

"A Line In The Sand"

"then Moses stood at the gate of the camp and said, Whoever is for the LORD, come to me!" [EXODUS 32:26a] [NAS]

~Draw a line in the sand~



You may remember as a child; you may have drawn a line in the sand and said, "Everyone that is on my side step across this line. Some may have stepped across to your side and others may have stayed put; those who did not cross the line were not on your side. Jesus is asking us to draw that line in the sand. We are either for Him or against Him; we cannot walk the fence

because eventually we will fall on one side or the other. We cannot serve two masters as Jesus recorded in Luke, *"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other....."*

[LUKE 16:13a] [NAS]

Whether we know it or not we are drawing that line in the sand each and every day. Each day we are on the Lord's side or we are not. Jesus is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew saying that we will know them by their fruits. Look at it in Matthew 7:20, Jesus said, *"So then, you will know them by their fruits."* [MATTHEW 7:20] [NAS] When you step across the line into the arms of Jesus, it's your first step in producing fruit. The world will know who's side you are on when you cross this line. Just let the light of Jesus shine in your life and do not be a closet Christian. The apostle Paul said in Romans 1:16; *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,.....* [ROMANS 1:16a] [NAS]

~Whoever is for the Lord~



Our scripture verse today is from Exodus 32:26, *then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Whoever is for the LORD, come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered together to him.* [EXODUS 32:26] [NAS] Moses

asked all the sons of Israel to step across the line and come to him if they were on the Lord's side. All the sons of Levi gathered to him. There was a parting

of the way; they immediately knew where everyone stood. As read earlier, Jesus said;
"So then, you will know them by their fruits. [MATTHEW 7:20] [NAS]

To continue with the story you may ask the question? Why did Moses want everyone that was on the Lord's side to come forward and cross that line? You may know the story, but let me bring you up to date. Moses had been on the mountain with the Lord, and God had delivered and written the Ten Commandments with His own finger on the two tablets of stone. Moses brings the two tablets with the Ten



Commandments written on them down the mountain. When he gets to where the Israelites are, he finds out that they had taken their gold and with Aaron's help had molten a golden calf to worship. They

had even worshipped and sacrificed to it while Moses was on the mountain communicating with God and getting the Ten Commandments. Apparently the sons of Israel thinking was, that Moses would not be coming back; but he had only been gone

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forty days and forty nights. [Exodus 24:18] How quickly do we forget, He who guides us and brought us out of the wilderness, out of darkness into His marvelous light? Only forty days and they had forgotten God!

~Forty Days~

Think about it, only forty days and the sons of Israel were already worshipping a molten golden calf. Lest they forget what God had done for them! We today are a very impatient people, the Psalmist said; *For evildoers will be cut off, But those who wait for the LORD, they will inherit the land.* [PSALMS 37:9] [NAS] And certainly this was true for the sons of Israel; they did not inherit the Promised Land because of their sins and rebellious ways. Some people today are like that, it seems we haven't learned much from our biblical ancestors. As long as everything is going good, they are with God, but when they think things are turning bad, they are out of here. Their thinking may be; "As long as God is blessing me, I'm okay, what a wonderful God we have." They have a "Bless Me Lord Religion." I've noticed over the years that there are two kinds of people

in this world, they are givers and they are takers. I won't elaborate on this subject right now except to say what Jesus said, "We will know them by their fruits."

Moses anger burned so much when he saw the calf and the Israelites dancing that he threw the tablets with the Ten Commandments written upon them from his hands and



shattered them at the foot of the mountain. Moses then took the calf that they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to powder. What he did next is totally amazing, he scattered the powder from the calf over the surface of the water and made the sons of Israel drink it. You talk about metal poisoning. They had to drink their own sin. There may be a great lesson for us in this example concerning sin. Think about it!

~Aaron and the Golden Calf~

When Moses asked Aaron about their sin, Aaron's response is in verse 22 of chapter 32. Aaron said, *"Do not let the anger of my lord burn; you know the people yourself, that they are prone to evil.* [EXO 32:22] [NAS] You see what happened here; Aaron blamed the people even though he was a leader of the congregation and the one that approved the molten calf and told the people to bring their gold rings so the golden calf could be molten. (Molten: melted down and cast in something.) He was again playing the blame game, just as Adam and Eve did with the Serpent. Adam said in the Book of



Genesis; *The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."* [GENESIS 3:12] [NAS] What

happened next; then the LORD God said to the woman, *"What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."* [GENESIS 3:13] [NAS] Can anybody ever take the responsibility and say, I'm at fault,it's my sin.



