

## Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 310

Exodus 33-34

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### Episode Summary

Exodus 33:12-23 constitute the famous passage where Moses' asks to see the Glory of God. In return, he receives a deflective answer and yet experiences God in human form on Mount Sinai. After having delved into this passage in the previous episode of the podcast, this episode returns to this passage and carries the content into Exodus 34. These chapters give us insight into how the anthropomorphized Yahweh links to the Angel of the Presence (Exod 23:20-23) who accompanied Israel into the Promised Land.

### Transcript

**TS:** Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 310: Exodus 33-34. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How's Florida treating you?

**MH:** Pretty good. We are on the brink of starting this school here. I found out today that we have (by the time I mention it, it's probably climbed again) 546 students. A little over 400 of them are online. The rest are going to be Monday and Thursday nights. So we're about ready to jump in. Good times. Going through *Unseen Realm*. It's just... Busy, but it's the right kind of busy.

**TS:** Any other fun things happening in Florida? Have you done, seen, adjusted, found anything? You mentioned to me (or was that top secret) something about D-O-G #3 eventually?

**MH:** Oh. Yeah. It's not so much of a secret. Yeah, we'd like to get a third pug, but we don't want four dogs, so we're waiting... It sounds so awful. [laughs] We're waiting for the older one to die. [laughs] The retriever, Atticus. That's the dog the kids grew up with, so it's a big deal. But he's pushing 12, so... But he's made the adjustment really well. He's having a good time, actually. It's just he was a little skittish around the pugs. He's been that way for a while. But here, he's, like, "Whatever. I'm in Florida now." [laughs] Maybe it's like a retirement for him.

**TS:** Well, I'm glad you're waiting to get your third pug. [MH laughs] Poor guy. Getting squeezed out.

**MH:** Yeah. They all can't be pugs, you know?

**TS:** I hear that.

**MH:** We're basically settled. We haven't really done anything other than go out to eat. We got a table today. So now we actually have chairs to sit on and a place to eat. But we have one more furniture item that will take another week to get here, and then we'll feel normal.

**TS:** Did you get a bed yet?

**MH:** Yep, we've had that for about a week. Got a mattress finally, which is, man... I don't want to rabbit trail too much on this, but boy did I hate our other mattress. I just despised that thing. What I wanted to do was just take it out into the yard and burn it. [laughs] Just as a final gesture of contempt. My daughter and her husband loved the thing, so we gave it to them. It's like, "Alright. I knew there was something wrong with you." [laughter] It's just terrible. But now, we've got one.

**TS:** There you go. Well, Mike, Exodus. This is the second-to-last episode. Kind of bittersweet.

**MH:** Right. We need the audience to hold back the tears. Because we're going to do Exodus 33 and 34 today, and the next episode is going to Exodus 35-40. We're wrapping up Exodus, because the content of Exodus 35-40 is essentially a repetition of chapters 25-31. Now there *are* differences, and we'll talk about them when we hit that episode. But yeah. This is the second-to-last episode of the book of Exodus. So like I said, hold back the tears. I had to do that earlier this week when I realized that, hey, one more episode. [laughs] But yeah, that's where we're at.

**TS:** Hey, don't forget. I already have a lot of questions. And then after that, we'll be doing probably one or two Q&As specifically about the book of Exodus. So we appreciate everybody that has sent questions in. This is your last chance. If you want to send them in to me at [TreyStricklin@gmail.com](mailto:TreyStricklin@gmail.com), that's fine. But Mike, I think we have more than enough questions.

**MH:** Good. That'll ease the pain a little bit of leaving Exodus behind. [laughs] It'll draw it out a little bit. But honestly, I think it's been good. There's a lot to talk about in the book, so it was a good choice. It's 40 chapters, so it's a long book. But I think it was well worth it.

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Well, let's jump in here to Exodus 33 and 34. Last time, we did say something about Exodus 33. We hit a number of things in that chapter. But I want to focus attention in this episode on some observations about how chapter 34 builds off chapter 33, specifically the cleft of the rock experience (when Moses sees the form of Yahweh pass by him) and then, of course, the effect on Moses (his shining face and all that). So there's a good bit here to spend some time on in chapter 34. But it, of necessity, builds off chapter 33. So we want to dip back into 33 a little bit to set up this episode—set up this chapter (chapter 34).

So last time, you may recall, we looked at, for instance, Exodus 33:2, which reads as follows. Let me just read that. God says to Moses,

**<sup>2</sup> I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.**

So we looked at Sarna's observation that the angel reference there (the angel talk) was something different in that verse than we've seen earlier in other places. In Exodus 33:2, God doesn't say "I will send *my* Angel" or "the Angel in whom is my name" (that kind of description that associates the Angel with Yahweh's presence—Yahweh himself in visible form), but instead in Exodus 33:2, it's just, "I'll send an angel." And that's accompanied... Right after he says that, we get the comment from God,

**<sup>3</sup> Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."**

That's verse 3. So right after verse 2 references this nondescript angel, God says, "I'm not going along." Now Moses' reaction to all of this is uncertainty, both about the mission and the angel. And this seems inconsistent with earlier statements, like in Exodus 23 where God promised to send the angel, "and my name is in him," and so on and so forth. It seems inconsistent. Chapter 33 seems inconsistent with that. But it's actually not. We talked about this last time about why it's not. To review here, since the angel of Exodus 33:2 is not identified as Yahweh's Angel (God doesn't refer to him as "My Angel" or describe him in some way that would associate him with the angel), Moses doesn't know what to expect. And you keep reading in chapter 33 and you get to verse 12, 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."**

He's uncertain about, "Well, who's this dude? What's going on here?" so he has this "I have no idea who you're sending with me" reaction in Exodus 33:12. And that's due to Yahweh's statement that not only does Yahweh not refer to the

angel as “My Angel,” but Yahweh specifically says, “I’m not coming along.” And so all that informs us that Moses linked Yahweh’s presence to that one specific Angel way back in Exodus 23, the one “in whom is the name.”

