

Series: Life of Moses

THAT I MAY KNOW THEE

EXODUS 33

Text: Exodus 33:13

Exodus 33:13

¹³ *Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, **that I may know thee**, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.*

Introduction:

The book of Exodus is a very familiar book to most of us here this morning. The title is taken from its key event. The book is a record of God's deliverance of His people and His power over the false gods of Egypt. For 400 years the Israelites were held in bondage. They cried out for a redeemer and God heard their cry and sent to them Moses.

Moses was their leader. In Numbers 12:3, he described as the meekest man upon the earth.

Numbers 12:3

³ (Now the man Moses *was* very meek, above all the men which *were* upon the face of the earth.)

It is difficult to understand how a child reared by Pharaoh, trained in in all the arts and skills of Egypt, who had the wealth of Egypt at his finger tips and murdered a man in an attempt to deliver the Hebrews could ever be known as the meekest man upon the face of the earth. But he did; and he did so because God was at work in him.

After 40 years living in the wilderness tending sheep, no doubt Egypt was a distant memory to Moses. It was a chapter in his life that was closed, the pages had turned, never to be revisited again. But God had other plans. God reveals Himself to Moses, calls him, equips him and sends him back to complete a task he had attempted to do his way.

Here in chapter 33, we pick up the story. The children are in route to the Promise Land. They have crossed the Red Sea. They have already witnessed God's mighty power in Egypt as well as in the wilderness. They encamped at the base of Mt Sinai. As they await Moses return, they fail miserably and construct a golden calf to worship. Things are off to a rocky start. In the previous chapter, God tells Moses He would destroy the people and start over by making a new nation through Moses. But Moses intercedes and prays for the people. Things at this point are rough. It is in these circumstances that Moses makes the request we read in verses 12-13.

Exodus 33:12-13

¹² And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. ¹³ Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.

The consuming desire in Moses' heart was that he would 'know God.' This might seem to be a strange request. But understand this is not a prayer for salvation. Moses settled his relationship with God long before Exodus 33. No doubt his own mother, who served as his midwife, taught him the things of the Lord. If Moses had not already placed his faith in God before the burning bush, he certainly did afterwards. Note what we read of him in Hebrews 11: 24-29

Hebrews 11:24-29

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; ²⁵ Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; ²⁶ Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. ²⁷ By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. ²⁸ Through faith he kept the passover, and the

sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. ²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

The point I am making is: Moses' prayer in Exodus 33:13 was not for salvation. That was settled. Moses was searching for a deeper relationship with God. That, my friend, is a mark of spiritual maturity. As we step out in obedience to the Lord, we are doing what God has called us to, serving where He has placed us. Things are good, but suddenly we come face to face with our own inadequacies. We suddenly realize how ill-equipped we are and how futile our own abilities are. As we mature we understand how vital a deeper relationship with God truly is.

As we will learn, living the victorious Christian life is more than just a decision you made 20 years ago. It is more than a prayer you scarcely remember praying. Your salvation was the starting line and living victoriously requires a vibrant faith. It requires a faith that is living and breathing, that is sustained by frequent and fervent communion with God. That is what Moses was praying for.

What is the great desire of our heart today?

In this passage we see 3 immediate blessings of a deeper more intimate relationship with God. I trust

these will be just us convicting and inspiring to you as it has been to me.

1. THE BLESSING OF SECURITY 33:13

Note the phrase, “show me thy way”.

This is an interesting phrase and the word used here for ‘way’ describes an archer shooting an arrow.

We all know what an arrow does: an arrow flies through the air and hits its target.

But how does the arrow do that?

Why does the arrow fly through the air?

You see, that is what this word answers.

The arrow is placed on the string, the string is pulled back, the arms of the bow bend and when the archer is ready he releases the string and the arrow is propelled forward with a tremendous amount of force. That is how and why the arrow flies.

The significance of the word is in the question it answers.

It has more to do with the how and why and less to do with the what.

That is the request Moses is making.

Moses had already seen what God could do. Moses had a front row seat when God demonstrated His mighty power.

Moses heard first hand God's plan to take them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.

But Moses knew that God's plan was far more than going from point A to point B.

Note Exodus 6:6-7

Exodus 6:6-7

⁶ Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: ⁷ And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Also note:

Exodus 19:4

⁴ Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

This is divine purpose of life! God is constantly at work drawing us unto Him. This is His great desire.

It was true for the children of Israel and it is equally true for us today.

Moses understood what God was doing, but he desperately wanted to know HOW God would accomplish this.

In the face of such terrible circumstances –he knew the people were stiffnecked and rebellious; he knew they could turn on him at any moment and he knew they were masters at murmuring.

