

April 29, 2018 - Ex. 34:1-26 - New Tablets, Festivals given
Torah Reading: Exodus 34:1-26 - New Tablets, Festivals given
Psalm 67
Haftarah: Habakkuk 2:2-8, 18-20

Exodus 34:1 - "And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest."

Rashi - "Hew for yourself": You broke the first ones. You hew others for yourself. This can be compared to a king who went abroad and left his betrothed with the maidservants. Because of the immoral behavior of the maidservants, she acquired a bad reputation. Her bridesman [the person appointed to defend the bride should any problems arise] arose and tore up her marriage contract. He said, "If the king decides to kill her, I will say to him, 'She is not yet your wife.'" The king investigated and discovered that only the maidservants were guilty of immoral behavior. He [therefore] became appeased to her. So her bridesman said to him, "Write her another marriage contract because the first one was torn up." The king replied to him, "You tore it up. You buy yourself another [sheet of] paper, and I will write to her with my [personal] hand [writing]." Likewise, the king represents the Holy One, blessed is He. The maidservants represent the mixed multitude. The bridesman is Moses, and the betrothed of the Holy One, blessed is He, is Israel. That is why it says: "Hew for yourself." -[from Tanchuma 30]

Exodus 34:5 - "And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD."

Moses learned God's name "Yahweh" at the burning bush. The great "I AM," the all-sufficient, self-subsisting One.

- **Proverbs 18:10** - "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe."

- **Malachi 3:16** - God has written a book of remembrance "for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name."

- **Revelation 22:4** - "And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."

Jesus' name revealed his identity and mission:

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (**Matthew 1:21**)

Doing something "in the name of" God is to act in and through an expression of His character and identity, and in His Spirit.

Here, to "proclaim the Name of the Lord" has the meaning of revealing His character. The next verses express that in seven characteristics or principles, in verses 6 & 7.

Exodus 34:6-7 - "And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

- The LORD God, merciful - His first attribute!

Rashi - This too is an attribute of compassion [for God], and so he [the Psalmist] says: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (**Psalms 22:2**). One cannot say to the Divine attribute of justice, "Why have You forsaken me?" - Mechilta on Exodus 15:2

[i.e. God's mercy seemed to abandon Christ on the cross, but God's justice was with him extracting its demands. This is almost too solemn and mysterious to contemplate.]

- Jeremiah 3:12 - "Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord."

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee" (**Isaiah 54:7**).

- "And gracious."

The ground on which God bestows His mercies: it is not for anything in man that is worthy.

Thou O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious" (**Psalms 86:14, 15**)

- "Longsuffering."

The meaning "slow to anger."

It was to the "longsuffering" of Jehovah that Moses first appealed when Israel had sinned so grievously at Kadesh-barnea (**Numbers 14:18**).

"The Lord is slow to anger and great in power" (**Nahum 1:3**).

"O Jerusalem. Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together" (**Matthew 23:37**).

- "Abundant in goodness."

goodness = *cheved* - lovingkindness, goodness, favor.

"For Thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes" (**Psalm 26:3**)

"In a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee" (**Isaiah 54:8**)

"...I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight" (**Jeremiah 9:24**)

- **"And truth"**

truth = *'emeth* - stability, truth, certainty, trustworthiness, sure, right, sincere and unmixed. (Not changing with time)

- **Psalm 111:7** - "The works of His hands are verity and judgment."

"For Thy mercy is great above the heavens: and Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds" (**Psalm 108:4**)

- **"Keeping mercy for thousands – forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin."**

Rashi - "for thousands" means for two thousand generations.

"And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter Him with their mouth, and they lied unto Him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant. But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned He His anger away" (**Psalm 78:35-38**)

"I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (**Jeremiah 31:34**)

- **"And that will by no means clear the guilty"**

Rashi - He clears those who repent, but does not clear those who do not repent (from Yoma 86a, targumim).

"He visits the iniquity of parents on the children": when they hold onto the deeds of their parents in their hands [i.e., emulate their ways], for He already explained this in another verse, [that it means only] "of those who hate Me" (**Exodus 20:5**). -[from Ber. 7a]

"unto the fourth generation" - God's attribute of goodness exceeds the attribute of retribution by a ratio of one to five hundred.

God is a God to be loved, but He is also a God to be feared, for "our God is a consuming fire" (**Hebrews 12:29**)

"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him" (**Psalm 89:7**)

His holiness and righteousness demand justice. That's why Christ had to die for our sins. And often, though sins are forgiven, consequences ensue:

"Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though Thou tookest vengeance of their inventions" (**Psalm 99:8**)

We must realize the crisis we are in, and the "plague" that is upon our heart:

- **1 Kings 8:38** - "What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house, then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know, for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men"

plague = *nega* - plague, but often used to represent "strokes" of God's judgment, wound, or leprosy.

Used of the Messiah - **Isaiah 53:4** - "we did esteem him stricken..." (*naga*)

Because of the plague on *our* heart, *He* was plagued.

Christ manifested his Father's Name

- **John 17:6** - "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."

- **John 17:26** - "I declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them."

