

Exodus Chapter 33 Commentary

Ex 33:1 ¶ "And the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: 2 And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: 3 Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way."

I want us to see a prophetic picture of the Church of Salvation by Grace from these verses. We notice that God tells Moses, lead these people to the land of promise and I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the idolatrous inhabitants of the land of promise before you. God says I will not personally go with you lest I consume you all in my anger. How do we see the church of today in this scene? Just as with Israel, God the Father does not dwell personally with us, and does not personally lead us on life's journey, through this wilderness world to our eternal land of promise. If God dwelt among us, He would quickly become angry and destroy us. However, we have one advantage over Israel, which is our intercessor, not Moses who was the intercessor for Israel, but Jesus Christ. Jesus came into the world and died upon the cross to abate God's anger toward us. God's anger towards our sins being pacified through Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit, which is greater than an angel, to dwell in us and lead us on our pilgrimage. We give thanks and praise to Jesus, for abating God's anger toward us, and giving us the promise of eternal life, with God and with Jesus, in the eternal place Jesus has gone to prepare for us.

2 "And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite:" When you are born again, you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, and the Holy Spirit power of Christ in us, which like God cannot behold sin with the least degree of allowance, drives out the former inhabitants of our hearts. Wherefore, "**the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite:**" are a picture of what we are told is in the heart of the unregenerate in **Mt 15:19-20; 19 "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: 20 These are the things which defile a man:**" Well, you ask, what about the inherited sin nature of the flesh. When you are born again and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, you are given a new nature for the flesh, which is the pure sinless nature of Christ, as testified by scripture, seen in **2 Pe 1:2-4; 2 "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3 According 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: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."**

Another advantage we have over Israel is that we have the complete King James bible, whereas, with Israel the bible was being written as they went along, and God supplied the law commandments as needed. It is beyond my comprehension, to grasp the totality of the multitude of the blessing bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ, over the blessing of God to Israel. Another advantage that we have over Israel is the promise of Jesus Christ in **Heb 13:5 "for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."** The one thing we share, in common, is as Israel had the promise of God "**I will send an angel before thee;**" we also have the promise of Jesus Christ that we are God's people and He will never leave nor forsake us.

4 "And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments. 5 For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore, now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. 6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb. 7 ¶ And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. 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. 8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. 9 And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the

tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses. 10 And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door."

We wish to continue with the advantages, and comparisons, of the Church of Salvation by Grace over the chosen nation of God's people, Israel. In verses 4-7 we see that Israel received the tidings that God himself was not going with them but his angel. They hear God telling them they are a stiffnecked people and it cuts them to the quick. God commands them to lay aside all their ornaments, which leaves them without anything to plead with God except repentant hearts. In this scene we see a picture of the child of Grace, having been born again, and realizing that they have nothing to bring to God, but hearts filled with repentance for their sins, and this can only be brought to God through Jesus Christ. As Israel laid aside all the ornaments, we must lay aside all our works and rely solely on the finished work of Jesus Christ, that the mercy of God may be extended to us.

Next, we see that Moses removed the tabernacle of the congregation from being in the midst of this stiffnecked people and Moses calls it the Tabernacle of the congregation (with a capital T), which is the picture of the New Testament Church, of Salvation by the Grace of God. Seeing the Tabernacle was set apart from sinful Israel, demonstrates to us the separation of the Church of Jesus Christ from the world. Thus, we see the born-again sinner, who is seeking God, leaving the wilderness of sin and going unto the Church outside the sinful camp.

Next, Moses enters the tabernacle, and God descends upon it in the cloudy pillar. When Israel sees this, every man stands in their tent door and watches. When God descends upon the tabernacle He converses with Moses, who is the picture of our intercessor Jesus Christ, with whom God the Father was in constant contact, while Jesus was on earth in the prepared body. We know this because Jesus said in **Joh 11:42 "And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."** As Jesus, on earth in His prepared body, was in constant contact with God the Father in heaven: so, the Holy Spirit in the Child of God is in constant contact with God the Father.

Seeing the pillar of God descend upon the tabernacle with Moses in it, all the people rose up and worshipped God. Surely you can see the picture of Jesus ascending to his place on the eternal throne of God, which is indeed afar off from the sinful camp. When we see, and understand, our intercessor has ascended back to heaven, from whence he came, we rise up and worship God. Why? Because we know from the scriptures that Jesus, our intercessor, has accomplished the will of God the Father, in the eternal remission of our sins, and granted to us the promise of eternal life in Christ. There is no name given among men whereby more honor and glory should be bestowed upon than that of Jesus.

