

Sermon Notes 11/21/2010

Numbers 12:8.

Deut. 4:12

Deut. 4:14-16

Ex. 24:9-11

Ex. 33:11; 18-23

Ex. 34:5-8

Exodus 34:29-35 :“29 And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.

“30 And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. 31 And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them.

“32 And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. 33 And *till* Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face.

“34 But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel *that* which he was commanded. 35 And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone: and Moses put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.”

Notes

Introduction: Similitude or Form. Images in the Soul; Images to the Eye.

I. Invisibility of God: How is God to become known

II. The Tables of Stone for Stony Hearts. The Back Parts of God.

III. The Law written on Flesh:

IV. The Veiling of God’s Glory for the Hardness of their Hearts.

"With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" (Nu 12:8 AV)

"And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye *heard* a voice." (De 4:12 AV)

"¹⁴ And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it. ¹⁵ Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day *that* the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: ¹⁶ Lest ye corrupt *yourselves*, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female," (De 4:14-16 AV)

"⁹ ¶ Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: ¹⁰ And they saw the God of Israel: and *there was* under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in *his* clearness. ¹¹ And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink." (Ex 24:9-11 AV)

"⁹ And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood *at* the door of the tabernacle, and *the LORD* talked with Moses. ¹⁰ And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand *at* the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man *in* his tent door. ¹¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. ¹² ¶ And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. ¹³ Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation *is* thy people. ¹⁴ And he said, My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will give thee rest. ¹⁵ And he said unto him, If thy presence go not *with me*, carry us not up hence. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. ¹⁸ And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. ¹⁹ 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 shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. ²⁰ And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. ²¹ And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: ²² And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: ²³ And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." (Ex 33:9-23 AV)

"¹ ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. ² And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. ³ And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount. ⁴ And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. ⁵ ¶ And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶ And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, ⁷ 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*. ⁸ And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." (Ex 34:1-8 AV)

"²⁹ And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. ³⁰ And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. ³¹ And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. ³² And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. ³³ And *till* Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. ³⁴ But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel *that* which he was commanded. ³⁵ And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses,

that the skin of Moses’ face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.” (Ex 34:29-35 AV)

Introduction

Sometimes, as I have told you before, a sermon gets in the way of another one, and it has to be preached for it keeps intruding. I will preach on the Sanctuary of the Lord, but that will be next week, for this sermon kept intruding, and I have to get it out of the way.

It has to do with the invisibility of God, for that was the issue at the incident of the golden calf. The word “similitude” or in the NKJ which many of you use, the word is “form.” In both cases the word represents something that stands for something else. We get the word “simile” and figure of speech using “like” or “as.” The Jesus is like a lamb, slain from the foundation of the world; but he was a man, not a lamb. There was not physical similitude between Jesus and a lamb, but a mental similitude. So we say that Jesus was “like” Moses or “like David” but the resemblance is not physical, to be seen with the eyes of the body, but with the eyes of the soul. On the other hand, we may say that a son is “like” his father, and we may mean physical resemblance; and the son may be nothing like his father in personality, intelligence, or spiritual awareness. I have twin sons and in some ways they are “like” each other, and in some ways they are very “unlike” each other. Although physically they look very much “like” each other; yet they are definitely not interchangeable parts.

So when it is said that Moses saw the “similitude” of God in Numbers 12 and that Israel saw the God of Israel above the sapphire pavement in Ex. 24, and God said you saw no “similitude” of God [same word] when God spoke to them in Deut. 4, we have to see that the word “similitude” is used in different senses. In fact, Ex. 24 speaks of the “similitude” of God being as the “body of heaven in His clearness” which speaks of his invisibility. They saw a similitude of God’s invisibility, if you will. Amazing.

So God talking to Moses as or like a man talks to his friend face to face, does not mean that Moses saw God’s face, because God said no one can do that and live. The emphasis was on the clarity of the speech not the appearance of the face.

So much for the introduction. I want to make four points this morning. This is not a sermon on expositions—I suppose that 99 percent of my sermons are expositions, but this one is summary and integration, for that is necessary also. The four points are these: I. The knowledge of God would be behind a veil under the Law of Moses; II. The Tables of Stone and the vision of the hinder parts of God to Moses, indicate this veiling of God’s knowledge; III. There would be a relative unveiling of the knowledge of God at the crucifixion of Christ; IV The veil would be completely removed at the resurrection of the dead.

I The knowledge of God would be veiled until the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ. These things come from 2Cor. 3, which we read a few moments ago.

- A. The law was written on stones, representing the hardness of the hearts of the people of God. Christ is hidden behind types and figures and historical parables. The contrast in 2Cor. 3 is between the law written on stones and the law written on the heart. God wrote it on stones because they did not have soft hearts. Whatever of the law of God is written on the natural man is written on his hard heart.
- B. Even in the ministry of Christ the gospel was yet veiled, for He spoke in parables that even his disciples did not understand until the Spirit was poured out upon them. The parables were wonderful and important teachings and must be studied, but the truth is concealed unless revealed by the Spirit of God. Jesus said this was the reason for speaking in parables, so that they would not see.
- C. But the veil was removed even further by the rending of the flesh of Jesus Christ. Symbolically, this was indicated by the rending of the veil of the Temple, meaning that the knowledge of God and access to Him was made clear by the death of Christ and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. Heb. 10:19 “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and

living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh....” But we still do not see clearly, but as in a glass, 2Cor 3:18. says as we see Christ in Scripture.

- D. This veil will be completely removed when we see Christ face to face in His glory. As 1John 3:1ff says.
- II The symbols of the veiling of God in Moses are three-fold:
- A. The Tables of Stone, representing the hard hearts of Israel.
 - B. The Veil on Moses face—They could not bear the glory of God.
 - C. The permission of Moses only to see the hinder parts of God. God is everywhere; He has no front or back. But this again is a figure; God saw not the face but the back of God—in a figure. A good figure it is. When my twins were little no one could tell them apart from behind. Only with a great deal of observation could you tell them apart from the front. It is like someone that you see in a crowd. Illustration: Bill Enoch? At the grocery store.
- III Under the New Testament in Christ’s Blood, the law is written on the fleshly tables of the heart:
- A. First of all in the heart of our Mediator, the Lord Jesus. Psalm 40:6: 6 ¶ Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me, 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart.
 - B. Secondly, in the hearts of those who believe as Abraham believed. There were some in the Old Covenant, because the New is concealed in the Old, but the Spirit was more fully poured fourth in the New, as God had said, that he would write His laws on our hearts.
 - C. We have been predestined to be like Christ, not like Moses. Christ had the law on his heart in a way that not even Moses had. How much superior is Christ to Moses! How pure, blameless, spotless. A true Mediator.
- IV This veiling was for the purpose of making it possible for God to dwell among us.
- A. Stated in Ex 33:3 Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way.” He did go with them, but He was behind the veil, hidden, and we are going to see, his wrath would break out from time to time and many died under the wrath of God.
 - B. But in Christ we have access into the presence of God and much more glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 - 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
 - 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;
 - 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,
 - 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;
 - 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.
 - 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,
 - 21 Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.