

## THE GLORY OF GOD

Week 4 – God’s Grace in the Midst of Judgment

October 2, 2018

How do you think of God? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever think of God as \_\_\_\_\_?

CONSIDER: Rom. 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_

It is crucial to know God as He has revealed Himself in the totality of His word. The God of the OT is the same God of the NT. He is both loving and He is judgmental against all sin. His holiness demands that He judge sin. As God unfolds His plan through Scripture, we see a fuller picture of Who He is.

At Mt. Sinai while Moses was on the mountain with God...

*Ex. 32:1 - Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, ‘Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’*

*Ex. 32:2-6 - And Aaron said to them, ‘Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.’<sup>3</sup> So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron.<sup>4</sup> And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’<sup>5</sup> So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.’<sup>6</sup> Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*

*Ex. 32:21-24 - And Moses said to Aaron, ‘What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?’<sup>22</sup> So Aaron said, ‘Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil.’<sup>23</sup> For they said to me, ‘Make us gods that shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’<sup>24</sup> And I said to them, ‘Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.’ So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out.”*

*Ex. 32:25-32 -<sup>25</sup> Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies),<sup>26</sup> then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, ‘Whoever is on the LORD’s side—come to me!’ And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.<sup>27</sup> And he said to them, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.’<sup>28</sup> So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.<sup>29</sup> Then Moses*

said, 'Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother.' ... Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, 'You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.' <sup>31</sup> Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, 'Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! <sup>32</sup> Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.' Moses was the mediator. Moses represented the people to God and God to the people. However, atonement for sin is a far greater work than Moses understood. Only blood could atone for sin (Lev. 17:11 [which God legislated after the tabernacle was built] yet noted in Gen. 3:21 and Gen. 4:3-5....).

Moses petitioned God to forgive the people for their great sin. God cannot set aside sin. There needs to be a payment for sin. God assured Moses that each person would have to bear the penalty for his sin – v. 33 - *Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.* I'm suggesting that what we are reading in v. 33 is Moses' sacrificial heart. He was willing to sacrifice himself eternally for his people.

God responded with justice....

Ex. 32:33-35 - *And the LORD said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. <sup>34</sup> Now therefore, go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin.'* <sup>35</sup> *So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.* God is telling the Israelites, as a people, that they would live and that they would continue their journey and possess the land as He, God, had promised. But there remains a question. Moses has already received from God on Mt. Sinai the detailed plans for the tabernacle (chapters 25-31). Now the only question is whether or not God will DWELL with them (Ex. 25:8) in their midst in the tabernacle?

Ex. 33:1-3 - *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.'* <sup>2</sup> *And I will send My Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. <sup>3</sup> Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.* God spoke of the children of Israel as "Moses' people" (Ex. 33:1). God is sending them on their way to the land He's sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! "I will not go up in your midst" – I could consume you because of your sin!

*I will send My Angel – not a new scenario!*

Ex. 23:20, 23 - *Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. ...<sup>23</sup> For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.*

We see God's overwhelming mercy. Ex. 33:3 - *for I will not go up in your midst, .....lest I consume you on the way* Why did God make this statement? HOLINESS! God had to deal with their sin. If God was going to dwell in their midst, there must be atonement for their sin or else he would consume them - because God is HOLY! *I will not go up in your midst* is God extending mercy!

*I will not go up in your midst* – BUT God's Angel will guide them and give them protection. We've seen the ministry of the Angel of the LORD in passages throughout Genesis. We've seen that the Angel of the LORD is God!

How are we to understand "I will not go up in your midst"? Ex. 25:8 – *And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.* Hebrew word for "among" is *ta-VECH* which means "in the midst/middle". Sanctuaries were usually built a little distance away from towns in the ancient world. God's covenant with Israel was unique. God promised to dwell in their camp – in their midst – among them/in the middle of them! The people were looking at the possible removal of that uniqueness.

Israel wanted Aaron to fashion an idol for them so that they could feel assured that their "god" was with them (Ex. 32:1). The idol did exactly the opposite. Ex. 33:4-6 - *And when the people heard this bad news (from their perspective), they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments. <sup>5</sup> For the LORD had said to Moses, "Say to the children of Israel, 'You are a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you.'"* <sup>6</sup> *So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.*

It was their jewelry that fashioned the golden calf. We need to realize that these ornaments that were Israel's tokens of repentance, were then fit for use as tokens of God's glory – His presence in the construction of the tabernacle in the wilderness – where God would dwell in their midst! From tokens/vessels fit for destruction to tokens/vessels fit for the glory of God! I believe that we're reading of a genuine act of repentance. If the hearts of the people were totally hardened, there would be no grief on their part. If the people were satisfied with God removing Himself from their midst, it would prove they only loved God's blessings and not God Himself.