This scenario (here in Exodus 33) is not the same deal. It’s not the same as Exodus 23. And so Moses is uncertain about what to do or who’s going along and all that. So it’s a strong hint that Moses understood the Angel back in Exodus 23 as Yahweh in visible form. Later in Exodus 33:14 (we keep reading), God tells Moses that, “Okay, my presence *will* go with you.” God relents. “My presence will go with you.” That’s an important statement, especially when we get to Isaiah, when we look elsewhere for passages that have a reference to an angel with the journey to the Promised Land. You hit Isaiah 63:9 and that describes the angel who delivered Israel through the wilderness as “the angel of God’s presence.” So that language specifically associates the presence of God himself with this particular angel. So Isaiah 63:9 and Exodus 33:14, therefore, sort of inform each other, once again identifying a specific angel who was Yahweh’s angel as Yahweh’s presence (Yahweh in visible form). So I’m going to read the rest of that little section where Moses is uncertain. Then God says in verse 14, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” And verse 15 through verse 23 reads as follows:

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**<sup>15</sup> And [Moses said to God], “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. <sup>16</sup> For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?”**

**<sup>17</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” <sup>18</sup> Moses said, “Please show me your glory.” <sup>19</sup> And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The LORD’ [MH: Yahweh]. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. <sup>20</sup> But,” he said, “you cannot see my face [MH: The Hebrew there is *panim*... *paney* it says in Hebrew], for man shall not see me and live.” <sup>21</sup> And the LORD said, “Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, <sup>22</sup> and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face [MH: my *panim*] shall not be seen.”**

We take that and then we go into Exodus 34, the first nine verses. Here’s what we read:

**The LORD said to Moses, “Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. <sup>2</sup>Be ready by the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me on the top of the mountain. <sup>3</sup>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.” <sup>4</sup>So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first. And he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand two tablets of stone. <sup>5</sup>The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD [YAHWEH]. <sup>6</sup>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, <sup>7</sup>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.” <sup>8</sup>And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. <sup>9</sup>And he said, “If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, please let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance.”**

That's interesting, in that last verse, the word *Lord* there is not the divine name, but it's Adonai. So I think the point there is we're supposed to as readers of the Hebrew text see a humility there, maybe a fear. Moses is afraid to use the divine name there because of what's happening to him. God is right there in his midst—so on and so forth. But there is a change there.

But at any rate, the description that we're going to focus on today is Yahweh (that's the divine name). Now notice in all of that (we've transitioned from chapter 33 into chapter 34) what is said. God has said that “my presence”... The Hebrew is *pānay*. It's the word *panim* with a suffixed ending (first common singular suffixed ending). My presence (*pānay*) I will go before Moses and Israel. So this is what God says. “My presence is going to go before Moses and Israel.” Moses, in response to that, when God relents and says, “Okay, I am going to go along after all. My presence is going to go with you...” Moses' response is that he wants to see God's glory. The word there is *kavod*.

So we need to take note of what God said is going to happen. (“My presence will go with you.”) And then we want to note what Moses asks for. (“Please show me your *kavod*. Show me your glory.”) God never actually affirms in what follows that that is what Moses is going to see. We never read in the rest of the passage that Moses saw the *kavod* of the Lord. He doesn't. He sees something else. He sees

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Yahweh in this human form. He experiences the presence that way. But he never sees the glory. He never sees the *kavod*. So God never affirms that that's what Moses is going to get. He's not going to get what he asks for. He'll get something, but he won't get what he asked for. But he does promise Moses that his goodness will pass before him. We know God is referring to passing before Moses in visible form even when he says "my goodness is going to pass before you." We know that God is telegraphing the fact that it's going to be a visible presence (a visible form) because he tells Moses that he will cover or shield Moses with his hand so that Moses can only see his back parts.

So let's just think about what we're seeing here. God says, "My presence is going to go with you." Moses is feeling good about things now, and he says he wants to see God's glory (his *kavod*). And God in effect by his answer says, "No, you can't see the *kavod*. You're not going to see the *kavod*. You're not going to see my glory. But my goodness will pass before you," meaning this visible form. Because in effect, "when my goodness passes before you, I'm going to put you in this cleft of a rock and I'm going to cover you with my hand. Then I'm going to remove my hand and you're going to see my back parts." So there's an equation there of the presence which Moses is allowed to experience, and he's going to experience on the trip to the Promised Land, anyway. He's already experienced it before with this anthropomorphic (human visible form of) Yahweh. There's a difference between those things that are allowable and what is not allowable. What is not allowable is seeing the *kavod* (the glory).

And so there are two ways to experience God's presence in this passage. When God's essence (when his glory, when the presence, when God himself) is filtered or covered or concealed or obscured by virtue of showing up as a man and when it's not. The one is accessible and allowable and permissible and won't result in Moses dying. The other one would. So the other one is *not* going to happen. This is important because when God describes how Moses is going to experience him, he describes what's going to happen. "You're going to see in this visible human form," then he says, "but my presence cannot be seen." That's Exodus 33:20, 23. The English translations will read, "My face you cannot see." So it creates this impression that God doesn't want Moses to see a human face. God is appearing as a man. And you're allowed to see the back parts and the hand. You're allowed to see anything but the face.

That works in a lot of passages where... Biblical scholars like to refer to the divine man (Yahweh as the divine man). Like in Ezekiel 1 where he's seating on the throne, you see from the waist down. You see his legs and his feet. Exodus 24 was another example. You see the feet of the Lord. But you never see the face (the *panim*). The difficulty with looking at things that way, though, is you have to imagine that when Yahweh showed up as a man with Abraham with the two angels (the three "men") and they have a meal, that somehow Abraham never looked at that one man's face. You know, the text never says that. You have to imagine that could be the case. Then you have to come up with some

mental scenarios as to how you can have a meal with three guys and never see the one's face. It's kind of difficult. It's also difficult when Abraham and God have that conversation about Sodom. Really? Like they never looked at each other in the face?

