

Up From Slavery

A man / A people / A plan

FACING FREEDOM:

HOLY COW?

EXODUS 32:11-29

Context

- Moses has been on Mt. Sinai for 40 days
- Moses has received the law, Chapters 25-31
- Israel has chosen to keep God at a comfortable distance.

Truths Observed

1. We all have something that we look to so that our lives have significance.
2. Leadership does not consist of giving people what they want. Instead, it means resisting their tendency to pursue those things which will bring them harm.
3. Actions have consequences.

The Power of Intercession

¹¹ But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. “O LORD,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³

Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’ ” ¹⁴ Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

What is required of an effective intercessor

- They are aware of God's character.
- They are conversant with God's purposes.
- They are aware of God's promises.
- They maintain a proper balance between the love of God and their love for their fellow man.

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4. Prayer can make a difference.

5. Discernment Required

¹⁵ Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back. ¹⁶ The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

¹⁷ When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, “There is the sound of war in the camp.”

¹⁸ Moses replied:

“It is not the sound of victory,
it is not the sound of defeat;
it is the sound of singing that I hear.”

6. The place for *RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION*

¹⁹ When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ And he took the calf they had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it.

- There is such a thing as anger without sin.
- There is a time when it is wrong to not be angry.
- The question here revolves around *why* Moses was angry.

7. The power of DENIAL

²¹ He said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?”

²² “Do not be angry, my lord,” Aaron answered. “You know how prone these people are to evil. ²³ They said to me, ‘Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.’ ²⁴ So I told them, ‘Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.’ Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!”

8. Accountability: anything but a chill-pill

²⁵ Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. ²⁶ So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, “Whoever is for the LORD, come to me.” And all the Levites rallied to him.

²⁷ Then he said to them, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.’ ” ²⁸ The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died. ²⁹ Then Moses said, “You have been set apart to the LORD today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day.”

Truths Observed

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Truths Observed

5. Discernment is always needed.
6. There is a place for *RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION*
7. Don't underestimate the power of DENIAL.
8. Don't forget the reality of accountability.

To Go . . .

- Does a concern for the holiness of God exert an influence on your attitudes and actions?
- How?
- For whom do you intercede?