

A Theology of the Book of Exodus

"Who is God and How Should We Live?"
from the Book of Exodus

"Glory be to God!"
Exodus 35-40
Rev. Charles R. Biggs

What is God's glory?

I don't want to know how to glorify him; I ask you what is God's glory?

Imagine if I were an unbeliever and I asked you: "I hear you speaking a lot about God's glory, but what is it; how do you define it?"

"Glory be to God!" we say! What does this mean? "God was glorified in what they said or did..."

WSC: "Chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

At the end of the Book of Exodus, we have God coming in glory to dwell with his people. But ***what is his glory.***

^{ESV} Exodus 40:34-35: Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

When Moses asked to be assured of God's favor toward him and the people, he asked to see his glory- - to look upon his face- -what does this mean?

Note: This is another example of how we can speak a lot about things such as *glory*, but when we are actually asked, we are puzzled as to how to answer.

Exodus 33:14-23: And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." ¹⁵ And he said to him, "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. ¹⁶ For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?" ¹⁷ And the LORD said to

Moses, "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." ¹⁸ **Moses said, "Please show me your glory."** ¹⁹ **And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.'"** And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live." ²¹ And the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, ²² **and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by.** ²³ **Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."**

Hebrew: dAbK' / "Glory" or "Honor"

Illustration: We say "your honor" to a judge or dignitary. God is the ultimate "Honor" and that is getting close to it. We should better say to God "Your Glory".

Simply put: God's glory is his "Godness" or what we might say (hopefully) helpfully **"Godness-goodness"**.

GLORY is God's "Godness-Goodness"!

This means: Who God is as God- -and how God is good!

More fully however, in order to answer what is God's glory, we might also ask:

Why do you live for God's glory? What does it mean to glorify God?

God's glory is:

God's being. God's character. God's ways. God's thoughts revealed.

God's making himself known and understood by finite creatures he saves and specially reveals himself to. We see God's glory in everything he has created, but we see God's glory reflected in a special way in man who is created in his glory-image.

The Book of Exodus along with all of Scripture reveals God and his glory.

God's being.
God's character.
God's ways.
God's thoughts.

***We as God's people glorify him by reflecting his goodness:
reflecting in our lives God's being, character, ways, and
thoughts in how we live.***

*^{ESV} Isaiah 60:1-3: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and **the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.** ² For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, **and his glory will be seen upon you.** ³ And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.*

This was what we were created to be and to do as creatures made in God's image! Snails bring glory to God, but not like man made in his image; giraffes bring glory to God, but not like man made in his image; the ocean brings glory to God, but not like man made in his image.

What is the image of God in man but his special "glory-image" revealed?!

It is revealed in how we live, how we worship, how we speak about God. God's glory is found ultimately in God our Creator and Redeemer, and in us as his creatures ***reflecting that glory.***

So how does God show his glory-goodness throughout the Book of Exodus?

*^{ESV} **Exodus 14:4** And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD." And they did so.*

*^{ESV} **Exodus 14:17** And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen.*

*^{ESV} **Exodus 14:18** And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."*

^{ESV} **Exodus 16:7** and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?"

^{ESV} **Exodus 16:10** And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.

^{ESV} **Exodus 24:16** The glory of the LORD dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

^{ESV} **Exodus 28:2** And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.

^{ESV} **Exodus 28:40** "For Aaron's sons you shall make coats and sashes and caps. You shall make them for glory and beauty.

^{ESV} **Exodus 29:43** There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.

^{ESV} **Exodus 40:34-35:** Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

I. God Promises

- He is a covenantal God.

II. God Hears

- He is a prayer-hearing God.

III. God Saves and Redeems

- He is a merciful and saving God.

IV. God Reveals Himself (specially)

- Through His Story
- Through His Name ("I am that I am"/ "I will never leave you nor forsake you.")
- Through His Law
- Through the Tabernacle
- God is Holy

- i. We are sinners, selfish, self-centered, and stiff-necked.
- ii. By God's grace, he makes us "fit" so and restores his glory-image in us so that we might dwell with him.

f. God is Just

- i. Sin must be punished.
- ii. Sin will be punished

g. God is Forgiving, Gracious and Merciful

- i. God tells the people a story about himself and his promises.
- ii. God hears a people's needs and answers.
- iii. God saves and redeems an undeserving people.
- iv. God specially reveals himself and his glory!

