Exodus 34 Commentary by Laura M.

We left off with Moses asking the Lord for a couple of things. He asked the Lord to change His decision and to go with them to the Promised Land. The Lord responded to Moses and said that He would go with them. Moses was successfully acting as intercessor for God’s people much like Jesus does for us.

Moses also asked God to show him His glory. In response to this… God explained to Moses that no one can see His face and live, but He described how He would reveal Himself to Moses in another way.

To me, this shows us how He reveals Himself to us today, especially in our daily Bible Immersion. We won’t see God’s face when we meet with Him daily in the morning, but He does reveal Himself to us when we go to Him the way He “commanded” Moses to. God told Moses how he needed to approach God, how He was going to reveal Himself, and He also told Moses that He is gracious to… and has mercy on… those to whom He chooses.

In Exodus 34… we see that God chooses to show mercy on the Israelites and is gracious to them, and especially to Moses. In this chapter, we see how God is a gracious and merciful God.

My experience has taught me that this is why God wants us to read His Word daily; His whole Word, daily… through the Bible in a year; it is so… we can come to really know God, understand Him, know His ways; know How great-majestic-powerful-mighty-loving-in control-the One and Only True God that He is.

If we don’t know this, how can we feel safe and sure to turn our lives over to Him. The more I am reminded through my daily Bible Immersion experiences that God is all powerful—loving—gracious—merciful… directly involved in my personal affairs as evidenced by what He shows me in my daily readings, the healthier-stronger and more successful I am in facing my life on life’s terms situations, and the more I do not feel the need to fight or, worse, flight, through turning to the food. Or, to not feel the need to have to manipulate and control my situations so that I don’t get hurt, or, another old response was to feel the need to isolate, so I don’t have to struggle through showing up when I don’t feel capable of showing up.

Today, by God’s grace, I show up every day knowing… really knowing… not just by blind faith or intellect because I’ve been taught this but by my own personal experiences…present time and over and over again… that God is with me, building me up; He addresses my needs every morning. I know I can trust Him. And… knowing that He is present and in control in this way; that nothing happens that He will not help me get through, that He never gives me more than I can handle… and not think or operate on faith just because it is a cliché in secular recovery that I want to believe, but because I am experiencing it and it is making me a totally different person than I ever was before. I can do the things I couldn’t do in the past because He coaches me as I go. He does this through His Word. Also by my reading His Word, He has supernaturally changed my heart and renewed my thinking.

In the morning… when I go to Him, I come to the end of myself, I pour any updated info out at His feet and then read His Word; He speaks to me through His Word like He did to Moses from the cloud when Moses approached Him in the way He commanded. God was gracious and merciful to Moses when He met with Him and God is gracious and merciful to me every morning when I meet Him in the Divine Appointment I have with Him, and when I stay with Him until He lifts me up.

In Verse 1…

God is gracious to the Israelites in that He starts out giving Moses instructions for Him to go back up on Mt. Sinai so He can write the Ten Commandments again for them… even though they were what He called, “a stiff-necked people” and rebelled so terribly against Him. He was being merciful and gracious after the Israelites acted out so badly.

Moses’ breaking of the two tablets, both tablets, is seen as symbolic of the people breaking God’s covenant that He made with them. They broke the second commandment yet Moses broke all Ten Commandments in response to their sin.

In James 2:10, it is written,

*For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.*

The Israelites broke covenant with God; they broke the second commandment, Moses broke both tablets, all of the Ten Commandments, and now God is instructing Moses to bring two new tablets up to Him so He can write on them again. What does this show us? He is forgiving and kind. This shows me that when I mess up in one area, that I need to stop and go to Him. It’s not okay to break one commandment and then to just sweep in under the rug and carry on. I sinned against God. It is not going to go away. I must go to God and repent. I have sinned against Him when I have done anything that His Word is teaching me is against His ways. Before my sins were so glaring that because my compulsive nature was so active in many different areas that there was not time to even consider other sins of pride, sloth, deceit, slander, etc. etc. I think I didn’t even have to look at things like gossip because I was isolating and eating, gossip and slander weren’t on the radar but today since I don’t spend time isolating and eating and I am engaging and developing relationships with people, I am experiencing sins that I never had to deal with. I am not so self-centered today now that I am out there experiencing life and although I sin less, I’m not sinless. It’s wonderful and God is my counselor, coach, psychologist, spiritual advisor, physician, best friend… He is my favorite comedian… God is very funny! He is also a great comforter and care taker. He is everything and we see in this chapter how God wants us to see Him when He proclaims His name.