Only when we acknowledge our sin, can we then repent and ask the Lord for forgiveness and we will be saved by God's amazing grace.

Let me get back to the story before I get too far off. The Israelites asked Aaron to make a god for them who would go before them. They did not know what had happened to Moses. I love Aaron's reply in verse 24; *"I said to*

them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them tear it off.' So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf." [EXODUS 32:24] [NAS] Can you believe this story



Aaron is telling? He explained it so innocently, in my version would be, "We just put in some gold rings and molten them and out came this little golden calf. We don't know what happened." I dare say that some way or another they helped molt the calf, I don't think it just came out by itself. Surely Moses didn't believe this story of innocence.

Now let us look at verse 25 in chapter 32, it will let us know what condition the Israelites were in. *Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control - for Aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision among their enemies -* [EXODUS 32:25] [NAS] You see this is what happens to people that do not obey and worship the true, one and only God. They get out of control and they sin more and more. They worship and sacrifice to other gods and all the time they are getting further and further away from the real God. We are to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Lord that created us and this world we live in.

~Step Forward if for the Lord?~

At this point is where Moses asked the people that are for the Lord to step forward to where he is. This was the dividing line of knowing who was and who was



not for the only true God. As the Bible tells us, the sons of Levi stepped forward for the Lord. Moses then commanded the ones that stepped forward, the Levi's, to take their swords and kill every man his brother, and every man his friend and every man his neighbor

that did not come to Moses' side and the Bible tells us there were three thousand men of the people fell that day. [Exodus 32:27-28] Aren't we glad we didn't live in that day?

Punishment was sometimes immediate, the judgment was now. Today we live under grace until we die. Praise the Lord for His wonderful plan and His amazing grace.

Amen! After this in verse 29; *Then Moses said, "Dedicate yourselves today to the*

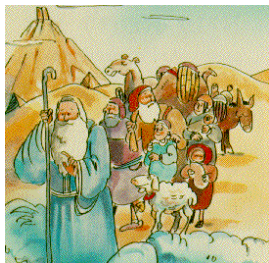
LORD - for every man has been against his son and against his brother - in order that

He may bestow a blessing upon you today." [EXODUS 32:29] [NAS] Yes, dedicate yourselves to the Lord that He may bestow a blessing upon you. We don't necessarily dedicate ourselves to the Lord for the blessings. But spiritual blessings, goes along with our decision and total commitment to follow the Lord.

Moses even tried to discuss and smooth out the situation with God, asking Him to forgive their sin and if not to blot him out of the book that God had written. God turned him down and then answered Moses in verse 33; *The LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.* [EXODUS 32:33] [NAS] We see from these verses that we are responsible for our own sin, no one else. As the saying goes, "God has no grandchildren." It's "one on one," we each will have to answer to God at the judgment seat. In the book of Revelations we read; *And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.* [REV 20:15] [NAS]

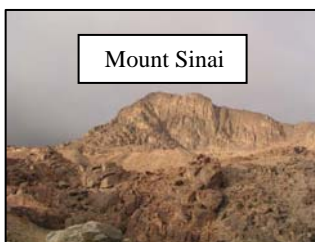
~Moses; A Righteous Man~

Moses was truly a righteous man. As we go into Chapter 33 we look at verse 9;



Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the LORD would speak with Moses. [EXODUS 33:9] [NAS] This tent would play an important role in the children of Israel moving through the

wilderness. What kind of tent was this, let us look at verse 7 in the same chapter; *Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp.* [EXODUS 33:7] [NAS] This tent was where Moses went to talk to the Lord and everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting. When Moses went into the tent of meeting, the people would



rise and worship, look at verse 10 of Chapter 33; *When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent.* [EXODUS 33:10] [NAS] I have always wondered when the

Bible talks about the worship of God; what are they referring to and how did His people worship Him? This verse says they would rise and worship. Worship how, would they stand up and raise hands and look to the heavens or what? If anyone can shed any light on this subject please share it with me. Like I mentioned the tent of meeting and its tabernacle played an important role of the children of Israel traveling through the wilderness.

~The Glory of the LORD~

We can only look at Exodus 40:34-38 [NAS] to see how an important role it played. 34 *Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* 35 *Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* 36 *Throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out;* 37 *but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until*



the day when it was taken up. 38 *For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.*

Can you imagine this roadmap? If they got up each morning and if the cloud was taken up they would travel, but if the cloud was over the tabernacle they would stay put. By day the cloud of the Lord was in the tabernacle and by night there was fire. I would have loved to have seen this manifestation of God. God has His ways.....Doesn't He? The Glory of God was so strong that Moses (a man of God) was not able to enter the tent of meeting and its tabernacle.

