

A. Sermon Scripture & Title

Now And Not Yet

Exodus 33: 1-6, 12-23

The Lord said to Moses, “Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your offspring I will give it.’² I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.³ Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.”

⁴ When the people heard this disastrous word, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.

⁵ For the Lord had said to Moses, “Say to the people of Israel, ‘You are a stiff-necked people; if for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you. So now take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do with you.’”⁶ Therefore the people of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward.

¹² Moses said to the Lord, “See, you say to me, ‘Bring up this people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’¹³ Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.”¹⁴ And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”¹⁵ And he said to him, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here.¹⁶ For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?”

¹⁷ And the Lord said to Moses, “This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.”¹⁸ Moses said, “Please show me your glory.”

¹⁹ And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my 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 man shall not see me and live.”²¹ And the Lord said, “Behold, 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.”

B. Discussion Questions

Read over the passage together

1. In reading through this passage, are there any points that strike you as interesting, troubling, or difficult to understand?
2. Were you surprised by Moses' response to God that He would not be going with the people and how the people were so distraught by the news of this?
3. What are your thoughts about Moses' request to see God's Glory? Do you see this as excessive in light of the close relationship that they shared or can you relate to Moses' desire?
4. Does the picture of being hidden in the cleft and the Rock being Jesus resonate with you? Do you have trouble "seeing God" when the struggles of life come upon you?