

# Moses and Exodus 33 - Part 1

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of beholding God's glory and being transformed by it, and encourages listeners to live a life of worship and transformation.*

**Duration:** 30:11

**Scripture:** Exodus 33:12, Exodus 34:5

**Topics:** "God's Presence", "Spiritual Transformation"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the encounter between Moses and God, highlighting the intimate conversation Moses had with the Lord, the significance of God's presence as true rest, and the awe-inspiring revelation of God's glory. It emphasizes the transformation that occurs when we behold the glory of God, reflecting His majesty in our lives and impacting the world around us with boldness and power.

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## Transcript

Okay, let's look at the book of Exodus, chapter 34, or maybe, let's see, I'll go back a minute there into chapter 33, sorry. Now, here's Moses talking, let's go to verse 12. And Moses said unto the Lord, isn't that lovely? It means he's sitting and having a conversation with the Lord.

Not with an archangel or some other being, but with the Lord. The Lord we sang about tonight, immortal, invisible, God only wise. And yet man talks with God.

In verse 12, 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, I know thee by name, and that thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show 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.

And he, God, said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Now, if you wonder what rest is, it's answered for you in that verse. Rest is the presence of God.

Never being afraid, knowing he's with us, he's guaranteed he'll never leave us or forsake us. And because of that we have rest. We can lean back as it were on God.

My presence shall go with thee. And then this other wonderful verse, the end of verse 17, or in verse 17, 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. Do you believe God knows you by name? You say, so and so talks with the Queen of England, and when he goes in he doesn't bow and say, Your Excellency, Your Majesty, he says, Hi Elizabeth.

He'd be a bit nervous to do that. But isn't it wonderful that God knows us by name? I know thee by name. That's what I want the Lord to do, know me by name.

I know thee by name. And he said, Moses said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. Verse 2 of chapter 34 says, Be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto the mount Sinai, and present thyself to me there in the top of the mount.

Now this is a hazard, isn't it? He'd done that in the 32nd chapter. What happened? While he was up there, they fooled around, they made a graven image, they got drunk, they got naked, they did every crazy willful thing to disobey God. And now God says, Now come up on the mountain again.

And verse 5 says, The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by him, and proclaimed the Lord. The Lord, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness, and in truth.

So he's gone up the mount with God. Look at verse 29. Oh pardon me, look at verses 6 and 8 first.

The Lord passed before him, and proclaimed the Lord. The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. And verse 8. Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

In chapter 32, and verse 22 it says, And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot. Now he's talking there to Moses. And thou know'st the people that they're set, and they're full of mischief.

Okay, I'm coming back into this chapter now, into chapter 34 for this reason. The Lord passed by. What had he requested? He'd request, Show me thy glory.

And now he's gone up a second time up on the mountain. You know, we kind of look at that as if we took a helicopter ride. Or have stood on an escalator.

Instead of that, he has to struggle up the mountain. And I identify that with that word in the fourth chapter of Hebrews. When it said that we're to labor, to enter into rest.

There's nothing comes easy in the Christian life. Everything is a wrestling, everything is a striving. We've got the world, the flesh, the devil against us.

And Moses here now has gone the second time onto the mountain. If I remember right, he's about 80 years of age. He must have been pretty fit.

It doesn't say how long he stayed there. How long it took the glory of the Lord to pass before him. But the Lord was merciful and gracious.

I believe in this instance, while there's no time factor given. If all the glory of God went past him, he could have been there for weeks. I believe he was transfixed.

Transfixed means motionless. I believe he stood awed. I believe he gazed at the majesty of God.

Something that we've totally forgotten in our day. The awful majesty of God. As I said last week, you should read at least once a week the 40th chapter in Isaiah.

Which tells you that God made the stars. He counts them all and he knows every one of them by name. That the nations are as a drop in a bucket.

That he has all power and all authority. You see, our God is so small. And we've such a small concept of God.