Verse 2

God tells Moses the instructions the night before. He tells Moses to come up in the morning. He tells him to “be ready by the morning, and come up in the morning…” He tells him to be ready, come up, and “present yourself there to me…”

He also says, “No one shall come up with you, and let no one be seen throughout all the mountain. Let no flocks or herds graze opposite that mountain.”

What this brings up in me is that God, through the work of Jesus Christ, wants us to learn how to approach Him daily, and to do it. He wants us to meet with Him and these are the instructions on how. He gives us His Holy Spirit to empower us to be able to do these things.

He wants us to take the time the night before to be with Him and get His itinerary for us for the next day. He wants us to pick a time and get everything ready so it is possible to “be ready by the morning…” For me this means to think through my have to’s for the next morning and figure out when I would have to be ready by… in order to be prepared to… go up on the mountain with my Bible and, my two tablets, my notebook… and pen so that I can hear from Him; so that He can write on my two tablets.

Then, in order to make this happen… I have to do certain things: My things are … to set my alarm, put out my clothes, be completely ready to do what I have to in order to go out the door so that I am ready to engage in the next part of my day; so that nothing will disturb my time with the Lord; He can have my complete undivided attention because all my needs for the next part of my day have been addressed; my heart and my mind are available to Him.

In verse 3, God’s instructions to Mosses are to keep everything else away. For me that would be my cell phone, my computer, people, when any of my daughters are visiting. When my daughters are visiting or when I lived under people, I left to do my Bible Immersion in my car because the tiniest noise distracted me and took my focus off God’s Word, and filled my mind with thoughts of the distractions so that I could not hear what God had for me… and… that… is missing the whole point; the whole experience. I must not be texting, reading my texts, checking my emails… nothing… this is my Divine Appointment with the Lord. I wouldn’t be late for a doctor’s appointment and I wouldn’t be checking or replying to texts when I am with my doctor or anyone… so I certainly need to ask His Holy Spirit to help me keep all my people away from the mountain… keep the flocks (my cell phone) and the herds (any persons that might interrupt my time with the Lord) away. I have to do my part and God does His! Am I perfect at this? I was pretty good for a long time but I have been struggling lately. I have to resist reading my texts and replying. All of this has taken just a willingness to try, to make the commitment, and to do my best. God, in His perfect timing and gentle way, has brought me into being able to do what I do accomplish. I repent when I am late or text and ask Him to help me to better the next day; to get over these challenges; and… he does!

Verse 4, Moses did as the Lord commanded and so in verse 5, the Lord came into Moses’ presence; which is exactly what I experience when I do my part. “The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.” This makes me smile because when I make the effort to have this Divine Appointment with the Lord, I believe He does meet me there. I don’t think I am fantasizing that He speaks directly to my causes—my present-day in time circumstances through His Word. The Word always addresses either a prayer I have recently prayed and definitely the experiences I am living through before, during the circumstances I am going through, and after the events, activities, relationship needs, or decisions that are pressing and need to be dealt with.

In verse 6 and 7 we read, “The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, *“The Lord, the Lord, A god merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, 7 keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”*

Wow! God is so good. When Moses followed God’s instructions, what did God do? God addressed or greeted Moses by telling Moses who He was. How did He do this and why did He do this? He did it by proclaiming His name and explaining to Moses wonderful things about Himself. I believe He was being considerate of how Moses might have been feeling. I believe many people do not approach God because they are afraid of what He will say to them and they don’t know Him so they are afraid of what He might do to them. After all, remember, God is so powerful that if anyone sees Him, they won’t live.

It took courage for Moses to go up on the mountain. It takes courage for us to approach God. God greets Moses by reminding Him, or maybe Moses did not know this yet, but God has given us His Word so that we can KNOW Him, that we can know He is kind and forgiving, if we choose to read about Him.

