

Exodus Chapter 33

- Both Moses and God were out of sight, and out of mind to the people.
- The conclusion is that God won't wipe them out.
- But in His time he will visit or address their sin.

V: 1 Now the Lord speaks to Moses giving him clear direction – depart.

Isaiah 30:21 “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”

- Destination: “*unto the land which I swear unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob...*”.

Psalms 138:2 “I will worship toward thy holy Temple, and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”

- God is keeping His promise! This is a reminder.

Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.”

2 Corinthians 1:20 “For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”

Genesis 12:6-7 “⁶And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. ⁷And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.”

Genesis 13:14-17 “¹⁴And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: ¹⁵For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. ¹⁶And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. ¹⁷Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.” (Genesis 22:16-18)

Genesis 26:3 “Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father.”

- God will deal with our sin, but at the same time He will keep His promises, He will do what He has sworn to do – nothing will keep us or separate us from the love of God.”
 - We are seeing here in Exodus the fulfillment of what God had promised 430 years prior in Genesis.
- V: 2 An angel will go before them to drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.
- God essentially assures them of victory.

We see the fulfillment of this promise:

Joshua 24:11 “And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.”

Genesis 15:13-16 ¹³And He said unto Abram, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; ¹⁴And also the nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. ¹⁵And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. ¹⁶But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.”

- It looks like the iniquity of the Amorites is just about full.
- This is a reminder of God’s promises, it’s a re-assurance of victory – and it’s applicable to us.
- We will stumble, we will fall at times – but this does not void God’s word? No, it just shows us who we are.
- Does God forsake us? Do we lose our salvation? No

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

- V: 3 Describing the land of Canaan as a plentiful place of abundance. The angel will lead them, but God will not go with them in their midst.
- Sometimes there’s that discussion whether the angel as mentioned in various places is “the Angel” of the Lord, meaning a Theophony or Christophony, or simply an ordinary angel, meaning not the Lord personally.
 - This would seem to be a regular angel as opposed to a Theophony because the Lord declares that He will not go up in their midst.

- **Now we come to the real consequence to sin: separation from God.**
- The reason being that the people are stiff necked, rebellious – and because God is a consuming fire – mixing the two means somebody is going to get burned.

Hebrews 12:29 “For our God is a consuming fire.”

- When Hezekiah was king of Judah, the army of Sennacherib king of Assyria conquered the Northern kingdom of Israel and had now come to Jerusalem to lay siege to it.
- Sennacherib sent Rabshakeh out to persuade the Hebrews to surrender, and to mock the God of Israel. Rabshakeh told the people not to trust in their king, nor their prophets, and particularly not in their God. None of the other kingdoms, nor their gods were able to stop the mighty king of Assyria – and there’s was no different.
- King Hezekiah took the threats of the Assyrians, and laid them before the Lord in the Temple – and the Lord answered through the prophet Isaiah.
- That night an angel of the Lord went through the camp of the Assyrians and slew 185,000 soldiers. The guards looked over the wall the next morning and all they saw were dead bodies.
- You would think that there would be great rejoicing over this victory which the Lord had given to the Israelites.

Isaiah 33:14 “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?”

- They were afraid because all of a sudden their God with whom they’d had a lukewarm at best relationship had shown Himself strong on their behalf, and right outside their city walls.
- Suddenly everything they’d learned growing up about the righteousness of God, the judgment of God were an uncomfortable reality in their lives.
- Here it’s the same thing in reverse. God knows He’s righteous, God knows that He is Holy, and that He’s a consuming fire – He doesn’t want the people to perish – and from the people’s response in V: 4 we see that they knew it as well.

V: 4-6 When the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned.

- If we can sin without remorse or conviction – something is dreadfully wrong. If the Holy Spirit isn’t convicting us of sin when we sin – that means He is not there. That means we’re dead.

- When that conviction comes and we sense the separation, we sense and know that we're not right with God – that is a hard place to be, I don't like that sense of distance – but I praise God that He lets me see it!
- They came out of Egypt with great wealth, having plundered the Egyptians. They wore much of that wealth, in contrast to their previous lives as slaves.
- Now they remove these outward symbols of prosperity or celebration and assume a more modest posture – having been humbled.

1 Corinthians 1:29 “That no flesh should glory in His presence.”

V: 5b “... *that I may know what to do unto thee.*”

- At first glance it may appear that God is trying to figure out what to do...
- The Hebrew word “yada” translated here as “know” is also translated as “to teach”, or “show” as in reveal what to do unto thee.
- Similar in a sense to waiting to see what the sentence or consequences are going to be.

V: 6 They took off their “ornaments” and never put them on again.

- These were the same things that were used to produce the golden calf – and they separated themselves from them.
- God wants us to separate ourselves from those things, or people that will pull us or separate us from Him.

1 John 2:15-17 “¹⁵Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”

V: 7 At this time the Tabernacle had not yet been built.

- The word used to describe the Tabernacle: (H4908) mishkan, mish-kawn';
- This is different than this “tabernacle” (H168) 'ohel, o'-hel; a tent, covering, dwellingplace, home, tabernacle, tent.or tent of meeting.
- Basically there was a tent that was used for meetings, and where Moses lived, and Moses said in effect that if God wouldn't be in their midst, then I won't be either.

“And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp.”

- Those who were truly seeking God had a way to do that.

Jeremiah 29:13 “And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.”

V: 8-10 As Moses went out to the tabernacle of meeting, the people would stand in their doorways and watch. As Moses entered, the Lord would descend in a cloudy pillar.

- As Moses was in the presence of the Lord, the people worshipped.