^{ESV} **Exodus 34:4-7:** So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first. And he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand two tablets of stone. ⁵ The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶ The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

V. God is Revealed in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ and His "Exodus" for His People!

- a. God promised and he came to fulfill his promises in Jesus.
- b. God heard our need and sent Jesus down to save.
- c. God saves and redeems us on the cross in Jesus Christ.
- d. God reveals himself as a man like us (not like us).

Greater understanding of God's glory:

1) In the face of Jesus Christ.

^{ESV} **John 1:1-4, 14:** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men...¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

2) In Jesus' Transfiguration and "Exodus" for all who believe:

Luke 9:28-36: Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure [th.n e;xodon], which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"- not knowing what he said. ³⁴ As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" ³⁶ And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

3) Reflected in Jesus' people of the New Covenant because of Jesus Christ:

2 Corinthians 3:7-18: Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at **Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end,** ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? ⁹ For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. ¹⁰ Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it. ¹¹ For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory. ¹² Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, ¹³ not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. ¹⁴ But their minds were hardened.

For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. ¹⁶ But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ **And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.**

More glory now in the New Covenant because God changes us by his glory and powerful Spirit from within.

For example:

- 1) Old Testament Revelation of Trinity
 - God, the Angel of the Presence, and the Glory Cloud-Fire Theophany of the Spirit.
- 2) New Testament (Fuller, More Glorious) Revelation of Trinity:
 - Father, Jesus Christ our Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God makes us holy and glorious by His Spirit as we gaze and behold the beauty, holiness, and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Paul goes on to write in 2 Corinthians 4:4-6:

^{ESV} **2 Corinthians 4:4-6:** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," ***has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.***

- Note: Contrary to some who do not think theology is important—our experiences flow from our theology and knowledge of God.
- 3) God keeps his promises in Christ Jesus ("Yes and amen" in Christ- 2 Cor. 1).
 - 4) God calls us his children.

- 5) God has revealed his Name more fully in Jesus Christ.
- 6) God has more fully revealed his "Exodus" and salvation in Jesus Christ.
- 7) God has washed us in the waters of baptism.

^{ESV} **1 Peter 3:18-22:** For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. ²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

^{ESV} **1 Corinthians 10:1-13:** I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. ⁶ Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, ¹⁰ nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. ¹¹ Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹² Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

- 8) God has given his people the law and commands.
- 9) We are God's "wilderness people" now as Hebrews 3-4 teaches us (this includes God's glorious presence by the Holy Spirit, Jesus guarding, guiding and defending, and being able constantly to call upon our Heavenly Father in times of need; it includes suffering; it includes imperfection in the church, and forgiveness of one another and patience as God works in us all together).

Hebrews 3:7-4:11: Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, *"Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, ⁹ where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works ¹⁰ for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.' ¹¹ As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'"*

¹² Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. ¹⁵ As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." ¹⁶ For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? ¹⁷ And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

4:1 Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. ² For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. ³ For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, "As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,'" although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴ For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." ⁵ And again in this passage he

said, "They shall not enter my rest." ⁶ Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. ⁹ So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰ for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. ¹¹ Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

- **Practical Application Note:** Recently I was asked whether a personal relationship with Jesus was more important than a corporate relationship with Jesus' Church...
- The **Book of Hebrews** teaches us that it is both and we grow together as a wilderness community in Christ *together!*

^{ESV} **Hebrews 10:22-25:** ...Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

- 10) God has given his Spirit to his people to show forth his glory to the world: "You are the Light of the world..."
- 11) We see that God will dwell in us now, and with us eternally ***in all his glory*** in the New Heavens and the New Earth. And his people shall reflect perfectly his glory in our glorified bodies- -eternally living before the face of God!

^{ESV} **Revelation 4:9-11:** And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever.

They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ¹¹ "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

^{ESV} **Revelation 5:12-13:** saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" ¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"

^{ESV} **Revelation 21:23-26:** And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵ and its gates will never be shut by day- and there will be no night there. ²⁶ They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

^{ESV} **Revelation 21:1-7:** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "**Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.**" ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." ⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶ And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son."

Let us pray:

Grant us, Lord, not to be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, while we are placed among things that are passing away, to hold fast to those that shall endure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Public Reception of the Weitz Family: Rick, Kathy, Joshua, Ethan, Daniel, Connor, Grace (and Caleb is at school)