I know if someone greeted me by telling me He is my Lord…(Lord means someone having power, authority, influence) and that He is merciful (merciful means forgiving, compassionate, pitying, forbearing, lenient, humane, mild, kind, softhearted, tenderhearted, gracious, sympathetic, humanitarian,

liberal, tolerant, indulgent, generous, and the antonym for merciful is not cruel) .....and gracious (gracious means courteous, kind, and pleasant: *smiling and gracious in defeat. I thought this was interesting in the definition because after the Israelites broke the covenant they made with Him, God was kind of defeated and this definition says that gracious is smiling and gracious in defeat… more definitions are a gracious hostess*: courteous, polite,

civil, chivalrous, well mannered, mannerly, tactful, diplomatic; kind, benevolent, considerate, thoughtful, obliging,

accommodating, indulgent, friendly, amiable, cordial, hospitable and an antonym that again, explains it all and gets

to the important point… not rude) ... God goes on to say that He is slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness…God is saying He is abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness… **Faithfulness** is the concept of unfailingly remaining loyal to someone… and… putting that loyalty into consistent practice… regardless…

of extenuating circumstances. …And if that is not overwhelmingly wonderful enough, God goes on to tell Moses (and us), He is keeping His love for us for thousands of generations… He told us earlier He is gracious and merciful to whom He chooses and here He is telling us it is us… all His children. Now, many people don’t realize this. His children are not everybody He created. His children are those who believe on Him, who believe that Jesus is who He says He is; that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Now, I didn’t want to get off topic but I think it is important to mention this for a couple of things coming up.

He forgives our iniquity and transgression and sin! Now, He was saying this to the Israelites back then and we know much has happened between then and now so we know for us now that our iniquities, transgressions, and sins are forgiven through what Christ did for us on the cross. Back then, they made sacrifices through animals on an ongoing basis but we are forgiven through the one time sacrifice when God gave up His only begotten Son. How wonderful is this! This is important to point out… it takes us into the next part… this is the part we’ve all been waiting for… this is when the ball drops… haha… or is it… what does God mean when He says, *“but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”?*

We’re going to come back to this because we need to first finish up with how God greeted Moses in this awesome loving and assuring way… in this way He assured Moses that He was in a safe place with a very powerful but very amazingly loving and caring ruler—the Lord, Lord… merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression of sin…

I know that my knowing and experiencing God in this way makes me extremely excited to not just meet with Him daily in the morning but it has given me a whole new outlook on life; I am excited every day to be a part of life now; I am a restored isolator, or binge liver… that’s what I did, but since getting to know God through what is said about Him in His Word, I have been able to face things in my life, without even considering to turn to the food, in a way I have never experienced and without taking longs breaks between diving in and then needing to pull back.

And… to meet with Him every morning… being reminded who He is…… when I meet the Lord, I meet Him with Adoration… every morning. He doesn’t say all His character traits to me… but the first thing I do is… I bow my head… I thank Him that I am there with Him again… and I wait… I say this all the time because it is true and it is a great analogy to explain it in this way … it is kind of like plugging in my GPS. It cracks me up that when I plug it in, I have to wait and it says, “acquiring satellites.” The first time I saw that, I laughed out loud because my thoughts were ‘that’s just like when I need to hear from God…I have to wait until I acquire satellites,” and there is no coincidence that the GPS’ initials can mean God Positioning System. So, when I meet with Him, I wait…sitting there with my head bowed… and then something inside me at a certain point moves me to worship Him… I sometimes am moved to read Scripture verses on adoring God’s character… I have these written in the covers of my Bible with lists of God’s character traits, and on then most of the time, I am more moved to sing a couple of worship songs that I also have the lyrics written in the front and back covers of my Bible… and although God doesn’t speak His character traits to me, I read them or I sing them because they say these same wonderful things about who God is that God said to Moses; and this sets me up, like God set Moses up, to really lean into Him… to really trust Him… to really desire to be with Him.

No coincidences. This is how God greeted Moses. This certainly works to empower me to feel comfortable with God and to want to pour my heart out to Him. Then I do. I tell Him all that’s not going so good…not going well…my sins… I thank Him for everything that is going really well… my thanksgivings… and I lay at His feet all my concerns for others… my supplications… and then, I am ready… I am ready to hear from Him. I stop talking and start reading. I start listening for what I think He is saying to me. I underline, circle, check and prepare to hear from the Lord. Then I do my Scripture, thoughts, prayer structure writing right everything there in my journal Bible and I am always blessed, always lifted up… often surprised with what He says to me…especially when I get to the prayer… sometimes things come up that were totally not on my radar but all the time He addresses my needs… my present-time needs. It is wonderful and that’s what He does here next with Moses but now let’s address what God might be meaning when He says, *“but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”* …in verse 7.

