

Prayer

Thank You, Lord Jesus for the gift of this day. Lead me through its joys and its trials, and guide me through everything that happens so that I come to understand something of Your will for me both today, and every day of my life. May I continue to praise You throughout the day, and grow stronger in faith each hour. All glory be to You Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN

Other Prayer Suggestions

- *Pray, by speaking out the names of those you love in blessing*
- *Pray, by naming the names of Jesus and giving Him glory*
- *Pray, by reciting the prayer that Jesus taught us Himself*
- *Pray, by listing things that are on your heart and give you concern*
- *Pray, by stopping to think about the concerns of others, not yours*
- *Pray, by waiting in silence for the Lord to answer your prayers*

Meditation

You know all things about everything, O Lord;
and yet You give of Your time to me.

You hear the sounds of the Universe, O Lord;
and yet You listen to what I say.

You are truth and justice personified, O Lord;
and yet You save me from my sin.

You create new things every day, O Lord;
and yet You rejoice in all I do.

You speak Your Word to the Universe, O Lord;
and yet You whisper in my ear.

Forgive me when I am selfish, O Lord,
and fail to give anything to You.

Bible Study - Exodus 33:17-23

¹⁷ The LORD said to Moses, 'I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.' ¹⁸ Moses said, 'Show me your glory, I pray.' ¹⁹ And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, "The LORD"; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰ 'But,' he said, 'you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.' ²¹ And the LORD continued, 'See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; ²² and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; ²³ then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.'

Reflections

Moses had just led the Israelites through one of their most terrible and darkest moments. The people had become impatient with God and Moses whilst waiting for them at the bottom of Mount Sinai, and they made a golden calf to worship. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, he was aghast. He broke the tablets of the Ten Commandments in two, and in the furor, civil war broke out between those who rallied to Moses and the rest of Israel (32:25-29). After this, Moses and God had an intriguing conversation (33:1-16) in which both put everything on the table, and at the end of an exhausting physical and spiritual day, Moses

said '*show me Your glory, Lord*' (33:18). You may well know what happened next, because God famously hid Moses 'cleft of the rock' (33:22) while His glory passed by (33:22). Then, when Moses came down from Sinai after this, his face shone (34:27f.), such was the power of the partial glory revealed to Moses.

Today, I do not intend to comment on this incident further, but I ask you to look at the prayer of Moses; '*show me Your glory, Lord*' (32:18). This remarkable prayer request deserves our attention, because it is an example of a particular kind of prayer that is perhaps missing from our congregational worship and private prayer; a prayer of pure, selfless, devotion.

'*Show me Your glory, Lord*' is a prayer that comes from a heart completely focussed on God, wanting nothing more than a pure relationship with the living God. Nothing less will do. There is a time and a place for straightforward praise and thanksgiving, for prayers of intercession, and for personal prayer requests. However, this prayer of Moses is different, and unlike our ordinary prayers. When we offer God our praise, we say and do things to honour Him, and our prayers are designed to 'lift Him high' in worship, as is our duty and privilege as His people. However, '*show me Your glory, Lord*' goes beyond praise and worship; it asks God to do something far greater than anything else He can or will do, which is to reveal more of Himself. When this prayer is said, the heart is completely focussed on God, and the soul is placed willingly at the mercy of God. No individual or group of people can say this prayer and knowingly harbour sin, for if we invite His glory, then such is His purity that all sinfulness will be consumed.

As Moses prayed this prayer, his spirit craved more of God. The glory of the Lord was visible to everyone in the cloud and fire by which the Israelites were led through the desert (Exodus 40:34f.), but Moses needed the Lord's personal revelation in order to be at peace with what was required of him. Now today, God's New Testament people have the complete revelation of the Father's glory available to them in the Lord Jesus Christ; and by the grace of God, the evidence of this has been passed down through the generations, principally through Scripture. As individuals, however, none of us has a complete understanding of the revelation of Jesus, and we all need more of Him. It would be arrogant of us to assume that since we have met our Lord once in the waters of baptism we need no further revelation of His presence and His glory; we always need more.

Thank God that today, we can say Moses' prayer, '*show me Your glory, Lord*', knowing that He delights to show us more of Christ. He is glad when we are so focussed in faith that we want to know more of Him, not just to do a task or to survive our trials here on earth, but simply because we love Him and want to love Him more. God's glory is not something we take from Him in order to make ourselves into more 'spiritual' Christians; the revelation of God's glory in Christ is a free gift from the heart of our Creator, given so that we might know Jesus and His blessing, and the Lord is delighted when we ask for it. Moreover, we should remember that we cannot pray '*show me Your glory, Lord*' in order to acquire some benefit. To see God's glory is come closer to the one we love; in true love, is that not enough?

May I suggest that you consider using this prayer of Moses; it will certainly challenge your faith as you consider how and when you might use it. Now, we live in a world in which almost everything we do requires a reason, and few people see the need to engage in things unless they have a purpose and can be achieved. Satan has used this feature of our world to infect God's people, such that many will not gather and celebrate unless there is a special speaker to hear, a task to do, a mission to be commenced or a good cause to celebrate. Think carefully about why it is that an advert calling Christians together to worship will not have the desired effect unless there is a good 'name' at the centre of the poster! But the Lord delights in those who offer themselves to Him in worship and praise for no other reason than they love Him and they want to be more like Him. Our Lord is truly glorified when His people pray '*show me Your glory, Lord*', whatever the circumstances, and are ready to do His will.

God bless you

Paul H Ashby