Jesus and God, the Father, are still communicating about us in the eternal heaven. How do we know this? We are told in **Ro 8:34 "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."**

One other picture we draw from the scene of Moses entering the tabernacle, is the picture of the veil of the temple being rent in twain when Christ died upon the cross on our behalf. This is when Jesus entered into the most holy place for us and the mercy seat was exposed to all the children of God, seen in **Heb 6:19-20; 17 "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."** Just as Moses continued to plead and make intercessions with God for Israel; today Jesus is pleading and make intercessions to God for us, which is why Jesus told us in **Joh 15:16 "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."** God chose Israel to be the nation of people to bear His name upon the earth. God has chosen the Children of God, the New Testament Church, to bear His name upon the earth.

Ex 33:10 And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door." When we are enabled to grasp the scene of the Son of God descending from heaven in his prepared body, and that prepared body hanging upon the cross on our behalf;

there is nothing we can do but, like Israel, fall upon our faces and worship our God and Saviour. You say, but preacher it says that they rose up and worshipped God, not that they fell on their faces. Yes, that is true, but it tells us in verse 8 that they were standing in their tent doors. Now, if they were standing, how can they rise up and worship God? They must go from "**standing in their tent doors**," to falling on their faces when the presence of God descended upon the door of the Tabernacle. Once they have fallen on their faces before the presence of God, they can rise up and worship God in Spirit and Truth. The same thing applies to every Child of God. Before we receive the new birth, we are standing in our tent doors, trusting in our own works for our salvation. When we see Jesus, descended to earth and dying on the cross for our sins, we fall upon our faces before God, just like Saul on the Damascus road. Then, having received the assurance of our eternal salvation, we can stand and worship God in Spirit and Truth.

11 "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle."

There is a special picture here that I want us to see in the scene: Joshua, Moses's servant, remained in the Tabernacle. Thus, we see Moses as the figure of God the Father, and Joshua as a picture of God the Son. If you search the definition of Joshua, you will find it is another name for Jesus, which is defined as the self-existent one, which simply describes Jesus as God. Because Jesus is self-existent, it shows us how he could resurrect himself from the dead. What was in the Tabernacle that represented Jesus? The Mercy Seat. Joshua remaining in the tabernacle tells us that though Jesus ascended bodily back to his place in heaven, yet Jesus remains in the Tabernacle, the Church on earth today, and his presence is manifested by the Holy Spirit indwelling God's chosen people.

Wherefore, Jesus has done what no other could do, which is: Jesus raised himself from the dead: Yet Jesus remains in the tabernacle, and is still represented on earth in the mercy seat, which is put into the heart of every believer: Jesus has ascended back to his place in heaven, and there Jesus is our High Priest, who is pleading our cause before God the Father. Wherefore, as Joshua remained in the tabernacle, so Jesus remains in the tabernacle.

We also know that Joshua remaining in the tabernacle is a picture of Jesus, because Joshua is the one who will lead Israel into the land of promise. Likewise, Jesus will lead us into the eternal land of promise, which He has gone to prepare for us. Hallelujah! Amen!

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."

Moses tells God: you tell me to bring this people to the land of promise: You have not told me who You are sending with me: and I need some reassurance. Moses says to God: you know me by name and have told me that I have found grace in your sight. Wherefore, God, I would like for you to reciprocate these things to me. Moses asks of God: show me your way: so, I may know thee, personally, which will prove I have found grace in your sight, and will make me know that this is thy nation of people.

For us today, when we are given the new birth, we have many doubts, and seek many assurances from God, that Jesus is indeed our personal Saviour. Satan desires that you stay in this state of doubt and fear, rather than you stand firm upon the promised knowledge of your eternal salvation. Many people go around doubting the finished work of Jesus Christ, by proclaiming a false humility of only having a hope, which is not what the bible teaches. The bible teaches that we have sure knowledge of our salvation, and if we don't know we have been saved by God's grace, and do not believe it with all our heart, then you probably are not born again. Consider these scriptures:

- **1Jo 3:14 "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."**
- **Heb 10:19-23; 19 ¶ "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed**

with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"

- *Mr 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."*
- *Joh 10:28 "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."*
- *Joh 17:2 "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."*

It is very obvious from these few texts, and there are many more in scripture, that you know that you have been born again, and in that knowledge, you know that you are saved by the grace of God, and you have eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Some will say: preacher what are you going to do with *Ro 8:23-25; 23 "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. 24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."*

We point out that this scripture is not talking about knowing you have been saved by the grace of God and given eternal life. This scripture is talking about the resurrection of the body at the return of Christ. It is not talking about the knowledge of the work of grace that God has done in your heart through the power of the Holy Spirit in giving you the new birth, eternal remission of sins, and eternal life.

Saved as used in Romans 8 means deliver or protect, heal, preserve, be made whole. Wherefore, we understand that this hope is that at the return of Christ, we will be delivered from this body of death, eternally protected by Jesus Christ, completely healed of all sin sickness, eternally preserved in Jesus Christ, made completely whole by the merging of the body, soul, and spirit, in the resurrection from the dead of in the change if we are alive at the return of Christ, and we will have sinless, immortal, incorruptible, and glorified bodies.

