

THE GLORY OF GOD

Week 7 – The Presence of God

March 11, 2025

I will not go up in your midst.... I won't stay so close to you, God was telling Moses. WHY? ...*lest I consume* (destroy) *you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.* We need to know that “stiff-necked,” while I mentioned last week that it means “stubborn.” The picture that describes this phrase is of an animal, an ox or a donkey, resisting its master and making its neck stiff.

Have you been pondering the significance of what God told Moses? God told them they could have the land of promise, but He would not remain with them in a close personal way. If they were satisfied with such an arrangement, it would prove that they only loved God's blessings and NOT God Himself!

If Moses would plead with God for His presence...it would show a genuine heart for God Himself! To be given blessings is of no value if God is not with them/not with us. The realization of the presence of God is greatly more significant than everything else!! Without God's presence, we are destitute! Without God's presence, all is hollow!!

Presence means “existence,” “the state of being there”! God's presence is His manifested presence – His visible presence – the revelation of Himself. How is God revealing Himself to you? God reveals Himself to us today through Creation, His Word, through Jesus!

Moses tent of meeting that he pitched “outside the camp,” where the children of Israel were camped, speaks to the remoteness of God due to Israel's sin, their idolatry...their worshipping of an idol – the golden calf. This tent spoke to God's justice.

AND, the tent also provided a nearness to God that was more intimate than anything the people had yet experienced. When the people sought God and went out to the tabernacle of meeting...when the people saw the pillar of cloud, God's manifestation of Himself, descend and stand at the door of Moses' tent of meeting and talk with Moses...the people rose and worshiped God! The people longed/they yearned for the fellowship that Moses experienced at this tent with God. And Joshua (Hoshea [Num. 13:16 - “desire for salvation”]), Yeshua (“The Lord is salvation”) would not depart from the tabernacle!

What understanding is the Holy Spirit giving us in this passage?

When Moses drew close to God it also drew the people to God and Joshua close to God, again, so much so that Joshua did not depart from the tabernacle (Ex. 33:11).

Do we DESIRE the sense of God's presence?

- We need God's presence for joy ([Ps. 16:11](#)): *In Your presence is fullness of joy.*
- We need His presence for protection ([Ps. 31:20](#)): *You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man.*
- We need His presence to deliver us from despair ([Ps. 42:5](#)): *Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.*

- We need His presence for our good ([Ps. 73:28](#)): *But as for me, the nearness of God is my good.*

God spoke with Moses “face to face.” God is spirit (John 4:22). God does not have a physical face. When we read of God speaking to Moses “face to face.” Face is “panim” in Hebrew which means “presence.” God spoke with Moses “presence to presence” – existence to existence. The root word for “face” is to turn which implies turning toward something or facing something.

Num. 12:6-8 explains “face to face” further...*Hear now My words:*

If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. ⁷Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. ⁸I speak with him face to face, even plainly (to perceive; to discern), and not in dark sayings (riddles); and he sees the form of the Lord (i.e. physical form; image: the Angel of the LORD – Ex. 3:2 - And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush.

When Moses pitched his personal tent outside the camp, remember, the “official” tabernacle had not as yet been constructed. God had told Moses to make a tabernacle when Moses was on Mt. Sinai (Ex. 25-28). But, again the tabernacle wasn’t built as yet. This would not stop Moses from taking extraordinary measures to seek God. Moses determined to make his own tent a tabernacle of meeting. Moses’ personal tent was a temporary tent of meeting. After the “official” tabernacle was built, Moses no longer needed his temporary tent outside the camp...and the term the “tent of meeting,” was applied to the tabernacle as it was a place where God would dwell among the people and the people would meet with God!

Ex. 33:12a - *Then Moses said to the LORD, ‘...You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me.*

God had previously told Moses He would send His Angel Ex. 23:20-21 - *Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. ²¹Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him.* (while the text states “an” Angel – this is the Angel of the LORD Who is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Who pardons transgressions/sins. And, God’s name YAHweh is in Him (YAHshua).

This is the Angel of His PRESENCE...

Isa. 63:9 - *In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them all the days of old.* Who is this? Jesus – prior to His incarnation in Bethlehem.

We only see THE Angel of the LORD in the OT. Once you turn over to Matthew, we no longer read of THE Angel of the LORD.

I’m strongly suggesting that The Angel of the LORD is a pre-incarnate...pre-Bethlehem APPEARANCE of JESUS!

Ex. 33:12b-13 - *Moses continued to speak with God, Yet You have said, ‘I know you (Moses) by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’¹³ Now therefore, I pray, if I (Moses) is*

speaking) *have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people.*'

It wasn't enough to know that they would make it to the land of promise. Moses and the people (how many?) valued the presence of God.