Now, this sounds scary and sounds like a generational curse. I never heard about generational curses until my life fell apart and a Christian I met introduced me to a married couple who… he was a pastor and she was a psychologist. They were in their 90’s and they offered to do generational healing work with myself and my daughters. I feel that was a wonderful experience and huge piece to my journey of getting to where we are at today but I still did not understand why God put this here in the Bible or understand generational curses so I looked into a little.

One CC pastor I listened to said it is because God is a jealous God, and in verse 14 it says just that,

*“For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:”*

The pastor explained that this is a righteous jealousy. He used the analogy that he would be jealous if another man flirted with his wife because he loves her and she is his, and he doesn’t want to see her get hurt. God loved the Israelites, they were His, Satan tempted them, they turned away from God, they worshipped a golden calf and that was righteous jealousy.

They belong to Him; we belong to Him. He doesn’t want to share us with the world. That’s how God sees us,‘You’re mine, you belong to me, be set apart, be holy.’ He wants all of us.

Israel just built a golden calf, gave themselves to Satan, and so now when God finished giving His attributes, He ends with, but I’m jealous and I will visit this iniquity to the 3rd and 4th generation. This is the part in the morning Bible Immersion where I’m reading God’s Word and in this, I am now hearing what God has to say to me. Moses was hearing what God had to say to him. God is not an enabler. God tells the truth. He wants us to be healthy, holy, humble, honest, and happy. We need to learn from our mistakes and the Bible does talk about generational curses in a few places.

Let’s turn to Deuteronomy 5:8-10

*“‘You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me*, *but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.*”

The generational curse falls on those who hate Him. Well, I don’t know if any of my ancestors hated God but I do know that alcoholism, drug addiction, food addiction, depression, criminal behavior (I had an uncle in jail for compulsively committing crimes all his life, suicide (have cousins who took their lives), sexual abuse, divorce… these are all things in my family that seem to be reoccurring. Are these curses? I don’t know, I think so… but what I do know is I want to know what God has to say about them and I want to do what I need to so my daughters, myself, and, if God blesses any of them with children, will be free of them. All of us went to the generational healing and it was very cleansing and freeing, and God says He shows steadfast love to thousands of generations who love Him and keep His commandments. So, there are two sides…those who hate Him and those who will obey Him.

Verse 7

God said he would visit this iniquity to the 3rd and 4th generations. It seems unfair that God would punish the sins of children because of their father’s sins but does God cause it. If we look at it, kids watch what their parents do, they know nothing else and then they do it too. That’s what has happened to myself and my brothers, and that is what has happened to our children. God doesn’t really do it. God just doesn’t stop it. He is not an enabler. The sins are naturally passed down from one generation to the next. If we choose to repeat the sin and not seek how to overcome the sin, that’s on us. God loves us so much, He is not an enabler—He does not ignore the sins, He keeps after us to correct our sins; He wants us to stop doing things that are unhealthy, not good, not helpful, that hurt ourselves and others. He wants us to repent.

Some people blame it on a generational curse or on their genes. They say things like,

‘This is how I was created.’ ‘There is nothing that I can do about it.’ ‘It’s not my fault.’ ‘I was born this way.’ Other people feel a lot of pressure because they feel they’re either caught in a generational curse or started one—but the good news is there is a cure for this and it is in Jesus. Forgiveness is in repentance and that’s the cure for us.

When the Israelites turned from their idols to serve the God of Israel, the curse was broken and God saved them. What is God doing here right now in Exodus … come up again with two new stones and I will write my commands again. In Judges 3:9, it says,

*But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother.*

And in Judges 3:15 it says,

*Then the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man.*

There is a pattern here. When they messed up, they cried out, and what did God do? He sent them a deliverer. We’ve been sent a deliverer as mentioned just before. This is where Jesus comes in… our Rescuer… our Savior!

1 Samuel 12:10-11

*And they cried out to the LORD and said, ‘We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD and have served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. But now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, that we may serve you.’ And the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak and Jephthah and Samuel and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and you lived in safety.*

We can see here what God does… We cry out to God and what does He do? He sends a way to save us. If we think we are trapped in a generational curse or started one, what do we need to do? We need to cry out to God!

The answer to a generational curse is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 5:17

*Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

God is so good… ALL things have become new.

