

## **A Fissure in the Rock**

Exodus 33 – 34

by Don Falkos

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Moses pitched a tent outside the Israelite camp and called it the Tent of Meeting. There the Lord spoke to Moses as one speaks to a friend. "You must lead the people of Israel to the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will go with you. Now chisel out two stone tablets. I will write on them the same words that were on the tablets you smashed."

Moses chiseled out two tablets and went up onto Mount Sinai. The Lord said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you. But you may not look at my face and live. So I will hide you in this fissure in the rock and cover you with my hand until I pass by. Then you will see me from behind."

The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, "I am the Lord, compassionate and merciful, slow to anger and filled with unfailing love. I forgive, but I do not leave the guilty unpunished."

Moses worshiped the Lord and said, "These people are stubborn and rebellious. But travel with us, forgive our sins, and claim us as your own special possession."

The Lord wrote on the tablets the terms of the covenant, the Ten Commandments, and gave Moses many other instructions, having him write them all down. Moses was with the Lord forty days and forty nights.

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, his face was shining brightly. Except when he was in the presence of the Lord or speaking to the people on behalf of the Lord, he wore a veil over his face to cover its radiance.