

EXODUS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Exodus chapter 33 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw the sin of Israel as they broke the covenant they made with God. Moses was up on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights getting the Law of God, how to build the tabernacle and the people became restless and convinced Aaron to make them an idol to worship the Lord by and he made for them a golden calf!

And the worship of this golden calf degenerated into a drunken orgy and God told Moses to go down from the mountain because He was going to wipe out the children of Israel and start all over with Moses. This causes Moses to intercede for the people, something I believe God wanted Moses to do and He relented from destroying them. In this rebellion, with the establishment of the Law, 3,000 people died in their sin and only the tribe of Levi stood alongside Moses and really they were standing with the Lord to fight against this sin. Interestingly enough, on the Day of Pentecost, 3,000 lives were saved, added to the church as the Spirit of God was poured out. It is as the Scriptures tell us; the Law brings forth death while the Spirit brings forth life!

Tonight in our study we will see the repentance and restoration of the children of Israel. So with that as our background, let's begin reading in Exodus chapter 33, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word!

EXODUS 33**VERSES 1-3**

1. As you read this you may be thinking, “This is great. God is going to bring them to the Promise Land. He is going to drive out their enemies” Yes, that is what it says, but it also says that He will not go with them but *an* angel He will send. In fact, because of their sin God says that He doesn’t want to get too close to them because they deserve His judgment. He will wipe them out! For many, that would be fine. Give me money, a good job, lots of toys to play with, health and-so-on. Folks, you will never be satisfied apart from the Lord being with you!

Think about it. Bret Farve is a multi-millionaire, he is retired from football, he has a wife who has survived breast cancer, he has children and yet, he is not satisfied, he wants to play football no matter how this affects others. David said in Psalm 27:4, “**One thing I have desired of the Lord, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord, And to inquire in His temple.**” You see, what will you profit if you gain the whole world and yet lose your soul? Absolutely nothing, true satisfaction is only found in the Lord! Also, in Psalm 26:8 we are told, “**Lord, I have loved the habitation of Your house, And the place where Your glory dwells.**” May we be satisfied in the Lord for if we are, nothing else will matter or rob us of that joy!

2. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones put it like this; “To be given every other blessing is of no value if God is not with you. What is the value of Canaan? What is the value of milk and honey? What is the value of having possessions, if God was not with them? They saw that the realization of the presence of God, having this fellowship and company, was infinitely more important than everything else.”

VERSES 4-6

1. True repentance leads to action, not just empty words and we see that with the children of Israel! They were not satisfied with possessions they wanted the Lord! So instead of decorating their flesh, they brought their heart before God. Too often Christians dress up the flesh to make themselves look good but in reality they are in sin and need to bring their heart before God in repentance as the children of Israel did!

VERSES 7-11

1. This tent of meeting was not the tabernacle because the tabernacle was not yet built. But it was a place where God spoke to Moses and do you see where the people stood? They were at a distance as this tent of meeting was outside the camp, but why? Because their sin had separated them from God, it kept them at a distance from God. And yet, they did have a heart for God. I believe this is why God instructed Moses to build this tent of meeting, to see who was really interested in drawing close to God. When the Holy Spirit truly touches our hearts we too will separate at any cost, no matter who will follow!

2. Now, how did Moses see God when we are told in I John 4:12, “**No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.**” I believe the Lord did speak to Moses face to face, but he did not see God the Father, but He audibly spoke to him as we speak to others. I do not believe this is an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ here, although some may think so. I believe it is God the Father speaking to Moses and you will see why as we move on!

3. One more point here. When God touches a person’s heart and they are on fire for the Lord, others will catch that fire as we see here. Moses was on fire for the Lord and the camp of Israel caught that fire! Also, Joshua stayed in the tent; he did not want to leave the Lord!

VERSES 12-17

1. Moses once again intercedes for the people and is basically saying that if the Lord doesn’t go with them, he doesn’t want to go and don’t bring the children of Israel. But why would he say that? Because, apart from the Lord going with them, they will have nothing. In other words, “We don’t want an angel to go with us, we want ***YOU!***” And the Lord says that He will go with them. Now, did they deserve it? Absolutely not but by God’s grace that He is extending to them, He will go. Folks, don’t ever feel you are separated from God’s grace. If you are in sin, repent, return for He is standing there with arms of forgiveness and restoration that are open wide for you – ***HIS GRACE!***

Notice what David said in Psalm 32:5 after his sin with Bathsheba. We are told, **“I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,’ And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.”** You see, first repentance and then restoration, not because David deserved it, but because of God’s grace!