And you say, "Well, what about the phrase that God and Moses conversed face to face? What's the problem here? Again, the word face translated into English is *panim*. It can mean face (like in a human, the featured thing on top of your shoulders there, between your ears) or it can just mean presence. "*Panim to panim*" was an idiom to basically say two people were present with each other having a conversation. The assumption is when that happens when people have conversations, they're looking at each other. And I would say that's normal. That's correct.

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And so I think that Abraham could have had a face-to-face conversation with Yahweh in human form. And the same for Moses. And the same for Abraham in Genesis 19, as well as Genesis 18. I don't think that's really what's being forbidden here. Because I think you can come up with other passages where it makes sense that God showed up as a man—Joshua 5, the captain of the Lord's host. It's the same thing. It really defies logic that they could have a conversation and the human person in the episode never sees the face of the other one. I don't think that's a contradiction here to God saying, "My face cannot be seen. (My *panim* cannot be seen.)"

And the reference to "you're going to have to look at the back parts..." I think what's going on here is the language is used to communicate the idea that what can't be seen is the glory. Because this is what Moses asks for and God never tells him that's what he's getting and the text never says that's what he got. In fact, God deflects it. He doesn't say in response, "Oh, okay," or, "No, you can't see that." He's going to say, "Here's what's going to happen, Moses. My goodness is going to pass before you." And we know in Exodus 34 what happens, that we have Yahweh in human form. He shields Moses with his hand until he passes by, and then Moses can see the rest of him. I think that whole episode is designed to communicate what cannot be seen. And what cannot be seen is the glory. I don't think it's a contradiction or creates a contradiction in some of these other passages, where God *does* show up as a man and people *do* have conversations. We can't basically take the divine man passages like Exodus 24, where you only see the feet, or Ezekiel 1, you only see the loins and the feet... We can't retroject words onto these and come up with these weird scenarios about Abraham and Joshua and Moses having conversations with God where somehow they never look at his face. People do that. But the reason they do that is this passage right here (Exodus 34) where God says "my face." First of all, people are reading the passage in English. But he says, "My face cannot be seen, lest you die." I think what we have here is a way of communicating the idea that people *can* and *did* experience the presence (the *panim*) when God showed up as a man. But what they can't see (what God forbids for their own good) is the

unfiltered presence (that is, the glory). That is what they are not allowed... Moses is not allowed to encounter that in this immediate (pardon the language here) face-to-face way—that that is something God will not allow to happen because Moses would die. And frankly, if God isn't filtered in some way—if he is not made accessible to the human senses—you're not going to know what you're looking at anyway. "What, a bright light?" Like, "What's that?" "Well, it's a bright light." "Yeah, I know, but I want to see God." "Well, there you go." You know what I mean? You can't really process a person (a personal entity) as being light.

And so what God has to do is come to humans (this is the consistent pattern of Scripture) in forms that they understand what they're looking at. And most often (not always) this is coming to them in human form, and *that* they're allowed to experience. Biblical characters do have face-to-face discussions with God in that way.

So the way that we sort all this out to make sense of it is there is what Moses is allowed to see and the way that it transpires here with the whole "back parts" thing ("You cannot see my *panim* and live, but I'm going to let you see my back parts.") is designed to communicate to the *reader* the notion that there's a way to experience God's presence when he's in human form but you cannot experience the presence without that. You cannot just experience the glory, because you would die. I think we get to that understanding by seeing how God doesn't answer Moses' request. There's a way he does answer it and there's a way he doesn't answer it. He deflects it. "You can't see the glory. You can see me in a certain way, but you can't see the glory."

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So I've been asked this question a lot in Q&A and this episode actually gives us a little bit of a chance to park on it. But this is how I think Exodus 34 needs to be understood in relation to Exodus 33. And not only Exodus 23. Not only seeing this particular angel in other passages... And people do see the angel. Joshua does see the captain of the Lord's host. Abraham did see Yahweh in human form. But the way to see consistency in all these passages is to do something like I just did—so what God deflects Moses away from that he is not allowed to experience. The way he is not allowed to experience the *panim* (the presence) is direct contact with glory. That's just not going to happen because you'll die. Not only will you not know what you're looking at, but you're going to die.

So this is how... I'm not unique here. But I think this is the way that we need to put all these things together. So this leads me (and again, it's not just me—there are other scholars here who would say the same thing) to believe that while Moses did see the Angel in the bush and presumably both he and the other Israelites saw the Angel of Yahweh protecting them—blocking the Egyptians and the whole exodus, the Red Sea crossing... If the Angel is out there leading them to the land, other people are going to see it. So while Moses and Israel *do* see the Angel of Yahweh (they see Yahweh in human form), no mortal ever saw or could see the pure, unfiltered glory of God. So we don't need to speculate that



Moses and Israelites always saw the Angel of the Lord from some oblique angle or he had a hood on or a facemask. We don't have to speculate on these things. It's not necessary. If we realize that *panim* is the Hebrew word behind "face" and *panim* is the same Hebrew word behind "presence," and that sometimes the presence of God *can* be apprehended, can be seen, and other times it *can't*, I think the way we divide those things up coherently is to say what *cannot* be experienced is the glory. So no mortal can see God as he truly is, unfiltered by visual convention.

Personally, I think this is why the Name is presented as *I Am That I Am*. God just *is*. He is ultimately completely *other*. He has no analogy. If you were to encounter the unfiltered presence of God, you wouldn't know what to do with it. You have no way of processing it. It just is what it is and good luck. There's no way to process who God is, what God is, all those sorts of things. So when he reveals his name, *I Am*... [laughs] "Okay, what does that mean?" "Well, it means I Am. I'm incomparable. I can't compare myself to any other thing, because I'm not like any other thing."

So for people to know, both in biblical days and for the sake of later readers of the text, this is how it has to be done, God has to come to humans. He has to condescend to them and come in a form that they can process. And that's allowable. And humans are safe doing that. They're not going to die when it happens. But if it was just the unfiltered glory, that's just going to end badly, and it wouldn't matter anyway because nobody's going to figure out what that is.