The world outside isn't in any way staggered by what we are or who we are. The Lord passed by him. You know, if you put it into common vernacular, I think Moses had a bit of a nerve to say to God, show me thy glory.

Boy, if I'd taken a stick and divided the Red Sea, I'd thought I'd seen all the glory I needed. If I hit a rock and it split open and it followed the nation wherever they went, I'd say, look at the magic. Hey, I did that.

Remember when I did it that morning? You're all thirsty and I did it. Good old me, Moses. But instead of that, he's awed.

He bowed down and what did he do? He worshiped. And you know what? If ever you see the glory of God, you'll worship. He bowed down.

But Moses was alone. Aaron wasn't with him. The highest moments of your life will be when you're alone in worship and in adoration.

They'll surpass all the preaching you've ever heard. Unless you heard mine, but apart from that. We don't see the glory of God.

I've said to you often, when do you tiptoe out of the sanctuary? Because you've been overwhelmed with the mercy and the glory and the majesty and the holiness of God. People go into church dirty, sing about Him and go out dirty. You can't do that if you see God.

He goes on a mountain. He climbs to the height. Show me thy glory.

Lord, I've seen your miracles. Show me yourself. I want to get intimate with you.

That's what it means. Show me thy glory. And the Lord passed by him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious.

I think all the history of Israel must have gone past him like you watch a film go, when God said that to him. Remember my mercy. I could have blotted you out with your transgressions.

I could have destroyed you when you made a golden calf. Instead, I extended my mercy. I extended my mercy.

I'm well past 70 years of age. People tell me sometimes I'm living on borrowed time. The only time I borrowed was the watch tonight, because I didn't have one.

I borrowed time. But anyhow, living on borrowed time? America's living on borrowed time. We passed the safety line years ago.

We're heading for hell as quick as any nation on earth. But if we saw the glory of God one Sunday in every church in America, we'd shake the country for God the next week. Everything else would wither.

Everything else would perish. All our values would change. Here he is on a mountaintop.

I looked up the 7th chapter. Don't look now. The 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

And that second, about the second verse, where that marvelous young man, the first martyr in the church, possibly not more than 19 years of age, Stephen, and he says, The glory of God appeared to Abraham where? In a hell hole called Mesopotamia. A place that was full of idolatry. A moral dung heap.

And yet God appears to a man. There's no system. There are no priests.

There are no altars. And yet the God of glory unveiled himself to a man in a hell hole like that? You know, maybe the God of glory has appeared in some cells of those poor prisoners in Russia today more than in our life. We're so busy we can't, we haven't time to wait.

Oh, we say, Be filled with the Holy Ghost. Sure, that's a command. Be filled with the Spirit.

There's another command. Be still and know that I'm God. It's in the 42nd Psalm when the seas are roaring and the mountains are falling.

Paraphrased, I guess, again by Isaac Watts, Let mountains from their seats be hurled down to the deeps and buried there. Convulsions shake the solid earth. Our faith shall never yield to fear.

But in a shaking world where everything is chaos, everything that's orderly has become disorderly, then God says, Be still and know that I'm God. Everybody else is going mad. Christians today think if they knock on doors till their fingers bleed and give out tracts until they're dropping in the shopping mall, they've pleased God.

Let me tell you, I believe you could earn, you could win a hundred souls to Jesus Christ every hour on the hour in the day and still disappoint Him. Because that's service in the outer court. God says Aaron and his son shall minister unto me.

Come on now, I know you nod your heads and say I'm right. How much ministering have you done to the Lord today? You said your prayers, but it was request, wasn't it? Do this, do that, do the other. Again, prayer is our preoccupation with our needs.

Praise is preoccupation with our blessings. Worship is preoccupation with God. Just God Himself.

I put that in the back of my Bible. I think I did anyhow. But I brought the wrong Bible.

But it begins with my goal is God Himself, not joy, not peace, not even blessing, but with thee my God. Moses was confronted and he saw the glory of God. And he appeared where? In Mesopotamia.

