The Ways of the Lord

Let us open the Word of God to Exodus chapter 33. We will read from verse 13. *"Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee."* Amen.

This is Moses speaking with God and asking Him to show him His ways, so that he might know God. It is a reason for us too to know the ways of God, to ask Him to show them to us so that we may know Him. But not only to know Him; much more is needed. We must also walk in His ways.

We will read in a few places to see this. Let us go to Psalm 103, verse 7. "He made known his ways unto Moses." Moses asked Him to show him His ways, and the Lord showed them to him.

He must do the same thing with us. First of all, it must matter to us to know His ways, so that He will show them to us, with the purpose of knowing Him and walking in His ways.

Let us also read Psalm 25. We read verses 4 and 5. *"Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day."* Amen.

This is a psalm of David. David prays the same prayer as Moses: "Shew me thy ways, O LORD." David also tells us in Psalm 27, verse 11: "Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path." Amen.

Moses prayed to the Lord to show him His ways. David prayed for Him to show him His ways. We too must pray that He would teach us His way, His paths, and lead us in that plain path.

We also read verses 8 and 9 of Psalm 25. *"Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way."* Amen.

We must ask Him to show us His ways. We read in Psalm 103 that God showed Moses His ways. David also asked Him to show him His ways, and David also tells us to whom God shows His ways: *"The meek will he teach his way."* That is a condition.

God does not show His ways to just anyone, and He does not teach His way to just anyone. It is quite clear that we too must meet certain conditions.

We also read verse 12. *"What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth."* Amen.

There are two essential things: being meek and fearing God. If I am meek, humble and submissive, which is what meekness means, and if I have the fear of the Lord, if I respect Him and love Him, He will show me the way I should choose.

When I say that I fear God, I am really saying that I fear His Word. If I fear Him, God shows me the Way, and not only does He show it to me, He also teaches me.

If there are people among us who would say that He does not show them, that they do not know the ways of God, it means they are not meek and do not fear the Lord, because the Lord does not lie. If God promises something, He keeps His promise. He is faithful. *"The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."* Amen. (Psalm 25:14)

If we fear God, He shows us the way we should choose. And He is our friend. And if we make a covenant with Him, He teaches us. The Lord teaches us.

Let us also read from Psalm 32 to see that the Lord teaches us. *"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."* (Psalm 32:8)

It is the Lord who will teach us and show us the way we should go. He will counsel us and keep His eye upon us.

Let us also read from 1 Kings, and let us remember this: we must not walk in just any way, but in the way of God, or in the ways of God. God walks on certain ways, on certain paths, and He asks us too to walk in His ways.

In Kings, chapter 11, verse 38. *"And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee."* (1 Kings 11:38)

If you will hearken to all that I command you, if you will walk in My ways, if you will do what is right in My sight, keeping My statutes and My commandments, I will be with you.

If we do not walk in the ways of God, He is not with us. We will also read from Job, chapter 21. This is Job's complaint. *"Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them."* (Job 21:7-9)

Reading from verse 13 about these people: *"They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."* Amen.

There is a kind of people who do not want to know the ways of God. A great many people are like this. Not one or two, a great many. They want to worship God, they want to have eternal life, they want to get into God's Paradise, but they do not want to know God. They do not want to know the ways of God, because if we know them, these ways make us accountable; they oblige us to walk in them. "If you will walk in My ways, then I will be with you," says the Lord.

There is a kind of people who choose not to know. We have read about another kind who want to know. And God tells those who want to know His ways that He shows them only to those who fulfil the two conditions.

They must be meek and fear the Lord. We will go to Psalm 1 to read a verse. We read a few things about the people who want to know the ways of God. And I assume that all of us here share the same desire. We all want to know the ways of God, and we all want to walk in the ways of God.

Verse 1. *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."* Amen. The man who does not go in the way of sinners. There are two ways. The way of God, or the ways of God, and the way of sinners, or the ways of sinners; the narrow way and the broad way.

"His delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Amen. He meditates on the ways of God, he meditates on His laws.

Let us also read Psalm 86: *"Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name."* Amen. This is a prayer of David. It seems that David prayed the same prayer many times.

Did David need this prayer? Do we need this prayer too? *"Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy. Preserve my soul; for I am holy."* That is what he says in verses 1 and 2. Whom does God love? The one who walks in His ways. So he walks in His ways. David says: I am poor and needy, humbled. I need You, Lord. And he asks, "Teach me thy way, O LORD."

