

MOSES' PRAYER

EXODUS 33:13-18 • TV-041B

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By
HENRY T. MAHAN

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Zebulon Grace Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
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Exodus 33:13-18

“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. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. 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? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. 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. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.”

I'm speaking to you today on the subject: **“MOSES' PRAYER.”** I started to call this message: **“MOSES' GREATEST PRAYER”** but I'm a little bit fearful of saying this is the greatest prayer this most humble man on the earth ever prayed. But this is a great prayer.

And if you want to follow in your Bible I'd like for you to turn to **Exodus 33:13-18**. Now, **Exodus 33:13-18**. It'll do you a lot of good to follow the Scripture as I preach this message today.

I think we're going to, as one fellow use to say, “Hoe a little corn today;” we're going to get down where we live. We're going to get down to the need of the creature.

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Now, Moses had a tent. He had a tent which he pitched outside the camp. It was far off from the camp away from the other tents where the other people were. And this was before the tabernacle was erected. This was before the services of the tabernacle, before the tabernacle was built.

Moses had this tent far out of the camp and he called it, "The tent of meeting." It was where Moses met God and where God met Moses. And the Scripture says that when Moses would go out to the tent of meeting that the people would all rise and stand in the door of their tents, until Moses entered the tent of meeting. And then they'd go on about their business.

And then the pillar of cloud signifying God's presence would descend upon and hover over that tent of meeting and God would speak to Moses, "*Face to face.*" That's what the Scripture says here, "*Face to face as a man speaks to his friend.*"

This is what our Lord was talking about, I believe, when He spoke there in **Matthew 5** of the prayer closet; "*Enter into thy closet and shut the door and pray to thy Father in secret.*" The presence of the Lord will surround you and God will speak to you and you can speak to God face to face as a man speaks with his friend.

But Moses went out to the tent of meeting, and this particular day, Moses was extremely troubled, and he was extremely anxious. And he presented to God a three-fold request. And when I read this three-fold request; I'll tell you I found as I read this passage that I didn't just look on it as Moses' prayer but honestly from my heart I looked on this as my prayer.

And I thought; let me bring that message to the people. Let me bring it to the congregation. Let me present it to the people. May, by God's grace, this be your prayer too, Moses' prayer, my prayer and your prayer.

And this three-fold request; now I'm going to take it slowly. I want you to turn to **Exodus 33**, first of all, **verse 13**.

And here's the first request in this holy place, in this tent of meeting, in this secret hour, when God's presence signified by the pillar of cloud hovering over that tent, and he spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend, and Moses presented a three-fold request:

First of all: He said, "*Lord, if I have found grace in your sight; show me thy way that I may know thee.*"

Now, here's the request; "*Show me thy way that I may know thee.*" But look where Moses begins. Look where this request begins; "*If I have found grace in thy sight.*"

You need not come to God any other way. You need not plead any other foundation or any other grounds for God showing you His way but grace. That's right! Moses didn't say; "Now Lord I left Egypt and I went out in the wilderness and I stayed for years. And then I went down into

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Egypt and I led your people out. And I've been faithful, and I've served you. And you gave me the Ten Commandments and I did all that you told me. Now Lord, I've done everything you told me to do. And I've given my life to you and I've served you and I've done the best I can."

"I've gone to church and I've tithed and I have taught Sunday school and preached and done all of these things. Now Lord, show me your way." Foolishness! Moses worded this thing right; he said; *"Lord, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me thy way."*

It's not by works of righteousness which we've done that God will show us anything. It's by His mercy and by His grace, *"If I have found grace in thy sight."* This is the basis of all blessings. This is the basis of all that God has ever bestowed upon a human being.

Let me read you some Scripture:

Genesis 6:8; *"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."*

Genesis 19:18, Lot cried; *"O my God; thy servant hath found grace in thy sight. Thou hast saved my life."*

Judges 6:17: Gideon prayed: *"Lord, if I have found grace in thy sight; show me a sign that you speak to me."*

Acts 15:11; Peter said: *"We believe that we through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved, even as the Gentiles, (through the grace, not through our merit or works) through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul said; *"By the grace of God I am what I am."* It was God's grace that chose us. God didn't leave us in darkness and leave us in depravity and leave us in sin; He chose us.