2. Remember what Jesus said in John 15:5, **“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”** That, in a sense, is what Moses is saying here, that apart from the Lord being with them they cannot do anything. You see, it is only because of His grace that we can do anything and apart from Him we can do nothing that He will accept!

VERSE 18

1. Moses was not satisfied with just knowing God; he wanted that deep, personal relationship with Him. He wanted to see His glory, the CHABOD in Hebrew. He wanted that which had substance, weight to it and not just fluff, like so many want today! May we desire that close relationship with the Lord, to see His glory, that which has substance to it!

I like the way Lloyd-Jones put it when he wrote, “We may have been Christians for many years, but have we ever really longed for some person, direct knowledge and experience of God? Oh, I know, we pray for causes, we pray for the Church, we pray for missionaries, we pray for our own efforts that we organize, yes, but that is not what I am concerned about. We all ask for personal blessings, but how much do we know of this desire for God himself? That is what Moses asked for: ‘Show me thy glory. Take me yet a step nearer.’” May we draw near to God, to have that kind of passion for Him!

VERSES 19-20

1. This is why I feel this is God the Father for He said, “**No man shall see Me and live.**”

It is as John tells us in John 1:18, “**No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.**” And in John 6:46 Jesus said, “**Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.**” Obviously Jesus has seen the Father, they have always existed together and thus, Jesus is able to say in John 10:30, “**I and My Father are one.**” If you want to know the Father, then get to know Jesus because He is an exact representation of the Father, if you have seen Jesus then you have seen the Father!

2. God is promising to reveal His character to Moses, all that He is, His goodness and in that, that is all he truly needed to see, that is all he could stand to see in his body of flesh!

VERSES 21-23

1. What Moses saw, literally was the afterglow of God the Father, for anything more would have been too much for him. May we have that desire to see God's glory, the CHABOD, the weightier things of God and not be satisfied with just the fluff! May we desire to see all that God wants to show us of Him!

EXODUS 34VERSES 1-4

1. If you remember back in Exodus chapter 32, as Israel was in sin and broke the covenant that they made with God, Moses broke those tablets of the Law. Now, with Israel repenting and God restoring them, God brings Moses back to the top of Mount Sinai to write the Law on two new tablets of stone. Thus, we see the covenant renewed. Now, why was Moses alone? Because sin had separated the people from God and Moses was acting as the mediator between the people and God just as Jesus is our Mediator! Paul makes that point in I Timothy 2:5-6 when he wrote, **“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”**

VERSES 5-7

1. Here we see once again the Shekinah glory cover the top of the mountain as the Lord speaks with Moses. When you see “**LORD**” in all capital letters it is the name of God, all that He is, it is YAHWEH! Now the Jews held the name of God in high reverence and thus, they left out the vowels so we don’t know how it is really pronounced, it is written YHWH. And when they came to the name of God, they would not say it, they would say, “the Name.” Also, when the Scribes were copying the Word of God, as they came to the name of God, they would stop, take a bath, change their clothes, wash their pen, dip it in fresh ink and then they would write, “YHWH.”

What does that mean, this *ALL BECOMING ONE*? We don’t have to guess because the Lord tells us; it is all that He is, His character, His nature. He is *MERCIFUL* or full of compassion. It is as Psalm 78:38-39 tells us, “**But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, And did not destroy them. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, And did not stir up all His wrath; For He remembered that they were but flesh, A breath that passes away and does not come again.**” He is *GRACIOUS* or He gives to us what we don’t deserve, eternal life, His love, it is freely given to us. He is *LONGSUFFERING* or God does not have a short fuse, He is slow to anger! He *ABOUNDS IN GOODNESS AND TRUTH* and we are blessed because of it! He *KEEPS MERCY FOR THOUSANDS* or the idea here is that we deserve death but He does not destroy us!

He does this by ***FORGIVING INIQUITY AND TRANSGRESSION AND SIN.***

Iniquity is a summation of both transgressions and sin. A transgression is a willful act of disobedience while sin is missing the mark of perfection even though you may be trying, you still fall far short! That is all forgiven in Christ! But, if his love and forgiveness are rejected, if they refuse the free gift of life that is found in Jesus, then they are guilty and their guilt will not be cleared!

