

## Message #67

## Exodus 34:10-35

Back in the 80's when I was working my way through school, Bob Kregel asked me and Harold Kregel if we would drive a truck to Ann Arbor and pick up several skid loads of books. We were both glad to do it. Harold and I were good friends and we enjoyed great fellowship together. Harold had been a missionary in Spain for years and we really had some great times of fellowship.

There were two places we needed to pick up books in Ann Arbor. We picked up the first load and then headed to the place to pick up the second load. As we were driving to get the second load, we heard several sirens of what we thought were police cars. Both of us were checking mirrors and Harold was turning and looking behind to see where the cars were. Well the truth is the sirens were sounding because the truck was too high and I was driving straight into a viaduct that was too low. The sirens were trying to get me to stop, but I didn't realize this. I slowed down but I drove straight into that viaduct and pinned the truck under the bridge overpass. I hit the steering wheel; Harold's head hit the windshield and shattered it. We were shook up but we were both okay. The rental truck was in bad shape. It was drivable but the top was smashed. Well the police came and they got us out and they gave me a ticket.

Harold and I drove back to Grand Rapids and I figured I am in serious trouble. I just ruined a rental truck; I just got a ticket. Harold had a bruise on the top of his head and I had one on my chest and I thought I am going to get fired.

The next day Bob Kregel called me into his office. So I thought, well I may as well go in and take it like a man. When I got in there, Bob said I know what happened and I want you to know we will take care of everything. We will pay for the truck and we will pay for your ticket. You both are okay and thanks for going and getting the books. I could not believe it. I had really messed up and Bob fully restored me to his favor. That is exactly what happens here with Israel and God.

This golden calf episode is a major "mess up" moment in Israel's history. She has blown it big. She had angered God to the point that God was contemplating starting over and making a new nation out of Moses rather than Abraham. Moses had blown it big. He had thrown down the Word of God and smashed it to pieces. This was a major debacle.

Moses had gone to God and asked for full covenant reinstatement. **Moses was not after some covenant revision, but full covenant restoration.** This is why this text is so important because in this text:

**GOD REVEALS THAT HE WILL COMPLETELY RENEW AND REINSTATE HIS COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS PEOPLE AND WILL DO SOME AMAZING MIRACULOUS THINGS TO SHOW MOSES AND THE PEOPLE THAT HE HAS DONE THIS; AND IF HIS PEOPLE WILL PURPOSE TO OBEY HIS WORD, HE WILL DO SOME AMAZING THINGS FOR THEM AND WITH THEM.**

As near as I may determine, there are six restorative parts to this process:

**RESTORATIVE PART #1** – God promises that He will make a covenant before all of the people and perform miracles to show He has done this. **34:10**

God tells Moses that He is going to completely reinstate His covenant with Israel and He would perform a series of miracles for Israel that He would not do for any other nation.

He already had done the miraculous in the plagues and in the parting of the Red Sea; but God was going to do some special miraculous things for Israel that would indicate that He was in a covenant relationship with her.

Now notice—He would do this for Israel. Not for the United States. Not for Japan. Not for China. Not for England. Not for Australia, Africa or Canada. He would do this for Israel.

If you read through the Old Testament, you will have to admit He has done things for Israel He has not done for any other nation. When the leaders of the nation Israel stepped into the Jordan River, the river parted (Josh. 3; 4:1-11). When Joshua marched around Jericho seven times, in the end the walls of the city fell down (Josh. 6:1-20). During the days of Daniel, three Israelites were thrown into a fiery furnace and were not even singed. Daniel was thrown into a lion's den and didn't have a scratch. God has done special things for Israel that He has not done for any other nation.

What all of this says is that I am in a special covenantal relationship with the nation Israel.

**RESTORATIVE PART #2** – God admonishes His people to be sure to observe His commands. **34:11**

God once again reinforces the fact that His people need to obey Him and His Word. God says not only am I reinstating My covenant with you, but if you will obey Me, I will actually drive out your enemies for you. God says, "I will take care of everything."

Now it is obvious today that God is in a covenant relationship with Israel. But it is also obvious today that God has not driven Israel's enemies out of her land. What has gone wrong? Israel has stopped obeying God's Word.

**RESTORATIVE PART #3** – God warns His people not to enter into covenant agreements with the inhabitants of the Promised Land. **34:12-16**

Now one thing God wanted His people to do was to make sure they did not make covenantal agreements with Gentile nations as they went into their land. God wanted His people to "tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their heathen deities" (v. 13). God did not want His people becoming too friendly with God-mocking people.

God gives five specific reasons why He wanted this done:

**Reason #1** - Because God did not want any other God worshipped. **34:14a**

This is what got them into this mess in the first place. They were worshipping something they had no business worshipping.

**Reason #2** - Because God is a jealous God. **34:14b**

God is a jealous God and He demands that He alone be worshipped by His people. We must always keep in mind that God's jealousy is not based on petty motives or evil envy. No other God can save other than the God of the Bible and God wants His people loyal to that fact.

**Reason #3** - Because Israel might participate in false religious worship. **34:15**

Do you see what God considers the worship of false religion to be? Prostitution. Worshipping in a false religion is prostitution. In fact, in some cases there were real prostitutes used at the worship services.

