

THE GLORY OF THE LORD (PART 2)

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In Exodus 33:18, God's servant Moses made a bold request: "*And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory.*" The Lord agreed to fulfill Moses' request: "And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy" (Exod 33:19). Exodus 34:5-8 says, "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, *The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.* And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." God showed Moses his glory, revealing to him his very nature. That nature is revealed by the words spoken by the Lord to mankind.

God's glory and His word

When God gave the law to Moses, Exodus 24:16-18 says, "*And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.*" We can see the association between the glory of the Lord and the revelation of his word with the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. This glory was further manifested to all Israel as they were assembled at the foot of the mount. Moses recalled these events in Deuteronomy 5:22-29: "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; and ye said, *Behold, the Lord our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!*" The glory of the Lord is also, and *especially*, revealed in the New Testament: "*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*" (2 Cor 4:6).

Refuse not the one who speaks from heaven

God showed his glory to Moses on the mount, and all Israel feared at the sight. But now we

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(continued)

have God's everlasting Covenant through his only begotten Son. Hebrews 1:1-2 says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." What is the significance of that? Hebrews 2:1-4 says, "*Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?*" We will have no escape if we refuse to hear God's Son Jesus Christ. Comparing what Israel saw of God's glory in the Old Testament to what we see through Christ in the New Testament, Hebrews 12:18-24 says that we are not come to that mount that burned with fire and caused even Moses to fear and quake, but rather to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to Jesus Christ the mediator of the New Covenant. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. *For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire*" (Heb 12:25-29).

The hope of glory

John 1:18 says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Thus, Jesus Christ came to declare the Father that we might see him. In John 14:8-9, "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? *he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" Through Christ, we indeed "see" the Father. What do we see? We see his glorious nature, and in a much plainer fashion that what he showed Moses on Sinai (2 Cor 3:6-13). And why has he revealed his glory to us in this way? So we can be like him! "*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*" (2 Cor 3:18). This is why Colossians 1:27 defines having Christ in us as the riches of the glory of God's mystery: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." It is not sufficient for us to merely "see" the Father, and his glorious nature. Moses saw part of that too (Exod 34:5-8). But it is our purpose from God to then partake of that nature: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, *through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue*: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: *that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet 1:3-4). Partaking of the divine nature, being changed into that same image, and having Christ in us, is truly the hope of glory!