VERSES 8-9

1. When you have an encounter with God, when you see His love, His grace, His mercy and-so-on, we are not forced to worship God, it just flows from our lives as it did in the life of Moses. And Moses not only asked that their sin be forgiven, but that they would be His inheritance, His treasure. What else could you ask for! How important is it to you to know God? Spurgeon made these interesting comments regarding this subject. He wrote, “It has been said by someone that 'the proper study of mankind is man.' I will not oppose the idea, but I believe it is equally true that the proper study of God's elect is God; the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy which can ever engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father.”

VERSES 10-11

1. God wants to do great things through them if they follow Him. If they don't, then they will face His judgment. But, in either case, God will be glorified!

2. God tells Moses that He will drive out all these “ite’s” from the land, the enemy just as God is doing in our own lives. Are these physical enemies as they were with Israel? They could be but for the most part I believe the Lord is speaking of the flesh, which wars with our spirit. We are to crucify the flesh nature so that the nature of Jesus may flow from our lives; we are becoming more like Him! All we must do is follow Him! Look at all the marvelous things God has done in our lives so far and all we need to do is allow His Spirit to work in our lives for His glory for as He works in us He will work through us!

VERSES 12-16

1. God is calling for the children of Israel to separate themselves from the Canaanites, don’t follow in their religious practices of worship, which many times involved sexual activity. Don’t become close friends with them or they will bring you down. Don’t marry them or you will fail! That seems harsh, doesn’t it? When you understand the corruption, the evil, the wickedness of these people, the cup of their indignation was overflowing and God was going to judge them. He gave them an opportunity to change, but they didn’t and the Canaanites would be destroyed, they were beyond redemption and if they were not destroyed, then they would destroy the children of Israel. You see, we are married to God; don’t play the harlot as Israel has done. In Hosea 1:2 we are told, **“When the Lord began to speak by Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea: ‘Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry And children of harlotry, For the land has committed great harlotry By departing from the Lord.’”**

2. Paul put it like this in II Corinthians 6:14-18, **“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.’”** Yes, God still wants us to be separate today from the unsaved, not that we can’t talk with them, but they should not be our close, intimate friends, we should not be dating an unbeliever because they will bring you down more often than you will bring them up. That is what the Lord has said and you can agree or disagree, but if you disagree and you go down that path, understand there will be consequences to your actions, and that won’t be good!

VERSE 17

1. God needed to remind them for they had already broken the covenant by making the golden calf to worship God by. Folks, we are to worship God in Spirit and truth and not with idols! For Israel, look at what Hosea 4:13-14 tells us they did, **“They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops, And burn incense on the hills, Under oaks, poplars, and terebinths, Because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters commit harlotry, And your brides commit adultery. ‘I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, Nor your brides when they commit adultery; For the men themselves go apart with harlots, And offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot. Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.”** What God warned them not to do, what they said they would not do, they ended up doing!

VERSE 18

1. This was the first of three feasts that all Jewish males 20 years old and up were to keep, to go to Jerusalem if possible to celebrate them. Passover and Unleavened bread ran together with Passover beginning on the 14th of Nissan and Unleavened Bread on the 15th of Nissan and running for seven days. Why does the Holy Spirit single out Unleavened Bread here? Because in this feast all the leaven in the home was to be removed and in the Scriptures, leaven is a type of sin. Thus, as God speaks of this covenant they were to keep, He is calling for them to walk in purity! God wants no less from us, we are to be holy as He is holy, that is the standard He has set, may we strive for it!

VERSES 19-28

1. In this section the Lord is reminding them of the Law's He has established to keep the nation separated from the other nations and to be separated unto the Lord!

2. Once again we see the three feasts that every Jewish male who was 20 years old and above was to keep, if they were able, in Jerusalem but they were to observe all seven feasts. And God told them that if they come to worship Him, during those feasts days, no enemy would come against them! God will honor, protect those who are coming to worship Him!

3. This was the second time Moses spent 40 days and 40 nights on Mount Sinai with the Lord and he did not eat or drink during both of these times he spent with the Lord. Folks, this was a miracle as God sustained him all those days for no man can survive that long without food and water. But God sustained him as he fellowshiped with the Lord. Now don't go home and try this, Moses was called by God to do this. Yes, fasting is Scriptural and there are many types of fasts, but make sure when you are fasting that you are doing it for the right reasons, you are seeking direction from God, you want to draw close to Him and not for your own personal gain, which would be unfruitful!

