

## EXODUS: The Person, Promise, and Power of God

### Exodus 32, pt 2 – God’s Amazing Grace

**<sup>30</sup> The next day Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.”**

**<sup>31</sup> So Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. <sup>32</sup> But now, if you will forgive their sin – but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.”**

**Exodus 32:30-31**

#### Context: Israel’s Egregious Sin and God’s Righteous and Consuming Wrath

*<sup>9</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. <sup>10</sup> Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you.” (Ex. 32:9-10)*

What a potential turning point in the story of God’s people! Once again, they stand on the precipice of \_\_\_\_\_ – this time by God’s own hand.

What is the cost of sin?

In a word, \_\_\_\_\_.

The consummation of the plan of Exodus is in jeopardy. God – the sure keeper of His own covenant – offers an alternative plan to Moses:

*“... let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you.”*

Those whom He has repeatedly referred to as “my people” (3:7, 3:10, 5:1) are now alienated from God due to \_\_\_\_\_.

But there is a foreshadowing of \_\_\_\_\_:

God refers to them as “*your* people” to Moses (32:7).

Why did he say that?

He also told Moses: “Go down ...” (v. 7)

Why did God say that?

And “let me alone ...” (v. 10)

Again, why?

God was \_\_\_\_\_ Moses into His plan by stirring him to \_\_\_\_\_ for the people. He was also \_\_\_\_\_ him as a leader.

<sup>21</sup> They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt,  
<sup>22</sup> wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.  
<sup>23</sup> Therefore he said he would destroy them – had not Moses, his chosen one,  
stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them. (Psalm 106:21-23)

Moses prayed intensely for \_\_\_\_\_ for the people ...

“I lay prostrate before the Lord for these forty days and forty nights, because the Lord had said he would destroy you.” (Deuteronomy 9:25)

... and the Lord withheld His wrath:

“ ... the Lord relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.” (Ex. 32:14)

Moses was not \_\_\_\_\_ God’s plans; he was \_\_\_\_\_!

### **Moses, the Intercessor - v. 11-14**

<sup>11</sup> **But Moses implored** the Lord his God and said, “O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

<sup>12</sup> Why should the Egyptians say, ‘With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people. <sup>13</sup> Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, ‘I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.’ ”

<sup>14</sup> **And the Lord relented** from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.

### **Moses prayed ...**

- 1) He appealed to God’s \_\_\_\_\_ to His people ...
- 2) He appealed to God’s \_\_\_\_\_ ...
- 3) He appealed to God’s \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ...
- 4) He pleads for \_\_\_\_\_ though \_\_\_\_\_ is deserved ...
- 5) He appeals to the \_\_\_\_\_ ...

God did not require \_\_\_\_\_ by Moses. Nothing Moses prayed brought anything new to God’s \_\_\_\_\_ or changed His \_\_\_\_\_.

But Moses’s prayer did display a deep \_\_\_\_\_ with God born out of great \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

*The result?*

What God had threatened was to \_\_\_\_\_ Israel; what he ended up doing was to \_\_\_\_\_ them with a \_\_\_\_\_ (32:34-35), a lesser consequence but by no means an \_\_\_\_\_.

His response was \_\_\_\_\_.

*Reminder: Even \_\_\_\_\_ sins have \_\_\_\_\_.*

*John Piper: “The aim of God-sent consequences of forgiven sin is not to settle accounts demanded by retributive justice. The aim of the God-sent consequences of forgiven sin are (1) to demonstrate the*

exceeding evil of sin, (2) to show that God does not take sin lightly even when he lays aside his punishment, (3) to humble and sanctify the forgiven sinner."

### **The Judgment of Moses - v. 15-24**

<sup>15</sup> Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand, tablets that were written on both sides; on the front and on the back they were written. <sup>16</sup> The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets. <sup>17</sup> When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp." <sup>18</sup> But he said, "It is not the sound of shouting for victory, or the sound of the cry of defeat, but the sound of singing that I hear." <sup>19</sup> And as soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. <sup>20</sup> He took the calf that they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to powder and scattered it on the water and made the people of Israel drink it.

<sup>21</sup> And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought such a great sin upon them?" <sup>22</sup> And Aaron said, "Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil. <sup>23</sup> For they said to me, 'Make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' <sup>24</sup> So I said to them, 'Let any who have gold take it off.' So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf."

