

Hunger and Thirst

Exodus 33:12-18

September 22-23, 2007

Introduction

ILLUS – A daughter’s prayer before dinner

1. You can learn a lot about a person by listening to their prayers, what they think about themselves, others, and even God.
2. Often a person’s passions are heard in their prayers.
3. What do you hunger and thirst for more of in your life?
4. Today, we are going to examine some of the most precious prayers lifted up to God in the Old Testament.
5. If you have ever found yourself at a loss to know what to pray for, please pay careful attention to the prayers of a man who hungered for more of God.

Exodus 33:12-18

Context

1. After the Mosaic Covenant was ratified Israel remained at the foot of Mt. Sinai while Moses received instructions for the establishment of a new theocracy; he was there for 40 days.
2. Back at base camp, around day 39, the Israelites became impatient. They wanted an idol made to lead them to the Promised Land.
3. Aaron buckled under the pressure and fashioned a golden calf from their gold. The people quickly declared it was their god!
4. God knows all things and told Moses to depart because the people had broken His commandments.
5. Moses entered the camp; broke the tablets made by God, crushed the idol into pieces, put the pieces in water and made the people drink, called for a purging of the camp and held Aaron accountable for his weak leadership.
6. Moses was not happy. More importantly, God was not happy and threatened to destroy Israel and start over with Moses.
7. Moses prayed for God to turn from His wrath, and He did.
8. Declared He wouldn’t go with Israel lest He destroy them because they were an obstinate people. So Moses prayed...

I. Teach Me Your Ways (12-14)

Isaiah 55:8-9, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways.’”

A. Lord, I want to know You

1. God had given Moses a great responsibility – lead Israel, 2 million people, into the Promised Land
 - a. But God said He won’t go with them
 - b. God said He would send a “messenger”
2. Moses did not like this arrangement (12a)
 - a. God had not introduced the angel to him
 - b. What’s an angel compared to the Lord?
3. Moses then reminded God of His words (12b)
 - a. Known by name – first name basis
 - b. Found favor – grace upon his life
 - c. In light of the favored, personal relationship, Moses asked for more intimate knowledge of who God is.

Philippians 3:7-11

APPL – *We have entered into a favored, personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. God wants us to ask like Moses.*

- *Ask God to teach you His ways and He will*

1 John 5:14-15, “And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.”

- *God utilizes a variety of tools to instruct us*
 - Life experiences (success and failure, ease and difficulty)
 - People (good and bad examples)

ILLUS – Chuck Smith’s son-in-law lawn mowing disaster

- Mainly, through His Word by His Spirit

Psalm 119:97-98, “O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine.”

APPL – The question is, “ARE YOU TEACHABLE?” When you greatly desire something, there is a good chance you will be more teachable!

B. Lord, I want to find favor in Your sight

1. God had told Moses that he was favored
2. Israel had fallen out of God’s favor while Moses experienced God’s favor
3. Moses wanted to forever remain in God’s favor
 - a. Place of blessing
 - b. Place of fruitfulness
 - c. Place of peace/rest

APPL – Abiding in Jesus Christ is our place of God’s favor

APPL – How do we abide in Christ? Open the door!

Revelation 3:20, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.”

ILLUS – Jesus, the unwelcome house guest?

II. I Want To Be Where You Are (15-16)

ILLUS – Jacob wrestling with God, “I will not let you go unless you bless me” (Genesis 32:26)

A. Lord, if You are in then I am in

1. If you don’t go, don’t send us! (15)
 - a. In verse 14, God assured Moses of His presence and rest
 - b. But the word “you” is singular not plural
 - c. Moses wanted assurance for Israel too!
2. What a change for Moses since Exodus 3-4

Exodus 4:10-14

- a. With God there they would make it
- b. Without God it wasn’t worth taking one step!

APPL – I only want to be where the Lord is! I want what God wants!

Proverbs 16:3, “Commit your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”

- Commit yourself to prayer and fasting
- Commit to seeking godly counsel (Be honest/transparent)
- Commit to waiting for God’s best (Don’t be impatient!)
- Commit to going when God says, “Go!” (Don’t procrastinate)

ILLUS – Desire for biblical education and full-time ministry

APPL - God’s presence brings us confidence as we step out!

B. Lord, be with me/us

1. God’s presence was the true sign of God’s favor
2. If God departed from the camp...
 - a. No distinction for Moses as a leader
 - b. No distinction for Israel among the nations

Psalm 73:25, 28, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And besides Thee, I desire nothing on earth. But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all Thy works.”

APPL – God’s presence brings comfort as we step out by faith

ILLUS – “I love you daddy” & Love notes from daddy

Matthew 28:20b, “and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

III. Show Me Your Glory (18)

A. Lord, reveal as much as I can bear

1. God assured Moses of His presence for Israel (17)
2. So Moses went back to his first request, “let me know Thy ways, that I may know Thee” and asked for more!
 - a. Moses had seen the burning bush

- b. He had seen God's glory leading Israel
 - c. He met with God like a man "face to face"
 - d. Been in God's presence for 40 days straight
3. Yet, Moses wanted to know more of the infinite God
- a. Glory means "weight"
 - b. Moses wanted to know the magnitude of God's personhood, as much as a finite being could handle and comprehend!

ILLUS – Requesting complete access to the life of President Bush

- 4. Amazingly, God granted his request with restrictions for Moses' good.

APPL - *Let's make Paul's prayer for the Ephesians our prayer...*

Ephesians 3:14-21

B. Lord, change me!

- 1. Ultimately, Moses knew that knowing God, having God always near would change him for his good
- 2. God's glory/presence is more than just the experiencing of light. The weight of His personhood brings change.

"We are changed in the presence of a holy God." Pastor Rich Jones

2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."

APPL – *The closer we are to the Lord, the more we will look like the Lord. God will...*

- *change my view of life and its meaning*
- *change my relationships and how I approach them*
- *change the way I order my day, spend money, or work*

"Everyone of us is as close to God as he wants to be." - J. Oswald Sanders

ILLUS – *Give me Jesus (When I rise, When I am alone, When I come to die... give me Jesus)*

Conclusion

APPL – *The God of Moses has not changed. He granted Moses' requests. The God of Moses is our God!*

Psalm 34:8, "O taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!"