We also read from Psalm 81. I read from verse 13. *"Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries."* There is a grief of God here: "Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!"

We also read verses 11 and 12. *"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels."* They did not listen to My voice, Israel would not listen to Me, so I gave them up to the impulses of their hearts and they followed their own counsels. Amen.

Then I gave them up to the impulses of their hearts, to the way of the heathen, the way of sinners, the broad way, because they did not listen to My voice and did not want to walk in My ways.

There is a large group of people who say: "We do not want to know Your ways. We do not want to walk in them."

We will also go to Jeremiah, chapter 6, verse 16. *"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."* Amen.

"We do not want to know them." We also read from chapter 7, verse 23, where God tells us why we must walk in His ways.

"But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." We walk in His ways in order to know Him, and here He tells us that if we walk in His ways, it will be well with us. Verse 24. Before we read further, I would like to remind you of something. This is Jeremiah. Jeremiah lived in the final period of the kingdom of Judah, before they were carried away into captivity, the Babylonian captivity. And through Jeremiah God wanted to ask them once more: Walk in My ways, so that it may be well with you. And this stubborn people would not.

And history tells us they were split in two. Some were carried away into captivity in Babylon, and some went to Egypt and died; they vanished, so to speak.

And God punished them all because they did not listen. Now we read verse 24. *"But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward."* Amen.

God warns us too. We can be happy or we can be unhappy, and not only unhappy; we can also die.

We also read from Jeremiah 21. Here in Jeremiah He also tells us of a consequence. We will face a dramatic consequence. This is still Jeremiah, still this people who were stiff-necked, and perhaps it is hard for us to understand what it was like back then.

Think of something similar. Suppose a great war is threatening us, it is at our door, it is just about to break out, and someone comes and tells us to walk in the ways of God so that we may escape the consequences of this war, which is terrible.

Under such conditions they would not walk in them. Even when they saw things happening, they would not walk in the ways of God. And when they were about to be carried off as captives, and were already being carried off as captives, they still would not walk in them. Let us think about ourselves too. How stubborn man is! We are no better. We are still human. There were a few people who bowed their hearts to know God. Not all of them. Very few. In Jeremiah's time you could probably count them on your fingers. There was a Daniel, a few people; the rest would not listen.

In chapter 21, verses 8, 9 and 10, the Lord tells us: "And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death." There are two ways. The way that leads to life and the way that leads to destruction.

There is another verse that says: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." There is a way of death and a way of life. There is a narrow way.

Whoever stays in this city will die by the sword, by famine or by pestilence. But whoever goes out and gives himself up to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will live, and his life will be his only prize. For I have set My face against this city for evil and not for good, says the Lord. It will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, who will destroy it.

Let us imagine that Bucharest, the capital of Romania, is already surrounded by an immense force; they have already reached the gates of Bucharest. And God warns us: "I have set My face against Bucharest for evil. Get out of it and give yourselves up as prisoners to these people. That is your only gain, that will be your only prize: that you stay alive." How terrible it was there! And yet, even under such conditions, there were people who would not. Many would not. Not even then, under such conditions, would they. Let us think very carefully about how many ways there are.

There are only two ways, no more: the way of life and the way of death. We read from Hebrews chapter 3, verse 10: *"Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways."* Amen. This is about the Hebrew people who were in the wilderness for forty years.

Moses knew the ways of God. God showed them to him. If He showed them to him, we can say of Moses that he was meek and feared God. There was also Caleb, and there was also Joshua.

What was the problem with these six hundred thousand people? They were not meek and they did not fear God. God did not show them His ways. They did not know His ways. Perhaps they asked, "We want to know Your ways." But they did not meet God's conditions.

Let us try to answer the question: Why do we not like God's ways? Why do we say, "We will not walk in them, we do not want to know Your ways"? I remember talking with someone many years ago. I asked him to read the Bible, and he told me: "I don't want to read the Bible, because I know it will force me to change my life. I don't want to know God, I don't want to know the wisdom of God, because I'll find myself on the way of sinners and it will force me to change." And he stayed right there. Probably ten or fifteen years have passed since then, and that person is still in darkness.

Let us read a few things about the ways of God to see what the ways of God look like. We go to Psalm 77, verse 13: *"Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary."* Amen. His way is holy. He teaches us His ways. He teaches His ways to those who are meek and fear God. He is a friend to those who fear the Lord and shows them the way they should walk.

