

May 13, 2018 - Ex. 34:27 – 35:29 - New Tablets, Freewill Offering
Torah Reading: Exodus 34:27 – 35:29 - New Tablets, Freewill Offering
Psalm 68
Haftarah: Jeremiah 31:32-39 + 32:40-41

Exodus 34:27 - "And the LORD said to Moses, Write you these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."

"after the tenor of" - i.e. "in accordance with" these words...

The first part of the chapter lists a summary of positive laws to confirm and reinforce the earlier laws agreed to in the "Book of the Covenant" in **Exodus 20:19–23:33** and **Exodus 24:7**.

Exodus 34:28 - "And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."

The Significance of the Number 40

(See <http://www.betemunah.org/forty.html>)

- The Flood rains lasted 40 days and 40 nights (**Genesis 7:12**).
- The Talmud states that "the soul is formed in forty days"; i.e. from conception until "formation" of the fetus is 40 days.
- Crossing the Red Sea was a picture of Israel's physical birth as a people. Forty days later, they immersed themselves and their clothes as a *mikvah*, marking a spiritual birth needed to receive the Torah.

See **Exodus 19:10-11** - "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day HaShem will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai."

Menachoth 99b R. - Johanan and R. Eleazar both said, 'The Torah was given in forty days and the soul is formed in forty days: whosoever keeps the Torah his soul is kept, and whosoever does not keep the Torah his soul is not kept.' [A picture of being 'born of the Spirit' - **John 3:5-8**]

- Moses went up on Mt. Sinai, three times, for 40 days each. (**Exodus 24:18, Exodus 32:30, Deuteronomy 9:18**)
- The spies scouted out the Promised Land for 40 days (**Numbers 13:16-25**)

- Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years until the generation that murmured had all died.
 - The Israelites ate manna 40 years, until they came to a land that was settled (**Exodus 16:35**).
 - Thus, 40 years after the giving of the Torah, Israel entered the Promised Land. Because of this the Sages teach that "After forty years, a student can attain [a full grasp of] his teacher's knowledge."
 - King David reigned 40 years over Israel (**1 Kings 2:10-11**).
 - Jesus "was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him." (**Mark 1:9-14**)
 - Jesus ascended 40 days after his resurrection.
- ...And many more examples....

Moses Face Shone

Exodus 34:29-30 - "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him."

"shone" = *qâran* - to radiate, to emit beams like rays, to shine. To have horns (because they resemble the rays of light)

Targum of Jonathan: "Moses knew not that the splendor of the form of his face was become illustrious, which he had from the brightness of the glory of the Shechinah of the Lord, at the time he talked with him."

Why did Moses' face shine now and not when he received the first tablets of Law?

Rashi - Our Rabbis said: [Moses received it] from the cave, when the Holy One, blessed is He, placed His hand on his face, as it is said: "and I will cover you with My hand" (**Exodus 33:22**). -[from Midrash Tanchuma 37]

Habakkuk 3:4 - "His splendor covers the heavens, And the earth is full of His praise. His radiance is like the sunlight; He has rays flashing from His hand, And there is the hiding of His power."

The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36)

Compare Moses' experience with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration

Luke 9:29 - "And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."

Jesus was the fulfillment of both the Torah (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) - which all point to Him and "his decease or "exodus" on the cross. (**Luke 24:27,32**) Both Moses and Elijah had also experienced a theophany.

Moses' Veil and Paul's explanation (2 Corinthians 3-4)

Tables of flesh, not stone; Spirit not the letter

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 - "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

2 Corinthians 3:9 - "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

2 Corinthians 3:12-14 - "Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ."

2 Corinthians 4:6 - "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Moses' face shined temporarily and had to be veiled because of the weakness of the Law - it brought only death - and the blindness of the people. Jesus' face shines into our hearts with eternal light, transforming us into his image from glory to glory.

Veil = *macveh*

A word used only in reference to Moses' veil here in Exodus. Uncertain meaning except through context.

