

The Story – Chapter 5

Introduction

In this chapter, we finish Exodus as we look at Moses interactions with God and the receipt of the Ten Commandment. If you don't have *The Story* book, you can read Exodus chapters 19-20, 24-25, 32-34 and 40.

Chapter 5 – New Commands and a New Covenant

The journey had begun. And, like all journeys, there is a “from” and a “to.” God saved Israel *from* slavery, and He saved them *to* become a holy nation – set apart for His purposes. God intended Israel to be different than the pagan nations surrounding them; they were called to honor God and to point others to this LORD. Just weeks after the exodus, God inaugurated a new covenant with Israel that, if obeyed, would shape them into the holy nation that He intended them to be. At Mount Sinai God gave Moses the Ten Commandments – God's expectations for His covenant people.

Unfortunately, even as Moses was receiving God's commandments, the Israelites were forgetting that they had just promised they would obey all that God said. While Moses was on the mountain with God, the people began worshipping a golden calf, causing Moses to shatter the Ten Commandment tablets when he came back and saw what they were doing.

When God proposed to send Israel on to Canaan without Him, Moses prayed for God's presence to remain. God graciously agreed and promised He would remain with Israel, in the form of a cloud over the Tabernacle. After spending forty days with the LORD on Mount Sinai, Moses came down with two new tablets of the covenant law. Moses' face was so radiant after time with God that he had to be veiled because the people were afraid.

Discussion Questions

As you read, remember there are discussion questions for each chapter beginning on page 473 of the book and also questions that can be found on *The Story* bookmark (which are also on our website). Also, feel free to consider some of the questions below:

1. Moses was an intermediary between Israel and God. Has there been someone in your life who prayed for you, helped you see God's will, or acted as a spiritual mentor? Would that type of relationship be a blessing to you today? How could you seek it out? How could you do this for someone else?
2. The Lord spoke to Moses "*as one speaks to a friend*" (p. 67). What was there about Moses that God found so pleasing? How would you rate your relationship to God, from 1 = Total Stranger to 10 = Close Friend. Why do you rate it that way? What can you do to be in a closer relationship with God?
3. When Moses comes down from the mountain for the first time and gives the people the law they rejoice saying, "everything the Lord has said, we will do." Yet when Moses returns up the mountain and stays longer than they expect they quickly become afraid. They turn from worshipping God to worshipping an idol they forge out of their melted-down jewelry. Why do you think it was so easy for Israel to slip from covenant affirmation to idolatry? Have there been times in your life you felt God had left you or found it hard to wait on God? What sustained you in those times?
4. What role do the Ten Commandments play in your life with God? Should and/or how can they play a more significant role?
5. The Israelites' journey through the wilderness is one with both great victories and terrible defeat. How do you see God relating to his people when they lose faith in His promises? Is he consistent? How do you relate to God in the midst of great times or great struggles in your own life? How have you seen God respond to you during these times?
6. What questions came up for you while you were reading this chapter?
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