Where are we?

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Was Moses pushy? Moses' words were bold. Are our words, our pleas, our requests to God bold?

...show me now Your way – Heb., “derek” – journey/road/path...mode of action. Do we see in all that is transpiring between God and Moses...that God is instilling compassion within Moses – compassion for His people?

...show me now Your way...that I may know You

Re: relationship, God knew Israel and Moses, and Moses wanted to KNOW God. How did Moses know God thus far?

God called Moses from the burning bush. God spoke with Moses. God commissioned Moses to deliver His people from Egypt. God empowered Moses to lead 2.5M people through the wilderness.

God and Moses communed with one another on Mt. Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights. Moses saw God's glory on Mt. Sinai. We can only imagine the precious encounters with God at the tent of meeting outside the camp.

What had Moses seen at the first Passover? He saw firstborns die in the homes that didn't have the blood applied to the lintel and doorposts.

He saw the pillar of cloud as darkness to Pharaoh's army and the pillar was a pillar of light by night to the children of Israel.

He saw the Red Sea part and allow the Jews to pass through on dry ground. He saw the Red Sea come together and drown Pharaoh's army.

Did Moses COMPREHEND? Would you consider what Moses had witnessed was the goodness and SEVERITY of God?

Moses is seeking to know God even more intimately.

How do WE comprehend knowing God more deeply? Does it mean to better understand how we can live in a manner that pleases God?

The Apostle Paul said in II Cor. 5:9 - *...we make it our aim...to be well pleasing to Him.* Are we well-pleasing to God?

Jesus, in His prayer to God the Father before His arrest and crucifixion said ...*this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God...that they may know Jesus Christ whom You have sent* (Jn. 17:3)

The English word *know* in John 17:3 is a translation of the Greek word *ginosko*, which, in this context, means an experiential knowing, not simply an intellectual understanding of facts about God or Jesus or the Bible. It means walking with God, abiding in Him!

GOD tells us in Jer. 9:23-24 - *Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; ²⁴ but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the **LORD** who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things*

Paul, near the end of his life, recorded his greatest passion...*that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings* (Phil. 3:10). His example shows us that no matter how long or how well we have known the Lord, we can always know Him more deeply.

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Moses wanted to KNOW God! What does God desire?

Jer. 9:23-24 - *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches;*

²⁴ But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the Lord.

Ex. 33:13b Moses said to God ...*and consider that this nation is Your people*. What is Moses expressing to God? This is YOUR nation, God. In Dt. 7:6-8 we read that Israel uniquely belongs to God. God created the nation of Israel (Isa. 43:1). WHY?

To accomplish His purposes: to receive the law (Ex. 20); to be the channel through whom the Messiah will come (Micah 5:2); to be witnesses to the Gentiles (Isa. 43:10); to be the instrument of blessing for the world (Gen. 18:18).

Ex. 33:14 - *And He said, 'My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.* God answered Moses' prayer. But, did Moses rest?

Ex. 33:15-17 - *Then he said to Him, 'If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. ¹⁶ For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.'* How will it be known...*that Your people and I have found*

grace in Your sight....? Moses declared – God, You made a covenant with us so that the world may know Who You are and who we are.

Moses was standing up for God having chosen Israel. In essence, Moses was asking God, “How are all the other nations to know that we really are your people?” Moses was asking God to make this absolutely clear...that Israel was a created nation to serve as an instrument of blessing for the world (Gen. 18:18). Israel is separate, unique, altogether apart – according to God’s prerogative, His sovereign choice (His choice as our sovereign God – our absolute ruler of the universe!)

In Isa. 43:10 – God told the Jewish people that they were His witness people – the ones who knew the ONE true God – and were charged with telling the Gentiles who believed in many gods.

In Gen. 18:18 – God states that He would use Israel as the instrument of BLESSING for the world!

Gen. 12:3 – and God promised Abraham that through his descendants would come the One Who would bless all the families of the earth – the Jewish Messiah, Jesus!

Ex. 33:17 - *So the LORD said to Moses, ‘I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you, Moses, have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.’* This is speaking of God’s intimate knowledge of and care for Moses. Throughout this exchange, God continued to unfold to Moses Who He is. God is giving Moses ASSURANCE! And so we read Moses speaking these words to God...

Ex. 33:18 - *Please, show me Your glory.*

QUESTIONS: What was new? What impacted you? How does Moses conversation with God mirror your conversations with God? **Answer questions in handout bolded and underscored!**

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK: Reread.... Journal.... Read Week 8 when you receive it.