

“Please, Show Me Your Glory”

Sabbath Afternoon, September 13

After the transgression of Israel in making the golden calf, Moses again goes to plead with God in behalf of his people. He has some knowledge of those who have been placed under his care; he knows the perversity of the human heart, and realizes the difficulties with which he must contend. But he has learned from experience that in order to have an influence with the people, he must first have power with God. The Lord reads the sincerity and unselfish purpose of the heart of his servant, and condescends to commune with this feeble mortal, face to face, as a man speaks with a friend. Moses casts himself and all his burdens fully upon God, and freely pours out his soul before him. The Lord does not reprove his servant, but stoops to listen to his supplications.

Moses has a deep sense of his unworthiness, and his unfitness for the great work to which God has called him. He pleads with intense earnestness that the Lord will go with him. The answer comes, “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” [See Exodus 33:12–23.] But Moses does not feel that he can stop here. He has gained much, but he longs to come still nearer to God, to obtain a stronger assurance of his abiding presence. He has carried the burden of Israel; he has borne an overwhelming weight of responsibility; when the people sinned, he suffered keen remorse, as though he himself were guilty; and now there presses upon his soul a sense of the terrible results, should God leave Israel to hardness and impenitence of heart. They would not hesitate to kill Moses, and through their own rashness and perversity they would soon fall a prey to their enemies, and thus dishonor the name of God before the heathen. Moses presses his petition with such earnestness and fervency that the answer comes, “I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.” — *Gospel Workers*, p. 33.

But Moses discerned ground for hope where there appeared only discouragement and wrath. The words of God, “Let Me alone,” he understood not to forbid but to encourage intercession, implying that nothing but the prayers of Moses could save Israel, but that if thus entreated, God would spare His people. . . .

As Moses interceded for Israel, his timidity was lost in his deep interest and love for those for whom he had, in the hands of God, been the means of doing so much. The Lord listened to his pleadings, and granted his unselfish prayer. God had proved His servant; He had tested his faithfulness and his love for that erring, ungrateful people, and nobly had Moses endured the trial. His interest in Israel sprang from no selfish motive. The prosperity of God’s chosen people was dearer to him than personal honor, dearer than the privilege of becoming the father of a mighty nation. God was pleased with his faithfulness, his simplicity of heart, and his integrity, and He committed to him, as a faithful shepherd, the great charge of leading Israel to the Promised Land. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 318, 319.

The Tent of Meeting

God honors those who humble themselves before him. Moses, disheartened by the discontent and murmuring of the people he was leading into the land of promise, pleaded with God for the assurance of his presence, saying: "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. 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 the Lord said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

Encouraged by the assurance of God's presence, Moses drew still nearer, and ventured to ask for still further blessings. "I beseech thee," he said, "show me thy glory." Think you that God reproved Moses for his presumption?—No, indeed. Moses did not make this request from idle curiosity. He had an object in view. He saw that in his own strength he could not do the work of God acceptably. He knew that if he could obtain a clear view of the glory of God, he would be enabled to go forward in his important mission, not in his own strength, but in the strength of the Lord God Almighty. His whole soul was drawn out after God; he longed to know more of him, that he might feel the divine presence near in every emergency or perplexity. It was not selfishness that led Moses to ask for a sight of the glory of God. His only object was a desire better to honor his Maker.

God knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, and he understood the motives that prompted the request of his faithful servant. He answered Moses, saying: "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."

Moses had genuine humility, and the Lord honored him by showing him his glory. Even so will he honor all who will serve him, as did Moses, with a perfect heart. He does not require his servants to work in their own strength. He will impart his wisdom to those who have a humble and contrite spirit. The righteousness of Christ will go before them, and the glory of the Lord will be their rereward. Nothing in this world can harm those who are thus honored by a close connection with God. —"The Grace of Humility," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 11, 1897, par. 4–7.

