

Exodus 33:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

Analysis

For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight?—Moses makes a theological argument: Israel's distinctiveness depends solely on God's presence. Not their obedience, abilities, or achievements, but God dwelling among them sets them apart from 'all the people that are upon the face of the earth.' This verse articulates election's purpose: God's people exist to display His glory by His presence. Without the divine presence, Israel becomes just another nation. This principle extends to the church—we are distinguished by Christ's indwelling Spirit (John 14:17, Colossians 1:27).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern peoples recognized Israel's God through His visible acts and presence among them (see Rahab's testimony, Joshua 2:9-11). Israel's uniqueness wasn't ethnic or cultural but theological—Yahweh dwelt with them.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What distinguishes your life from unbelievers—external practices or God's internal presence?
2. How does this verse challenge cultural Christianity that emphasizes behavior modification over God's transforming presence?

Interlinear Text

וְבַמְּה הַ	H4100	For wherein	שָׁלַל יְ	H3045	shall it be known	אֵל עָ	H645	here	כִּי אָגָ	H3588	have found	מֵאַתִּי	H4672	grace	נִ	H2580
בְּעֵינֶךָ יְ	H5869	in thy sight	אָנָּה וְ	H589	I and thy people	כָּל וְ	H3808	all and	כָּל כָּתָב	H1980		כָּל כָּתָב	H5973		כָּל כָּתָב	H5971
וְנִפְלַיְתָה	H6395	with us so shall we be separated	אָנָּה וְ	H589	I and thy people	מִכָּל לְ	H3605	I and thy people	כָּל מִ	H5971		מִכָּל יְ	H5971		מִכָּל יְ	H5971
בְּפָנֶיךָ	H834		עַל אֲשֶׁר	H5921	that are upon the face	בְּפָנֶיךָ	H6440	of the earth	בְּאָדָם	H127						

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 4:7 (Parallel theme): For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

Numbers 14:14 (Parallel theme): And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD

art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

1 Kings 8:53 (Parallel theme): For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.

Exodus 34:10 (Parallel theme): And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the LORD: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

Matthew 1:23 (Parallel theme): Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Exodus 8:22 (Parallel theme): And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth.

2 Corinthians 6:17 (Parallel theme): Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

2 Samuel 7:23 (Parallel theme): And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?