



The Tri-Cities Edifier

Volume 11

June 15, 2025

No. 24

If We Only Knew?

David McClister

You recall the account of Moses at the burning bush and how God commissioned him to return to Egypt and lead the Israelites out from there. At first Moses was, understandably, reluctant. "Who am I?" he said, to which God responded "I will be with you." Moses was right, he was a nobody. But it was not Moses who would accomplish the release of Israel. God would do that. God simply wanted to use Moses as his agent and representative to Pharaoh.

Of course, that should have been enough to quell any fears Moses had, but it was not. He kept offering excuses for why he should not do this work, but God answered every one of them. Moses was not going to get out of this.

Of course, Moses only knew to ask about the problems which crossed his own mind. He really had no idea of how the whole thing would unfold. He had no idea of how difficult the exodus would be. Therefore, in an act of great kindness, God told Moses how Pharaoh would react to the demand to release Israel. "I will harden his heart," God said, and He explained to Moses that Pharaoh would be stubborn and resistant to the divine order. The implication seems to be that this would result in further hardships on Israel, but that insight was beyond Moses at the moment. Anyway, God laid the near future out before Moses and explained to him that Pharaoh's stubbornness was actually part of God's plan. Because Pharaoh would refuse to obey God, God would unleash the plagues upon Egypt by which He would show His own people, Israel, just what a great God He is. The plagues would then break the will of Pharaoh in such a grand way that Israel would leave Egypt with the loot of their former captors in their wagons (Exod 3.19-22).

All of this information was for Moses' protection. Moses was reluctant to go anyway, and God knew that if the situation seemed to turn worse, Moses would become "rattled" and want to quit (which he did anyway). Therefore God showed him the future so that when things happened, Moses would not be taken by surprise or think that the plan of God was not working. God wanted him to know that even Pharaoh's stubbornness was part of the plan, and that it would work out perfectly in the end.

Interestingly, we see Jesus doing the same thing for Peter. Jesus knew that Peter's will was no match for his words, and that Peter would "cave" in the hour of trial. So Jesus told Peter how he was about to deny his Lord, but after that Peter would be of great help to his brethren. Jesus could have said nothing and let Peter find out the hard way just how weak he really was, but instead Jesus tried to soften the blow by preparing Peter for it ahead of time and telling him how things would unfold.

I suppose it would be nice if God would do for us what He did for Moses and Peter. Wouldn't you like to see into the future and know that things will work out? Wouldn't it be comforting to see that everything will come to a good end? Think of how different our perspective would be if we could see past the present hardships and know the good that will come from them. If we only knew how things would work out, if only we could look into the future Yes, it would probably be very comforting, and it might answer several questions for us, but God does not do this for us.

Why doesn't God show us the future? Why doesn't He let us know how things will go so that we are not surprised or upset when things look like they are not going well? After all, aren't we serving God too? Isn't God using us for His will today like He was using Moses for His will back then?

The answer is this: what God did for Moses is supposed to be a lesson for us. We don't have to go through the same experience as Moses in order to learn what Moses learned. *We can learn the lesson by reading the story of Moses.*

So what did Moses learn? He learned that God will make everything work out well in the end. Even when wicked people come into the picture, God can use their wickedness in such a way that in the end the wicked are destroyed by their own ways, and God's people are safe and sound, and even better off than they were before. God expects me to learn and accept by faith what Moses learned through personal experience. In other words, the story of Moses stands as proof of God's providence and faithfulness. God will do what He said, and He will do it in the best possible way. Moses got to know that ahead of time. God asks us to believe it, based on the story of Moses.

You see, God does not want to have to show me everything; He wants me to trust Him. Now that trust is not a "blind faith." It is based on God's past record of dealing with people, which God expects me to read and accept. Based on His past faithfulness, God wants me to trust in His future faithfulness as well. It is not a hard concept to understand, but sometimes we think it is hard to practice.

Is this not what Jesus said to Thomas, who insisted on being shown, for himself, that Jesus was alive from the dead? He said *"Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed"* (John 20:29). Peter recognized this as well when he wrote *"and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory"* (1 Pet 1:8).

The fact is that God will be true, just like He always has been. I don't need to see the future in order to know that in the end, God will work everything out perfectly. The Bible, and my faith in it, tells me so. *Focus Online* – July 13, 2015

The Memory of Them is Forgotten

In a couple of weeks, I will be attending a family reunion. Lord willing, I will see some of my first cousins—people I haven't seen in over 40 years. In preparation for that, I am in charge of pulling together old family pictures. Pictures of relatives I never knew. Names that will once again escape me in a few months (if not in a few days, knowing my memory).

In putting all of this together, I find the Bible to be true over and over again:

"There is no remembrance of former things, Nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come By those who will come after." Ecclesiastes 1:11

"For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the memory of them is forgotten." Ecclesiastes 9:5

"...For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." James 4:14

The Bible, however, records the names of the faithful (see Hebrews 11) as a constant reminder to us—not to forget them, because we learn from their examples of faithfulness.

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us," Hebrews 12:1

STACY CRIM