Now a couple other textual notes related to Exodus 34. I just want to go through the passage and highlight a few things and we'll loop back into this experience of Yahweh with a couple of them. Let's go look at verses 6 and 7 again. So Exodus 34:6-7:

**<sup>6</sup> The Lord [Yahweh] passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord [MH: Yahweh, Yahweh], a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, <sup>7</sup> 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."**

Now Sarna writes this about these two verses. I'm going to give you a few things he says and then comment on them. He says:

The subject of the two verbs in verse 6...

"The Lord passed before him and proclaimed..." Who's the subject of the word proclaimed? Grammatically, it could be the Lord passing before him and the Lord

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proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord...” or it could be Moses, “The Lord passed before him and Moses proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord...” You could take it grammatically either way.

The subject of the two verbs may be either Moses, as verses 2 and 33:21 indicate, or God...

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I think actually Exodus 33:19 is the key here. If we read Exodus 33:19: He said [God is speaking to Moses],

**“I will make all my goodness pass before you and [I] will proclaim before you my name ‘The Lord.’”**

So I think the best way to take this is that we need to let Exodus 33:19 inform our reading. Some people don’t like the Lord passing before Moses and the Lord referring to himself in the third person. They just think that’s weird. First of all, it happens a lot in Scripture, where God refers to God in the third person. So it’s not *that* unusual. So it’s no real problem. So we don’t have to come up with a way to get around the problem by saying, “Oh, it’s Moses doing the proclaiming.” Grammatically, you can do that, but 33:19 ought to inform our reading. It’s very clear there. There are two first-person verbs, and God says, “I will do this” and “I will proclaim.” So I think that should end the debate there in chapter 34.

Sarna goes on to talk about the phrase “compassionate and gracious” (or “a God merciful and gracious” is the way the ESV has it). He says the order of these two things is different than you get in the Decalogue (Exodus 20:5-6). And it seems to Sarna (and I would agree with this) that not only do you have a bit of a difference in terms of the way things are laid out, but you really have a difference in content. So here God is compassionate and gracious. There God says,

**I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup> but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.**

So there’s compassion and grace and love shown in the Decalogue, but the description of God is different than here. Here you have God being magnanimous. What’s highlighted is his magnanimous qualities rather than his willingness to judge in Exodus 20. And I think it’s interesting and, honestly, appropriate that here, when God reveals himself and you get similar language to what you find in Exodus 20... *Here*, if you will, the positives—the magnanimous qualities—are highlighted. I think that’s especially interesting and appropriate because of what has just happened—the golden calf incident. So there’s really no need for God to say, “I’m a jealous God and I’m willing to punish when it’s

necessary” and all that kind of stuff. Here, the emphasis is on mercy and grace. And that’s going to become important because we’re leading up to the covenant renewal. So it’s a way for God (and for the writer, as well, obviously) to get people thinking in the right direction, get Moses assured that the covenant’s going to be remade and get the reader to know that God has forgiven. He’s still going to be in a covenant relationship with the Israelites after the golden calf. And so God is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” So on and so forth. And then you get the language from Exodus 20. So I think that’s worth pointing out. The covenant is going to get renewed, starting with verse 10 and following—the rest of the chapter. So it’s set up by this description of God.

Sarna has another thing to say about the language here. ESV has “steadfast love and faithfulness.” Sarna translates these things as “kindness and faithfulness,” and then “extending kindness” (“keeping steadfast love” in the ESV). He writes this. The Hebrew here is *hesed ve-’emet* (steadfast love and faithfulness).

Hebrew *hesed ve-’emet* appears frequently as a word pair to express a single concept. Each of the components has a wide range of meaning. *Hesed* involves acts of beneficence, mutuality, and often also obligations that flow from a legal relationship... *’Emet*, usually translated “truth,” encompasses reliability, durability, and faithfulness. The combination of terms expresses God’s absolute and eternal dependability in dispensing His benefactions.

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On extending kindness [MH: or in the ESV “keeping steadfast love”] The phrase may express either God’s continuous and unchanging *hesed* or the idea that the merit for the *hesed* that people perform endures beyond their own generation.

So you have... I think the way to read this is really the first part of what Sarna concludes here. What we have here is in the description of God, not only is God willing to not leave the covenant relationship, but he’s also both capable and has obligated himself and is willing to obligate himself to be loyal to it. *Hesed* elsewhere gets both translated and described as loving loyalty, which I think feels kind of clunky, but it’s still a good way to communicate the idea of the word. To have that mentioned here really twice, that God is *hesed ve-’emet* (he’s full of the steadfast love and faithfulness, and he extends *hesed*) pointing to the fact that God is reliable, durable—he’s going to keep the covenant no matter what, even though we just had this golden calf thing happen. So it’s important to set up the covenant renewal starting in a few verses in verse 10.

What about the phrase “will by no means clear the guilty”? I think this phrase has led to a lot of misunderstanding—generational cursing and all this stuff. I think it fundamentally misunderstands what’s going on here. Now Sarna (we’ll just let him chime in here)... If you go to the passage and we look at the language. Yes, the Lord forgives iniquity and transgression and sin, but he “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." Sarna writes:

Divine forbearance does not mean that sinners can expect wholly to escape the consequences of their misdeeds.

Let me just stop there. Who gets punished? If they're guilty, the ones who are guilty are going to get punished. But God is yet this magnanimously merciful and gracious God. So what Sarna is saying here is, it might be easy for somebody to read that description and think, "Wow! God is so big and so capable and so willing to forgive that when we do something wrong and there *is* judgment, that there still won't be consequences. God will reverse that or skip that part or that's just not going to happen." So Sarna is saying, "No, this idea is really not correct, to draw from this passage." The idea is really more (and Sarna quotes some rabbinical sources for this that would say) that the idea here is that God remits punishment for the penitent but not for the impenitent. You say, "Well, it makes sense, but can you really get that from the text?" People can argue about that.

I think, if we keep going, it brings that idea more into focus and gives it more justification. This notion of "visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation," that statement (we've talked about this on the podcast before, but we might as well get into it here again) doesn't mean that the innocent (the next generation of children, the offspring that extend from the guilty) children are punished for the their ancestors' sins. That's actually specifically contradicted in the Decalogue in Exodus 20:5-6.