Romans 8:1

*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

If any of us feel compulsive overeating is a generational curse, this is our fix—Jesus Christ; praying in the name of Jesus—turning to Jesus; recognizing, admitting our sinful flesh behavior, repenting, confessing, asking for forgiveness, asking another to pray for us, and receiving God’s forgiveness. Believing we are forgiven. Believing in Jesus.

If any of you feel you have caused it, take this to those you have caused to stumble, make amends, tell them about the mystery of the Gospel of Christ and what He has done for you, asking them to forgive you.

God always gives us a way out. This is it—we must take it—this is our part—crucify our flesh on the cross with Jesus—be done with the sin.

God says He visits this sin to the 3rd or 4th generations but to those who love Him, He keeps steadfast love for thousands of generations! We can be a turning point that will affect multitudes of people… we need to repent, turn from sin in our lives, and begin obeying God… not guessing at what obedience to God looks like but by knowing what obedience to God looks like by being in His Word daily… learning and being transformed by His Word—by being filled with His Holy Spirit through adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication and in this He gives us the ability to go out and apply it… be obedient

Verse 10

God lifts Moses up by promising to make a covenant before the people again, to do marvelous things for them…things that no one else has ever seen; He promises that others will notice what He does in them—He uses the word, “awesome.” I think it’s awesome what he’s doing in me and my girls, and my family… and I think my family is catching on. I certainly hope so but the other night my brothers and my father and step mother took me out for a BD dinner. They couldn’t stop complimenting me and staring at me. They were so unusually happy. When we were leaving, I couldn’t help but notice, one in particular, couldn’t stop looking at me as if I shaved a mustache but they just couldn’t put their finger on what it was that was different.

Verse 11

God tells them to “observe”… watch what He does; He tells them to be careful to do what He instructs them… and … He tells them what will happen if they don’t follow His instructions. For those of us who read ahead, we know they don’t do as God says and of course, like us, when we don’t follow His instructions… weigh and measure our meals… we suffer consequences.

He wants us to get all our altars, pillars—lower case gods out of our life. He is saying here that He is a jealous God (verse 14). He loves us and doesn’t want us giving our attention to things that are going to hurt us and hurt others. He created us, knows what is good for us, and is trying to lead us in this. He says to keep people who serve lower case gods out of our life. Change—recoil from people, places, and things that or who are disobeying God’s precepts, or we will get “hooked.” That’s what they call it in secular recovery. If we don’t deny our flesh, we will get hooked by the enemy and all His wiles. Satan will use these people, places, and things to influence us into giving into sinning against God.

Verse 18-26. God tells them all they can do… that will help them do well—feel well—be in relationship with Him… we can do the same:

Stay abstinent 7 days a week

Work 6 days a week and rest on the Sabbath

Give Him our first fruits

Moses was with the Lord another 40 days and nights. God asked Him to write what he was telling Him. God asks us to be with Him daily and to write what He is telling us. We do this in our Bible Immersion and we do it by Scripture memorization… we write God’s Word on our hearts.

Moses fasted. We do a kind of fast by eating our weighed and measured meals and not eating anything in between.

When Moses came down, the people were different this time, and He was lit up! It says it was because he was with God. This is why we don’t leave our time with God in the morning until we are lifted up. The people were able to tell… Moses was with the Lord. I’m often asked at work why I am always smiling. I do my Bible Immersion in my car in the parking lot and I walk into the building right after, and I definitely have spring in my step every morning. I am ready to face the music! Moses shared everything the Lord said to him with them. I share everything the Lord says to me to anyone who will stand still long enough to listen. Haha

I think the take away here today in Exodus 34 is go to the Father through Jesus. Jesus is the Word. The Word is God.

John 1:1

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

John 1:14

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Crucify our flesh on the cross with Jesus. That’s the take away! Recognize (get out of denial), admit, confess, repent (turn away from), tell another, ask them to pray for you, go to the Word daily… sit with God daily… adore Him, worship Him, confess to Him daily…keep up with what needs to be filtered out daily…what you need His help with daily, thank Him for all that is going right…(all He is showing up for...helping you with), pray for others and then be in His Word…keeping all others and other things out… approach Him the way He asks us to and then listen to what He has to say to us. This is the way to freedom from sin; to freedom from bondage to sin; the way to breaking the chains…the generational curses.