

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Communion with Moses through Light Seventeenth Week in Ordinary Time
Wednesday, August 2, 2017 8:15 AM **Ex 34:29-35;** Mt 13:44-46 (God has great plans. God elevates the chosen ones to help the others, but a lot of people don't want to be helped.)

Today we are reading from the **Book of Exodus**, and we were reading from it the last few days. You might find that **these stories sound repetitious**; well, they are because there are two **different traditions woven together**. It starts with two. Eventually two more develop, and they are all woven together, which is why the Old Testament, especially the first four books seem so repetitious.

Now in one of the stories Moses is always going up the mountain; in another story he goes to a tent. In one of the stories God writes the Law on the stone with his own finger; in another Moses writes it down. So you see the details are not clear. What we know is that **the Israelite people had some sort of extraordinary experience of God. Moses was central to this**. He was so transformed by this experience that **light came out of him, especially his face**.

Now sometimes people say light comes out of the heads of saints, but no one ever spoke of a whole face being radiant. But you will remember that Jesus was transfigured also through light, so these are experiences of light. They really do not translate into specifics. Later on the traditions would get down to all kinds of specific laws and regulations that they said God told Moses. You can be sure what he was experiencing was nothing so verbal. **It was a non-conceptual, supra-rational sort of communion in the light. And it is through this that Moses received the wisdom he needed to guide and direct the affairs of people**.

At the same time we see the people couldn't get it; they couldn't understand what was happening. So as soon as Moses was gone for a while, they started to go back to their, you might say, old ways. Aaron fashioned a golden image. Now actually that's unlikely. It's unlikely that

Aaron had the means to fashion a golden image, but later on course there were many golden images. There is the famous calf in Dan, the shrine of Dan, and that became of course a symbol, if you want to say that, a sign, of the idolatrous nature of the people. But **they did fall back into whatever they were used to because they couldn't understand or connect with whatever it is God was trying to do through Moses.**

So we see that from the very beginning God has great plans; people don't follow—general principle. **God has great plans. God elevates the chosen ones to help the others, but a lot of people don't want to be helped.** They want to fall back into their own delusions about who they are, and as if they know, and as if they know what to do, and they know what God really is like. And so **this pattern repeats itself** over and over and over again. And it is repeating itself **today.**