**You shall not bow down to them [to other gods] 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 the fourth generation *of those who hate me*, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those *who love me and keep my commandments*.**

There the language is clearer that, yeah, (I'll use the language of the passage) if you hate the Lord (if you're going to be disobedient just like your ancestors were), then this whole thing's going to follow you. You will deserve judgment. But for those who *love* the Lord, he will show steadfast love "to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments." So there's a little bit of a further characterization there that helps. And it's the same in Deuteronomy 5:9-10. I won't read that one, since it's the Decalogue in Deuteronomy. I would also say that the statement also isn't intended to outline some sort of chronology of cursing. When it comes right down to it, the statement is intended to draw attention to the fact that God does not keep punishing. Now Enns, I think, in his commentary says this in an interesting and helpful way. When he comments on the phrase "his mercy extends to thousands of generations," Enns writes,

40:00

...whereas [God does] visit punishment on offenders only to the third and fourth generations.”

So let me just rephrase that. Let me just say that again. Enns is highlighting the fact that we have a contrast going on. God’s mercy extends to thousands of generations (Deuteronomy 7:9, for instance).

**⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,**

We just looked at that language in Exodus 20 (the Decalogue): “showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” So in regard to those who love the Lord, God’s mercy is shown to thousands and thousands and thousands of generations. But when it comes to the guilty, God doesn’t keep punishing for thousands and thousands and thousands of generations. Instead, the effect of the offender’s sin only extends to the third and the fourth generations. So it’s actually a contrast that points out that God doesn’t keep punishing. It has a very clear limitation, whereas his mercy doesn’t have any limitations. “The third and fourth generation” is actually an idiomatic expression to express the idea basically for the duration of the guilty party’s life. So the third and fourth generation is essentially the timespan that it would take for a person who, let’s say, committed some offense as an adult... They’re 20-30 years old. Well, by the third and fourth generation, that’s the rest of the length of that person’s lifespan. Because a generation is defined as when children grow up and reach child-bearing age (they get married and have other children). And in biblical days, that’s 20-25 years. So basically what this is saying is, when you have someone who is guilty and hates the Lord (to use the language of the Decalogue) and bears the punishment for their sins, that punishment (God’s judgment, as it were) and the consequences of that judgment are only going to last really as long as that person’s normal lifespan would last. It doesn’t keep going through future generations. The only thing that keeps going on and on and on and on and on is mercy.

So these passages actually teach the opposite of what I often hear about generational cursing, at least trying to tie that concept to biblical language. The point is a contrast. Go to Deuteronomy 7:9. Go to Exodus 20:5-6 and Deuteronomy 5:9-10 (the larger passage there) and you’ll find out that what goes on for thousands and thousands of generations is mercy. But judgment and the consequences of judgment... You have somebody sin and their whole family (people who are innocent) suffer the consequences of what somebody did. They’re not being punished as though they did it because God doesn’t punish the innocent. But yet, the fact that when God does punish the guilty, their punishment affects the lives of other people, especially within their family and their extended

family. God says, "Look, that's going to be limited. In three or four generations, that person is gone. There are limitations there. But what isn't limited is mercy.

So when God's people sin, God's punishment will not extend beyond the life of the offender. It'll only extend three or four generations—basically, the course of that person's natural life. God's anger, therefore, has definite limitations, whereas his mercy is limitless. That's the point. So we need to stop looking at this kind of passage and inverting it 180° to suspect that third and fourth generation somehow means that the innocent are punished well beyond the offender's lifetime, three or four eras down the road. That is *not* what it means.

45:00

Now we get to verse 10 in Exodus 34... This is where we get the covenant renewed. I'm not going to read the whole thing. But you get language here that it's drawn from the Decalogue passage—the original covenant. Verse 10:

**<sup>10</sup> And he said, "Behold, I am making a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the LORD, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you."**

And then God says, "I'm going to drive out your enemies. Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land. Don't do that." Verse 13:

**<sup>13</sup> You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut down their Asherim <sup>14</sup> (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God)...**

And again, things you don't do: Don't make covenants with the inhabitants of the land when you get in there. Don't eat of their sacrifices. Don't sacrifice to their gods. Don't take of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters whore after their gods and make your sons whore after their gods. Don't do that. Verse 17:

**<sup>17</sup> You shall not make for yourself any gods of cast metal.**

[laughs] It's exactly the same term as used in Exodus 33:4, 8 for the golden calf. And the point is clear. We talked about this in the golden calf episodes. Yahweh will not be worshipped in the manner that other gods are worshipped. Don't do that. Sarna chimes in here and says:

Mindful of the people's sin, the renewed covenant contains stricter admonitions than those given before [MH: there are things added, especially the little reference there to the golden calf.] (23:23, 24) regarding the incursions of foreign cults into the religion of Israel. Pacts with the indigenous peoples of Canaan are

prohibited because of their deleterious consequences—religious corruption, intermarriage, and the resultant undermining of national religious integrity. If Israel is to be “distinguished ... from every people on the face of the earth” (33:16) [MH: This is what Moses just said. “The fact that you’re with us is what distinguishes us.”], then it must make itself distinctive by unswerving and exclusive loyalty to its covenantal relationship with God...

Then he goes on to comment on sacred posts (*Asherim* in Hebrew). These are...

...pagan cultic objects often mentioned in the Bible. They derive their name from the goddess known in Babylon as Ashrat, consort of the god Amurru [MH: which is the Amorites]. She bears the titles “bride of the king of heaven” and “mistress of sexual vigor and rejoicing.” In Ugarit she appears as Athirat, consort of Il, who was head of its pantheon, and she is termed “the progenitrix of the gods,” “mother of the gods,” and “Lady Athirat of the Sea.” She was a fertility goddess, and in 2 Kings 23:7 she is associated with sacred prostitution. That text testifies to the assimilation to Canaanite culture on the part of a segment of the Israelite population—a reality demonstrated by an inscription from Kuntillet ’Ajrud in northwestern Sinai that mentions “YHVH and his asherah.”