Again, I say as I prayed over this today, Mesopotamia is about the most corrupt place on the earth. It was full of idols, it was full of immorality, it was lawless, it was godless. And yet almighty God comes to one man, only one saint, maybe in a whole nation of a million people, and He reveals Himself to that one man.

You say, why does He reveal Himself to me? Because you don't stay still, that's why. You give Him a shopping list and get up and go out and your prayers are over. I wish I had some more details about this.

I could fill it in by imagination, but I won't. Moses standing there and God, the God of glory, the God of the universe, unveils His majesty, unveils His glory. Isn't this man speechless? Why does He bow down to the earth? Because He can't stand there.

Because He can't keep looking. The glory is so great. And He bows Himself to the earth, and not only bows Himself to the earth, He worships.

And there's only one way you can worship, and that is to worship God in spirit and in truth. God is a spirit, I'm a spirit. My spirit must connect with God's spirit.

Most of our religion today in Christian centers is soulish, it's not spiritual, it's soulish. That's why kids like to go to these rock concerts. Because it's soulish, it stirs the soul.

And they go out and sin and do all the devilish things they want to do. There's no change there. You can't glorify God, you can't have a vision of the glory of God and turn around and be mean to your wife or children.

Oh, this is a marvelous scripture. But I've got to link it up with something else here. Go to the second, where are we? Second book of Corinthians.

Where do I want to go? Second book of Corinthians chapter 3, I guess. And 2 Corinthians 3, 18. I think it is.

I'll get there in a minute. Now this is bringing it right down to earth, where we live. 2 Corinthians 3 and verse 18.

But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed by the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord. Now he's talking about us, he's talking about the Corinthians that got lost in vanity. And they drifted away from fundamental truths.

They were turning to other things. But he says, we all with open face. Phillips translates that, we without veils on our faces.

I didn't read the scripture, I should have gone on there and read where Moses came down the mount and his face so reflected the glory of God he had to wear a veil. Now in the 32nd chapter when he comes down the mountain he's blood red with anger. God is angry and he's angry because he's in tune with God.

How often do you get angry? Are you in tune with the Holy Ghost? When the Spirit of God is offended, are you offended? Are you just going buying and selling and eating and drinking and all the normal things that the man next door does? I'm supposed to be a spiritual man. I'm supposed to be in tune with the infinite. I'm supposed to be regulated by the Holy Ghost not the traditions of my setup or denomination.

Moses stood there until the very radiance of God shone on him. Remember the mount of transfiguration? Well the mount of transfiguration was not Jesus reflecting the glory of the Father. It was the inherent qualities of Jesus Christ.

It wasn't a spotlight from heaven. It was the holiness and purity of God in him being God that flashed out. But I noticed this, they never fell down and worshipped him.

They fell down and worshipped him at the beginning of the revelation because he was a different Christ in one sense. He'd accomplished his mission. He'd led captivity captive.

He'd given gifts unto many. He'd taken the hinges off the gates of hell. He destroyed the power of the devil.

Do you think the church will ever enter into that? I hear people saying, Lord, rebuke the devil. He rebuked him 2,000 years ago. Come on.

Why don't we enter into what he did? There's only one reason that the world is going to hell tonight and that is the unbelief of the church. Now use your light. We do not believe God.

It's not the sinners that don't believe him. We don't believe him. We have a partial belief, not a full belief.

But when they saw Moses come down from the mountain, they couldn't gaze on him. I was going to say I have a poem. I had it somewhere.

I've got part of it here written by Frieda Handry-Allen, which I think explains the thing very beautifully. She's talking about you and I going into the holy place, not being in the outer court, not going into the holy place, but really going into the holy of holies. That's the only place that God came.

In the outer court there was daylight. In the holy place, in the holy of holies, or in the holy place, there was candlelight, a seven-branched candlestick. In the holy of holies, there was no light.

