



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THE WORD

## Why We Worship

∞ Understanding God's Heart ∞

### 1. Review

*“Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear; but **let not God speak with us**, lest we die.’ And Moses said to the people, ‘Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.”*

- Exodus 20:18-20

- A. The Israelites were accustomed to a visible God.
- B. They ask not to speak to God – they demand Moses speaks to God for them.
- C. The Lord comes to purify and test, and the Israelites fear that He will destroy them – even after all He has done.

### 2. The Ten Commandments

- A. God gives the Ten Commandments.
- B. The people need a Law to live by (Exodus 24:12).
- C. People often believe that the Ten Commandments are restrictions, but they are freedoms.
- D. Truth sets you free. Following the Ten Commandments leads to a freer life – free of sin and its traps.

*“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

- John 8:32

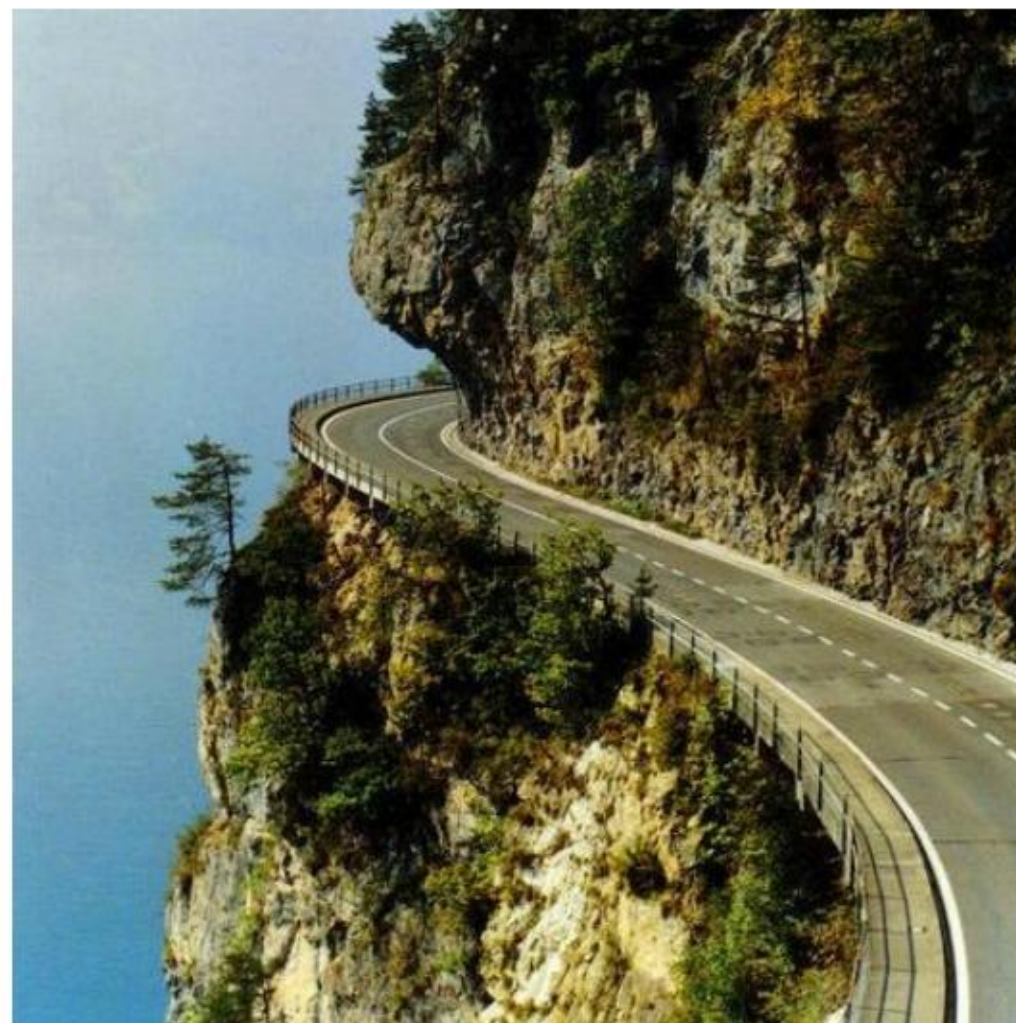
- E. Lies bind like cords and affairs are work.



*“His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and **he is caught in the cords of his sin.**”*

- Proverbs 5:22

- F. Commandments are guardrails to keep us from falling into the gorge.
- G. The Ten Commandments are literally written in God’s handwriting, written by hand for the Israelites.



- H. On the way back down the mountain, Moses heard a sound.

*“And Aaron said to them, ‘Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.’ So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’ So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it.”*

- I. How quickly does the speechwriter of God forget – Moses’ own right-hand man fashions a calf out of the gold given to them by God, and he can’t even take responsibility for it.

*“And Aaron made a proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.’ Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made*



*themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" And the LORD said to Moses, 'I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people! Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation.'"*

- J. Why would God need Moses to leave Him alone? Because they are friends, and they understand each other. Moses understands the implication of his people's sins.
- K. There comes a time when the Lord reaches His limit and says "enough." Moses has to plead with God and he asks God to let him intercede.
- L. We translate Scripture to get something out for ourselves. This is humanism. Give people enough and they will do the right thing. On the contrary, Christianity knows that humans are not basically good. It is God's grace, not our merit, that grants us peace and goodness.