Monday, September 15

That I May Know You

Moses manifested his great love for the people in his entreaty to the Lord to forgive their sin, or blot his name out of the book which he had written. His intercessions here illustrate Christ's love and mediation for the sinful race. The Lord refused to let Moses suffer for the sins of his backsliding people. He declared to him that those who had sinned against him, would he blot out of his book which he had written; for the righteous should not suffer for the guilt of the sinner. The book here referred to is the book of records in Heaven, where every name is recorded, and their acts, their sins, and obedience are faithfully written. When any one commits sins which are too grievous for the Lord to pardon, their names are erased from the book, and they are devoted to destruction. Although Moses realized the dreadful fate of those whose names should be dropped from the book of God, yet he plainly declared before God that if the names of his erring Israel should be blotted out, and be no more remembered by him for good, he wished his name to be blotted out with theirs'. For he could never endure to see the fullness of his wrath come upon the people for whom he had wrought such wonders. —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 285, 286.

After the Lord had given Moses all these gracious assurances, did he rest in satisfaction, and settle down in content?—No; he still desired something of the Lord; he prayed, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory. 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 show mercy on whom I will show mercy." The glory of God was revealed to Moses, and it will be revealed to those who seek for it as earnestly as did Moses. —"Our Need of Unselfish Love," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 28, 1891, par. 7.

We should plead with God for his blessings, as Moses pleaded with him in the mount. We have no time to wait. Our Lord is coming, and it is time to set our house in order. There is a great work to be done, and if you go to your neighbor with your heart all warm and glowing with love, do you not think that you can find the key to unlock your neighbor's heart? The trouble with our work has been that we have been content to present a cold theory of the truth. We have not let our hearts melt down before those with whom we work. O that the Lord might quicken our understanding, and give us a realization of the time in which we are living! Many have walked in the sparks of their own kindling, but we should plead with God as did Moses, advancing step by step until we can say, "Show me thy glory." Moses was in earnest in the matter, and the Lord put him in a cleft in the rock, and let his goodness pass before him. Have you thought of that? He let his goodness pass before him. O my brethren, what will not the Lord do for us, if we will but seek him with all the heart? —"Let Us Go Without the Camp," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 28, 1889, par. 10.

“Please, Show Me Your Glory”

Emboldened by his success, he ventures to come still nearer to God, with a holy familiarity which is almost beyond our comprehension. He now makes a request which no human being ever made before: “I beseech thee, show me thy glory.” What a petition to come from a finite, mortal man! But is he repulsed? does God reprove him for presumption? No; we hear the gracious words: “I will make all my goodness pass before thee.”

The unveiled glory of God no man could look upon and live; but Moses is assured that he shall behold as much of the divine glory as he can bear in his present, mortal state. That hand that made the world, that holds the mountains in their places, takes this man of dust,—this man of mighty faith,—and mercifully covers him in a cleft of the rock, while the glory of God and all his goodness pass before him. Can we marvel that the “excellent glory” reflected from Omnipotence shone in the face of Moses with such brightness that the people could not look upon it? The impress of God was upon him, making him appear as one of the shining angels from the throne.

This experience, above all else the assurance that God would hear his prayer, and that the divine presence would attend him, was of more value to Moses as a leader than the learning of Egypt, or all his attainments in military science. No earthly power or skill or learning can supply the place of God’s immediate presence. In the history of Moses we may see what intimate communion with God it is man’s privilege to enjoy. To the transgressor it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But Moses was not afraid to be alone with the Author of that law which had been spoken with such awful grandeur from Mount Sinai; for his soul was in harmony with the will of his Maker.

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. The eye of faith will discern God very near, and the suppliant may obtain precious evidence of the divine love and care for him. —*Gospel Workers*, pp. 34, 35.

Go to God and tell him as did Moses, “I cannot lead this people unless thy presence shall go with me.” And then ask still more; pray with Moses, “Show me thy glory.” [Exodus 33:18.] What is this glory?—The character of God. This is what he proclaimed to Moses. Let the soul, in living faith, fasten upon God. Let the tongue speak his praise. When you associate together, let the mind be reverently turned to the contemplation of eternal realities. Thus you will be helping one another to be spiritually minded. When your will is in harmony with the divine will, you will be in harmony with one another; you will have Christ by your side as a counselor. Enoch walked with God; so may every one of the laborers for Christ. You may say with the psalmist, “I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” [Psalm 16:8.] While you feel that you have no sufficiency of yourself, your sufficiency will be in Jesus. —*Gospel Workers*, p. 237.