It was pitch black. And unless a shekinah glory came, there was no light. You know, when men put Jesus Christ to death, they put out the light of the world.

The only light in the world tonight is the word of God. Thy word is a lamp to my feet. That's to guide me in what to do.

And the light to my path, that to me is, the light is the word of God, the lamp to my feet, is the word of God. And the lamp to me is the word of prophecy that tells me not just what to do, but where to go. And the only light in the world tonight is the word of God, plus the glory that's reflected in your personality and mine.

Romans 12, 1 and 2 says, present your body a living sacrifice unto God and be not conformed to this world. Or as J.B. Phillips puts it so well, don't let this world press you into its mold. Come on, is it doing that? The style of clothes you wear, the style of life you live, is the world system pressing me into its mold? Do you feel unhappy if you go to church and you have to design a dress on? Or the ladies shoes? Is the world pressing us almost unconsciously into its mold? Be not conformed, but be transformed.

It's the same word used of Jesus, be transfigured. Be transfigured by the renewing of your mind, having the very mind of God himself given to us. Frederick Allen says this, Within the veil be this beloved thy portion, within the secret of thy Lord to dwell, beholding him until thy face is glory, thy life is love, thy lips his praise shall tell.

Within the veil, for only as thou gazest upon the matchless beauty of his face canst thou become a living revelation of his great heart of love, his untold grace. Within the veil his fragrance poured upon thee. Remember the woman that washed the feet of Jesus with tears, and then put that wonderful ointment on, then dried his feet with the hair of her head.

What happened? The fragrance she poured out on him came back on her. Do you know why you find prayer so dry? Because you don't worship. Do you know why you come out of the place of prayer the same as you went in? Because you don't gaze on his wholeness, on his majesty, on his sufficiency, on his glory.

And then having tasted something of the other world you come back into this world with a radiance that's totally un-understandable to the world. Be not conformed, be transformed. Within the veil his fragrance poured upon thee.

Without the veil that fragrance shed abroad. Within the veil his hand shall tune the music which sounds on earth the praises of thy God. Within the veil thy spirit deeply anchored.

Thou walkest calm above a world of strife. Within the veil thy soul with him united shall live on earth the resurrection life. Now that's where we should be living now, not after we die and shuffle off this mortal coil if you want to be Shakespearean.

But even now I should be. Not I'm going to reign with him, I should be reigning. If I'm not reigning with him then the world's reigning in me.

Either I have total dominion by the grace of God over the world, the flesh, the devil or the picture is reversed. I think there's a very wonderful verse here. We all with open face.

We don't have to veil our faces, do we? I've quoted you before that little daughter, nine year old daughter of the man who preached that hellfire sermon that still preaches. Sinner's in the hands of an angry God, Jonathan Edwards. And his little nine year old daughter says people mock my daddy.

He's so gravel voiced. He's so serious when he preaches. Well God in heaven, what is the most serious to preach in the gospel? Paul says more than once to Timothy be sober, be sober, be sober.

The end of the world is coming. Dear Lord if it was coming two thousand years ago where are we tonight? Is the church sober? Go down the road and see how many are in the family circle outside the church. They'll be playing ping pong and fooling as though the world's going to heaven.

I said before if you take the view of the politicians Mr. President, I'm glad he's getting better. He says there's a holocaust coming up because fire's going to come and destroy the nation. But supposing you don't believe what the politicians say.

The word of God says Armageddon's coming and a system is going to come to destroy a third of the world's population. That should make us a nightmare. If we eat any gumption at all, if we're a fraction as spiritual as we think we are both at last days and every church in town would have a prayer meeting 24 hours a day at least a room in the church.

If I ever get into a fellowship and have control of it, there'll be a room open 24 hours a day. And they'll expect you to keep up that 24-hour prayer barrage. Does the devil go to sleep? You go to bed tonight, it happens to be Friday night.

