

**PICK UP THE PIECES**  
**(First Delivered September 10, 2017)**  
**Olaide Banks**

**Thesis:** When you respond to God's Sudden Move be on your guard. There will be times when despite our best intentions our life, our dreams, our situations can be shattered to pieces. When it all falls apart only by trusting in God and his grace can we pick up the pieces and be restored.

**Key Words:** Restoration, Grace, Mercy, Persistence, Resilience, Overcome

**TEXT: Exodus 32: 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.**

When we see Moses in Exodus 32:19 he is returning from a time of intense connection with God. In fact, Exodus Chapters 24 through 32 capture the time that Moses spent in God's presence, hearing God's commandments, decrees and plans for the life of His people.

- Every chapter, every verse and every Word in the Bible is precious,
- When the Bible spends 8 chapters dealing with one interaction with God it is significant,
- For example, the Bible spends one chapter on the creation of the world, - Gen 1
- The Bible spends 2 verses in the creation of man,
- So when the Bible spends 8 chapters on one interaction between God it has to be important,

**24** Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. You are to worship at a distance, <sup>2</sup> but Moses alone is to approach the Lord; the others must not come near. And the people may not come up with him."

<sup>3</sup> When Moses went and told the people all the Lord's words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the Lord has said we will do." <sup>4</sup> Moses then wrote down everything the Lord had said.

He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the Lord. <sup>6</sup> Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he splashed against the altar. <sup>7</sup> Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey."

<sup>8</sup> Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."

<sup>9</sup> Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up <sup>10</sup> and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue

as the sky. <sup>11</sup> But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.

<sup>12</sup> **The Lord said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the law and commandments I have written for their instruction.”**

<sup>13</sup> Then Moses set out with Joshua his aide, and Moses went up on the mountain of God. <sup>14</sup> He said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are with you, and anyone involved in a dispute can go to them.”

- So Moses is arguably at his closest to God. God has made Moses his voice to the people of Israel. Moses is the first person that we know to receive the written word of God. At his closest to God and at his highest height, we come to Exodus 32:7

### **God says:**

<sup>7</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. <sup>8</sup> They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’

<sup>9</sup> “I have seen these people,” the Lord said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. <sup>10</sup> Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.”

- From this moment of extraordinary intimacy where God and Moses have communed over God’s will for His people. Moses now finds The Lord at an extraordinary moment of frustration.
- God knows what he has done for his people. Just last week we talked about “A Sudden Move” and how God led his people across the Red Sea with Pharaoh at their backs.
- Because Moses spent more time with God than the people wanted, they turned their backs on God and created an idol by melting down their Gold.

Beginning at Verse 11 and continuing to Verse 15 Moses pleads with God be merciful on His people. Moses uses the one thing that God always responds to and keeps and that’s His Word. God had planned to destroy his own people, but Moses used the Word of God and said to God ‘Remember when you swore to yourself that you would make Abraham’s descendants as numerous as the stars?’

- The Word of God in Verse Number 14 says something amazing – God repented!
- If you want a takeaway, when you petition God, when you seek favor from God, when you seek mercy from God – use God’s Word!

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## LET ME SHARE A FEW TAKEAWAYS:

1. Things can fall apart at your highest heights
  - a. Close to God - Moses had just been as close as any man was to God.
  - b. Seeking His Will- God had just revealed his most important commandments to him.
2. When things fall apart, God does not focus on fault – he focuses on accountability.
  - a. It wasn't Moses fault that the Israelites were worshipping and Idol,
  - b. Even though it wasn't his fault – as the leader he was held accountable,
  - c. Verse 21 -25 – as a leader you have to put people in place who are accountable
    - i. Aaron made excuses and wasn't accountable
3. When distractions arise, you have to keep focused on God.
  - a. Verse 19 – Moses saw the calf and the dancing and he got angry
  - b. Don't take your eyes off God – When he focused on the sin of the people he took his eyes off his God given purpose
  - c. His purpose in this instance was to Give the people God's word and will
  - d. Moses' anger literally caused everything God had given him to shatter to pieces
4. When you stand in righteousness – God remembers it.
  - a. Verse 27 – Levites stepped forward and answered Moses command and rided the camp of Sin,
  - b. God then chose the Levites to be the defenders of the faith, the priests forever

## CLOSING

- You see, everything that you work for can be shattered to pieces just by taking your eyes off God for just one minute,
- You could be riding high and so close to God, and just that momentary lapse can cause you to throw it all away,
- Everything that God gives you – you can throw it all away
  - You family, by taking your eyes off God can be shattered to pieces
  - Your finances, by taking your eyes of God can be shattered to pieces
  - Your ministry, if you take your eyes of God can be shattered to pieces
- Each of us is a leader and so we are accountable even when it's not our fault
- Moses, who led God's people out of Egypt and was one of the few men to experience God's countenance and Glory, was banned from the promise land – don't throw it all away
- I want to tell you, that even though God hold's us accountable, he is full of mercy and grace
  - Although Moses didn't get to enter the promised land God gave him a taste,
  - God took him to the mountain and let him see with his own eyes,

**I Peter 5:10** – And the God of ALL GRACE, who has called you to hid eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered for a little, will HIMSELF restore and make you STRONG, FIRM and STEADFAST.

**Goodbye now children**, and may the Lord bless you real good, but on my way to Heaven:

- I want to tell you that no matter how far you fall, you can pick up the pieces
- No matter your situation you can pick up the pieces
- Even if it's your fault you can pick up the pieces
- No matter what anybody says you can pick up the pieces