CONSIDER: keeping God at a distance was Israel's first inclination and request at Mount Sinai. Ex. 20:18-19 - *Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. <sup>19</sup> Then they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.'* And now when God tells Moses that He, God, will be distant, the Israelites mourn. They were still going to possess the land of milk and honey. It appears that they mourned the idea of loss of intimacy with God.

Moses' immediate response....

Ex. 33:7-11 - *Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the*

*LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp.<sup>8</sup> So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle.<sup>9</sup> And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses.<sup>10</sup> All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door.<sup>11</sup> So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he (Moses) would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.*

God had removed Himself from the midst of the people – outside the camp. Moses set up his personal tent outside the camp where not only Moses, but also the people could go – those who sought the Lord God (Ex. 33:7). Moses, the mediator between God and man, went outside the camp. And, his actions impacted the people. This place of meeting gave the people a means of worshipping God and offered them a hope for a future, fuller fellowship with God. Worship – the Hebrew word, *saha*, emphasizes the act of prostration; the act of obeisance/reverence.

Exodus 33 encompasses God’s judgment and His amazing grace. At the very point of Israel’s great sin, when the judgment of God appears imminent, God’s GRACE is so very visible! Grace is visible in the warnings which God gave them: The warning of extermination (32:10); of death (32:24); and of a distant relationship (33:1-3). God did not warn the Israelites to torment them. He warned them to turn them from their sin to repentance.

When you study the Bible does God impact you with certain words and phrases in His word? Of course...ALL Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:16). As we study, doesn’t God reveal Himself through His word, and many times cause us to research certain words and phrases? We are being given a fuller picture of God’s plan of redemption! Are any words in this passage jumping out at you?

“Mediator”:

Moses – the mediator between God and man.

*I Tim. 2:5 - For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus*

*Deut. 18:17-19 - And the LORD said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good.<sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.<sup>19</sup> And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. Of Whom is God speaking to Moses? JESUS! Who is THE Mediator Moses as a deliverer and a mediator was a type of Jesus – Moses foreshadowed Jesus!*

“Outside the camp”

Let’s first understand what was inside the camp? I’m speaking of what God had laid out in the Mosaic Law for the people. He would dwell in their midst.

Those “outside the camp”:

Num. 5:2 - *Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper, everyone who has a discharge, and whoever becomes defiled by a corpse.* Those who were unclean were sent outside the camp.

Lev. 16:27 - *The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp.*

Heb. 13:12-13 - *Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.* <sup>13</sup> *Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach* (Identifying with Jesus, identifying with His death. We need to die to self and bear His reproach, bear His shame)

Leprosy is a graphic picture of sin and its defilement. We are unclean because of our sin.

God became man, Emmanuel – God with us; God in the flesh – so that blood could be shed – PRECIOUS blood needed to be shed – to REDEEM us – buy us out of bondage to sin.

Our sin-bearer, Jesus, is foreshadowed by the animal sacrifices. Jesus is foreshadowed by the scapegoat that was taken outside the camp after all the sins of Israel had been confessed over the scapegoat at Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement. A scapegoat in our verbiage is a person who is blamed for the wrongdoings, mistakes, or faults of others. Can you understand how Jesus is the fulfillment of the scapegoat of Yom Kippur (Lev. 16)? The scapegoat was led outside the camp. Jesus was crucified outside the camp. We are to identify with Jesus and go outside the camp.

Moses’ tent of meeting speaks to the remoteness of God due to Israel’s sin, their idolatry. This tent speaks to God’s justice. YET, the tent also provided a nearness to God that was more intimate than anything the people had yet experienced. This tent speaks to God’s holiness, justice, mercy, love, and His grace! And so, we see the glory of God in salvation through judgment – and I pray that we’re marveling!

#### QUESTIONS:

How does this passage impact you?

Changed you? In what way?

Softened you?

What have you learned about God in this passage?

What questions do you have?

What are you going to share from this passage with others?

#### SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread the handout with the references.

Journal how God is revealing Himself to you and record your responses.

Share something from this lesson with another person

Read week 5 when you receive it.