



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V24 N44 October 30, 2022

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Personal God

I believe God is involved
in and cares about my
daily life.

*"I lift up my eyes to the
mountains – where does my
help come from? My help
comes from the LORD, the
Maker of heaven and earth."*

Psalms 121:1-2



What makes
God's glory
significant?

WAY OUT

"Glory Days"

Exodus 33:12-23; 34:5-9

The expression, "the glory of the LORD," appears seven times in Exodus (16:7, 10; 24:16, 17; 33:12; 40:34, 35), and another seven times in the rest of the Pentateuch (Le 9:6, 23; Nu 14:10, 21; 16:19, 42; 20:6), twenty-one times in the rest of the Old Testament, and only once in the New Testament (Lk 2:9). Reading just the passages in which the expression occurs in Exodus makes it clear that it refers to the *visible presence* of the LORD. Take the following for example: "Then *the LORD said* to Moses, 'Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the law and commandment I have written for their instruction . . . When Moses went up on the mountain *the cloud* covered it, and the *glory of the LORD* settled on Mount Sinai. For six days *the cloud* covered the mountain, and on the seventh day *the LORD* called to Moses from within the cloud. To the Israelites the *glory of the LORD* looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain'" (24:12, 15-17; cf. 19:9, 16-19; 33:14-15, 18-23). In the books of Leviticus and Numbers, *the glory of the LORD* "appears" to the people to indicate that he is present with them. Commenting on 33:18, "Then Moses said, 'Now show me your glory,' one commentator makes the connection between God's *glory* and God's *presence* explicit by saying: "The request of Moses to see the glory of Yahweh is effectively a request that Yahweh demonstrate the reality of his promise to be present, indeed that he prove his Presence once again, as he did before the solemnization of the covenant that has since been shattered. 'Glory' in this context is very close to a synonym for 'face, Presence,' as the ensuring narrative shows" (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 452).

Moses is determined to see "the glory of the LORD." He knows unless the LORD goes with them—the glory of the LORD being equal to the presence of the LORD—neither he nor the people he is commissioned to lead would reach Canaan, and even if they should, they would most certainly not be able to rip the land from the grasp of its

occupants, the Canaanites. A different commentator writes: "Why did Moses ask God to show him his glory? . . . The answer is that Moses had indeed seen God's glory in the past and therefore wanted to see it again, in as full a way as God might choose to show it, in order to know that just as God's glory had reassuringly accompanied him and the Israelites on such occasions in the past, Moses could count on it to be with them again once they finally set forth from Sinai. That would convince him that God was indeed still close, still protective, and still interested in him and the Israelites as his people" (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 704).

It goes without saying that the Israelite slaves did not emancipate themselves. The plagues that ultimately broke the stubborn will of Pharaoh were not their doing; neither was the parting of the Red Sea nor the destruction of Egypt's chariots. All of it was the LORD's doing. Remember what God said to Moses in Exodus 3:19-20, "But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go." The very idea that the same slaves *the LORD* emancipated would make it *on their own* from Sinai to Canaan and then possess it was ludicrous. Moses knew it and the LORD knew it. And so given Moses' intercession for the people (32:31-34; 33:13, 15-16), God agreed to accompany Moses and the people to Canaan (33:14, 17).

Likewise, it goes without saying that we did not save ourselves. We have been saved by grace through faith based on the death of Jesus. Neither do we sanctify ourselves. We are being sanctified, that is, conformed to the likeness of Christ by the Spirit, who lives in and through us. Apart from his enablement we cannot live the Christian life. All of it is the Lord's doing. Fortunately, we have the promise of God's ongoing presence (Heb 13:5) and his determination to finish the work begun in us (Php 1:6).

1 EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read Exodus 33:12-23 and 34:5-9

33:12-23

12 Moses said to the LORD, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' 13 If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people."

14 The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

15 Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

17 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you, and I know you by name."

18 Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."

19 And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 20 But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

21 Then the LORD said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. 22 When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. 23 Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen."

34:5-9

5 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. 6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, 7 maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

8 Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped. 9 "Lord," he said, "if I have found favor in your eyes, then let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance."

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline "lead these people" in v. 12.
- Box "but" indicating contrast in vv. 12, 20, 23.
- Circle "whom" in v. 12.
- Circle "by name" in vv. 12, 17.
- Highlight v. 13.
- Circle "rest" in v. 14.
- Bracket each of the two rhetorical questions in v. 16.
- Circle "your glory" in v. 18.
- Circle "my goodness" and "my name" in v. 19.
- Circle "my hand" and "my back" in vv. 22-23.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Where does the *conversation* between the LORD and Moses (vv. 12-23) most likely take place?
 2. Explain the point of the *contrast* introduced by “but” in verse 12.
 3. The LORD knows Moses *by name* (see vv. 12, 17). What does that connote?
 4. Put what you think Moses wants *to learn from the LORD* in your own words.
 5. Verse 14 is a *fitting close* to the first go round in Moses’ conversation with the LORD. How so?
 6. But Moses persists, giving *two reasons* the LORD’s *Presence* must go with his people to Canaan. Explain them.
 7. The second go round in Moses’ conversation ends like the first (v. 17; cf. v. 14), so why ask the LORD, “Now show me your glory” (v. 18)?
 8. Does the LORD grant his request? Explain.
 9. Comment on the *figures of speech* used in verse 23.
 10. **Discussion:** Read 34:5-9 and talk about what Moses learns from the LORD when he shows Moses his glory.
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Commentary On The Text