Hope as used here means a concrete expectation, concrete confidence, or absolute faith. Wherefore, we see again there is no doubt that the resurrection of the body will come to pass, but we are yet waiting for that event to occur, at which time it will be seen and no longer hoped for.

Seen means to look at or behold, to look forward to, to perceive. Again, we see it means that we are waiting for the redemption of the resurrected body.

Wherefore, take this scripture in the context that it was intended, and we easily see that it is not speaking about knowing if you are saved, but is speaking only of the belief that when Christ comes the second time, we will then see the fulfilling of this hope, for we shall have resurrected and glorified bodies like the body of Jesus.

Next people will throw up *1Co 8:2 "And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."* Again, they use this scripture totally out of context. If you read the whole chapter, you will find that it is speaking of eating things offered to idols, which has nothing to do with knowledge of your salvation in Christ Jesus.

Returning to the text in verse *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."* Moses only asked God to show him God's way, and Moses would then know God. The same is true in the life of every born-again child of God. What do you mean? In the new birth, you are given the revelation of Jesus Christ, as the redeemer and thus you are given to see and know the way, which is Jesus Christ, as seen in: *Joh 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* In this text Jesus is speaking to Thomas, his disciple in the presence of the other disciples, which declares to us that Jesus is a personal Saviour, which we are to exemplify to those around us. It is why we recognize our brothers and sisters in Christ as God's people. We declare unto you today, if there is anything that a child of God should rejoice in and over, it is the finished work of Jesus Christ, and the knowledge of eternal salvation in Christ Jesus. Hallelujah! Amen!

14 "And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. 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? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. 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."

Remember in Verse 3 God said: "*for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way.*" Through the intercessory prayer of Moses, God tells Moses: My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. Moses replies: If thy presence go not with us then do not carry us thence. Moses further iterates: It is thy presence with us that identifies us as your people. Your presence with us will separate us from all other people on the face of the earth. God tells Moses He will do this because Moses has found grace in his sight and God knows Moses by name.

Do you see the picture of the Church of Salvation by Grace in the is age of grace? What is it that sets the saved apart from the unsaved? The saved have the presence of Jesus, in the form of the Holy Spirit, indwelling in them. This is why Jesus told us that He would never leave us nor forsake us. It is the picture of the eternal life that we are given in the new birth.

It is the prophetic picture that, as Israel through Moses found grace in the sight of God, so we have received grace in the sight of God, through Jesus Christ, and who knows God by name. Just as God knew Moses by name, so Jesus Christ knows each child of God by name. The poet man gave us a special hymn to remember this in the Lloyd Hymnal, with particular attention on verse 4:

412 11s. Christ's comfort to the church.

1. O ZION, afflicted with wave upon wave, Whom no man can comfort, whom no man can save; With darkness surrounded, with terrors dismayed, In toiling and rowing thy strength is decayed.
2. Loud roaring, the billows now nigh overwhelm, But skillful's the pilot who sits at the helm; His wisdom conducts thee, his power thee defends, In safety and quiet thy warfare he ends.
3. 'O fearful, O faithless!' in mercy he cries, 'My promise, my truth, are they light in thine eyes? Still, still I am with thee, my promise shall stand; Through tempests and tossings I'll bring thee to land.
4. **'Forget thee, I will not, I cannot—thy name, Engraved on my heart doth for ever remain! The palms of my hands, while I look on, I see The wounds I received when suffering for Thee.**
5. 'I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans, For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones; In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain, Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain.
6. 'Then trust me, and fear not, thy life is secure; My wisdom is perfect, supreme is my power; In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine, To make thee at length in my likeness to shine.'

Praise and Glory to God for this eternal blessing.

18 "And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 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. 20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. 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 clift 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."

Moses request of God that God reveal his glory to him. God tells Moses: **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."** However, you, as a natural man with an inherited sin nature, cannot see my face and live. God tells Moses: I will make my glory to pass by thee, while I hide thee in the clift of the rock, then when my glory has passed by, I will remove my hand and allow you to see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen.

What does this have to do with us today? The saved people of God do not see the face of God, here in time. However, the name of the Lord is proclaimed before us because of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

The hand, which hid Moses in the clift of the rock and only allowed Moses to see the hinder parts of God, is the same hand that hides us today from seeing God's face, while we inhabit bodies that have an inherited sin nature. We can behold God, now, with spiritual sight, but not with natural sight. When Jesus returns the second

time, and we are changed, God's hand will not hide us in the clift of the rock, and we shall see the face of God and live forever. Hallelujah! Praise ye the LORD! Amen!