

Chapter 33

- 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 swore unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it:
- 33:2 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:
- 33:3 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.*
- thought: *The above three verses seem to be a capstone for the narrative that starts in 33:4, below; and, too, a recap of that meeting between God and Moses which started with the 'threatened' destruction of the children of Israel, and ended with God's acknowledgment that the LORD would not destroy the mixed multitude for their sin against God. In the process, Mercy had overshadowed Judgment, in a manner of speaking.*
- I believe that, God placed the recap in this position, so that, we would not be afraid that the children of Israel would no longer be around for the next phase of the revelation of God. Had we been allowed to think this, Satan might have convinced us that God does not keep His word: and, by the act of expanding on that, we might have despaired of this knowledge, thus ending our openness to the LORD, even before we had a chance to see that, God does always stand for the development of his son, Israel.*
- Submission to despair can prevent us from seeing the following: such messages of God as might be perceived to be threats, or the changing of His mind, are, instead, revelations of the state of mankind, as seen in the unfolding of the knowledge of what mankind, as occasioned by spite, might think should be done. That is, it reveals what a man, one who does not appreciate, or understand, the goal of God, would expect God to do to "punish" Israel. The knowledge of this 'restraint' of God is a productive revelation for mankind; for, oftentimes, our deeper self is obscured by the unwillingness to see Truth. It is good that we are revealed in the statements of God, and, thereby, we have a clear opportunity to quench the fire of Satan . . . even before the devil-inspired wood is gathered in us.*
- It is sort of like God is saying: "If this was a human decision, this is of the sort thing that would be done: but, let us take it beyond the human realm, to see what the LORD God does, as set in the order of things as the means for balancing justice and mercy, even in the human sphere."*
- 33:4 And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments.
- 33:5 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.
- 33:6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.
- 33:7 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.
- 33:8 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.
- 33:9 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.
- 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.

33:11 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.

WOW!

33:12 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.

33:13 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.

33:14 And he said, *My presence shall go with thee*, and I will give thee rest.

thought: *Though the children of Israel would no longer have direct communion with God; because of his devotion and proven service to God, Moses was not included in this indictment.*

33:15 And he said unto him,

If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

33:16 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.

33:17 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.

thought: *Once again, God has dispelled a threat from Satan: it was done through the activation of the devotion of His servant, Moses. Again, we see where God presents Moses with a potential temptation from Satan; which temptation is this: that, surely, God would give the land to the people, but because they would not stay loyal to Him, He, therefore, will not openly reside in the land, with them. Moses has spoken, and reinforced this, in his mind; that, the people must take God forward with them, for them to be able to keep the land, and, thus, to be the instrument of God's fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses is further solidifying his bond to God, and his unique place in the eyes of the LORD.*

In each situation, it is as if God is saying to Moses: "See, if I treated the people as they have treated their LORD; then, I would forget my promises, and take vengeance against them, in such fashion as they have turned away from their LORD God, with their abiding in idolatry."

33:18 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

thought: *Here, it is as if, Moses was responding as follows. "Please LORD, You are beautiful in my sight . . . just as, surely You are. Please, LORD, never let me forget Who You are, and how different from us You are. Your mercies are greatly appreciated by me. And, I will teach the people to honor your mercies, with proper fervor. You will always be God: so, please let it be that You are always merciful to us; in accordance as, we are weaklings in this, Your Realm".*

33:19 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.

33:20 And he said,

Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

thought: *Lest there be some ones that find this to be in contradiction with 33:11; please note this: in the verse noted above, the action was, speech, and not, sight. 33:11 persuades us to consider that, God chose to speak with Moses on an equal footing. That is why Moses was able to express his concern for the welfare of the children of Israel, and to, seemingly, give God an order (33:15).*

33:21 And the LORD said,

Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:

- 33:22 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:
- 33:23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.