Exodus 33:12-23 is about Moses' desire to have the Presence of the LORD go with him and the people from Sinai to Canaan and related request to see the glory of God. On the reason why, one commentator explains: "At this point in the story of the exodus, Moses very much needed the reassurance God now proposed to give him. The exodus assignment—to bring the people not just from Egypt to Sinai but now from Sinai to the promised land was complicated by the vivid evidence of the people's idolatry in chap. 32 that they were a recalcitrant lot, suggesting that Moses' task would not be a light one. Moreover, God's refusal so far to grant his direct presence any longer in accompanying the people means that Moses would, as it were, be more on his own in leading Israel hereafter than he had been before—and the job had proved hard enough already. The theophany promised here would reassure him" (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 700).

Exodus 33:12-23 contains a conversation between Moses and the LORD that apparently takes place in the tent of meeting (vv. 9-11) in which the LORD promises to go with the people to Canaan (cf. v. 14; cf. 17) and Moses asks to see God's glory (v. 18). It can be divided into three parts each beginning with "Moses said" (vv. 12, 15, 18) and ending with the LORD's reply to Moses (vv. 14, 17, 19). Exodus 34:5-9 contains a description of the LORD doing what he tells Moses he will do in verses 19-23.

In the opening dialogue between the two, Moses questions his ability to "lead these people" (v. 12) by himself. He's uncertain as to whom the LORD will send with him and doubts he can do the job alone. Before the golden calf debacle, the LORD indicated that *he himself would go with him* (23:10-23), but following the people's "great sin" (32:31), God stated explicitly that *he would not go with him* (33:3). So now what? Moses is certain of thing—a mere angel (33:3) will not suffice. So on the basis of his personal relationship with the LORD—evidenced by God's previous choice of him and present friendship with him (v. 11)—he petitions him: "Teach me your ways," he implores, "so that I may know you and continue to find favor with you" (v. 13). The "ways" he mentions likely pertain to God's "ways" with respect to the upcoming journey from Sinai to Canaan. Moses wants to know more about Yahweh, so that he might respond to whatever comes to pass in "ways" that would be pleasing to him. When he tells the LORD, "Remember that this nation is your people," God knows what he's getting at, and replies, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" (v. 14).

In the following dialogue between the two, Moses persists, unable to take "yes" for an answer. After the LORD affirms that he will, in fact, go with the people,

Moses explains why the LORD should not send them if he doesn't. The LORD's presence alone would give them success, and success alone would give them credibility in the eyes of the nations. "Unless Israel succeeded where other nations would expect them to fail, no one would infer that their God was great," says one commentator (Stuart, 703), while another reiterates, "Only Yahweh's Presence with Israel and with Moses will give credence to the assertion that Moses, and Israel along with him (and because of him), have found favor with Yahweh. Only Yahweh's Presence with Moses and Israel separates them from all other people throughout the world" (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 447). God again replies affirmatively, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you, and I know you by name" (v. 17).

In the final dialogue between the two, Moses makes the unprecedented ask, "Now show me your glory" (v. 18). That's all he has to say. Moses is looking for *visible confirmation* of the LORD's two *verbal affirmations* (vv. 14, 17). He doesn't get exactly what he asks—but hey, it doesn't hurt to ask—still he does get more than he likely expects. "What the LORD gives to Moses is quite specifically *not* the *sight* of his beauty, his glory, his Presence—that, indeed, he pointedly denies. What he gives rather is a description, and at that, a *description* not of how he *looks* but of how he *is*" (Durham, 452)—captured in the words, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (v. 19). Moses cannot see God eye-to-eye, even though he can speak to him "face-to-face" (lit., "mouth-to-mouth"), since no one can survive such a sight. However, he is given the privilege of seeing God's backside. "In a cleft in the rock" (v. 22), protected from the nearness of God's glory by the divine hand, Moses will catch a glimpse of God's "back" (v. 23).

And this he does as recorded in 34:5-7, "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.'" Moses wanted some sort of absolutely incontrovertible evidence that the Lord had again accepted his people and would go with them into the promised land. He needed a sign that would convince him that God was with him and the Israelites—and he got it!

