

# The Presence of God

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] I'm going to pray for a few moments and to the portion of scripture we read together in the book of Exodus chapter 33 and we shall read again the 14th and the 15th verses.

Exodus chapter 33 and the 14th and the 15th verses.

And he said, my presence shall, my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest.

And he said unto him, if thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. And he said, my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest.

The deliverance of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt and their 40 years wandering in the wilderness where we might say a symbolical sign or we might say a parable of the pilgrimage of the New Testament church.

[ 2 : 0 6 ] Although it was a form of punishment to them, yet it was meant to teach ignorant people and to teach the church of Christ to the end of time.

Their deliverance from the destroying angel in Egypt was through the blood of a man being sprinkled on the doorposts and on the little of the little of the little of the little of the little of the little of the little of the house.

And that they would stay in the house. It wasn't the house that was the means of protection as the destroying angel passed over the whole of Israel.

That the blood of Israel was the only as the middle of Israel. And that the blood on the little of Israel was the only source of the little of the little, was the only source of the little of the little was the only source of the light. Which would imply that these Israelites were equally sinful and as guilty as the Egyptians.

But the blood of a man sprinkled on the doorpost was their safety.

[ 3 : 3 8 ] And again, in the night of Egypt, on that same night or the following night, they came out and were brought, not by the shortest road from Egypt to the promised land, but they went east towards the Red Sea.

And they were again in a severe danger. For Pharaoh with his chariots, 600 chariots and a large army went off to take them, to take the Israelites back again into Egypt.

And their condition on the border of the Red Sea was again a severe trial.

There was no way of escape. The Red Sea was in front and all the sides were high and rocky mountains and the Egyptian army, 600 chariots plus a large army coming closely behind.

And they felt there was no way by which they could escape. And of course there would be no way unless the Lord had arranged a way, a way that no one could seek of.

[ 5 : 3 4 ] And yet it was so simple. Moses was led by a pillar of cloud and it wasn't his own wisdom that he led in the way he brought the children of Israel.

But he followed the pillar according to directions from the Lord and the pillar took them there. And he is praying.

But no one hears his prayer. It is a silent prayer to God and he is crying for deliverance.

And the Lord says, finally, Christ, they went to me, stretch out thy hand over the sea and it will part.

Now, they went across the sea and dry land and the Egyptians, endeavoring to do the same, were drowned.

[ 6 : 55 ] And they came on to Sinai. And it's at Sinai, on a plain wall in front of Mount Sinai, the camp stayed and rested.

And they rested there for about 40 years, 40 years before they entered the promised land.

Now, the first thing, and I mention these things because it is impossible to understand what we have in our text without knowing the background to it.

And the first thing that was done at Sinai was to make a covenant with God, or rather God making a covenant with them.

There were no priests ordained. There was no high priest or Levite set apart or anything. It was just as they had come out of Egypt in their ignorance of God and of his salvation, except by the miracles that they had seen by which they escaped out of Egypt.

[ 8 : 32 ] And Moses went into secret conversation and prayer with the Lord. And they arranged what the Lord demanded of them.

That they would be for the Lord and that they would be his people. And that he would be their God.

And Moses came back and set that covenant before them. And they all unanimously declared that they would serve the Lord and the Lord would be their God.

And a covenant was sealed, sacrifices were made, and the blood was sprinkled on the word of God, and then sprinkled on the people.

And thereby they became a dedicated people to the Lord. They themselves made a public provision that they were to serve the Lord and no other God.

[ 9 : 47 ] And it was after that covenant was made at Sinai that Moses then went up Mount Sinai.

And he was on that mountain for 40 days without eating anything or drinking any kind of drink.

And at the end of the day, the Lord gave him two tables carved out of the rock.

And the ten commandments are written on the two tables. One of the tables contained the way by which they were to serve God.

And the other table how they were to serve their relationship to all mankind.

[ 11 : 02 ] Now Moses came down after 40 days. He was 80 years old when that took place. And after fasting for 40 days without food or drink, he came down in a hurry.

Glory are these tablets, these tables of stone on which the law of God was written by the finger of God.