VERSES 29-30

1. The face of Moses had a glow to it, it shined and the people were afraid, he was radiating, but why? Because of the time he spent in the glory of God. As Christians we should shine forth or radiate God to people. You see, as you spend time in the *SUN* you will see the affects with either a suntan or sunburn! The same is true as you spend time in the *SON OF GOD*, you will see the affects and so will others! Paul put it like this in II Corinthians 3:18, **“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”** The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit.”** And The Living Bible says, **“But we Christians have no veil over our faces; we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.”** Thus, as you spend time with Him, in His Word, you are being transformed into His image; you will radiate His glory to those around you!

VERSES 31-35

1. Moses gives to them the commandments of God, the Mosaic Covenant, which was the bases of God’s Theocratic rule over His people!

2. Moses places a veil over his face, yes the people were afraid of his shining face, but that was not the reason he did it. How do I know that for sure? Because Paul tells us in II Corinthians 3:13, **“unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.”** He covered his face because as he spent time away from the Lord, that glory, that shine began to fade away and he did not want the children of Israel to see that. And Paul helps us to understand that this fading away was a picture of what was to happen with the Old Covenant that was written on the tablets of stone, that it would fade away and give way for something that shined far brighter, the New Covenant based in the shed blood of Christ on the cross of Calvary for our sins!

3. One last point here and that is this. Why is it that in many of the medieval artworks of Moses they have him portrayed with a pair of horns on his head? It is because of a mistranslation of the phrase, **“the skin of Moses’ face shone”** found in verse 35. The Hebrew word for **“shone”** means, “shot forth beams” and it is related to the noun for “horn.” Thus, the Latin Vulgate mistranslated this verb as “having horns.” Thus, the artwork is based on a mistranslation and has nothing to do with Moses having horns on his head!

VERSE 35**VERSES 1-3**

1. Yes, there was much work to be done but obedience is more important than sacrifice. Thus, they were to work for six days and then rest on the seventh day, the Sabbath and spend it with the Lord. For us, the same is true, obedience must come first and out of that obedience we can then do the work of the Lord!

VERSES 4-9

1. Why didn't God just create these materials for the tabernacle? Because He is allowing them to be involved in His Work, but only those who want to give, they are not being forced to give. Moses didn't have some clever fund-raising technique or tell them he would swallow a goldfish if they obtained all the materials for the tabernacle. No, he told them what was needed and that was it, then it was up to them to give for the work of the Lord! It is as Paul tells us in I Corinthians 9:7, "**So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.**" And that goes not only for our money, but our time, using our gifts. If you are serving and complaining, then you are not a cheerful giver and folks, I don't think anyone is forcing you to do it. If you don't want to, then don't, but I will also tell you this, you miss out on the blessing! But if you can't give cheerfully, then don't give at all! And I truly believe that God touches the hearts of people who have a willing spirit to give and they do! Look at when we were trying to purchase this building, we had no resources, but I let you know what was needed and that was it and God spoke to your hearts and here we are today!

VERSES 10-19

1. Here we see the call for those who are gifted to come and assist in the work of building and furnishing the tabernacle.

VERSES 20-29

1. When God touches people's hearts you don't have to force them to work, you can't stop them from working!

VERSES 30-35

1. Bezalel and Aholiab were called by God to do this work, gifted men who not only could do this work but they were able to teach others! How important that is and what a special gift that is but for it to work the people must also be willing to step forward as God is calling! I remember when we were doing some construction on this building before we had our occupancy permit to have a service and I did not know what I was doing, but Conrad is one of those gifted workers who was able to teach me. That is what we see here in Exodus and that same principle works today as older women minister to the younger women in the church, older men minister to younger men and-so-on.

2. As we finish up tonight lets close with Exodus 36:1 for it fits into this section we are in right now. We are told, **“And Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whom the Lord has put wisdom and understanding, to know how to do all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, shall do according to all that the Lord has commanded.”** The workers were to follow these men in the work of building and furnishing the tabernacle!

3. For us as Christians, God has also called us and He wants us to use the gifts that He has given to us. Paul put it like this in Philippians 2:12-16, **“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.”**

Paul is not saying that we are to work in for our salvation or work for our salvation but we are to work out our salvation because we are saved, allow good works to flow from our lives and bring glory to God! I realize that you may feel weak; that you can't do it and that is okay. Remember what Paul said in Philippians 4:13, **“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”** With that perspective we can't lose as we walk where the Lord has called us!