

- This moving back and forth from God to the people and back communicates through action that Moses was the mediator.
 - God required the people to work through the services of a mediator.
 - God would talk to Moses and Moses would talk to the people.
- God worked through this restriction to teach men a lesson about how men obtain a relationship with God.
 - Man's sin creates a necessary barrier between himself and the Lord, one man cannot cross by himself.
 - He must have a mediator to bridge the distance.
- Notice in v.2 that only Moses may come near to the Lord.
 - Men may know of God and that He exists
 - Men may see physical manifestations of His presence and power, just as Israel saw in Egypt.
 - And men may even hear from Him
 - But men may not come near to God, whether physically or spiritually, apart from a mediator.
 - Before Moses and the other men approach the Lord to worship, Moses first goes to the people in v.3 and delivers the entire words of the ordinances.
- 1. At this point, the people all spoke as if with one voice declaring they will do all the words the Lord has spoken.
 - With this declaration, the nation is committed to keep the Covenant at Sinai, which also included the Law.
 - As we've discussed before, the people couldn't keep their own word, and so the penalties of the covenant were assured.
 - But at this point, it has been established.
 - And it is established for this generation and all generations to come in Israel.
 - It is a covenant with a nation of people, not with a certain group of people.
 - All who are born into that nation are already party to the covenant.
- 2. Now comes time to seal the covenant with a traditional ritual
 - First, the covenant is recorded
 - Secondly, Moses builds an altar and stands up twelve pillars.
 - The pillars represent the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - And as we discussed earlier, an altar has only one purpose.
 - It is a place of sacrifice.
 - So Moses is preparing to make a sacrifice.
 - Covenants were agreements established in blood.
 - The symbology of the blood was that a life has been poured out to establish this covenant.
 - And should either party break this covenant, a life will be taken.
 - Furthermore, the blood is applied to each person, marking them to indicate their agreement in the terms of the covenant.
 - In the Abrahamic Covenant, the Lord alone moved through the blood.
 - Showing that only the Lord was binding Himself to the terms of that covenant
 - But in this scene, both Israel and the altar are sprinkled with the blood.

- The people are obligated to keep their part, and the Lord is obligated, as signified by the place of worship.
3. Finally, once more Moses reads the covenant to the people.
 - And once more, they agree to all that was written.
 - And Moses declares that by this blood, the people have entered into a covenantal relationship with the Lord.
 - In this scene, we can find some powerful and important pictures of the covenant that God later brings to Israel and the Church in Christ.
 4. And the definitive commentary on this moment are found in the book of Hebrews.

Heb. 9:11-20

 - But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;
 5. First, the writer draws a comparison between Moses and Christ as mediators of covenants
 - Moses' role as mediator was to bridge a physical gap between the people and the Lord
 - Moses went up the mountain to meet with God
 - And then he went back down to meet the people
 - How did the people gain the benefit of Moses' mediation?
 - First, Moses connected the people to God
 - He carried the people's agreement up to God
 - And he carried the Lord's assurances back to the people
 - Secondly, invited them into making a confession of agreement with the word of God
 - Moses commanded the people that if they agreed to the covenant, than they must keep the Law to be righteous.
 - If they violated the Law, then they would have broken the covenant and would be judged unrighteous.
 - And the people said they would obey all that the Lord spoke.
 - Then they were joined with the Lord in a covenant
 - Lastly, Moses sprinkled both parties with blood, establishing the agreement in blood and giving it force.
 - Moses applied the blood to both the people and the altar on earth, making the agreement binding on both.
 6. God intentionally chose a mountain on which to appear to the people, so that the imagery of separation of height and distance would be present.
 - The Lord could have appeared to men on a "at plain.
 - But the mountain served to reinforce the truth that men need a mediator to reach God Who is in Heaven.
 - So it became apparent to all the people that Moses was a mediator who bridged a physical gap between God and Israel in order to form this covenant of Law.
 - But Moses couldn't bridge the spiritual gap that separates men and God.
 - Moses couldn't go up to Heaven and sacrifice in the Heavenly tabernacle.
 - That would require an even greater Mediator.
 7. Someone Who could pass the test of sinlessness required to enter that Holy Place
 - So Hebrews tells us that Jesus acted as our Mediator for this greater covenant.