*"Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: '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? **Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, "He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth"**?' Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. **REMEMBER** Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, **to whom You swore by Your own self**, and said to them, I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'"*

- M. Moses pleads with the Lord to keep His people safe and to save His own name from the ridicule of the nations who hate Him. As a friend, he pleads with the Lord to bring Himself honor and glory, even though the people don't deserve it.

*"So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people. And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides; on the one side and on the other they were written. Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. And when Joshua **heard the noise of the people as they shouted**, he said to Moses, 'There is a noise of war in the camp.' But he said: 'It is not the noise of the shout of victory, Nor the noise of the cry of defeat, But the sound of singing I hear.' So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke*



*them at the foot of the mountain. Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it.”*

- Exodus 32:2-20

N. God says He will destroy them, but Moses intercedes for them.

1. Because of *your name*

O. Moses says, “show me your glory.”

P. God watches His friend take on His anger and stand beside Him. Moses bears the burden of the Lord’s anger.

Q. God asked Moses to leave Him alone because God knows Moses by first name. Moses can talk to Him in a way that only a friend can talk.

1. Believers have grace, but God does have a limit on what He tolerates.

2. Paul tells us not to use grace as an occasion to sin. Grace is not a “get out of hell free” card.

*“What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!”*

- Romans 6:15

3. Moses pleads with God.

4. A friend of God is more concerned with God’s name and reputation than his own.

*“As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.”*

- Proverbs 27:17

5. God already told Abraham He would bless the nations.

6. Israel was tempted to be like other nations. Those nations were vile. They were having a vulgar, godless, sexual orgy.

7. God simply allowed His friend to talk Him out of wrath.

“Who is standing with the Lord?”



**“All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door. So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle. Then Moses said to the LORD, ‘See, You say to me, “Bring up this people.” But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, “I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.” Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people.’ And He said, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’ Then he said to Him, ‘If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.’ So the LORD said to Moses, ‘I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.’ And he said, ‘Please, show me Your glory.’ Then He said, ‘I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.’ But He said, ‘You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.’ And the LORD said, ‘Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.’”**

- Exodus 33:10-23

### **3. God’s Perspective**

- A. They tell Moses to move the tent of meeting out of the camp.
  - 1. They ask Moses to cover His face because he shows the glory of God and it scares them. The glory of God scares the people so much that they can’t even have it on Moses’ face – it scares them because it shines a light on their own flaws.
  - 2. God feels as though the people don’t want Him, they just want His blessings.



*“Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses’ hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them. Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.”*  
- Exodus 34:29-35

B. God sends the prophets.

1. Old Testament - the disappearing act of God
2. God becomes more and more silent – not because He is angry, but because He is continually rejected.
3. He is only wanted by a few friends, so He speaks through the prophets.
4. They reject the prophets and kill them.
5. God never says what people want to hear.
6. God tries to bless a nation of stiff-necked people and they slap Him away.

C. God tells Hosea to marry Gomer and that she will never be faithful to him (Hosea 1:1-2).

1. It’s a physical demonstration of what they have done to His heart. God wanted to be their God and king, but they wanted golden calves, and they wanted a king like other nations.
2. And yet, like God, Hosea shows Gomer grace and takes her back.



*“Therefore the Lord said: ‘Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and **honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.**’”*

- Isaiah 29:13

D. God becomes more and more silent. More elusive. Finally, at the end of the Old Testament, God falls silent for 400 years. They didn’t want to see Him or speak to Him. They didn’t want to meet with Him, and so He stops speaking.

#### **4. Jesus Breaks the Silence**

A. And then - Jesus is born in Bethlehem just six miles from the Temple, and no one comes to worship Him.

1. They are busy with religion as usual.

B. Shepherds and astronomers come instead. Pagans could see the signs and sense the greatness, but those who knew He was coming ignored Him, because they wanted to do their own practices.

1. Jewish hierarchy KNEW He would be born and ignored it.

C. Jesus’ whole life is one of rejection by His own people, questioning and accusing Him constantly. He did not free them from their worldly oppression, which is what they wanted.

*“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”*

- Matthew 10:37

D. They finally kill Him because He didn’t do *what* they wanted, *when* they wanted.

*“Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”*

- Matthew 13:30

E. Jesus dies mostly alone with a few friends. Even Peter, who watched every one of Jesus’ miracles, denies Him at the end.



*“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”*

- Matthew 7:13-14

F. Narrow is the road. Jesus is forsaken by the world, by His friends, and even by His father.

*“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. **It is to your advantage that I go away**; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.”*

- John 16:7

G. 500 people were invited to the upper room to receive the power and fire. Only 120 went.

H. God isn't asking for pity – just what He has already paid for with His goodness. He wants to be believed, trusted, obeyed, loved, believed in – all things He has earned many times over.

I. To believe God means to respect Him. To be faithful to Him is a vote for God and a stand. It is standing beside Him like a friend. He does not need our defense, but His friends would defend Him anyway.

J. It is not about us – it is the Lord's heart. It is honoring what He has already done and continues to do for us. Lift His name louder than the curses against it, and defend His honor.

K. The worship is His – it should not be mingled with our petitions.

1. Take need out of worship. That's a mingled offering.

2. You do not compliment your spouse to make *yourself* feel better.

L. Make His name glorious. Make His fame known among the people. Viciously defend His honor. Lift your voice louder than curses to declare His greatness.