

Israel Breaks the Covenant (c. mid July 1446 BC)

Exodus 31:18–32:35

The Tablets of Testimony

31:18 And when he finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, he gave to Moses the two tablets of the testimony, stone tablets, written with the finger of God.

The Golden Calf

32:1 And the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, and the people gathered opposite Aaron, and they said to him, “Come, make for us gods who will go before us, because this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” [[Acts 7:39–41](#)]

2 And Aaron said to them, “Take off the rings of gold that *are* on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring it to me.”

3 And all the people took off the rings of gold that *were* on their ears and brought *it* to Aaron.

4 And he took from their hand, and he shaped it with a tool, and he made it a cast-image bull calf, and they said, “These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.”

5 And Aaron saw, and he built an altar before it, and Aaron called, and he said, “A feast for Yahweh tomorrow.”

6 And they started early the next day, and they offered burnt offerings, and they presented fellowship offerings, and the people sat to eat and drink, and they rose up to revel. [[1 Cor 10:7](#)]

Yahweh’s Anger and Moses’ Intercession

7 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, “Go, go down because your people behave corruptly, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt.

8 They have turned aside quickly from the way that I commanded them; they have made for themselves a cast-image bull calf, and they bowed to it, and they sacrificed to it, and they said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.’”

9 And Yahweh said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and, indeed, they *are* a stiff-necked people.

10 And now leave me *alone* so that my anger may blaze against them, and let me destroy them, and I will make you into a great nation.”

11 And Moses implored Yahweh his God, and he said, “Why, Yahweh, should your anger blaze against your people whom you brought up from the land of Egypt with great power and with a strong hand?

12 Why should *the* Egyptians say, ‘With evil *intent* he brought them out to kill them in the mountains and wipe them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger and relent concerning the disaster for your people.

13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by yourself, and you told them, ‘I will multiply your offspring like the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I promised I will give to your offspring, and they will inherit *it* forever.’”

14 And Yahweh relented concerning the disaster that he had threatened to do to his people.

Moses Breaks the Tablets of Testimony

15 And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the testimony *were* in his hand, tablets written on their two sides; on the front and on the back they were written.

16 And the tablets, they *were* the work of God; and the writing, it *was* the writing of God engraved on the tablets.

17 And Joshua heard the sound of the people in their shouting, and he said to Moses, “A sound of war *is* in the camp.”

18 But he said, “There is not a sound of shouting of victory, and there is not a sound of shouting of defeat. I hear a sound of singing.”

19 And as he came near to the camp, he saw the bull calf and dancing, and Moses became angry, and he threw the tablets from his hand, and he broke them under the mountain.

20 And he took the bull calf that they had made, and he burned *it* with the fire, and he crushed *it* until it became fine, and he scattered *it* on the surface of the water, and he made the Israelites drink.

Moses Confronts Aaron

21 And Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you that you brought on them *such* a great sin?”

22 And Aaron said, “Let not my lord become angry. You yourself know the people, that they are intent on evil.

23 And they said to me, ‘Make for us gods who will go before us, because this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’

24 And I said to them, ‘Whoever *has* gold, take *it* off.’ And they gave *it* to me, and I threw it in the fire, and out came this bull calf.”

The Levites Kill the Ringleaders

25 And Moses saw the people, that they *were* running wild because Aaron had allowed them to run wild, for a laughingstock among their enemies.

26 And Moses stood at the entrance of the camp, and he said, “Whoever *is* for Yahweh, to me.” And all the sons of Levi were gathered to him.

27 And he said to them, “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, ‘Put each his sword on his side. Go back and forth from gate to gate in

the camp, and kill, each his brother and each his friend and each his close relative.”

28 And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses, and from the people on that day about three thousand persons fell.

29 And Moses said, “You are ordained today for Yahweh, because each *has been* against his son and against his brother and so bringing on you today a blessing.”

Yahweh’s Punishment

30 And the next day Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to Yahweh. Perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.”