It's called the *"Election of grace."* That's right! *"There's a remnant according to the election of grace."* It was God's grace that chose us. It was God's grace that redeemed us, *"In whom we have redemption through His blood according to the riches of His grace."*

It was His grace that called us; *"God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by His grace."* It is grace that supplies our need. Our Lord said; *"Paul, my grace is sufficient for thee, (whatever the thorn, whatever the trouble, whatever the trial); my grace is sufficient."*

**"Amazing grace
How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost
But now I'm found
I was blind but now I see.**

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**Tw'as grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed."**

So, this first request was based upon the right foundation. Moses cried, "*Lord, if I have found grace in thy sight; show me thy way that I may know thee.*"

Now, how does a man know God? Our Lord Jesus Christ said in **John 17:3**; "*This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*"

How does a man know God? Jesus Christ reveals God; that's how a man knows God. If you learn Christ, you learn God. If you know Christ, you know God. If you come to Christ, you come to God. If you worship Christ, you worship God.

Phillip said, "*Show us the Father (show us God).*" And Christ said, "*Phillip; have I been so long time with you and thou hast not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*"

Jesus Christ reveals God for He and the Father are one. He said, "*I and my Father are one.*" And He said, "*No man knoweth the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal Him. Show me thy way.*"

I believe in that hour God answered that prayer for Moses. And Christ later said, "*Moses wrote of me.*" God showed Moses the way of redemption. God revealed Christ to Moses and Moses wrote of Christ. That's right!

"*Show me thy way.*" Christ said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.*"

He showed Moses the way of life that he might know God, that he might know God in His redemptive character, that he might know God as the Saviour, that he might know God almighty's Jehovah, "*God our Saviour.*"

Christ reveals God's purpose to save, for "*He's the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.*" Christ reveals God's love; "*Herein is love, not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. For God so loved the world He gave His Son. This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him.*"

Christ reveals God. Do you want to know God? Meet Christ. Christ reveals God's holiness. Christ reveals God's power. Christ reveals God's fullness, for the Scripture said; "*In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*"

He's the brightness of God's glory. He's the exact image of His person. "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.*"

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So, this is my prayer, Lord, if I've found grace in thy sight, and it will have to be on that basis; it won't be because I'm better than the fellow next door or down the street or I'm more holier and more pious, more righteous, more dependable, I'm more faithful, or more zealous for God's cause. God's not going to bless you for that reason. *"Your righteousnesses are filthy rags."*

"If I have found grace in thy sight;" that's the basis on which He blessed Noah. Do you reckon you can come just a step ahead of Noah? That's the basis on which He blessed Moses, Gideon, Paul and Peter; *"If I have found grace in thy sight; show me thy way that I may know thee."*

Second: Now look down at **verse 15** and here is the second request, Moses presented his second petition, he said, *"Lord; if your presence go not with me don't let me go; carry me not hence."* The Lord had promised Moses; He said in **verse 14**; *"Moses, my presence will go with you."*

Now the Lord had promised Moses that His presence would go with Him. Egypt was behind him and Canaan was way out there in the future. But between Egypt and Canaan was an awesome, awful, wilderness.

And this is what Moses is saying; "That long, hard, wilderness journey is upon me." And Moses wanted reassurance of the presence of God and he said, *"Lord, if your presence go not with me, I don't want to go."*

Now my friends; let's apply that to you and to me. Heaven and all its glories are awaiting every believer. That's right! We believe that. But the wilderness journey of life is upon us, it's around us and this journey would be impossible without His presence.

"Yea, though I walk through this valley of the shadow of death; I will fear no evil." Why? *"Thou art with me."* If He's not with me I fear all evil. I fear the evil one and all his evil subtleties. I fear every trial.

How does a person without the foundation keep his footing? How does a person without the refuge find any safety? How does a person without Christ find any strength? How does a person without hope in Christ find any comfort? I just don't know.

Paul prayed with God to remove a thorn which was disturbing him, and God said to him, *"Paul, my grace is sufficient for thee."* And that made it all right. The praying stopped. The request stopped.