Whatever is meant by the finger of God, it was made clearly so that it was quite readable. And when the Lord came down, he, to his astonishment, found that the whole camp of Israel, which he had left in the plain, had turned to idolatry.

They did not assume it was idolatry. They thought it was to the Lord that they made a golden cow and put off their altar gardening and were dancing, worshipping this God through the image of a golden cow.

That was the mediator. Now that that sort of thing can go on and done in our own midst and we can have our dances and everything.

[ 12 : 34 ] And we do not assume that it is idolatry. You wait until you see Christmas Day, which is kept throughout Christendom today.

And you never saw greater idolatry. You have chosen this day and it's quite evident that it's not the day upon which Christ was born at all.

Christ was not born in midwinter at all. There are several. The day has been changed. At periods, one time they were holding it in March.

Another time they were holding it in September. And finally, the church united it with the sun worship, which was kept throughout the heathen world at that time.

And we are joining more and more into this idolatry. And we do not realise that it is idolatry. And idolatry is a very serious sin in the eyes of the Lord.

[ 13 : 49 ] It is a complete departure from himself. And we cannot keep the two. That was the failure of Israel.

They thought they could take in Baal worship and unite it with the worship of God. They would sacrifice one day to the Lord and the next day they would be sacrificing to Baal.

They would be joining the two together. They had these images in their homes, Baal images. And yet they thought they were serving the Lord with all their heart.

They thought that the Lord Almighty who brought them out of the land of Egypt was honoured by them.

Now when Moses came down from the mount and he saw them turn so quickly to idolatry, he broke the two tables of stone which the Lord had carved out and upon which he had written the Ten Commandments.

[ 15 : 12 ] Now if you think of that act, you might assume, and rightly so, that Moses sinned grievously.

There was hardly anything you can imagine that he could take what God had given him. And in which he had written the Ten Commandments and broke them deliberately in the presence of the congregation.

And in which they came down Roman, the Ten Commandments and did not make foi-talál, a Cuteamanie Father called Friends of God that are people in heaven He was going revealed not to name God, and for one thing you made forever, And if you think about Analytics, that your saying anything wrong, or you see or yourself, that your saying anything wrong would not make true.

That he gave Çev crunch, that you weren't walking in heaven, idolatry while he was interceding on their behalf and coming with the terms with the way by which they were to live their life according to the law. Now what Moses did there was actually symbolical if they could understand it. The first Adam, the first man that God created was created out of the dust of the ground and breathed in his nostrils the breath of life.

That is what we are informed of by the inspiration of God himself. Nobody was there, nobody would know unless it was revealed to Moses by God himself. That this is how man was made by the infinite power of God making a man a full man.

[ 17 : 21 ] And that man which he created in his own image and in his own knowledge with righteousness, with full power to fulfill the Ten Commandments which was written in his heart. He was made in the image of God and the image of God was the law written in the faculties of Adam's speech. And Adam very shortly after it was done, we don't know how long, broke the man who was done, broke the commandments. And man was lost, man became sinful and Adam was a covenant head and he stood not only for himself but he stood for every individual that would come into the world. Not just in the mass but for each individual. He stood for every individual. He stood for every individual that would come into the world.

Not just in the mass but for each individual. He stood for every individual. He stood for you as your covenant head. And when he broke the law, when he sinned against God, he put the commandments into fragments. If you break one law, one commandment I should say, if you break one commandment you're guilty of all.

And Moses was trying to bring back this to them, to the children, to the church, how Adam sinned and how they were sinful in their nature. They had what we call original sin and he was seeing it breaking forth here in idolatry.

So God commanded him to make another two like unto the first two tables. But not to write anything on it, but to take it up again to the moment.

Now there is, as I mentioned, it was for the teaching of the New Testament, church in particular, these things happened. Now you will see the second Adam wasn't made of the dust of the earth.

[ 19 : 58 ] And the Lord didn't bring another new being. But Christ was made of our race. He was born of the Virgin Mary. He was brought up as a child. But God himself made him perfect. His law was again re-established in the heart of one of our race.

