the three required festivals are presented
 - Passover
 - Pentecost
 - Booths
- It also presents some of the other ordinances
- Finally, Moses is directed to write all this down as the 10 Commandments during a second 40 day and 40 night period

Exodus 34 (Cont)

- **Exodus 34:28**

- The first version of the 10 Commandments (**Exodus 20:1-17**) never mentions the actual number of Commandments
- We have seen the difference in identifying the Commandments between the Jews, Protestants and Catholics
- The understanding that the Commandments should be divided into 10 comes from this section
- What did Moses look like?



Exodus 34 (Cont)

- **Exodus 34:29**

- This passage presents a very interesting image of Moses based on mistranslation of the ancient languages
- When Moses came down from the top of the mountain it says that his “face shone,” was shinny; was “horned”
- This implied that it was shining with beams of light that were so bright that the people could not look at it
- What had happened was that the people had changed as they were back in the darkness
- It was like looking at a car headlights in the dark of night
- They could not bear looking at the intensity of the glory of God that was reflected in Moses’ face

Exodus 34 (Cont)

- Therefore, Moses had to wear a veil over his face so that the people could bear to be around him
- The veil was to cover the light
- This confusion comes from the Greek which said that his face was *apaugasma* meaning “glorious” or “radiant”
- *Jerome* when translating the *Vulgate*, tried to capture this image by going back to the Hebrew which he was studying at that time
- He used the Hebrew word *qeren* meaning “horn” in his translation

Exodus 34 (Cont)

- He explained that Moses' face was "horn-like" to reflect that beams were shooting out of his face (the glory of God)
- When we get to the *Douay Rheims* English translation, it sounds like that there were actual "horns" on his head
- This led to *Michelangelo's* statue of Moses