I want to do a brief rabbit trail here, because I sometimes get questions in email about, “Hey, Mike. Don’t you realize that Yahweh of the God of Israel had a wife or a consort? There’s this inscription from Kuntillet ’Ajrud that mentions Yahweh and his Asherah. So there.” Duh. We had to translate those in grad school. Yes, I’m completely aware of them. But I think you’re not aware of a few things (the people who think this is something). I want to do a little bit of a rabbit trail here on this inscription (the Kuntillet ’Ajrud inscription). And there are several of these from that place. And there are other inscriptions that have the same wording. (Khirbet el-Qom comes to mind. There’s one there as well.) I’m going to quote an authority here, somebody’s who’s done a lot of work on this. And that’s Rick Hess. We’ve had him on the podcast before. We interviewed him as part of the SBL interviews two years ago. This is in Rick’s wheelhouse. He does inscriptions and archeology as an Old Testament scholar. And I’m going to quote from his book, *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey*. This is a 2007 book. This comes from page 284. So I’m just going to read and we’ll see what the issues are here.

50:00

In the eyes of some scholars, this is the most significant set of texts [MH: Kuntillet ’Ajrud] yet discovered for understanding Israelite religion. These important inscriptions mention Yahweh and Asherah as deities invoked in the pronouncement of blessings on various people. El and Baal are also mentioned in a single poem. However, the interpretation of these texts bristles with problems. Elsewhere, I (1992c; 1996b) have argued that the mention of Asherah, in conjunction with Yahweh, is not a cult symbol nor is “his Asherah” the best

translation. Instead, it is preferable to render the goddess's name as Asheratah, in accordance with the spelling and reading of her name everywhere outside the Bible for more than a thousand years. The tradition of reading and pronouncing this name as Asherah is one that derives directly from the Bible. In the translations below, for the sake of accuracy, I will render the goddess's name as "Asheratah." However, I will continue to use "Asherah" in the text of this study, since it is the most commonly accepted way of spelling the name of the goddess.

Now that's the end of the quote. What's he's talking about here is if you actually look at the inscription, you have... This isn't going to translate well visually, but essentially you have the *aleph*, the *shin*, the *resh*... And then you've got the H. Then you've got the T and another H. So the issue is the last consonant (that other H). It could be a suffix (third masculine singular suffix in epigraphic Hebrew, which means "his"). So you have the Athirat or Asherah and then "his" on the end ("his Asherah"). What Hess has just noted, though, is that the actual spelling here of this name in all sources outside of... I'll quote him. "Everywhere outside the Bible for more than a thousand years," the T and the H at the end... It's not a suffix. It's a proper name (Asheratah). So what he's saying is you should be translating this "Yahweh and Asheratah," not "Yahweh and his Asherah," like his wife. Now that doesn't mean that whoever made this inscription wasn't thinking of them as a couple. Hess is going to say they probably were. But out of the gate, "his Asherah," as Hess points out and other scholars have as well... That's really not the right translation. So that's just point number one. Now he goes on to elaborate on these inscriptions and he says this:

Who or what is A/asheratah in these inscriptions? Four options have been suggested:

- a. a symbol of Yahweh
- b. personal name of the goddess Asherah
- c. a symbol of Asherah
- d. personal name of the goddess Asherah/Asheratah

That Asherah is a symbol of Yahweh is not impossible.

Let me just jump in here. When we did these inscriptions in grad school, we had to read a bunch of articles on these things. And some think that Asherah is actually a term that is used for a place (it sounds weird), a cultic threshold or place of sacrifice, or a symbol of a deity (not the deity itself). And Hess is saying, "That's not impossible."

However, it is unknown in Israel for Yahweh to have a cult symbol. Keel and Uehlinger (1992) propose a cult symbol subordinated to Yahweh. In this interpretation the Asherah symbol is no goddess. As developed by Miller, Asherah



became a symbol of Yahweh who expresses his presence, a kind of hypostasis that possesses no gender but only the presence of God. With Hadley [MH: these are all scholars who've studied Asherah], he sees in her an anticipation of Lady Wisdom in Proverbs and the development of the Law as a personification of God. However, this view [MH: generally that Asheratah is a symbol of Yahweh] suffers from several problems.

[Mark] Smith (1991; 2003, 126–28) argues that the references that associate Asherah with Baal (Judg. 3:7; 1 Kings 18:19; 2 Kings 23:4) must all be discounted as late editorials and glosses by the Deuteronomists.

So Smith is saying, “Look. Earlier in Israelite religion, Asherah was the consort of Yahweh and these verses that make Asherah the consort of Baal were added later to clean up the theology.” And Hess is objecting to that. He says...

But why would the Deuteronomists...

55:00 The Deuteronomistic idea is material written essentially in the 7-8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. in the wake of the probable idolatry in Israel when Josiah and others were trying to get rid of idolatry—that the way certain passages in the book of Kings, for instance, were written testifies to the fact that Israel was idolatrous and we're trying to clean it up. That sort of thing. So when we see “Deuteronomists,” this is what they're talking about. It gets that name because a lot of scholars think Deuteronomy was written at this time. It's not Mosaic; it was written at this time as well for a variety of reasons. But we're not going to rabbit trail onto that. But what Hess is saying is, “Look. If we assume this picture that we have a bunch of biblical writers (we'll call them Deuteronomists) writing at this time, trying to deal with the idolatry, why,” he asks, “would the Deuteronomists defeat their own purposes of monotheism by rehabilitating a forgotten goddess?” Why would they bring her back into the picture?

Nor is the text's failure to mention Asherah in Jehu's reform of 2 Kings 9–10 proof that this deity/hypostasis was acceptable to the Yahwist Jehu. Rather, the emphasis on Baal includes all the deities in his pantheon, such as Asherah, and only occasionally did the biblical writers feel the need to specify them and give them the “honor” of naming them.