In a similar way, a veil covers the face of all people:

Isaiah 25:7 - "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations."

veil = *maccekah* - This word is many times translated "molten" as in idols which are covered over with molten metal. Used for the cast images of gods in **Exodus 34:17**.

i.e. the nations have become like their gods, blinded by a covering (**Psalm 115:8**).

Also, if seen as napkin/veil in the grave clothes of Lazarus:

John 11:44 - "And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."

The peoples that sit in spiritual darkness are in the region of the shadow of death.

2 Corinthians 4:4 - "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 - "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled (*anakalyptō*) faces all reflect the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into His image with intensifying glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

Ultimately, the napkin (*soudarion* - cloth used for binding the face of a corpse) was specifically mentioned as left by Christ in the tomb:

John 20:6-7 - "Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself."

How long did the Moses' shining face last?

Rabbi Sa'adiah ben Yosef Gaon (circa 900 A.D.) says, "it did not remove from him to the day of his death: hence it is said, 'his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated,' (**Deuteronomy 34:7**)."

Sabbath Instructions (Exodus 35:1-3)

The rules for observing the Sabbath are given here to show us that the work of creating the Tabernacle must be done while remaining in "the rest."

Hebrews 4:9-11 - "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

The Free-will Offering of materials for the Tabernacle

The "willing heart" is mentioned seven times in this passage.

"a willing heart" = *nadiyb leb* - inclined toward, willing, voluntary, generous, freely
From a root "*nadab*" - to incite, impel, make willing, volunteer, offer freely.

The making of the Tabernacle was after the eternal pattern given to Moses, and every part of it was carefully governed by that design. But its making was accomplished by the people out of a willing heart, and as God's Spirit bestowed wisdom and skill. The people had to participate with their whole heart, soul, mind and strength or the Tabernacle would not get built.

A paradox - If "free will" is just an illusion, why do we say God never violates our will?
And how can there ever be a free-will offering?

Apparently the will and the thoughts of the people were turned toward this one work. As David said: "I have set my affection to the house of my God" (**1 Chronicles 29:3**)

Our assent and agreement is a mystery, but it's an essential element in how God works. Basically, as we get out of the way, the Spirit is free to work God's will through us. This is what a renewed and transformed mind provides - a conduit for the Spirit - although a highly complex one that coordinates skill and learning (the meaning of *chakam* or "wise hearted" - **Exodus 35:10, 25**).

A shadow of this is seen when an athlete, a craftsman, a musician or a writer performs "in the zone" without self consciousness. Everything flows.

This description of Israel coming together joyfully in engraving, crafting and sewing all the articles needed for God's dwelling place (*mishkan*) in the Tabernacle is a picture of what happens spiritually in a body of believers coming together in fellowship and ministry.

See **Exodus 35:35** - "Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work..."

The mundane circumstances of our lives, the suffering, defeats, joys and sorrows of life, when they are freely shared among us become transformed into a sacred space by God's Spirit - a true covering and a sanctuary.

2 Corinthians 1:4 - "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

2 Corinthians 1:6 - "And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer:

or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation."

This sharing of our life is not to be given grudgingly. The understanding is that everything we have is from God, anyway.

David's prayer just before he died about the building of the Temple: "From Your hand we have given to You"

1 Chronicles 29:13-16 - "Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name. But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You. For we are sojourners before You, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours."

1 Chronicles 29:18 - "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee."

The crucial lesson is that manipulation, force, group-think, peer-pressure or fear are never part of the ingredients. Neither is a need for recognition or glory.

This whole scene shows the contrast between making an idol and making the Tabernacle. We're either doing one or the other. Which one are you doing today?

God's Provision

The people already had what was needed to make the Tabernacle, by God's provision. They didn't have to go out and find anything. They just had to willingly offer what they had and then put it together as the Spirit instructed.

Freedom, rest and joy in giving are the theme of this passage!