

HONEST PRAYERS

Interceding for God's Presence, Exodus 33:12-17

Israel's Rebellion

- The children of Israel were accustomed to the presence of God from the time they crossed over the Red Sea
- They had a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night
- But when Moses went to the top of Mt. Sinai in Exodus 32 to meet with God
- The Israelites became impatient and rebelled against God by making a golden calf to worship
- The children of Israel had sinned by creating and worshipping golden calf while Moses was delayed at Mt. Sinai
- God is upset with what He sees His people doing and says to Moses ***Exodus 32:9-10 (KJV) 9 And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: 10 Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.***
- Moses intercedes for the Israelites not based on “their worth”, but based on *God's worth*
- God changed His mind and instead of destroying all of the Israelites:
 - Three thousand of the rebellious Israelites were killed by the sons of Levi
 - God sends a plague among the people
- God *reinstates* His promise to send the Israelites to the Promised Land, but instead of God going with them, God will send an *angel* instead to guide them to the Promised Land
- There is a price to be paid for disobedience and rebellion; ***it's the absence of the presence of God***
- Moses and the Israelites will still get to the Promised Land, but it will be without the manifest presence of God
- Without the presence of God, anything we try to do is more challenging, difficult, frustrating, will not generate results that having God's presence with you will provide

Seek the Lord

Exodus 33:7-11 (KJV) 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

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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. [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.

- God often withdraws His presence from our lives when we sin
- The consequence of sin, we lose our sensitivity of the presence of God
- That's what happened to the children of Israel, God withdrew His presence
- God withdrawing His presence was *symbolized* by Moses making a tent outside the camp and calling the "Tent of Meeting", the place where the Israelite would now have to go to *meet* God
- It used to be in the center of the camp when God was the center of their lives
- When Moses would go in the Tent of Meeting to pray and worship, the people would get up and go to the door of their tent
- As Moses entered the tent, a *pillar of cloud* would form and hover over the entrance of the tent, it was the *presence* of God
- When Moses would go to the Tent of Meeting, God came in the tent to meet with Moses
- Moses developed a *personal* relationship with God in the tent, it was so personal that God spoke to Moses *face to face*, like a man speaks to his friend
- While Moses was in the tent, the people stood at the door of their tent and worshipped the LORD
- What Moses and the children of Israel did in Exodus 33 still works today if we want the restoration God's manifest presence in our lives
 - Take time to *seek* the Lord in worship
 - Take the time to repent of our sins, slothfulness, and indifference to the things of God
 - Take time ask Him to restore all that's missing in your life

Moses' Intercession

Exodus 33:12-17 (KJV) 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. [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***

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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.

- Moses appeals to God on behalf of the people
- Moses didn't want "2nd best" (an angel guiding them), He wanted *God's best* for himself and the children of Israel
- Moses didn't think they could get to the Promised Land without the presence of God all along the way
- Because Moses was *speaking terms* with God, he felt comfortable to tell God his *complaint* in verse 12, "*You've been telling to lead these people, but you haven't let me know who you will send with me*"
- Moses was a powerful man of prayer, and he began to intercede on behalf of the Israelites
- Moses said to God if I have any grace or favor with you at all, show me your way
- Moses asked God to remember that the Israelites were *His* very own chosen people
- God responded by saying "My presence will go with you, and I'll give you rest"
- God promised to give them *rest*
- Moses believed the presence of God was essential and necessary for their lives
- Moses pleaded with God saying they couldn't go on if the manifest presence of God was not with them
- Moses said to God in verse 15, ***If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.***
- Moses went on to say, "If You don't go with us how will other people know that we are true believers"
- God's presence makes the difference in our lives
- God said to Moses, "I will do what you asked because you have found favor in My sight, you're special to Me, and I know you by name
- God restored His presence back over the lives of the children of Israel because Moses of the *grace on Moses' life* when he interceded for them
- When we intercede for others, the grace of God on *your life* can cover to the lives of people until they get right with God
- Who do we know that is distant from God that you can intercede for now?