

## Moses' THREE Forty-Day Fasts

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Many people are aware of the fact that when the Ten Commandments were given by God at Mt. Sinai, Moses *fasted* for forty days. What you may **not** know, however, is that— at that time— Moses actually engaged in **three** 40-day fasts! In this article, we will see *proof* of that fact.

First, let's recap the events which took place at Mt. Sinai. In doing so, notice the following excerpt from an article by Pastor John H. Ogwyn:

...Moses [during his **first** trip up into Mt. Sinai, to receive the Ten Commandments] was *on* the mountain **forty days and forty nights** [Ex.24:18]. During the time that Moses was in the mount, Israel made a golden calf and when he came down from Sinai he found the nation holding an *idolatrous orgy*.

God was *angry*, and threatened to **destroy the whole nation**. Moses spent time in *prayer and fasting beseeching God for mercy for the people*. Did you ever wonder **how long** Moses spent down from the mountain *interceding* with God? Deuteronomy 9: 15–21 reveals that this was **also** for a period of **40 days**. After that [i.e., *after* this **second** 40-day period], Moses went back *up* the mountain, into God's presence, where he received a **second** copy of the Ten Commandments. He was back up the mountain for **40 days once again** (Exodus 34: 1–4, 28). *Add it up*. There was a *seven-day period* following *Pentecost before* Moses went up into the presence of God [i.e., a 7-day period following Pentecost, *before* Moses' **first** trip up into Mt. Sinai], *followed by THREE periods of 40 days each*. (John H. Ogwyn, "The First Feast of Tabernacles," *Living Church News*, Sept/Oct 2000, Living Church of God)

Now, by looking at just a *few* scriptures, we can *verify* what Mr. Ogwyn said about there being **three** forty-day periods. In Deuteronomy chapter 10, it speaks of Moses' **second** 40-day trip into Mt. Sinai. "At that time the LORD said to me, 'Hew for yourself two tablets of stone **like the first**, and come up to Me on the mountain...'" (verse 1). Now verse 10: "**AS at the first time**, I stayed in the mountain **forty days and forty nights**..."

So from that *one* scripture alone, we can see that Moses stayed **forty days and nights** during **each** of the 2 times he went up to receive the Commandments written in stone.

Let's now look at a scripture which shows that there was *another* forty-day period... **in between** those 2 forty-day periods on the mountain. The following scripture is talking about what happened at the very **end** of the *first* 40-day period: "Then I took the two tablets and threw them

out of my two hands and broke them before your eyes. And I fell down before the LORD, **as at the first, forty days and forty nights**; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger” (Deut. 9: 17-18).

So, that was *another* forty-day period, *in between* those 2 forty-day periods. And that fact is made even *plainer*, by looking at verse 25: “Thus I prostrated myself before the LORD; **forty days and forty nights I KEPT prostrating myself**, [why?] because the LORD had said He would **destroy** you” (Deut. 9:25).

We have now *proven* that there were **three** 40-day periods. *Furthermore*, we proved something *else* in verse 18. We proved that Moses **fasted** during both of the **first two** 40-day periods. Look again at verse 18: “And I fell down before the LORD, **as at the first**, forty days and forty nights; **I neither ate bread nor drank water.**”

Now, the only thing remaining to prove, is that the **third** 40-day period was *also* a **fast**. To prove that, notice Exodus chapter 34: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Cut two tablets of stone **LIKE the first ones**, and I will write on *these* tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke” (verse 1). So this chapter is describing what happened during Moses’ *second* 40-days in the mountain. Notice verse 28: “So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; **he neither ate bread nor drank water**. And He [God] *wrote* on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.”

Now we have proven that there were **three** 40-day periods, and that Moses **fasted** during *each* of those 3 periods! (Also see the table located at the end of this article.)

(For *further* proof that Moses fasted during the **first** 40-day period, see Deut. 9: 9-12.)

## Note #1

Earlier, we looked at Deut. 9: 25, where Moses said this: “Thus I prostrated myself before the LORD; **forty days and forty nights I kept prostrating myself**, because the LORD had said He would **destroy** you.” Here, it is obvious that Moses did **NOT** mean that he remained prostrate for the entire 40 days. Rather, it simply means that he **repeatedly** prostrated himself before God during that 40-day period. That should be obvious, when one considers certain things Moses **did during** that second 40-day period... such as grinding the golden calf into powder, and the **other** things spoken of in Exodus 32:20 *through* Exodus 34:1.

## Note #2

Regarding the 3 forty-day fasts, it is interesting to **compare** those “3 forty-day fasts” of Moses to the fact that Moses’ *life* can be separated into “3 forty-year periods.”

Moses was: (1) 40yr in *Pharaoh’s* court; then, (2) 40yr as a nomadic *sheep-herder*; then, (3) 40yr as a “prophet and leader of the Israelites.” (Moses **died** at age 120; = 40 x 3).

### Moses' Three 40-Day Fasts

*Regarding the information below, “(A)” proves that it was 40 days; “(B)” proves that he **fasted** throughout that 40-day period.*

**1<sup>st</sup>** 40-day period (First Trip to Receive the Ten Commandments)

(A) Deut. 10: 1, 10                      (B) Deut. 9: 17-18, 9-12

**2<sup>nd</sup>** 40-day period (Period Between First & Second Trips)

(A) Deut. 9: 17-18, 25                  (B) Deut. 9: 17-18

**3<sup>rd</sup>** 40-day period (2nd Trip to Receive the Ten Commandments)

(A) Deut. 10: 1, 10                      (B) Ex. 34: 1, 28