Moses is looking at the road ahead and he determines the greatest need he had was to know God in a deeper way.

Every person has a certain 'way' about them. God is no different. This certain 'way' does not define what they do as much as it defines why and how they do what they do. Sometimes we get the idea that God will take us from point A to point B and that the road will be perfect. The seas will be calm and the path will be lined

with roses. But what forget is that every sea has storms and every rose has thorns. God often uses these storms and thorns in our lives to accomplish His purposes. When we come to the place where we know His way, we are able to appreciate the promise we find in Romans 8:28.

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

There is security in knowing the ways of God! Moses sought that security when he prayed, "I want to know your ways."

In Psalms 103 we find that God answered his request.

Note:

Psalm 103:7

⁷ He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

There is security in knowing the ways of God. Why would God allow such a terrible trial in your life? Why are things so uncomfortable now?

God uses those difficulties to bring us closer to Him.

The first blessing of a deeper relationship is Security.

The second blessing is

2. THE BLESSING OF SERENITY 33:14

Notice the promise that God makes to Moses in verse 14.

Exodus 33:14

¹⁴ And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

There were many days that Moses failed. There were many days when he gave in to the pressures and frustration of leading a rebellious group of people. But no doubt, there were many more days when Moses lived in the quiet peace and rest that God's presence affords.

When we think of peace we think of rest from trouble, rest from trials, or rest from turmoil. But God's definition of peace is a supernatural rest in troubles, rest in trials and rest in turmoil.

There are people here this morning, you are under such a weight and burden. The load is so heavy you fear you might break.

Beneath the weight of your burden break at the point of your knees, fall down before Him, deepen your relationship with Him and find the serenity that He alone can give!

There is abiding peace for those who abide in Him!

The peace of God is only available through peace with the God of peace. Moses learned this as he deepened his relationship with the Lord.

Note what the Lord said in Matthew 11:

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The first blessing of a living and deepening relationship with God is Security. The second blessing is Serenity.

Note a third blessing.

3. THE BLESSING OF SANCTITY (34:29-34)

Exodus 34:29-34

²⁹ And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. ³⁰ And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. ³¹ And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. ³² And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. ³³ And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. ³⁴ But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded.

There is so much in these few verses, but the one thing that I want to highlight is the immediate impact this event had on Moses. This time spent in close communion with God was a real event. The result of this meeting was real to Moses and equally real to everyone who saw Moses. After this encounter with God, this season of close communion with the Lord, there was a quality about Moses that was evident for all to see.

There was something different about him. There was sanctity about him. There was something saintly about him, something holy, and something godly. You see, Moses left this meeting with the finger prints of God upon him. Everyone saw it.

There is only one place this available. As much as I enjoy singing; hymns cannot reproduce what Moses had. As much as I enjoy preaching, sermons cannot duplicate what Moses had. As wonderful as it is to serve and labor in the church, activity cannot replicate what Moses had. The only place you and I can get the quality of holiness, of godliness –of sanctity; is from spending time with God.

That is it. Everything else flows from it.

Close:

No doubt there some here today that knows this element in the life is missing.

You know that you're not as close to God as you should be.

Your testimony is not of one who shines with the reflective glory of God. You are lacking that quality in your life. When people look at you, they see many things, but one thing they do not see is the fingerprints of God upon your life.

You are troubled about it. You desire to have a closer, deeper relationship with the Lord.

Note what we read in James:

James 4:8

⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you....

You are the only thing that stands between where you are and where God desires you to be in your walk with Him.

We are at this moment as close to God as we really choose to be.

Illustration: Gordon and Norma Yeager

For 72 years Gordon and Norma Yeager shared their lives together as husband and wife. On October 12, 2011, while on a morning drive Gordon came to a stop sign and failed to yield to oncoming traffic. The elderly couple was taken to the Marshalltown Hospital near Des Moines, Iowa and placed in the same ICU room. Their beds were moved close together so that they could hold one another's hand. At 3.38pm, Gordon quietly passed away. But to the surprise of the family, the monitor continued to show a heartbeat. Upon closer examination by the attending nurses, it was discovered that the heartbeat belonged to his wife who

was still holding his hand. The monitor was picking up Norma's heart through Gordon. Within 70 minutes, Norma also died, holding the hand on the one she loved so dearly.

Application:

Wouldn't it be great if we held so close to our Heavenly Father that His heartbeat could be felt in us? That we would truly reckon ourselves dead to self so that all outward appearances of life were actually Christ living through us?

Convicting isn't it.