you have ordained yourselves* for the service of the Lord, for you obeyed him even though it meant killing your own sons and brothers. Today you have earned a blessing.”

**Moses Intercedes for Israel**

30 The next day Moses said to the people, “You have committed a terrible sin, but I will go back up to the Lord on the mountain. Perhaps I will be able to obtain forgiveness* for your sin.”

31 So Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Oh, what a terrible sin these people have committed. They have made gods of gold for themselves. 32 But now, if you will only forgive their sin—but if not, erase my name from the record you have written!”

33 But the Lord replied to Moses, “No, I will erase the name of everyone who has sinned against me. 34 Now go, lead the people to the place I told you about. Look! My angel will lead the way before you. And when I come to call the people to account, I will certainly hold them responsible for their sins.”

35 Then the Lord sent a great plague upon the people because they had worshiped the calf Aaron had made.

33 The Lord said to Moses, “Get going, you and the people you brought up from the land of Egypt. Go up to the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I told them, ‘I will give this land to your descendants.’ 2 And I will send an angel before you to drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hitites, and Jebusites. 3 Go up to this land that flows with milk and honey. But I will not travel among you, for you are a stubborn and rebellious people. If I did, I would surely destroy you along the way.”

4 When the people heard these stern words, they went into mourning and stopped wearing their jewelry and fine clothes. 5 For the Lord had told Moses to tell them, “You are a stubborn and rebellious people. If I were to travel with you for even a moment, I would destroy you. Remove your jewelry and fine clothes while I decide what to do with you.” 6 So from the time they left Mount Sinai,* the Israelites wore no more jewelry or fine clothes.

7 It was Moses’ practice to take the Tent of Meeting* and set it up some distance from the camp. Everyone who wanted to make a request of the Lord would go to the Tent of Meeting outside the camp.

8 Whenever Moses went out to the Tent of Meeting, all the people would get up and stand in the entrances of their own tents.

They would all watch Moses until he disappeared inside. 9 As he went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and hover at its entrance while the Lord spoke with Moses. 10 When the people saw the cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, they would stand and bow down in front of their own tents. 11 Inside the Tent of Meeting, the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Afterward Moses would return to the camp, but the young man who assisted him, Joshua son of Nun, would remain behind in the Tent of Meeting.

**Moses Sees the Lord’s Glory**

12 One day Moses said to the Lord, “You have been telling me, ‘Take these people up to the Promised Land.’ But you haven’t told me whom you will send with me. You have told me, ‘I know you by name, and I look favorably on you.’ 13 If it is true that you look favorably on me, let me know your ways so I may understand you more fully and continue to enjoy your favor. And remember that this nation is your very own people.”

14 The Lord replied, “I will personally go with you, Moses, and I will give you rest—everything will be fine for you.”

15 Then Moses said, “If you don’t personally go with us, don’t make us leave this place. 16 How will anyone know that you look favorably on me—on me and on your people—if you don’t go with us? For your presence among us sets your people and me apart from all other people on the earth.”

17 The Lord replied to Moses, “I will indeed do what you have asked, for I look favorably on you, and I know you by name.”

18 Moses responded, “Then show me your glorious presence.”

19 The Lord replied, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will call out my name, Yahweh,* before you. For I will show mercy to anyone I choose, and I will show compassion to anyone I choose. 20 But you may not look directly at my face, for no one may see me and live.” 21 The Lord continued, “Look, stand near me on this rock. 22 As my glorious presence passes by, I will hide you in the crevice of the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. 23 Then I will remove my hand and let you see me from behind. But my face will not be seen.”

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33:9 Exod 13:21; 19:9; 25:22; Ps 99:8; 33:11 Num 12:8; Deut 34:10; 33:12 Exod 3:10; 32:34; John 10:14–15; 2 Tim 1:19; 33:13 Exod 34:39; Ps 25:4; 33:14 Exod 13:21; Josh 22:4; Isa 63:9; 33:15 Ps 80:3; 33:16 Exod 34:10; Lev 20:24, 26; Num 14:14; 33:17 Exod 33:12; 33:18 Exod 33:20; 31:19 Rom 9:15; 33:20 Isa 6:5; John 11:18; 1 Tim 6:16; 33:21 Ps 91:1, 4; Isa 49:10; 5:16; 33:23 John 1:18; 32:30 Or to make atonement. 33:6 Hebrew Horeb, another name for Sinai. 33:7 This “Tent of Meeting” is different from the Tabernacle described in chapters 26 and 36. 33:19 Yahweh is a transliteration of the proper name YHWH that is sometimes rendered “Jehovah”; in this translation it is usually rendered “the Lord” (note the use of small capitals).