Folk don't have to work tomorrow. They'll be at the hell holes, the dung houses till 12, 1, 2, 3 in the morning. Many of them don't start till about 2 or 3. They go to these night clubs, night spots.

The church, doesn't the church, every church near in town will be locked up tonight by about 10 o'clock. If the fire department did that, we'd raise hell about it, wouldn't we? If the hospitals did that, we'd be disgusted, you can't do it. I think I told you last week, two men came into my office and the first thing they said is, anybody real? You remember that because you were there, you were one of them.

That put you on the spot, Jacob, but anyhow. He doesn't mind, I know him. I straighten him out every day, but he's twisted the next day, but anyhow.

Just like Jacob, just like Jacob in the Scriptures. No, he's really coming on. I love this man very, very much.

He's my new neighbor. And if he doesn't buy that house, you're in trouble. But they asked the question, the other brother I think with you asked the question, is anybody real? I changed that and I, sure I break up.

My question is, does anybody care? Do we really care the world is going to hell? Do we want to go on Sunday and be nice and sweet and have a nice little time and get a hug and a kiss and then go out to a perishing world exactly the same? You can't do that if you gaze on his holiness. The more you see his holiness, the more you see corruption in the world. The more you see his integrity, the more you see of the deception and falseness of the systems that we live in the church as well as outside of the church.

We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord God changed from image, from glory to glory. It says they emphasize, that's a good Bible to read, reflecting the glory of God into the same image we are being transformed from glory to glory. So I showed you quickly there the glory of Moses.

He had to drape his face because people couldn't bear to see the reflected majesty of God in him. And I'm supposed to live reflecting we beholding in a mirror. You can't look on God.

And so you have to hold a mirror and see him that way. We see his glory in the word of God. The more you know of the word of God, the more you'll know of his majesty, the more you'll know of his glory.

Look at Acts chapter 3 for a minute or two here. The more I read of this book, the more trouble I get. Sorry, it's Acts chapter 4. Acts chapter 4, verse 13.

Now when they saw the boldness, now they say, when they saw the coldness. It says in the same chapter, I guess, see how these Christians love one another. Now they see how these Christians shove one another.

Verse 13 says, Now when they saw the boldness, who are they? Well, look up the chapter a bit further back. Verse 5, It came to pass on the morrow that their rulers, they were the rulers and the elders and described Annas the high priest and Caiaphas another high priest. And that's illegal anyhow.

The Jews weren't allowed to have two high priests and they had them. And John and Alexander and as many as were of the kindred of the high priests were gathered together in Jerusalem. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they conceived, they perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men.

And they took knowledge of them that the glory of Jesus Christ was shining in them. The glory of Jesus shining in Moses up on a mountain, he's by himself. These men are in a hell hole.

These men have been to prison. And yet the glory of Jesus Christ is there, though they have a prison sentence hanging over them. You don't need ideal situations to get the glory of Jesus Christ.

All you need to do is to be in his will. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men. Isn't that something? Just imagine those men in the other room didn't have a PhD between them.

Didn't have a bank account between them. Unlearned, unusual, unwanted. But boy before long the world knew they were around.

They had no backing company, they had no bank accounts, no newsletters. Isn't that terrible? Don't mention that please around here, but anyhow. And we all get to have, wouldn't it be wonderful not getting junk mail from all these big evangelists.

He'll tell you evangelists when you get to heaven. Very clearly you know the streets are made of gold, they'll be digging the streets up. I'll be looking for you.

Isn't it a paradox this book? If you want to go up, go down. If you want to gain, throw everything you have away. Lose your life, you'll find it.

Keep your life, you'll lose it. If you ascend, you'll be humiliated. If you humble yourself, you'll be exalted.

If you want to be a somebody, be a nobody. So foolish, isn't it? You better not be a hater because you know it's true anyhow. When they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they took knowledge of them.

That gets under my skin, it gets in my heart. They took knowledge of them.

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