Imagine the enormous \_\_\_\_\_: the perfect \_\_\_\_\_ of God (Psalm 19:7-11) and the undeniable wickedness of Israel's \_\_\_\_\_ ...

Was Moses right to be so \_\_\_\_\_?

- 1) He responded to a great offense against \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) He remained \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
- 3) He reflected \_\_\_\_\_ of sin.
- 4) He was not \_\_\_\_\_ for his deeds.

Could Aaron have come off any \_\_\_\_\_?

- 1) He \_\_\_\_\_ the sin.
- 2) He refused \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) He made \_\_\_\_\_ that were irrelevant to the sin.
- 4) He lied \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) He led \_\_\_\_\_.

### **What Repentance Looks Like - v. 25-29**

<sup>25</sup> And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), <sup>26</sup> then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. <sup>27</sup> And he said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'" <sup>28</sup> And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell. <sup>29</sup> And Moses said, "Today you have been ordained for the service of the Lord, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day."

Repentance is \_\_\_\_\_ and surrendering to His authority.

It is \_\_\_\_\_ against sin.

*"The question is that of fundamental loyalties. Moses does not call for those who had never deviated from loyalty to the Lord by worshipping the golden calf. Rather he calls for those who, no matter what they had done, were now prepared to acknowledge the authority of their King. It is an act of amnesty, but one calling for immediate decision."<sup>1</sup>*

We don't know who was killed ...

We do know that the justice meted out was irrespective of \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

We also know that 3,000 represented only a small fraction of the whole. This again is \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Ongoing Intercession and Moses' Sacrificial Offer - v. 30-35**

*<sup>30</sup> The next day Moses said to the people, "You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." <sup>31</sup> So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. <sup>32</sup> But now, if you will forgive their sin – but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written." <sup>33</sup> But the Lord said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book. <sup>34</sup> But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; behold, my angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them."*

*<sup>35</sup> Then the Lord sent a plague on the people, because they made the calf, the one that Aaron made.*

Clearly, Moses understands the parameters of \_\_\_\_\_. He, better than any, recognizes the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. He knows well the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin. And he rightly understands the pattern God established in the Tabernacle: Sin requires an \_\_\_\_\_.

Moses offers *Himself* to God as that atonement.

Why didn't God accept Moses' offer?

### **The Sovereignty of God - Ends and Means**

*"There is no need whatever for God to change His designs or alter His purpose for the all-sufficient reason that these were framed under the influence of perfect goodness and unerring wisdom. Men may have occasion to alter their purposes, for in their short-sightedness they are frequently unable to anticipate what may arise after their plans are formed. But not so with God, for He knows the end from the beginning. To affirm God changes His purpose is either to impugn His goodness or to deny His eternal wisdom.*

A. W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God*

Would God have really destroyed Israel and started over with Moses?

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<sup>1</sup> John L. Mackay, *Exodus*, Mentor Commentaries, 542.

**If God is sovereign, why pray?**

- a) Prayer has been appointed that the Lord God Himself should be \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) Prayer is appointed by God as a means for our growth in \_\_\_\_\_.
- c) Prayer is appointed by God for our seeking from Him the things which we are in \_\_\_\_\_ of.
- d) God \_\_\_\_\_ us to pray.

*"... prayer is not intended to change God's purpose, nor is it to move Him to form fresh purposes. God has decreed that certain events shall come to pass through the means He has appointed for their accomplishment.*

*God has decreed the means as well as the end, and among the means is prayer. Even the prayers of His people are included in His eternal decrees. Therefore, instead of prayers being in vain they are among the means through which God exercises His decrees."*

***Here then is the design of prayer: not that God's will may be altered, but that it may be accomplished in His own good time and way."***

A.W. Pink

Two partial truths:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_

The answer? \_\_\_\_\_

*"... concurrence refers to the coterminous actions of God and humans. This means that at the same time human agents are acting, God is acting in and through them. We are creatures with a will of our own. We make choices. Yet the causal power we exert is secondary. God's sovereign providence stands over and above our actions. He works out his will through the actions of human wills, without violating the freedom of the human will."*

Ken Erisman, *Grounded in the Faith* (p. 261).

**Next week: Exodus 33 - The Glory of God and the Good of Man**