

Show Me Thy Glory

Sermon delivered on July 27th, 2014

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Text: *Exodus 33:1-23; 34:1-8*

As we saw last Sunday Moses had a life-changing encounter with God when God called him and when he was given the privilege to know God's name.

Moses had enjoyed a close communion with Jehovah. He had often heard the voice of God that called him, commanded him and guided him. Observe that it was not through another man that Moses communicated with God but rather he had a direct communion with God.

Exodus 33:11 And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend ...

But here in our text we read Moses pleading with God ...

*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.***

*18: ... **I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.***

*"Lord, I know your name, I know you know my name but now **I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.**"*

Moses was not satisfied with just to knowing God's name, that God knows his name, now he wants to have a sight of God's glory.

I – Moses' Urgent Prayer

Moses had already seen a glimpse of the glory of God in several occasions:

1. When God called him at the burning bush

*Exodus 3:1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. 2: **And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.** 3: **And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.** 4: **And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.** 5: **And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.***

2. When God descended in fire upon Mount Sinai

*Exodus 19:18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because **the LORD descended upon it in fire**: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and **the whole mount quaked greatly**.*

3. When Moses was called up and went into the midst of the cloud

*Exodus 24:15 And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. 16: **And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days**: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. 17: **And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire** on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. 18: **And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount**: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.*

But Moses wants a fuller and a greater revelation of God. Moses is very earnest with God. He beseeches God that he may see the glory of God. He prays that God would reveal His glory to Him, that he may know Him in a fuller way.

A good sign that a person has experience grace is that he wants more grace. A good sign that a person came to know God is that he wants to know God more.

The more a person knows of God, the more he would know. The nearer he gets, he presses nearer still. He longs to see God's power and glory.

*Psalm 63:1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2: **To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary**.*

II – Moses' Reason for his Prayer

What prompted Moses to pray this prayer?

God called Moses to an overwhelming task - to bring His people to the Promise Land, to bring the Jews to the **Land that they have never seen**. How can he bring **a rebellious and a stiff-necked people** into the Promised Land, they have never been nor ever seen?

He feels the crashing weight of responsibility on his shoulder. **He understands something of the awesomeness and hugeness of his responsibility and the challenge that he will face**. This realization drove him to his knees so he prays this prayer *"Show me Thy glory"*

Moses understands that **if he going to lead and if he is going be the man of God, he must have a sight of the glory of God**. He must have a fuller understanding of the glory of God.

Moses could not bear the thought of going forward without the Lord's presence.

*15: And he said unto him, **If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence**. 16: *For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? ...**

He understands that the manifestation of the power and glory of God in his life is what would enable and empower him to do what God has asked him to do.

III – God's Gracious Response

God graciously answered Moses' prayer.

*17: And the LORD said unto Moses, **I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.***

*19: And he said, **I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.***

God's glory is twofold

1. God's essential glory

This is the glory which pertains to God's existence. It is compared in Scripture to the white blinding bright light, just like the sun.

*1 Timothy 6:16 Who only hath immortality, **dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*** God alone can never die, and He lives in light so bright that no human can approach Him. No human eye has ever seen Him, nor ever will. All honor and power to Him forever! Amen.

*23: ... **thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.***

Moses could not look upon the face of God and the front side of God. He would be too blinding, too dazzling, too full of splendor, too radiant, so effulgent. It would kill him. It is like looking at the full radiant sun in the noon day. In fact it would be easier to look at the sun that to look at the full radiant of God's glory.

2. God's ethical glory

This is the glory of His character. This is His name, His nature, His character, His person, His being, His attribute.

*5: **And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.** 6: **And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7: Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. 8: **And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.*****

Observe that when Moses said...

*18: ... **I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.***

the answer given him was this ...

*19: **And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee ...***

Jehovah "passed by before him" (ver. 5), i.e., gave him the glimpse of His essential glory.

*22: **And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by ... 23: **And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.*****

III - God's gracious shielding

A full discovery of the essential glory of God, would overwhelm even Moses himself. If God would make known the fullness of who He is, Moses would not be able to live.

*20: And he said, **Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.***

No man can see God in His essential glory and live.

So God in mercy said, "*You will only see my back, the afterglow of my glory.*" **God puts restrictions** so that Moses may behold some glimpse of God's essential glory and yet not die.

But as far as the ethical glory of God **there were no restrictions**. He has kept nothing back. He has made His goodness pass before him. He has revealed His name.

How did God shield Moses?

*21: And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: 22: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that **I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:** 23: And I will take away mine hand, and **thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.***

Clift of the rock

*21: ... **I will put thee in a cleft of the rock ...***

God in His mercy provided Moses some shield from God's glory. Moses was put into the cleft of the rock. He hid him behind a rock.

Jesus Christ is the cleft of the rock wherein we stand when we come to God in Christ Jesus. Apart from Christ, men do not see the true goodness of God.

*1 Corinthians 10:4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and **that Rock was Christ.***

*Rock of ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.*

Cover thee with my hand

*21: ... **and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:***

This is the second shield between Moses and God's glory. Not only the rock but God's hand as well.

IV - Application

What does this account mean to us? What do I want us to take away from this story?

1. The goodness of God

We see the goodness of God in the way God answered Moses' prayer for greater revelation. This should be an encouragement to every one of us to seek the Lord.

God is not playing hide and seek with us. He was us to know Him. He wants us to seek His glory. I believe that's the kind of prayer that God will not turn down.

Isaiah 55:6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

We see the full display of the goodness of God at the cross.

Titus 3:4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, He is infinitely gracious, infinitely benevolent, infinitely loving.

“That God should be good to creatures is something to be thankful for, but that he should be good to sinful creatures exhibits His character in a far more marvelous light, and should constrain our gratitude beyond all degree. That he should plan a scheme of redemption, that He should give His Son to carry out that purpose, that His Holy Spirit should bow the heavens and come down and be resident on earth, dwelling in the bodies of his people, that He might work out the good pleasure of His own will wherein is goodness.”

God's goodness, gracious promises, and mercy towards us, should not only encourage our faith, but also excite our fervency in prayer.

2. The glory of God

Moses understood that it is not about him but about God and His glory, God's honor, God's reputation, God's praise and God's kingdom. This should be most on our hearts, soul, mind, thoughts and tongue. Whether spoken or consciously expressed to God in the silence of our hearts and minds – this day pray, *“Lord show me Thy glory.”*

I want to be like this Moses. I want us to be like Moses. I want you and me to come before God this day and to say to Him *“I pray you, show me Thy glory.”*

I want this to be the supreme passion of our lives. I want this to be the driving motive of all we do. I want us to be a people who are consumed with the glory of God.

I don't know what lays heavy upon your shoulders and upon your heart this day but every one of us can identify with Moses with the enormity of the challenges of life that we all face. Whether they be personal, ministry, family, finances, health, work, career, relationship, vocation, sin, weakness, habits, clothing, music, etc. Whatever it may be this must be the prayer of every man and woman, under the sound of my voice this day we must all pray *“Show me Thy glory.”*

Do you want to see the glory of God?

You will never see his glory till you get to Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5: For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.