31 And Moses returned to Yahweh, and he said, “Alas, this people has sinned a great sin and made for themselves gods of gold.

32 And now if you will forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me from your scroll that you have written.”

33 And Yahweh said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot him from my scroll.

34 And now go, lead the people to where I spoke to you. Look, my angel will go before you, and on the day *when* I punish I will punish them *for* their sin.”

35 And Yahweh afflicted the people because they had made the bull calf that Aaron had made.

Moses Entreats Yahweh to Go With Israel (c. mid July 1446 BC)

Exodus 33:1–17

Yahweh Refuses to Personally Accompany Israel to Canaan

1 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, “Go, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land that I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your offspring.’

2 And I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, and the Hittites and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites,

3 *Go* to a land flowing with milk and honey, but I will not go up among you, because you *are* a stiff-necked people, lest I destroy you on the way.”

The People Obey Yahweh and Mourn in Genuine Repentance

4 And the people heard this troubling word, and they mourned, and they each did not put their ornaments on themselves.

5 And Yahweh said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘You *are* a stiff-necked people; *if* one moment I were to go up among you, I would destroy you. And now take down your ornaments from on you, and I will decide what I will do to you.”

6 And the Israelites stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb *onward*.

The Temporary Tabernacle—“Tent of Meeting”

7 And Moses took the tent and pitched it outside the camp far from the camp, and he called it the tent of assembly, and all seeking Yahweh would go out to the tent of assembly, which *was* outside the camp.

8 And at the going out of Moses to the tent, all the people would rise and stand, each at the opening of his tent, and gaze after Moses until his entering the tent.

9 And at the entering of Moses *into* the tent the column of cloud would descend and stand *at* the opening of the tent, and he would speak with Moses.

10 And all the people would see the column of cloud standing *at* the opening of the tent, and all the people would rise and bow in worship, each *at* the opening of his tent.

11 And Yahweh would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his neighbor. And he would return to the camp, and his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not leave the middle of the tent.

Moses Entreats Yahweh to Personally Accompany Israel and Yahweh Agrees

12 And Moses said to Yahweh, “See, you *are* saying to me, ‘Take this people up.’ But you have not let me know whom you will send with me, and you yourself have said, ‘I know you by name, and you also have found favor in my eyes.’

13 And now if I have found favor in your eyes, make known *to* me, please, your way, and so I may know you so that I can find favor in your eyes. And see that this nation is your people.”

14 And he said, “My presence will go, and I will give you rest.”

15 And he said to him, “If your presence *is* not going, do not bring us up from here.

16 And by what will it be known then that I have found favor in your eyes, I and your people? Is it not by your going with us? And so we will be distinguished, I and your people, from all the people who *are* on the face of the ground.”

17 And Yahweh said to Moses, “Also I will do this thing that you have spoken, because you have found favor in my eyes and I have known you by name.”

Yahweh Renews the Covenant (c. late July - August 1446 BC)

Exodus 33:18–34:35

Moses Asks To See Yahweh's Glory

33:18 And he said, "Please show me your glory."

19 And he said, "I myself will cause all my goodness to pass over before you, and I will proclaim the name of Yahweh before you, and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show compassion to whom I will show compassion." [\[Rom 9:14–15\]](#)

20 But he said, "You are not able to see my face, because a human will not see me and live."

21 And Yahweh said, "There is a place with me, and you will stand on the rock.

22 And when my glory passes over, I will put you in the rock's crevice, and I will cover you *with* my hand until I pass over.

23 And I will remove my hand, and you will see my back, but my face will not be visible."

Yahweh Takes the Initiative to Renew the Covenant

34:1 And Yahweh said to Moses, "Cut for yourself two stone tablets like the first ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke.

2 And be ready for the morning, and go up in the morning to Mount Sinai and present yourself to me there on the top of the mountain.

3 And no one will go up with you, and neither let anyone be seen on all the mountain, nor let the sheep and goats and the cattle graze opposite that mountain."