And Moses. And Moses takes up the tablets which he himself had cut out, like unto the first. That Christ, you know, in his humanity, he was like the first Adam.

But he was made of the substance of the Virgin. And God wrote upon all the faculties of his being. He wrote the law of God. And he was like that without sin and without original sin.

He was the only one who did not come by ordinary generation. And yet was of our race. And Moses went up the second time to the mount and was again on the mount for 40 days and 40 nights without eating food or drinking any kind of liquid.

and after the next 40 days he came down and when he came down the second time with the law written by the finger of God on the tables that on the tablets that he had carved out himself like into the first his face was shining and the people would not come near him and he couldn't speak to them because his face was shining like the sun and they were terrified and he realized he himself didn't know his face was shining with the glory of God he had been you might say 80 days in intense communion with God without eating fruit or drinking water or sleeping he was in constant communion and yet he was coming down in full strength he wasn't weak he wasn't carried after all that fasting and coming down with his face shining like a heavenly being and it is after he has come down the second time that we have this intercession or between the two it might be within the two that he has this intercession with God the Lord God made an offer to him and we see the kind of person that Moses was he said that he would blot out all the descendants of Abraham the Israelites and would make Moses another covenant head and all the descendants of Moses would become the church of Christ it was a wonderful offer and offered by God Almighty and Moses rejected it and he rejected it not because he realized what had happened and that they were actually guilty and they should be destroyed but he had concern for the glory of God what would all the nations see that God took the Israelites out of Egypt in a miraculous way and yet he failed to bring them into the land of promise and he was unable to fulfill the promises which he gave to Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob he was a false god his promise would be of no value ever now and Moses saw the issues and he pleaded no if he were to blot out the church to blot him out as well so we have the reaction of Moses in the verses we have here after his intercession and his pleading with God to preserve the people to fulfill his promise to bring them into the promised land and his perseverance in prayer his pleading with God perceived an answer and he said that he would bring the people into the land into the land of Canaan

[ 25 : 34 ] into the promised land and that he would send an angel before them he himself was not going with them anymore they were too sinful and Moses again pleaded again and again although an angel would be good it would be not sufficient he wanted himself to himself to lead them into the promised land and nothing loss would do I see that you are not sufficient with an angel with an messenger with a preacher with anything loss than the Lord himself the Lord is the saviour he is at the head of his people and that is what Moses was pleading for and interceding on behalf of his church that he himself come and lead them and that nothing loss would bring them into the promised land and we have that in the verses I read now therefore I pray thee if I have found grace in thy sight show me show me now the way that I may know thee that that I have found grace in thy sight and the Lord said my presence shall go with thee and I will give you rest now the presence was the same presence which led them out of Egypt and led them to the Red Sea as I mentioned and led them to Sinai that is

God appeared in a pillar of cloud the pillar was a white cloud like a pillar coming down upon upon the tent of the congregation and it would rest and then it would move away and they would lift the tents fold them up on the tabernacle and everything and follow this cloudy pillar during the night it was shining like the moon and it was light to the Israelites but it was when it went behind it was darkness as it turned to the to the Egyptians who followed them to destroy them they were seeing nothing but darkness now we see we see

Moses Moses sintercession no wonder although he he was compared or like that he acted as a figure representing the Lord Jesus Christ a prophet likened to me he shall raise up to him you will listen this this was this was a promise for which the Israelites waited for a thousand years for a promise for a prophet likened to Moses that was to arise in the church and they believed also in the Messiah which was promised to them from Moses onward but Moses identified the Lord Jesus Christ to himself a prophet likened to me the Lord shall give you unto him you will you will pay attention and believe now when you remember when when John the Baptist began to preach in in the wilderness of Judea the people went out and the Pharisees those who who had the council sent out messengers to ask

John the Baptist was he the Christ or was he the prophet promised by Moses and he said that he wasn't the prophet and that he wasn't the Christ that he was just a man crying in wilderness now the promise given to Moses is one that we should all covet and all seek and it is a prophet it is a promise that we that we do not need that we dearly need the promise is my presence shall go with thee now that is what Moses prayed for that is that was the the whole substance you might say of his pleading and of his intercession

