

## Life of Moses Study (November 29, 2020)

### OPENING QUESTION:

**SERMON DISCUSSION:** How were you impacted by the sermon? What new thoughts or lessons did you discover? In what ways did you find yourself challenged and/or encouraged?

### READ Exodus 33:12-23

**NOTE:** After the ratification of the covenant between God and His people, The LORD called Moses up to the mountain to give him the law on tablets of stone (written by God Himself). He also gave Moses instructions to build a portable tabernacle where the LORD would dwell in the midst of His people. While Moses was with God, the Israelites grew restless. It was not even six weeks since they had promised their allegiance to the LORD and His commands that they convinced Aaron of their desire to worship a god. Aaron's response was to construct a golden calf. God's wrath burned against them and He planned to destroy them, in order to make a great nation of Moses. Moses pleaded with the Lord to spare them, appealing to God's own reputation among the nations and according to His promise to Abraham. God relented from destroying the people (but later punished them with a plague.) Moses went down the mountain and when he saw the calf his "anger burned hot", and he threw the tablets out of his hands, and broke them at the foot of the mountain" (Exodus 32:19). He destroyed the idol and had 3,000 people executed hoping to make atonement for their sin. Moses selflessly pleaded with the Lord, "if you will forgive their sin—if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written" (Exodus 32:32). The Lord told Moses "Depart...to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...I will send an angel before you...but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people. Upon hearing this news the Israelites mourned.

1. The LORD and His people were growing apart. Note the changes indicating the distancing in their relationship from the following verses:

Exodus 23:23; 32:34 compared to 33:2 (concerning the angel)

Exodus 25:8 compared to 33:3, 7

2. Read Exodus 33:4-11 and describe the people's response to their growing apart from God.

3. The Israelites were still going to the Promised Land and God was going to send an angel before them to drive out their enemies (Exodus 33:1-3). Why was this not enough for Moses (Exodus 33:15-16)? What principle do you find that you could apply?

4. Exodus 33:11 reveals, "The LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." How do you find this special friendship evident in the manner that Moses conversed with God (Exodus 33:12-23)? What evidence do you find in your own life denoting a special relationship with God?

5. Describe what Moses asked from God in the following dialogues:

For himself as a mediator (Exodus 33:12-14)

For the Israelites as the people of God (Exodus 33:15-17)

For himself as a mediator and a man who wanted to know God (Exodus 33:18-23)

6. Moses had seen God's glory in the cloud protecting the Israelites from the Egyptians (Exodus 14:19-20). He had seen God's feet (Exodus 24:10) and had entered the glory cloud on Mt Sinai (Exodus 24:15-18). Why at this point, do you think Moses asks, "Please show me your glory" (Exodus 33:18)?

7. "Having God's goodness pass in front implies that the covenant between God and the people is being reestablished. Moreover, God again proclaims His name, 'The LORD' to Moses. This is an allusion to the initial encounter in 3:14-15, where God first proclaimed His name to Moses." (NIV Life Application Commentary-Exodus by Peter Enns)

"The promise concerning mercy and compassion [to be gracious] is...part of the reassurance God gave Moses, saying in effect: you won't just receive my common grace; you (my people) will receive my covenant mercy and compassion [graciousness]."  
(The New American Commentary-Exodus by Douglas K. Stuart)

Discuss how the LORD answered Moses's request to see His glory. What is your reaction to God's response?