

### 1. Turning Point of Exodus:

- The chiasmic structure found in Exodus 25-40 has the Golden Calf (Ch. 32) followed by God's attributes and covenant restoration (Ch. 34) as the turning point.
- The re-establishment of the covenant relationship is only due to **God's Character**.
- These two verses are the lynchpin for the entire relationship between God and humanity.

“if they (Israel) are to have any future with God, it will have to depend on **patience** and **forgiveness**. So the basic pattern of scripture's story is presented for the first time here” (Gowan 1994, 239).

Donald Gowan, *Theology in Exodus*, p. 239.

### 2. Learning about **God's character and nature**:

- Exodus 3:13-14 – Moses wants to know God's name. He wants to know God's nature or function.
- God's response: "I will be that I will be" (v. 14), which is a non-answer that provides an open-ended future.
- Fast fwd. to Exodus 33-34 – Moses wants more information on this God that Israel is following.
  - "Now show me your glory" (Ex. 33:18) -
- God's response:
  - "I will cause my **goodness** to pass in front of you" (Ex. 33:19).
  - Proclaim the "Name of the Lord" – God's characteristics – (Ex. 34:6-7)

### 3. **God's goodness** – what constitutes God's goodness?

- God's essence is goodness.
- "Goodness" is the perfect balance of God's Attributes for every person in any and all situations.

Goodness =  
- compassionate (womb-pity), graciousness, slow to anger  
- abounding in loving-kindness and truth (faithfulness)  
- maintaining covenant-faithfulness  
- forgiving all manner of sin –  
wickedness, rebellion against God, and missing the mark  
- but is also just and holds the guilty accountable for their actions.

4. God's Attributes:

Attribute	Hebrew	Definition
Compassionate – (womb-pity)	<i>rahum</i>	- mercy, womb
Gracious	<i>hanun</i>	- grace, favor, undeserved favor
Slow to anger		- patience
Loving-kindness	<i>chesed</i>	- covenant-faithfulness
Truth	<i>emet</i>	- truth, faithfulness
Forgiving	<i>nasa</i>	- to lift, take away
- wickedness, iniquity	<i>avon</i>	- to distort, bend, twist, pervert
- rebellion	<i>pesha</i>	- rebel against a relationship
- sin	<i>chatah</i>	- to miss, miss the mark, go wrong
- guilty punished		- God is just. All are held accountable for their actions in the pursuit of holiness (see Hebrews 12:4-13)

5. Reflection:

- Moses asks to see God's "glory" (v. 18). Glory is associated with shining power, weight, or heaviness.
- God responds by revealing his mercy, compassion, and grace. Any adjectives of power – holiness, perfection, might - are missing from the description.
  - God reveals his power in the actions of the plagues and dividing the sea, but his character shows his mercy and grace for the benefit of others.
- A tension exists between God's forgiveness and judgment
  - God is just, and transgressions must be judged.
  - Authentic justice is a balance between compassion/mercy on one hand and judgment/punishment on the other.
  - God's punishment has the intended purpose of character growth as we strive to transform into his image.
- This statement on forgiveness is critical to Israel's understanding of God's willingness to extend his grace to his people.