God was on the one hand to lead them and give them an angel and to and himself was to be absent when there are cases there are situations arising in the church of Christ in the world when God withdraws his presence from it and when the presence of God is withdrawn we might have the forum without its power and it's a most dangerous situation such a situation will not impress arising generation at all they are able to assess they are able to understand that there is nothing in the church that it's just a forum of a forum of worshipping there is no power there is no influence and the church without the presence of God has no influence in the world and has no influence upon upon arising generation and that is the kind of situation that is growing throughout

[ 32 : 54 ] Scotland and throughout Lewis and we can try for a few moments to understand what is the presence of God in the church God promised to Moses and not to Moses only but to the whole congregation and he said my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest and he said and he said unto him if thy presence go not with me carry us not up hence now Moses was to be the leader and he prayed that the Lord's presence would be with himself and by being with himself that he would be the means of having the influence of God over the whole church my presence shall go with thee now we have seen how

Moses wrestled at the throne of grace he God answered him God gave him other things offered him other things and God was speaking to him and yet he would not accept it unless he would receive the promise that God would be with them and that God would work on their behalf and that it's only by the presence of God that he would overcome all the nations in front and that he would come to possess the promised land and he says my presence shall go with thee now what is actually the presence of God can you understand what the presence of God is and are you able to understand it to know that God is with you and that you can know his presence not just assuming that he is are taking it for granted that he is but to know it and to be aware of it and to have the comfort that

Moses received at this time while Moses knew the difficulties ahead he knew the powers that were against him though he had been delivered from the Egyptian powers he knew also all the nations of the world of that time were between him and the promised land and the difficulty of taking possession of the promised land now there are three ways by which we can consider the presence of God according to his word the presence of God is infinite it fills space and matter as far as your mind can conceive the most distant star

God is as fully present there as he is here or there he fills all and in all he is infinite in his presence so in that sense he is with and round and his present here that is the that was the teaching of the apostle Paul through inspiration to the Greek philosophers that he was everywhere that it's in him we live and move and have our being now that is very mysterious we don't feel him we don't know that unless the word of God informed us concerning that very thing the infinitude of God and that it is in him we live and move and not anything comes into existence or perishes but according to the presence of

God then we find this throughout the scriptures if you read Psalm 139 it verifies what the apostle was saying and what I'm trying to say the infinitude of God is wherever we are God is there and he knows us he knows our thoughts before we speak them but again we have the presence of God mentioned in scriptures concerning the providence of all things he rules and governs raises up and casts down if you would read the book of Daniel he was seeing the great nations and the great empires that were to arise and how they were to be destroyed another one rising again in its fall and we have seen in our own day we have seen the rise and the fall of the

[ 38 : 49 ] British empire one of the greatest empires that ever came into the world it was so wide and so great that it was said of it that the sun never went down on it it was shining in some part of the British empire throughout the world in some part of it and we have seen it God threw it away as if it would cast something out of its hand it had no further use for it the presence of God had been lost and when we lost the presence of God God in his providence cast us away and it does the same thing with an individual as it does with an angel and with an empire he's the God of providence so that not even a sparrow fall to the ground without his permission knowing exactly what happens today and tomorrow and he's ordering all things according to his own infinite counsel he's the most wise

God and he knows what he's doing and how he will do it now he reveals himself in providence in such a way that it is equally mysterious what is sometimes what takes place we assume that it is a great calamity the crosses that will appear in your own life you might assume that you suffered a great loss but as the years will come you will discover that God was in it and you didn't know it it was the very calamity was the means of turning you from your evil will or from your carelessness or bringing you to himself and

God is doing according to his will with the armies of heaven and with the inhabitants of the earth all things are in his hand and you look at your own life see what happens take note of everything that things that seem to be out of your control other things in which he can lead you to do certain things and perhaps you don't know why you are doing it but you can find out afterwards that God was in it and you didn't know and I'm quite prepared to say that if you do not see or understand the mystery of God working in your life and guiding you in ways that you don't know you don't know at all because it is easier to understand in the working of his providence concerning us than he is in any other way but he is in particular to be known in his saving grace now his presence in his saving grace is very different though it might be again through his providence they are so united that we cannot hardly separate them because his grace works in a mysterious way but there is an order in which

