

Ch. 7 Review: In chapter 7 we discussed how God told Moses how to perform the miracles to present to Pharaoh. Moses pleads with God to use Aaron, but God has chosen Moses. God hardens Pharaoh’s heart in order that his plan come to fruition. What does this tell us about God?

Materialism and orgiastic celebration

The Jewish people are impatient with the return of Moses from the mountain.

Exodus 32:1 – “When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, “Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.” What does this tell you about the Jewish people’s relationship with Moses?... And with God?

The creation of the golden calf by Aaron exposes the weakness to “materialistic gratification” of the people. Aaron was weak in letting the people rebel. What are some examples of “golden calves” in our lives today?

Exodus 32:25-26 – “Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies”. What does this tell us about leadership? Who are our enemies who may be laughing?

“This strongly implies that in the absence of the voice of truly upward and difficult aim, the most immature and dysregulate will clamor, successfully, for control.” “Regression is easier and more likely than progression...”. What is this telling us?

Exodus 32:27-28 – Moses called the faithful to him and all the Levites rallied to him. Moses said: “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.’ The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died.” What is God doing?

This was a small percentage of the population by all accounts as estimates of the Jewish population range from 2 million to 30 thousand.

What are the dangers the Jewish people are challenged with in their journey to the promised land? How do these challenges compare to us today?

“When sin is practiced, the good recedes.” God withdraws His leadership at this time and replaces it with an angel. What does “a stiff-necked people” mean? Why must God withdraw? Have you seen this in your life?

Desperate reestablishment of the covenant

At least one Israelite is still close to God. And it is Moses. Moses was allowed to see the back of God and to see where God had been. God’s glory was too much for even Moses to see. Can you comprehend the glory of God and what it is?

God instructs Moses to hew two new stone tablets of the ten commandments. God is giving the Israelites a second chance.

The error must be corrected, either by the sinner or by those that come after. Can you see the lesson here? How does this apply to us?

Moses returns from the mountain so full of the glory of God that the people cannot bare to look upon him. This tells us two things:

1. The genuine closeness to the divine of Moses, remaining in faithful communion with God
2. The opposing state of the Israelites, steeped as they remain in sin

How are we to consider these two factors in judging our personal relationship with God? Where do we stand with seeing God’s glory?

Exodus 40:34-38 – “Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. In all the travels of the Israelites, whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, they would set out; but if the cloud did not lift, they did not set out - until the day it lifted. So the cloud of the Lord was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel during all their travels.”

The Israelites have mended their relationship with the almighty God. They have enthusiastically built the temple tent and God has reestablished his direct leadership. “The Tabernacle of the Israelites is the precursor to the synagogue, the cathedral, and the church. It is what becomes the center of town and city, the place of gathering for the sacrificial offering of the united community, the establishment within which the confession, repentance and atonement that stabilizes and recalibrates the maligned psyche..”

Can you see why God has created the church not only as a spiritual community but as a physical structure? Why is this?

Leviticus

The key thought of Leviticus is holiness – the holiness of God and man (man must revere God in holiness). In Leviticus spiritual holiness is symbolized by physical perfection. Why would God require perfect sacrifices from the Israelites? What was their nature?

Numbers

Numbers 13:1-3 – “The Lord said to Moses, “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.” Twelve men were sent. They returned in forty days. They reported that the land was a land of milk and honey but was inhabited by giants. They spread rumors and lies about the inhabitants being the offspring of the Nephilim. By speaking bad about the land, they were speaking bad about God and His promise to give them the land.

“This caution is best read as a failure of leadership rather than as an honest accounting of the trials and tribulations that still confront the Israelites.” What can we learn from this lack of faith in our life as we confront obstacles that seem insurmountable? God almost loses His patience with the Israelites, but Moses reminds Him of His promise of the rainbow. So, generations must be cleansed in order for the faith of the Israelites to be strong enough to enter the promised land. When have you used faith to move forward when logic or circumstances appeared to make your progress impossible?

Deuteronomy

Deut. 34:5-7 – “And Moses the servant of the Lord died there in Moab, as the Lord had said. He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is. Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone.”

The love relationship of the Lord to his people and that of the people to the Lord as their sovereign God pervade the whole book of Deuteronomy. It’s spiritual emphasis and its call to total commitment to the Lord in worship and obedience inspired references to its message throughout the rest of Scripture. Moses embodied that commitment to the Lord.