A second problem arises with a twelfth-century BC Babylonian text, in which the names of many gods are subsumed under one deity, Marduk, who is chief god of Babylon. [MH: And Hess is saying, “Everybody knows about this text, where all the deities of Babylon at this time were subsumed into Marduk.”] However, Marduk's wife's name is missing. [MH: She's not named in that text.] This is no oversight but a demonstration of the fact that the female goddess was never assimilated into

the male deity, even in such a polytheistic context. This evidence argues against the view that Asherah was or became a hypostasis [MH: a stand-in] of Yahweh.

There is evidence for the continuous presence of Asherah in the West Semitic pantheon from c. 2000 BC on into the Persian period without any textual suggestion of her becoming a hypostasis [MH: or stand-in] of [any] male deity...

**He goes on and he critiques all these different possibilities and he writes this:**

My view assumes that this [MH: Asheratah] is the personal name of the goddess. In this scenario, the final *-h* consonant in the inscription's spelling of the name could be a second feminine ending...

**Sorry for the grammar talk. But for those of you who know a little bit of Hebrew grammar, you'll follow this. It could either be a second feminine ending or a vowel letter reflecting a final A vowel.**

In the latter case, the name is not Asherah but Asheratah. This is the preferred explanation, based as it is on comparative forms in Iron Age names of southern Palestine and on all other West Semitic occurrences of the deity's name from the second millennium and the Iron Age epigraphy of the first millennium BC. Asherah, spelled as it is in the Bible (*'ăšērâ*), is never found in extrabiblical texts of the monarchy in Israel. At Khirbet el-Qom (see below) and on ostraca from seventh-century BC Tell Miqne (= Ekron) the spelling *'šrt(h)* is always found. Thus I think the deity was Asheratah, identical to the Asherah of the Bible, only spelled slightly differently.

**So what does this mean? What do the data actually tell us? Here's why I rabbit trailed on this. As Hess noted, there were one or two writers (I'm going to quote Hess here again). He writes of the Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscription:**

At least one or two writers of this graffiti [from Samaria] had a view of their god that allowed for other deities, a perspective reflected as well in the prophets.

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**Now what does that mean? He's saying something I said a week or two ago. Look, for sure some Israelites living during the monarchy or at other times would've thought poorly about their theology, about the theology of the biblical writers. Even before we had biblical material, of course there are going to be some Israelites that think like Canaanites do. "Oh, we have a deity. His name's Yahweh. And he has a wife. All the other deities around here have wives. So why wouldn't he?" They're going to think these thoughts. It's going to be normal for certain Israelites to think about Yahweh like other people think about their gods and having a divine couple and all this stuff. Absolutely. Somebody's going to be thinking that thought. And apparently, as Hess says, well, at least a couple of**

writers did because we have these inscriptions about Yahweh and his Asheratah or Yahweh and Asheratah. There's a pairing. There's a divine couple here. At least two Israelites thought this way. But it's not coherent to presume that a *majority* of Israelites thought this way, based upon these inscriptions. It's not coherent to presume a majority of Israelites thought that Yahweh had a consort much less than to say that the biblical writers thought this way. That conclusion is a non sequitur. It is a conclusion which does not follow the data. It is an overreach of the existing data. For sure, that was the theology of some Israelites (divine couple). "Every other deity has a wife, so Yahweh has one too." Asherah or Asheratah. For sure some Israelites had that as their theology. Guess what? The Old Testament tells us that and calls it wrong. [laughs] Okay? It calls it apostate. That's basically what we know.

But you're going to go out on the internet and you're going to see people reference these inscriptions. Then Mike's going to get the email. Like somebody went out on the internet and discovered something that I've never heard of in relation to Yahweh and Israelite religion. I'm sorry, but you're not going to do that. This is what grad school is for. So yes, we know about these inscriptions, but for you to take one inscription and to presume that, "Well, the writer thought this, so everybody did." Or, "The writer thought this so the biblical writers really thought this. And then they tried to erase it and obscure it." This conspiratorial hermeneutic.

Look, I've got news for you, friend. You can't... Christians... We have an entire Bible and we've had it for 2,000 years. Christians disagree on all sorts of theological subjects from the *same* Bible. People do not all think the same way, even when they want to identify with the same thing or the same belief system. That's just life. So your assumption that we have an inscription out here that says "Yahweh and Asheratah, a divine couple," "That must really be what the biblical writers thought!" is just nonsense. It is a non sequitur (a conclusion that does not follow from the data and in fact overreaches the data). Nothing else in life works that way, okay? [laughs] Especially in a field like religious belief systems, *people don't all think the same thoughts*. It is so obvious as to be self-evident. For those of you out there who are thinking like that, it's like, "Look, you can't even find the people living under the same roof as you to agree on everything." They're just not going to do that. That is not the way people are. It's not the way life is. And we have no reason to suspect, based upon a couple of inscriptions that this (the idea of a divine couple) was *official* Israelite religion of the biblical writers. We have no reason at all to think that. That is just poor thinking. Sorry, but that's what it is.

So lastly, as we wrap up this episode, the one episode here in the last few verses, Exodus 34:29-35. This is the shining face of Moses. We'll do this and we'll end.

**<sup>29</sup>When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup>Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup>But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them. <sup>32</sup>Afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he commanded them all that the LORD had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup>And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.**

**<sup>34</sup>Whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out.**

So on and so forth. So we have this episode of Moses' shining face. And Sarna writes this:

The first half of this verse is the scriptural way of describing Moses' withdrawal into solitude at the onset of his mystical/spiritual experience on the mountain. In the presence of the ultimate Source of holiness and in communication with Him, Moses realizes a transformation of his self. He achieves a state that is beyond the ordinary range of human experience...

1:05:00

Having succeeded in his mission as an intercessor, Moses descends the mountain carrying the two inscribed tablets that testify to the reality of the renewed covenant between God and Israel.

The idea of radiance. Sarna writes:

[This was] a unique phenomenon conveyed by a unique Hebrew verb, *karan*. The traditional meaning given here is favored by the context and by Habakkuk 3:4 in which *karnayim*, "rays of light," appears in parallelism with "a brilliant light." This reference relates to God, and numerous biblical passages bear witness to a widespread, poetic notion of God being enveloped in light. Moses' radiance is a reflection of the divine radiance.