10. How did we gain the benefit of Jesus' mediation?

- First, He descended to earth to deliver the news of the covenant to the people.
 - He traveled the distance from God's Heavenly place, where the Heavenly temple resides.
 - Where a Heavenly altar has been established.
 - Where the blood of much greater sacrifice can be applied.
 - And then this Mediator made the trip back to the right hand of the Father to serve as our intercessor.
 - As Paul explained... [Eph. 4:8-10](#)
- So Jesus fulfilled the picture of a mediator moving between God on high and the people below.

11. Secondly, the Lord delivers our agreement to the covenant.

- But unlike Moses, the Lord serves that purpose in a unique way.
- Moses had to travel up to God and then back to men to complete the communication process.
- But Jesus is the Word and His Spirit lives in us, so the process for us to communicate our agreement with the covenant is so simple, many people over look it.

[Rom. 10:5-10](#)

12. Can you see more clearly what Paul is talking about now in Romans 10?

- He is referring to Moses' role as a mediator going up to God and coming back down to the people.
- In that earlier covenant, righteousness was defined as living the law perfectly.
- But in the New Covenant, righteousness is defined as faith alone.
- And Paul says we join in this new covenant not by seeking someone to enter Heaven or descend into Hell for us.
 - That has already been done once for all men.
- So now we gain the benefit of Christ's mediation simply by a confession of our mouth.
 - We enter the New Covenant through a Word that is near to us.
 - By Christ, we are near to God already
 - We only need to say the word of faith and we enter the covenant.

13. Finally, Christ's blood enacted the covenant...

- Notice that a covenant (or testament, also called a will) is not in effect until the death of the One who makes it.
 - Our Last Will and Testament doesn't go into effect until we die.
 - So the New Covenant (or new testament) required a shedding of blood before it took effect.
- Jesus' blood was sprinkled on the Heavenly tabernacle altar when Christ ascended.
- Secondly, that blood is applied to us by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
 - And we re-enact that application of blood in the Lord's Supper observance.
[John 6:53-57 & Eph. 2:13](#)
 - So the covenant of Law has been enacted between God and His people

14. The nation of Israel is now forever bound to the Lord in a special way...

- They are called to live a Law that will forever distinguish them from the rest of the people on earth.
- And they will be judged strictly by this Law.
- It will be the cause of their temporary downfall.

- And it will be the basis for their rise again.
- 15. But this covenant is not the means of personal salvation for any Jew or any man at all.
 - It is a covenant that establishes a nation.
 - And through that nation, God intends to accomplish remarkable things.

Verses 9 - 18...

Having signed the covenant, Moses and the other men ascend the mountain to meet with God as directed.

1. There they see the God of Israel.
 - The question immediately becomes what did they see.
 - And as with any scripture, we must interpret this passage in light of all scripture.
 - We can't assume an interpretation for this passage that contradicts other scripture
2. For example, we read this elsewhere... [1John 4:12](#)
 - John declares that no man has even seen God at any time.
 - This must certainly include this time.
 - Then later in Exodus we read... [Ex. 33:20- 22](#)
 - God Himself declares to Moses that Moses cannot see God's face and live.
 - If Moses couldn't see God's face and live, then certainly Moses never saw God's face, including in Exodus 24
 - Finally, we remember that earlier in this chapter the Lord said to Moses that these men were permitted to worship from a distance.
 - But only Moses could approach closely.
 - So these men saw something of God, but whatever they saw, we know they never saw God in any true sense, at least not His face, and they were never very close.
3. We get a clue of what they did see in v.10 when we see a reference to His feet.
 - We can safely assume that when these men found themselves in the presence of the Lord, even from a distance, that they had a reaction similar to reports we read elsewhere.
 - They were prostrate on the ground in fear of their lives.
 - And from that vantage point, the only thing they saw was God's "feet" and the pavement underneath.
 - We can safely assume this was an appearance of the Shechinah glory.
4. V.11...the men are given a chance to eat and drink
 - This meal is another important moment in the covenant.
 - Covenants were concluded with a meal using the meat sacrificed.
 - The meal was a sign that these parties were now allies.
 - At this point, the covenant ritual is ended, and the next phase of the giving of the Law is ready to begin.
5. Moses escorts men back to the camp of Israel, and he instructs them to stay behind rest of the party return to the camp of Israel.
 - The two men who held up Moses' arms in battle are placed in charge of the camp of Israel.
 - And if anyone has something that requires judgment, these two men would handle it
6. Then Moses and Joshua head back up the mountain for the fifth time.
 - Joshua will accompany Moses for part of the trip.