Paul was content with the thorn if he could have God's grace and God's presence. And that's what Moses is saying here; "Lord if you don't go with me, don't let me go, not another step."

And I'll tell you something else he was talking about. He was going to the land of Canaan. That was his destination. And Moses was saying this; "I don't even want to go to the land of Canaan if you're not going with us. Canaan would be no joy without thy presence."

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Paul said this; *"I have a desire to depart and be with Christ."* Do you know, Paul never talked about the streets of gold, the gates of pearl and jasper, and the mansions in heaven? He never talked about those things.

Every time he talked about heaven he talked about being with Christ: *"To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. I have a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better."*

Yes sir! It doesn't matter where we are. It doesn't matter what we have. It doesn't matter who we're with if God's not there, if God's not there. **John Newton wrote:**

**"Content with beholding His face,
My all to His pleasure resigned,
No changes of seasons or place
Would make any change in my mind.
While blest with a sense of His love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there."**

And then God's presence; listen to this, look down at **verse 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?"*

Moses says: "Lord, if you don't go with me; don't let me go, because he says, if thy presence go not with me; how shall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight. Is it not that you are with us?"

In other words, Moses is saying here; this is the evidence that we're His, that He is ours, His presence." He says; "Lord, if you don't go with me; don't let me go because how shall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not that you are with us?"

This is the distinguishing characteristic, *"God is with us."* Christ said, *"I and my Father will come and dwell in you. We will take up our abode in you."* God's presence reveals God's grace to us.

All right; watch this, down there in the same verse: God's presence also is that which distinguishes true believers from all other people. That's right! Listen to Moses in **verse 16**; *"Thy presence with us separates us from all the people who are upon the face of this earth."*

It's distinguishing grace. It's separating grace. It's not that I wear my sleeves longer than you that distinguishes me as a child of God. It's not that I wear my hair in a different style. It's not that I wear a uniform of religion.

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It's not that I talk in a high pitch, whiny voice and wear a silly smile all the time and carry my hands like this, that I reveal that I'm one of God's children. It's God's presence, and it's God's grace. That's what distinguishes true believers, the presence of the Lord.

Read it, **verse 16, Exodus 33**: *"How shall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight?"* Well, they don't wear a certain kind of uniform that'll make them Christian. Or let them have a certain kind of pious walk or let them obey certain rules and regulations.

No sir! Here's the way you distinguish a true believer: *"Is it not that you are with us, thy presence is with us?"*

That's what separates us from all the people on the face of the earth, the presence of the Lord, the glory of the Lord. We are His temple and His dwelling place. And people recognize that you've been with Jesus. And God said, *"Moses, I'll go with you."*

Now watch this, **verse 17**: *"Because you have found grace in my sight."* Don't you plead on any other basis. That's the way this whole prayer is conducted. It's in the secret place. It's between God and Moses, face to face, friend with friend.

And Moses says; "Lord; if I found grace in your sight; show me your way that I may know you. And Lord, if you don't go with me; don't let me go." And God says; "I'll go with you; I'll go with you, because you've found grace in my sight. That's why I'll go with you and I know you by name Moses, I know you."

Third: And that leads us to the third request. Now listen carefully to this, **verse 18**: And Moses said, *"Lord, I beseech thee; show me thy glory."*

Now my friends, the things Moses had seen were sufficient to satisfy the average person for many lifetimes. Oh, he had seen; you talk about miracles, you talk about seeing a demonstration of the power of God, the reality of God's presence; Moses had seen the burning bush, the bush that burned but was not consumed.

The plagues in Egypt; think of all those places, how many, ten of them, concluded by the death of the first born when that horrible, awful, midnight cry went up from all over Egypt and death visited every family and every home, even the cattle on the hillside from the Pharaoh's palace to the cows out yonder on the hillside.

And Moses saw the parting of the sea. I hate to say it, but I suspect that would satisfy you and me for a long time wouldn't it? We'd talk about that till we died.

And then the manna falling from heaven and the rocks spurting forth its water and the brazen serpent; Moses had seen those things. But Moses wanted to see God's glory, His chief glory. Are you with me?