God comes to dwell in a sinner's heart and that is the presence that we are referring to now God dwells in the heart now there is an order in the God head there are three persons in the God head the father the son and the holy ghost now when the father when the father if we can use the thought if there is a thought in God when the father destined or purposed to create things at the same time the same thing came into the mind of Christ the mind of the son and in the mind of the Holy Spirit you know there are only one God there are three persons in it and the one knows the other intimately and nothing is in one's mind without being in the other there is there is only the one

God and the same attributes in all the same loving in them all when God was told to love us sinners at the same time the same thing grows in the heart of Christ I will suffer for them the Holy Spirit it grows in the Holy Spirit the same thing I will apply that I will apply that salvation to sinners now in the presence of God coming with a person he comes usually with some kind of striving striving with the sinner to bring him from the state he is in a state of sin and a state of sin is a state of misery however much a person may be enjoying the sinful life remember it is a state of misery for in that condition a person is an heir of eternal condemnation he is under the guilt of sin and therefore under the condemnation of

[ 45 : 23 ] God and however much he might enjoy his condition and the amusement of the world and these things remember that it's a state of condemnation as if he would see a person condemned to death and dancing in his cell and being most under turned in his cell till the day of his death well you would say that the person was manned and so anyone would assume but it's not as foolish as those who are enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season dancing in the way to hell is a situation which is to be lamented and to be looked on with horror and now the presence of

God breaks him upon such a person and he breaks him by convincing him that he is a sinner now it's not in the same way a person will come to the knowledge that he is a sinful being that he cannot pray that he cannot do anything right that he cannot worship God that he cannot do anything that he is sinful in his nature and yet he cannot pray and ask God to have mercy and the spirit of God works mysteriously and the mystery of it of what it does is called regeneration or a new birth by which the spirit of God comes and works in the heart some with terrific power although so gently that the person is not aware that it is the spirit of

God who is actually working in his heart at all God and and in this regeneration or new birth faith is part of the elements that is begotten in the heart and faith immediately is exercised upon Jesus Christ and the moment a person has faith and believes in Jesus Christ he is immediately justified by

God and the moment he is justified God adopts that person into his family and immediately he is adopted the spirit of God comes to indwell in that person's heart so these changes are following so close to each other and the presence of God is without pressure by the indwelling of the spirit of God and it begins to enlighten the passion more and more of his privileges and of his of his indebtedness to God and says what shall I render unto God for all his benefits now the presence of God by the holy spirit in the heart is a privilege that belongs to everyone who has been born again who has believed in

Jesus Christ the spirit of God the presence of God is with that person but the presence of God can be disturbed if the person neglects to pray neglects means means of grace and is not walking according as he should be according to the word the spirit of God might be grieved in that heart and the person loses the presence of God now I'm sorry I can't just go on to part I had there's a part there that is most interesting and he said my presence shall go with thee and I will give you rest now that is

[ 50 : 36 ] I'm sorry I can't develop this I was going to speak of it in large this is what Christ promised when he's called to the burdened and heavy laden to come unto him and find rest rest in Christ rest concerning your eternal salvation rest for every day of your life for concerning concerning the providential moments and everything your providence is in God's hand and you're finding that you are now in God's family and God is dealing with you as with a child and you know that it's that it's safe that you are safe in his hands and you will find a rest that passive understanding and may we seek that rest doesn't really matter what other things we miss if we find the presence of

God by his Holy Spirit in dwelling us and the rest that comes from believing in Christ that we have a mighty saviour who is interceding in the right hand of God on high and who is coming again to take his church to the rest he himself has earned and has received for his church may the Lord enable you to seek that present and to seek that rest let us pray eternal God are we to seek thy peace and thy presence and thy rest and may we be led by thy spirit unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith bless thine own word follow us with thy favour pardon all our sins and shortcomings accept us in

Christ and thine shall be the glory now and forever more amen