The Self-Revelation of God

The Deity proclaimed Himself, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

"Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped." Again he entreated that God would pardon the iniquity of His people, and take them for His inheritance. His prayer was granted. The Lord graciously promised to renew His favor to Israel, and in their behalf to do marvels such as had not been done "in all the earth, nor in any nation."

Forty days and nights Moses remained in the mount; and during all this time, as at the first, he was miraculously sustained. No man had been permitted to go up with him, nor during the time of his absence were any to approach the mount. At God's command he had prepared two tables of stone, and had taken them with him to the summit; and again the Lord "wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments." — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 329.

"God is love." 1 John 4:16. His nature, His law, is love. It ever has been; it ever will be. "The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," whose "ways are everlasting," changeth not. With Him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Isaiah 57:15; Habakkuk 3:6; James 1:17.

Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings. . . .

The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love. — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 33.

In God's word we behold the power that laid the foundation of the earth and that stretched out the heavens. Here only can we find a history of our race unsullied by human prejudice or human pride. Here are recorded the struggles, the defeats, and the victories of the greatest men this world has ever known. Here the great problems of duty and destiny are unfolded. The curtain that separates the visible from the invisible world is lifted, and we behold the conflict of the opposing forces of good and evil, from the first entrance of sin to the final triumph of righteousness and truth; and all is but a revelation of the character of God. In the reverent contemplation of the truths presented in His word the mind of the student is brought into communion with the infinite mind. Such a study will not only refine and ennoble the character, but it cannot fail to expand and invigorate the mental powers. — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 596.

The Shining Face of Moses

Those who trample upon God's authority, and show open contempt to the law given in such grandeur at Sinai, virtually despise the Lawgiver, the great Jehovah. The children of Israel, who transgressed the first and second commandments, were charged not to be seen anywhere near the mount, where God was to descend in glory to write the law a second time upon tables of stone, lest they should be consumed with the burning glory of his presence. And if they could not even look upon the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, because he had been communing with God, how much less can the transgressors of God's law look upon the Son of God when he shall appear in the clouds of heaven in the glory of his Father, surrounded by all the angelic host, to execute judgment upon all who have disregarded the commandments of God, and have trodden under foot his blood! — *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 294.

Moses had a deep sense of the personal presence of God. He was not only looking down through the ages for Christ to be made manifest in the flesh, but he saw Christ in a special manner accompanying the children of Israel in all their travels. God was real to him, ever present in his thoughts. When misunderstood, when called upon to face danger and to bear insult for Christ's sake, he endured without retaliation. Moses believed in God as one whom he needed and who would help him because of his need. God was to him a present help.

Much of the faith which we see is merely nominal; the real, trusting, persevering faith is rare. Moses realized in his own experience the promise that God will be a rewarder to those who diligently seek Him. He had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Here is another point in regard to faith which we wish to study; God will reward the man of faith and obedience. If this faith is brought into the life experience, it will enable everyone who fears and loves God to endure trials. Moses was full of confidence in God because he had appropriating faith. He needed help, and he prayed for it, grasped it by faith, and wove into his experience the belief that God cared for him. He believed that God ruled his life in particular. He saw and acknowledged God in every detail of his life and felt that he was under the eye of the All-seeing One, who weighs motives, who tries the heart. He looked to God and trusted in Him for strength to carry him uncorrupted through every form of temptation. . . . The presence of God was sufficient to carry him through the most trying situations in which a man could be placed.

Moses did not merely think of God; he saw Him. God was the constant vision before him; he never lost sight of His face. He saw Jesus as his Saviour, and he believed that the Saviour's merits would be imputed to him. This faith was to Moses no guesswork; it was a reality. This is the kind of faith we need, faith that will endure the test. Oh, how often we yield to temptation because we do not keep our eye upon Jesus! — *Conflict and Courage*, p. 85.

Friday, September 19

For Further Reading

"The Power of Prayer," *Signs of the Times*, January 29, 1902.
"Consecration," in *Steps to Christ*, pp. 67–75.