

DAY 36



Scriptural Background: Mt 7

"13 Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few." Mt 7:13–14

Moses was the great leader of God's people, the deliverer who led them out of bondage in Egypt, and the mediator of God's covenant with His people. Significantly, Moses conveyed the terms of that covenant – the law – from a mountain after fasting for a period of 40 days and nights (see Ex 34:27–29). Therefore, what Jesus is doing in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7) is not just delivering a few new ethical niceties, nor is this merely another rousing speech in the circuit of yet one more itinerant inspirational speaker. No, rather, what Matthew is doing as he presents Jesus' teaching from the Mount (5:1), after having just fasted for 40 days and nights in the wilderness (Mt 4:1–2), is presenting Jesus to us as the new Moses, the true leader of God's people, inaugurating the terms of a *new* covenant (Jer 31:31–34, Mt 26:27), by which He would deliver His people not just from bondage in Egypt, but out of bondage to sin and death and Satan himself. This way is a hard way—it will require the leaving of all you thought you had (Mt 16:24–28), but it is also the good way, leading to life itself. Let us respond just as the people did to Moses and to Jesus, marveling at what was being unveiled through them (Ex 34:30, Mt 7:28–29), and may our own faces shine with the very brilliance of Christ as we do (2 Cor 3:12–18).

Prayer:

LORD Jesus, how Your glory is not what we would expect. You lay down Your life for others and say "there, there is My glory displayed." I take for myself, and the more I get, the more glory I think I have. Change me indeed from one lesser degree of glory—my kind—to a far greater degree of glory—Your infinitely greater kind. Only by Your life within me will this change ever be realized, so would You transform me this day by Your blood of the covenant as I behold You in Your Word and in Your teaching. Amen.