Word Studies/Notes

v. 12 *lead these people* An allusion to 33:1 (cf. 32:34)

v. 12 *whom* “The LORD’s presence earlier assured to his people (see 23:21 and note), is now temporarily withdrawn because of sin” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ex 33:3). “Moses objects that a mere angel is no substitute for God’s own presence” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ex 33:12). Moses wanted to know that Yahweh himself would lead the Israelites to Canaan. “He asks for an assurance of God’s presence because he needs this reassurance to continue to lead the people” (Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 471).

v. 12 *by name* “Yahweh’s knowing Moses by name is a singling out that demonstrates Yahweh’s favor upon him” (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 446). “Knowing Moses by his name implied having chosen Moses” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Exodus,” 2022 ed., 287, plano-biblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf; see also *The NET Bible*, 36tn on Ex 33:12).

v. 13 *teach me . . .* Is Moses asking simply to “know God better” (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 701)? “Moses wanted to know more of God’s dealings with people, especially after all that has happened in the preceding chapter” (*The NET Bible*, 37tn, note on Ex 33:12). S. R. Driver summarizes it this way: “that I may understand what your nature and character is, and shape my petitions accordingly, so that I may find grace in your sight, and my future prayers may be answered (*Exodus*, 361). Or is Moses asking more specifically “to know Yahweh’s ‘intention,’ his ‘way,’ specifically, his decision where Israel’s fate is concerned” (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 446) — cf. “I will decide what to do with you” (33:5)? “This is the focus of Moses’ first request (‘Let me know Your ways, so that I may know You,’ in other words, ‘Tell me what You want from me, plus all Your plans and intentions, and how I can successfully lead Your people,’ v. 13).” (Constable, 287).

v. 14 *rest* “The accompanying promise, ‘I will give you rest,’ could be taken to mean that Moses’ job would be easier if God went with him, but the audience for this statement was more likely Israel as a whole, and the ‘rest’ envisaged was that which had already been promised in 15:13, 17, that is, Canaan, the promised land of rest for God’s people” (Stuart, 702).

v. 18 *your glory* I.e., the visible manifestation of God’s presence. “He wanted an experiential sensory perception of God” (Stuart, 705). In effect, Moses is asking for verification of God’s promise to be present (v. 14) — to “put it in writing” so to speak. “The request of Moses to see the glory of Yahweh is effectively a request that Yahweh demonstrate the reality of his promise to be present, indeed that he prove his Presence once again, as he did before the solemnization of the covenant that has since been shattered” (Durham, 452).

v. 19 *my goodness, my name* “Surprisingly, what Moses learned about God’s glory after the ‘great sin’ (32:30) of the golden calf was not further fear of God but rather that he was a gracious God, full of compassion” (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 315).

vv. 22-23 *my hand, my back* “The descriptions ‘cover you with my hand’ and ‘remove my hand’ do not mean that God is a very large human-shaped being with a giant but human sort of hand capable of sheltering a person’s entire body; rather, these are the kinds of necessary anthropomorphisms without which little of God can be described” (Stuart, 710). “W. C. Kaiser says that since God is a spirit, the meaning of this word could just as easily be rendered ‘after effects’ of his presence” (“Exodus,” *EBC* 2:484). As S. R. Driver says, though, while this may indicate just the ‘afterglow’ that he leaves behind him, it was enough to suggest what the full brilliancy of his presence must be (*Exodus*, 363; see also Job 26:14)” (*The NET Bible*, 64tn on Ex 33:23).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

The LORD lifted his threat, agreeing to go with Moses and the people to Canaan in spite of their “great sin,” because he is a gracious God, abounding in mercy and compassion.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?
2. What does this passage teach me about myself?
3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Like many of you, our family is going out of town for Thanksgiving. With nine people involved, I have lists for all the things to do – ongoing lists in my head, written lists in my journal, and text lists that have been fired off, so the kids know what they’re supposed to do to help prepare. God told Moses to go, and what appears first on his list? He wasn’t wrapped up in who would ride which donkey, or which healthy snack he should pack for which picky kid. Laundry wasn’t really a thing in those days, so I guess clean clothes weren’t an issue. What appears first on Moses’ list of concerns in planning and preparing to go into the Promised Land was a plea for God’s presence. He knew he couldn’t take a single step in the right direction without God by his side leading and guiding him. Moses not only wanted God’s presence, but he wanted God to teach him His ways. He wanted to know God intimately so he could lead the Israelites appropriately. I can plan every detail of our vacation weeks in advance, but it won’t be successful without the Lord’s presence. We can play games, cook out and do all the fun things, but if my husband and I aren’t leading our kids closer to God, the vacation is just another thing to do. I want this vacation to be special, to unify our family and be a vacation we’ll all remember, so I’ll start with prayer. Psalm 31:3 “Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me.”

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Exodus 33:12-23; 34:5-9

1. What did Moses ask from the Lord?
2. How did the Lord respond?
3. How does God describe Himself in this text?

What Do You Think?

Do you think Moses’ actually saw God’s face?

What Do You Do?

Play follow the leader with your family. Talk about ways God leads us.

CORE COMPETENCY: Personal God

I believe God cares about everything in my life.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 18:29

“With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall.”

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- ☐ I completed my Bible Study
- ☐ I memorized this week’s verse
- ☐ I brought my Bible to church
- ☐ I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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