But the ways of God are holy. We will also read Hosea about the ways of God, what Hosea says in chapter 14, verse 9: *"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein."* Amen.

Whoever is wise, let him take heed to these things. The ways of the Lord are right. The transgressors fall on this way. The just walk in them; not just anyone walks in the ways of God, because they are right.

If we still cheat on our taxes, if we still lie, if we still say things that are untrue, if we are crafty, we will fall on them.

We will read more in Psalm 18 about the ways of God, from verse 30. *"As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him."* Amen.

The ways of God are perfect. God is perfect. Psalm 19:7 says: "The law of the LORD is perfect." The law of the Lord lies along the way of God, and we must walk on this way, following His laws and commandments. God asks us to walk in His way, just as He asked the Hebrew people in the past. The narrow way the Lord Jesus spoke of is the way of God, while the broad way is the way of the heathen. God commands us to walk in all His ways, to love Him and serve Him with all our heart and with all our soul, to keep His commandments and His statutes so that it may be well with us.

God asks us to fear Him and to walk in all His ways. His ways are perfect and we must follow them. Isaiah 35:8-9 speaks of "The way of holiness", which is meant only for those who are holy. This way is for the redeemed, and no unclean person will be able to pass over it. God has redeemed us at a price, so that we may walk on the holy way He has prepared for us.

Matthew 21:32 mentions that "John came unto you in the way of righteousness." The righteous will walk in the way of God. It is important to follow God's holy way, because it will lead us to Him and bring us happiness. "The way of God" is right, as we read in Hosea; it is righteous.

Let us also go to Luke, chapter 1. Let us see what else is on this way. What else does God tell us is on it? In chapter 1, verse 76, there is a prophecy about John the Baptist and about the Lord Jesus. Verse 76: *"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."* Amen.

In Isaiah 35 we read about this way. It is a way made up of two great stretches, a highway and a way of holiness, and no ravenous beast will come on this way, no angry man, no opposer, we might say.

"To guide our feet into the way of peace." It is a way of peace. We will read again from Luke, chapter 19. Let us remember that He calls us to walk in the way of peace.

We can easily check whether we are on this way, whether we are on the way of peace or the way of war. Not armed war; rather, any opposition that rises up in us and that we carry through is a way of war, not of peace.

Chapter 19, verses 41 and 42: *"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."* Amen.

We read in Jeremiah that if we walk in the old paths, the good way, we will find rest for our souls. But they would not walk in them. There is no way you can find rest if you do not walk in His ways.

If only you had known, in this your day, the things that belong to your peace. Or, if only you had known the way of peace. But now this way is hidden from your eyes. You cannot see it.

Walking after the things of the Spirit is life and peace, the Word of God tells us. Let us also read from Romans, verses 17 and 18 of chapter 3. It speaks of a kind of people included here, and it says of them that they have not known the way of peace. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

We read in the Psalms about the condition of the person who does not know the way of peace. To know the Way of God and to be on it, we must be meek and have the fear of the Lord. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

It is only natural that they do not know the way of peace. The Kingdom of God has roads; it has paths. But what are the paths in the Kingdom of God like? The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace.

So in the Kingdom of God there are paths of righteousness and ways of peace. These are the ways of God, which are perfect. May the Lord help us to know the ways of God and to walk in them.

To close, we will read from Isaiah 59, verse 8. It speaks of the way of darkness, the way that leads to death. And it speaks of the people who walk on this way. They do not know the way of peace, and there is no judgment in their goings. "They have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." Anyone who walks on these ways does not know peace; these ways lead to death.

There are two great ways: the way of peace and the way of righteousness.

There is no judgment in their goings. They do not know the way of peace. We close with Psalm 119 and a beautiful promise. And before I read it, let me quote one more verse that has just come to my mind: "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." It is God's request: "Give Me your heart, and let your eyes delight in My ways." Let them find delight.

And here the Psalmist says the same thing, from verse 1 to verse 3. "1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. 2. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. 3. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways." Amen.

Let us take this promise for ourselves. Blessed are we if we walk in righteousness, undefiled in our way.

If we seek Him with all our heart, if we keep His Word and walk in His ways, we will be blessed and we will have life. May the Lord strengthen you and help you to take to heart what you have heard, and may we walk with all our strength in His ways. Amen.

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