Similar imagery was in use in ancient Mesopotamia, where an encompassing, awe-inspiring luminosity known as *melammu* was taken to be a characteristic attribute of divinity. This supernatural radiance was thought to be shared by royalty and was a sign of the king's legitimacy. The present narrative about Moses

shows that this notion was not considered to be incompatible with Israelite monotheism, although it appears in the Bible only in connection with Moses.

The peculiar threefold use of *karan* rather than the regular verb *ʿ-*w-r** [MH: *aleph-vav-resh*, that's *ʿor* to shine... the peculiar use of *karan* to convey this shining as opposed to the verb *ʿor*, to shine, to give light...] is probably a pointed allusion to the golden calf, for *keren* is the usual word for a horn. It subtly emphasizes that the true mediator between God and Israel was not the fabricated, lifeless image of the horned animal, as the people thought, but the living Moses [MH: who had been with God].

The association of *karan* with *keren* gave rise to the mistaken notion that Moses grew horns [MH laughs]—even though the text speaks not of his head but of “the skin of his face.” The rendering of *karan* by *cornuta* in the Vulgate translation, based on the commentaries of Jerome (ca. 347–ca. 419), helped foster the error, and a horned Moses later became a familiar figure in art from the eleventh century on. The most famous such portrayal is, of course, Michelangelo's at San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome...

The awe-inspiring radiance emitted by Moses' face may be understood as the afterglow of the refulgent splendor of the Divine Presence...

I just wanted to read you a little bit of that because you've probably seen that picture of Michelangelo's Moses, in which Moses has horns. This is where it comes from. It comes from an error perpetuated in the Latin Vulgate, which was the Bible of most of the Church of Rome, anyway, for centuries. And because it rendered the verb mistakenly that way... It saw *karan* and thought of the noun *keren* and horn, and so it... It's a mistranslation. So that's a bit of trivia.

But I actually like Sarna's observation that *karan* as a verb is unusual. It's probably in the text here in Exodus 34 rather than the normal verb *ʿor* (to give light) just to play off the golden calf, the horned calf, the horned bull or ox. I think that's a nice touch and I think that has some coherence as to why the writer would have chosen this vocabulary as opposed to the more normal terminology. I want to end the episode here by something that Sarna writes in this section. He says:

*The awe-inspiring radiance... functions to reaffirm and legitimate the prophet's role as the peerless intimate of God, the sole and singular mediator between God and His people; it also testifies to the restoration of divine favor to Israel. As such, the narrative forms a fitting conclusion to the entire episode of the golden calf. It further serves as an appropriate transition to the last segment of the Book of Exodus—the account of the*

*construction of the mobile Tabernacle that is to symbolize the presence of God in the camp of Israel...*

1:10:00

Now we're going to end there. But I like that quote because if you wonder why in the world... This is just one reason and we're going to get into it in the last episode next time when we cover chapters 35-40. But if you wonder, "Why in the world do we have the construction of the Tabernacle in chapters 35-40, which essentially repeats the instructions given in Exodus 25-31..." We get the instructions there and then we get the carrying out of the instructions in the last five chapters. One of the reasons is just what Sarna said there. The fact that we get it before the golden calf is obvious—because God has entered into a covenant with Israel, given them the law, and all this wonderful stuff is going on. And God is going to dwell with his people, *after* the golden calf. The fact that all of it is essentially reiterated is part of the testimony that God is still going to live with his people. Nothing's changed. God is faithful. He is merciful, showing kindness from generation to generation to generation. So it's a way actually to bookend... The material is bookended on either side of the golden calf episode to make the point that the covenant has been restored.

**TS:** You know, Mike, that's really interesting about Michelangelo's depiction of Moses with horns. Did Moses just have a really good suntan or what? [MH laughs] Was he glowing? Can you give a little bit more of a description there?

**MH:** Yeah, I think that's the point, that his skin shone. There was a radiance. If you want to call it glowing, go ahead, if that communicates it well. I think that's the idea. But he did not have horns. [laughs]

**TS:** Yeah, just a really good suntan.

**MH:** You know, it's really weird how... I mean, Jerome lived roughly 350 into the 400s A.D. So you're talking about centuries and centuries and centuries of people using the Latin Vulgate and reading that passage and thinking that Moses had horns. And it's entirely wrong. It's a translation fabrication. But nobody knew that. It was just, "That's the way it is." It's amazing to see how long a bad translation could last. [MH laughs] So remember that next time somebody questions you about Deuteronomy 32:8, "Well, you know, my Bible doesn't say 'sons of God' there." Well, that's because we didn't have the Dead Sea Scrolls. Yeah, that kind of thing actually happens. It happens that translations aren't what they should be for various reasons. In this case, it was a difficult term. Probably should have looked at Habakkuk and drawn the right conclusion. But Jerome didn't. In Deuteronomy's case, it's just a lack of having the correct text. But this kind of thing does happen on occasion.

**TS:** I also had a question about 34:14, where it says, "You shall worship no other god, for the Lord whose name is Jealous..." Anything there to unpack?

**MH:** I like the wording there. Let's go back and look at it: "whose name is Jealous." Isn't that interesting? God actually isn't *named* Jealous. If God's filling out a job application, he doesn't put the word *Jealous* in there. [laughs] But the fact that his name is Jealous... Remember, his name is another way of referring to himself, his person, his essence, who he is, and what he is. So if we remember the notion that the name is another way of referring to God himself, it doesn't mean that he's *named* this; it's that he *is* this. He is a God that will not share his glory with somebody else, with some other deity. And it points to the... It's another good verse for establishing that "The Name" is a way of referring to God himself.

**TS:** Alright, Mike. That sounds good to me. We appreciate it. And with one episode to go in covering Exodus, don't forget to send me your questions if you have any. And also don't forget to go to [NakedBibleTours.com](http://NakedBibleTours.com) to sign up to go on our cruise, because Mike and I would really love to meet you.

**MH:** Yeah!

**TS:** It would be a lot of fun. And with that, I just want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.