4 And Moses cut two stone tablets like the first ones, and he started early in the morning, and he went up to Mount Sinai, as Yahweh had commanded him, and he took in his hand the two stone tablets.

Yahweh Passes Before Moses

5 And Yahweh descended in the cloud, and he stood with him there, and he proclaimed the name of Yahweh.

6 And Yahweh passed over before him, and he proclaimed, "Yahweh, Yahweh, God, *who is* compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding with loyal love and faithfulness,

7 keeping loyal love to the thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and he does not leave utterly unpunished, punishing *the* guilt of fathers on sons and on sons of sons on third and fourth *generations*."

Moses Worships and Repeats His Request for Yahweh's Presence

8 And Moses hurried and knelt down to the earth and worshiped.

9 And he said, "Please, if I have found favor in your eyes, Lord, let my Lord, please, go among us—indeed it is a stiff-necked people—and forgive our iniquity and our sin and take us as your possession."

The Renewal of the Covenant

10 And he said, "Look, I *am about to* make a covenant. In front of all your people I will do wonders that have not been created on all the earth and among all the nations, and all the people among whom you *are* will see Yahweh's work, because what I *am about to* do with you *will be* awesome.

11 "Keep for yourself what I myself have commanded you today. Look, I *am about to* drive from before you the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

12 Be careful for yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you are going, lest it be a snare among you.

13 Rather, you will tear down their altars, and you will break their stone pillars, and you will cut off their Asherah poles.

14 For you will not bow in worship to another god, for 'Yahweh *Is Jealous*' is his name, he *is* a jealous God,

15 lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they prostitute *themselves* after their gods, and they sacrifice to their gods, and they invite you, and you eat their sacrifice,

16 and you take from their daughters for your sons, and their daughters prostitute *themselves* after their gods, and they cause your sons to prostitute *themselves* after their gods.

17 You will not make gods of cast metal for yourself.

18 "You will keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Seven days you will eat unleavened bread, which I commanded you, at the appointed time of the month of Abib, for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt.

19 Every first offspring of a womb *is* for me—all of your male livestock, *the* first offspring of cattle and small livestock.

20 But the first offspring of a donkey you will redeem with small livestock, and if you will not redeem *it*, you will break its neck. Every firstborn of your sons you will redeem, and you will not appear before me empty-handed.

21 Six days you will work, and on the seventh day you will rest; in the *time of* plowing and in the *time of* harvest you will rest.

22 And you yourself will observe the Feast of Weeks—the firstfruits of the wheat harvest—and the Feast of Harvest Gathering at the turn of the year.

23 Three times in the year all your males will appear before the Lord, Yahweh, the God of Israel,

24 because I will evict nations before you, and I will enlarge your territory, and no one will covet your land when you go up to appear

before Yahweh your God three times in the year.

25 “You will not slaughter the blood of my sacrifice on *food with yeast*, and the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover will not stay overnight to the morning.

26 The beginning of the firstfruits of your land you will bring to the house of Yahweh your God. You will not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.”

The Covenant in Writing

27 And Yahweh said to Moses, “Write for yourself these words, because according to these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.”

28 And he was there with Yahweh forty days and forty nights. He ate no food and drank no water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten words.

Moses’ Shining Face

29 And when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony *were* in the hand of Moses at his coming down from the mountain; and Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with him.

30 And Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, and, to their amazement, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid of coming near to him.

31 And Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the community returned to him, and Moses spoke to them.

32 And afterward all the Israelites came near, and he commanded them all that Yahweh had spoken with him on Mount Sinai.

33 And Moses finished speaking with them, and he put a veil on his face.

34 And when Moses came before Yahweh to speak with him, he would remove the veil until he went out, and he would go out and would speak to the Israelites what he had been commanded. [cf. [2 Cor 3:7–18](#)]

35 And the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of the face of Moses shone, and Moses would put back the veil on his face until his coming to speak with him.

Scripture quotations are from the [Lexham English Bible](#) (LEB). Copyright 2012 [Logos Bible Software](#). Lexham is a registered trademark of [Logos Bible Software](#).