So many times Moses found favor with God. Moses is credited with the first five books of the Bible, The Law of Moses, the Torah, sometime also referred to as the Pentateuch. Just these credits in themselves are a Godly accomplishment. Moses truly was a righteous man and was seeking the glory of God by obeying His every command.

~Crossing the line for Christ~



When you step across that line for Christ; the world will know you by your fruits. You will be set apart; holy to God. As the King James says, you are now a peculiar people. Just look at 1 Peter 2:9, it says, *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;* [1PETER 2:9] [KJV] You know you have stepped across the line to Christ when you have been transformed from darkness to the marvelous light of God.

You know what.... the first step is the hardest. But after your get going the steps



get easier and faster and all of a sudden you are running toward the Savior Jesus Christ. Asking for forgiveness and repentance and praying that you will not step back across that line; back to the other side, the side of darkness, where you came from. Stay in touch with God. Keep on the side of Jesus. As the song goes, "there's no other way."

- Are we adjusting our daily lifestyle in the harmony and spirit of today's worldly trends?
- Are we adjusting our lifestyle as the sons of Israel did when they didn't think Moses was coming back down from the mountain?
- Are we adjusting our lifestyle thinking that Jesus Christ is not coming back?
- Are we true to the Word of God?
- Are we walking in the spirit that Christ could return any day? Jesus said in John 4:24; *"God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* [JOHN 4:24] [NAS] Sincerity is good, but truth is needed with it.
- Are we adjusting our lifestyle to where we can live for Jesus Christ every day and every minute of each day?
- Are we stepping across the line in favor of Jesus Christ?

Hopefully we will examine ourselves today and if we are not serving Christ, we will make that adjustment in our lifestyle and cross over the line.

Friends; are we going to be like Moses, Aaron and the children of Israel which were over the age of twenty at the start of the journey, wandering around in the wilderness and never getting to the Promised Land. Don't come up just short of the goal of eternal salvation. God is leading us and trying to get us out of this wilderness. We just have to follow Him and do His will for our life.

Moses and Aaron both died before going into the Promised Land, the land of milk and honey. Aaron died on Mount Hor and Moses died on Mount Nebo. Moses was able to see the Promised Land from a hilltop, but was not allowed to enter because he did not



follow exactly the instructions of God. What instructions did

Moses not carry out as commanded by God? It is recorded in

the book of Numbers, Chapter 20. The children of Israel are in

the Wilderness of Zin and there is not any water for the Israelites or their beasts. And as usual the children of Israel are great complainers and they complained that they had no water. So Moses is instructed by God to speak to a certain rock and water would come forward. But Moses, apparently in his anger toward the children of Israel strikes the rock twice with his staff. Now the penalty for this one act of disobedience was that Aaron and Moses would not go into the Promised Land. Look in Numbers 20:12; *But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."* [NUMBERS 20:12] [NAS]

It seems a shame that Aaron and Moses would not be able to go into the Promised Land because of this one sin. But God is serious about His laws, commandments,



precepts and statutes. We just have to look back at Moses, Aaron and the

children of Israel to see how serious He is. When He comes back and

it may be soon, He's coming with a two-edged sword and will

separate the goats from the sheep. If we have been faithful with what

He has given us? Then we will reign with Him for eternity, but if we have

not been faithful the penalty will be death and we will not come out of the Wilderness into the Promised Land of eternal salvation.

I will be closing this message with an illustration concerning crossing the line into the land of Jesus. There is a “dividing line,” our default is not to follow Christ. We have to make that conscious and heart decision for eternity through Jesus Christ.

~**The Dividing Line**~ taken from e-sword bible quotes and edited.

Lines are everywhere! There are lines in parking lots to designate the parking spaces. There are lines drawn at intersections so that pedestrians know where to cross the street. There are little, but important, lines drawn on rulers to show units of measure. There are lines drawn on baseball diamonds, basketball courts, and football fields to help the players and referees know if the balls, and players, are in or out.

Lines can be very important. They help us know where we stand. We are either on one side of the line or the other.

Jesus, too, drew a line when He called those from the multitude to follow Him. Jesus' words make a very clear line: either you are for Christ or you are against Him. That same line exists today. We must decide on which side of that line we will stand.

Many choose to stand on both sides of the line. And for those individuals Jesus replies, *'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.* [REV 3:15-16] [NAS]

There is no middle ground with the Lord. In fact, for those who try, it makes Him sick to His stomach. Take a stand on God's side today.



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