We are in the process of studying Hosea and it is obvious that Israel did not heed this point and plunged right into it. In fact, she not only did not tear down the false religious stuff, but she actually made more idols. She got involved in all kinds of immoral behavior.

**Reason #4** - Because Israel might intermarry with heathen people. **34:16**

Intermarriage in the Bible does not seem to be discouraged here as much on ethnic grounds as it is on religious grounds. God does not want His people intermarrying with heathen people devoted to heathen religions.

If they did not get rid of false religion, there could be intermarriage and the end result would be that the sons could be influenced by the wives and led into a harlot worship.

**Reason #5** - Because God's people might make another molten god. **34:17**

The reason why God was putting these restrictions on His people was because they were to never again make some molten deity and worship it like they did with the golden calf.

We, of course, know that they did make more of these things and did not follow through with what God wanted.

**RESTORATIVE PART #4** – God reminds His people to observe special days and laws. He has given to Israel. **34:17-26**

Now God gives Israel a capsule-form summary of some specific things He wanted them to do.

**Specific #1** - Israel shall observe the feast of unleavened bread. **34:18**

Now this feast celebrated the fact that God delivered Israel from slavery to the Egyptians. Leaven is often used as a metaphor for sin. This is important because God wants us to always remember that He is the one who delivered us from sin.

**Specific #2** - Israel shall give God the first offspring from every womb. **34:19-20**

God owns everything. He wants His people giving Him the first and the best. No one was to appear before God “empty-handed.” It is a major mistake to think of self with first fruits rather than God. God came up with a marvelous system of redemption. For example, a donkey was an unclean animal but God devised a way in which His people could still give to Him. He demanded that everyone share in bringing their first fruit offering to Him.

**Specific #3** - Israel shall completely rest on the seventh day. **34:21**

Under Sabbath law for Israel she was to completely shut down from any work on the seventh day. They were to sit home and do no work. Even if it were in the middle of the harvest, there needed to be a shut down. This Law has not been given to any other nation.

Now as we have said, the Sabbath is for Israel, not the Church. However, Sunday is a day in which there ought to be a focus on God and His Word. Sunday should be a day to focus on the eternal, not the temporal. It should be a day of action, not rest. We should go to church to hear the Word and sing the hymns and give our offerings and fellowship with the people of God. We do this on the first day of the week.

**Specific #4** - Israel shall observe the Feast of Weeks. **34:22a**

The feast of weeks was 50 days after the first fruit celebration. The description of this is found in Leviticus 23:15-22. Two loaves of bread were offered for the people, with burnt, grain, drink, sin and peace offerings. The loaves of bread were made with leaven. What all of this symbolizes is that God has a relationship with sinful people. God accepts their offerings and has fellowship with sinners.

**Specific #5** - Israel shall observe the Feast of Ingathering. **34:22b**

This feast again emphasizes the importance of giving first of the harvest to God.

**Specific #6** - Israel's males are to appear before God three times a year. **34:23-24**

God wanted all representative families to nationally appear before Him three times a year and He wanted the men to take the lead in this.

**Specific #7** - Israel must not offer a blood sacrifice mixed with leavened bread. **34:25a**

Leaven is often used for sin. The blood sacrifices are designed to resolve the sin issue. Therefore to intentionally mix the blood with leaven is to say the blood doesn't really do anything about sin.

**Specific #8** - Israel is not to leave any of the sacrifice of the Passover until morning. **34:25b**

The blood sacrifice is complete. It completely resolves the sin issue and you don't leave some of it until morning.

**Specific #9** - Israel is to bring the first of the fruit of your soil to the Lord. **34:26**

Not only was Israel to bring animals and children, but also the fruit of the soil. The crop farmer was just as accountable as the animal farmer. God wanted His people to honor Him with everything He had given them.

**Specific #10** - Israel is not to boil a young goat in its mother's milk. **34:26**

This particular admonition existed in the Canaanite world. The Canaanites thought this added to the fertility of their flocks. God says no way. God cares about the life of animals. I doubt that we even begin to grasp the concept of these animal sacrifices that were required. Those innocent animals had to be killed to take care of our sin.

**RESTORATIVE PART #5** – God has Moses write His covenant words down specifically for Israel. **34:27-28**

Do not miss **verse 27**. **These things are written for Israel, not the Church**. We can make application from all of Scripture, but this is about Israel. But I do want us to see the importance of the written Word of God in having fellowship with God.

Notice in **verse 28** that again Moses is up on that mountain for 40 days and 40 nights. God is putting Israel to the test once again to see whether or not they will fall back into the same trap of idolatry.

**RESTORATIVE PART #6** – God causes Moses' face to reflect God's glory. **34:29-35**

Now the 40 days was over and Moses was heading back down the mountain with the tablets and what Moses did not know is that his face was shining because he had been with God.

According to **verse 30**, when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, they were afraid to even come near him.

According to **verse 31**, Moses called to them and Aaron and the rulers and the congregation returned to Moses and Moses told them that they needed to obey everything God told them to do (**v. 32**).

When Moses finished speaking he put a veil over his face so the people would not be afraid. In fact, **verses 34-35** says that whenever Moses went in before the Lord, he would take the veil off and when he came out his face shined bright and he would put it back on.

Now what did this do? What this all did was to show Israel that she was back in business with God. God had restored the relationship.

No matter how far one has fallen, one can be restored. Turn to the sacrifice of the innocent Lamb of God and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.