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- I remember this scenario when I was a child. Having done that which I wasn't supposed to have done and having my mom tell me that my dad would deal with me when he got home.
 - Later seeing my dad's car pull up; watching as he and my mom talked, waiting for him to “deal” with me. Knowing that as he turned and un-fastened his belt what that meant...

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- Everything is on hold: Moses has all the plans for the Tabernacle, the priestly garments, and all the stuff – but they aren't making it yet.
 - Their sin has put everything on hold; they're waiting to see what is going to happen.

Psalms 66:18 “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”

Isaiah 59:1-2 “¹Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: ²But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.”

- Sin separates us from God, sin forestalls our walk with the Lord.

Proverbs 15:29 “The Lord is far from the wicked: but He heareth the prayer of the righteous.”

V: 11 God spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend!

Later when Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses:

Numbers 12:6-8 “⁶And He said, hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. ⁷My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. ⁸With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall

he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?”

Deuteronomy 5:4-5 “⁴The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, ⁵I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;”

Deuteronomy 34:10 “And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,”

- Face to face means directly and personally – and we can have that!

1 Corinthians 13:11-12 “¹¹When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹²For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

It starts with a relationship, it starts by becoming His friend:

John 15:14-15 “¹⁴Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. ¹⁵Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you.”

John 10:27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

- It would seem that based on V:7 that anyone who chose to could go out to meet the Lord at the tabernacle of the congregation – but we only see Joshua doing this.
- Once in God’s presence – he didn’t want to leave. God didn’t make him go.

V: 12-13 You’ve told me to bring this people into the promise land, but now we’re waiting to see who’s going to go. (Angel or people?)

- Moses isn’t sure what is going on, he’s not sure what is going to happen.
- Moses continues: at the same time you’ve said that you know me by name and that I’ve found grace in your sight.
- If that’s the case, show me your way, reveal to me what you are doing – that I might know you better, that I might find more grace in your sight.

2 Peter 1:2-3 “²Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, ³according as His Divine Power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”

- Intercession / consider that this nation is your people.

- Not knowing what is going to happen, Moses continues to intercede for the people.

God's response:

V: 14 *“My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.”*

- God declares that He will go with them, not because of their devotion or piety – but because they had a mediator who stood between their sin and God's holiness.

1 Timothy 2:5 *“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”*

Our mediator has the same message:

Matthew 11:28-30 *“²⁸Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you, (walk with Me...) and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”*

- I won't downplay the role here of the intercessor, because as Moses intercedes on behalf of the people, he is a model or type of Jesus who is our intercessor.
- There is however another important factor that we very much need to consider: God's character.
- When we think about God Almighty, we acknowledge that He is high and lifted up, that He is Holy and righteous, all powerful – as we read earlier He is a consuming fire, He is sovereign, and all knowing, He is omnipresent, He is truly incomprehensible – beyond our understanding in so many things.
- That is our perspective.
- How does God describe Himself?

Exodus 34:6-7 *“⁶And the Lord passed by the before him, and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, **merciful** and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, ⁷keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...”*

Psalms 103:8 *“The LORD is **merciful** and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.”*

- I would venture to guess that there are some here today, just because of the numbers – there are some here today that haven't entered into that close personal relationship with Jesus because of the sin or the past sins in your life.
- The rational being that we need to clean up our act, then we are ready for God – if we just fix this or that. “I won't go to the doctor until I'm better.”

- I would lovingly say, gently say – you don't know God, you won't know God – until you know His mercy and His forgiveness – and that they are yours for the asking.
- He is waiting with open arms to forgive, to show Himself merciful.

Luke 19:10 “For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Mark 2:17 “When Jesus heard it, He saith unto them, they that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

- Like the children of Israel, we all drop the ball, we all mess up constantly.

But if we're truly repentant:

Romans 5:20 “Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

V: 15 “*with me*” is in italics, meaning it's not part of the original text.

- While there is application in the personal form – if you don't go with me, then I won't go.
- What it really says literally is “*if thy presence go not, carry us not up hence.*”
- The result of Moses being in the presence of God on the mount and in the tabernacle of meeting was not only a closer relationship with God Himself, but also a passion for God's people.

V: 16-17 Previously Moses had asked that question, if I've found grace in your sight, and you said that you (God) know me by name – here we see that God acknowledges both.

- Moses poses the question; “how will the rest of the world know that we've found grace in your sight – except you go with us?”
- That is what makes us different than the other nations around us.
- God responds to Moses' intercession, and agrees that He will do what Moses has requested.

James 5:16 “... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

V: 18 Moses is on a roll, God has shown both he and the people favor so he seemingly kind of just goes for it: What's he want? He wants to know God!

James 4:2 "... ye have not, because ye ask not."

Speaking of Jesus:

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: whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

V: 19-20 God will make His goodness pass before Moses, God's goodness and His glory are connected.

- God will proclaim His name; God's name is equivalent to His nature, His essence.

"I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will be merciful"

- God is sovereign.
- No man can see God's face and live.

John 1:18 "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him.

- Whenever anyone in scripture has "seen God", they've seen Jesus – a Theophony or Christophony – and even then in a limited way – not in His glory.
- Whenever we "see" a glimpse of His glory – part of us dies, no man can see Him and live.

V: 21-23 I'll put you upon a rock: - **by Me...**

Psalm 18:2 "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

- Jesus is our rock, the cliff, or the cleft – cross.

Cliff: (H5366). neqarah, nek-aw-raw'; from H5365; a fissure:--cleft, cliff.

Colossians 3:3 "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

- The only way we're going to see God's glory is to be hidden in Christ.