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments" (**John 14:15**)

- **Romans 13:10**, "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

- **Romans 6:14** - "Ye are not under the law, but under grace"

- **Galatians 6:2** - "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Christ's burden is easy because when we are weak, He is strong.

- **Galatians 2:20** - "I am crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"

"He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one" (**Hebrews 2:11**)

or, "from out of One" - Christ's Sonship (by generation) in relation to God is reflected in the sonship (by adoption) of His brethren. "God makes of sons of men sons of God, because God hath made of the Son of God the Son of man" - St. Augustine on Psalm 2

Ownership - All believers belong to his Name and thus manifest that Name.

As near kinsman/redeemer, Christ is our brother. The Targum on **Song of Solomon 8:1** says "when the King Messiah shall be revealed to the congregation of Israel, the children of Israel shall say unto him, 'Come, be thou with us for "a brother," or "be thou our brother.'" And so the Zohar says, Israelites are "the brethren of the holy blessed God."

Faith opens the way for the Spirit within us to produce the fruit of love, and thus fulfill the law of Christ and manifest God's true character.

Moses Again Intercedes for Israel

Exodus 34:9 - "And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance."

God's promise of **Exodus 19:5** - "ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people" had been rescinded because of the Golden Calf.

Moses' prayer was answered we know from Deuteronomy 32:9 - "For the Lord's portion is His people: Jacob is the lot of His inheritance."

"For the Lord will not cast off His people. neither will He forsake His inheritance" (**Psalm 94:14**)

Fully completed in Christ at the end of time:

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (**Revelation 21:3**).

The Covenant

Exodus 34:10 - "And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the LORD: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee."

What could be more miraculous than the plagues on Egypt and the splitting of the Red Sea?

Compare to Jesus and his miracle-filled ministry:

- **John 14:12** - "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

That greater work - besides the miracles and healings accomplished by the apostles - is probably the preaching of the gospel throughout the world by His church.

And at the end of time, the returning Christ is pictured in similar terms to Mount Sinai's portents:

"...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (**2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8**)

"Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" (**Hebrews 12:26.**)

The Danger of Idolatry (Exodus 34:11-17)

Exodus 34:13 - "But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God"

"We should wage an unsparing war upon that which prevents us from enjoying our inheritance in Christ. Everything that would displace God in our lives and in our affections must be demolished. Every idol — that which comes between the Lord and my heart — must be ruthlessly hewn down."

- Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Exodus*

Feasts and the Sabbath

God had previously told Moses, "ye shall serve God upon this mountain" (**Exodus 3:12**). Now comes a description of that service or worship.

Feast of Unleavened Bread

The "unleavened bread" prefigured the person of Him who is "without blemish and without spot" (**1 Peter 1:19**)

Exodus 34:26 - "The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk."

Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk

See notes on **Exodus 23:19**, where this prohibition is first mentioned:

"Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk."

Miamonides "Guide of the Perplexed" (111:48) and other commentators suggest this may have been a pagan practice for fertility commonly associated with any first fruit offerings.

Another view:

Joseph ben Isaac Bekhor Shor of Orleans (12th century) - According to the plain meaning, the term "bishul" here means grow or complete, similar to its use [in the verse (Genesis 40:10)]: "its clusters ripened (הבשילו) into grapes." This is what the verse is saying: do not allow [the kid] to grow up and be weaned from its mothers milk. [In other words, do not] wait until [the kid]'s mother grows it with her milk, rather bring it at the beginning. This fits with the context of the first part of the verse, "the choice first fruits of your soil [you shall bring]."

Nevertheless, this is the foundation for the Jewish Kosher custom of dividing meat and milk products, not eating or storing them together, keeping separate dishes and utensils, etc.

The prohibition is given in **Exodus 23:19**, **Exodus 34:26** and **Deuteronomy 14:21**.

One interpretation was that the word for boil can be interpreted as "found" - meaning that if a sacrifice (for the First Fruit Offering) was discovered to be pregnant, it was not accepted.

Others saw it as a gesture of compassion.

Philo: "And having also given a command that no one shall sacrifice the mother and the offspring on the same day, he goes further, and is quite prodigal on the particularity of his injunctions, adding this also, "Thou shalt not seethe a lamb in his mother's milk." For he looked upon it as a very terrible thing for the nourishment of the living to be the seasoning and sauce of the dead animal..."

Clement of Alexandria agreed, saying it "teaches the need for compassion."

Ibn Ezra: We have no need to seek the reason that it is prohibited, for this is hidden even from those of understanding. But perhaps God commanded us not to do it because it demonstrates a certain cruelty. The commandments "no animal from the herd or from the flock shall be slaughtered on the same day with its young" (**Leviticus 22:28**) and "do not take the mother together with her young" (**Deuteronomy 22:6**) are similar."

Possibly, the current kosher laws about separation of meat and milk developed after the destruction of the Temple, as a way to mark a distinction between the emerging

Christians and the synagogue, "by making social interaction with non-Jews via table fellowship a near impossibility."

- *From 'You Shall Not Boil a Kid in its Mother's Milk' - The Interpretive History of a Curious Commandment, by Tim Hegg, Torah Resource Institute.*