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He knew, evidentially Moses knew more than we know that these miracles and these manifestations of power were not the chief glory of God. Now he knew that. Evidentially he knew that because here he is after all of these experiences, he's praying; *"Lord, show me your glory."*

All right; wherein lies the chief glory of God? What's Moses asking for? This is what I'm asking for, the same thing Moses is asking. My friends; I don't get excited when God heals someone who is sick. All healing is of God. *"God giveth and God taketh away. God giveth life and God killeth;"* that's what the Scripture says.

If anybody is healed, God heals him. If anybody's brought out of the valley of death, God will bring him. If a life is taken, God takes it; He's the author of life and death. I don't get real excited.

People get real excited when somebody who's been sick; I've seen folks crippled; God made them walk. I've seen people with blood diseases and I've seen God heal them. I've seen people with other sicknesses. We've prayed for them and anointed them with oil and God has healed them.

That's nothing to get excited about. God's almighty. He can do all things. I've seen some folks we've prayed for and they've died. God wasn't pleased to heal them. God heals some and God doesn't heal some.

But that's not God's chief glory. Moses knew that. Can you see that? That's not the chief glory of God showing off powers and miracles and manifestations of His power. *"Show me your glory."*

And God said in **verse 19 of Exodus 33**; look at it; and God said: *"I will cause all my goodness to pass before thee. I will proclaim the name of the Lord. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious. I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful."*

Do you know what God's chief glory is? Here it is right here! Moses had seen all of these miracles and here he is on his knees praying with God face to face as a man talks to his friend and he says; "Lord, I want to see your glory, your chief glory, your great glory."

God said, "All right Moses, I'll show you my way. My presence will go with you. I'm going to show you my glory. I'm going to proclaim the name of the Lord Jehovah. I will be gracious, I will be merciful. I will send a Saviour, I will redeem the lost. I will seek and save the lost. I will cause sinners to repentance."

This is God's chief glory; it's His redemptive grace in Jesus Christ our Lord. That's right! That's God's glory.

And men who are out here preaching divine healing and miracles and all of these things, are not preaching the greatness and glory of God, the chief glory of God. You preach the greatest glory

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of God and the chief glory of God when you preach redemptive grace in Jesus Christ, when you preach Christ.

That's the reason Paul who healed more than anybody, who spoke in tongues more than anybody, who was not one wit behind the greatest apostle; that's the reason He said: *"I'm determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."*

You take your message, but Christ crucified was Paul's message. *"Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."* God's greatest glory is His goodness, is His grace, and is His mercy toward sinners in Christ Jesus.

He said that Himself. In **Exodus 33:19** Moses says, *"Show me your glory, (your great glory, your chief glory)."* God said, (All right, here it is); *"I will be gracious, (sovereign grace), to whom I will be gracious. I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful."*

Now, before our Lord went to the cross in the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed this way, *"Father, the hour is come; now glorify thy Son that thy Son may glorify thee. Glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was that I may glorify thee."* That was done on the cross.

Now my friends; the heavens declare the created glory of God. *"The heavens declare the glory of God. The firmament showeth His handiwork, (the creative glory)."* History records the providential glory of God.

But the cross and only the cross reveals the redemptive glory of God; "That in the ages to come; (watch this) that in the ages to come He might show how many cancers He has healed." No sir!

"And in the ages to come He might show how many blind people He's given sight." No sir! "That in the ages to come He might show how many lame people He made to walk or crutches He broke or people He healed." No sir!

Paul says, *"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus our Lord."* That's what heaven is going to be about. It's going to be to the praise of the glory of His grace.

I'll tell you, **Exodus chapter 33 verses 13-19** is some of the most beautiful, gracious, wonderful, territory upon which you can walk. Take a stroll there, will you?

The three-fold prayer of Moses; *"Lord, show me thy way. If I have found grace in your sight; show me your way that I may know you."* I don't want to perish defending a profession of religion or a denomination or a system of doctrine. I want to know God, don't you?

And Lord, if your presence doesn't go with me, don't let me go. And Lord I want to see your glory, your chief glory. I won't be satisfied till I do!