

THE GLORY OF GOD

Week 3 – WHY The Burning Bush? WHY Was No One Singed?

February 11, 2025

What is the significance of God's glory in the Bible?

Unifying Theme: God's glory serves as a unifying theme throughout Scripture.

Ultimate Purpose/The Eternal Purpose of God: Hab. 2:14 - *the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord....* This is God's desire...and ours! How glorious it will be to live in the Kingdom of God on earth which leads into the new heavens and the new earth – and the New Jerusalem

Eschatological Hope: The full revelation of God's glory is tied to eschatological (end times) expectations from the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament.

Re: God manifesting Himself...be it to Abraham, or Moses, or to Isaiah...it's helpful to know the history of that day to understand the purpose for God revealing Himself.

Genesis 50:24-26 (read) - What are we understanding through these last three verses in Genesis? God had already promised His people land through God's covenant with Abraham. God brought the children of Israel to Egypt to grow in number – and that they did! The 12 tribes of Israel at the beginning of their residence in Egypt, were 70 in # (Gen. 46:27). They departed Egypt 430 years later with approx. 2.5M people!

Joseph, to whom God gave the gift of dreams and interpreting dreams, was the Pharaoh's right-hand man in the storage of the abundance of food in Egypt for 7 years and in the distribution of food to the known world during a famine for 7 years. God was faithful. In Joseph's preparation re: his death, he reminded the children of Israel that God would be bringing them out of Egypt and carrying them into the land of promise...and they were to carry out Joseph's bones with them. Joseph's body was not buried in the ground! Joseph trusted in God to return the children of Israel to the land He had promised them.

God used Joseph who was Jewish to bless Gentile Egypt and the Gentile nations of the known world through the times of famine! (Gen. 12:3). Gen. 18:18 – God told Abraham that He would use Abraham and his descendants as in instrument of blessing for the world!

When Jacob and his family joined Joseph in Egypt, Jacob, the Jewish man, blessed Pharaoh, the Egyptian ruler who was believed by his people to be the son of the sun god,

When God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt through Moses, not only did the Jewish people leave Egypt, a mixed multitude also was delivered (Ex. 12:38): Gentiles. Egypt was a conquering nation. Their prisoners were Gentiles who were taken as slaves into Egypt. Through God's deliverance of the Jewish people, He delivered the Gentile slaves as well.

Ex. 1:8-14 (read) - For 430 years the children of Israel dwelled in Egypt. Of those 430 years, they were afflicted as slaves for 400 years (Ex. 12:41; Acts 7:6). As we know from the text in Exodus 2, Moses was born to Jewish parents who feared for Moses' life. When Moses' mother could no longer hide the baby Moses, she took a basket, smeared it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in the basket, and laid *it* in the reeds by the river's bank. Pharaoh's daughter appeared

at the river to bathe. She discovered Moses and took him as her son. The next we read about Moses, he was “grown” (Acts 7:23 – 40 years old!).

We’re told in Ex. 2:11-15 that Moses went out from Pharaoh’s palace to find his Hebrew brethren. Moses witnessed their burdens in the midst of slavery. Might Moses have thought that

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God was going to use him to deliver his people??? The Exodus text doesn’t say. BUT, we are told in...Heb. 11:24-25 - *By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God (his Jewish brethren) than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,*

Moses killed an Egyptian to defend a fellow Jewish man from abuse. His Jewish brethren had witnessed Moses killing and burying the Egyptian and railed at Moses the next day. Ex. 2:14 - *Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?*

Moses fled from Egypt to Midian where he lived in exile for 40 years. In Exodus 3, we find Moses tending sheep for 40 years! Was tending sheep preparation? The Hebrew suggests that during his life in Midian, this was Moses’ habitual occupation. For 40 years Moses lived as an obscure shepherd in the wilderness. Moses didn’t even own a flock of sheep; the sheep belonged to his father-in-law. Was Moses feeling as if he, in desiring to serve God so long ago, had been put on a shelf? Mt. Horeb where Moses was tending his father-in-law’s sheep means desolation! At Mt. Horeb – desolation – Moses ENCOUNTERED GOD!!!

Ex. 3:2a - *the Angel of the LORD appeared to him/Moses in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush.* The Angel of the LORD is a pre-incarnate/pre-Bethlehem appearance of Jesus! This is God the Son. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him (John 1:18). Moses knew about the Angel of the LORD. Moses wrote about the Angel of the LORD in Genesis 16, 21, 22, and 32.

Ex. 3:2b...*So Moses looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.* (that seemed to be Moses’ take-away – what Moses was FOCUSED upon) ³ *Then Moses said, ‘I will now turn aside and see this GREAT sight, why the bush does not burn.’*

It was not uncommon for a plant like this to spontaneously ignite out in the desert. What was most unusual about this bush was that the bush was NOT consumed. This is what drew Moses to examine this very distinctive sight. The fire did NOT consume the bush.

I believe that we are seeing God’s holy presence but I also believe that the burning bush represents Israel...afflicted but not destroyed, because God is in the midst of them and has made a unilateral and unconditional covenant with Israel. The context speaks of God calling Moses to serve as His deliverer of His children – Israel!!

There seemed to be no fear on Moses’ part. His yearning to be used by God seems to have given Moses courage) ⁴ *So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush. God waited until Moses responded to HIM!* Often God’s Word doesn’t touch our heart the way that it might because we might not be giving God’s word our attention. The

burning bush was a spectacular phenomenon that captured Moses' attention; but it would change nothing until Moses received the *Word of God* that came to him there.

God called to him from the midst of the bush and God said, 'Moses, Moses!'

God's first words to Moses...God called him by name! Who else would know Moses...an obscure, forgotten shepherd on the backside of the desert?! Who else but God would be calling from a bush that was ON FIRE? And, the double call, "Moses, Moses," might've implied an urgency. OBSERVATIONS:

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And he/Moses said, 'Here I am.' ⁵ *Then He/God said, 'Do not draw near this place.* How do we respond to God's calling? *Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.'* God seemed to be telling Moses to stop coming closer, to keep a distance, to show reverence for God's presence.

⁶ *Moreover He said, 'I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'* I AM the living God – the God of your ancestors. God revealed Himself to Moses by declaring His relationship to the patriarchs. This reminded Moses that God is the God of the covenant, and His covenant with Israel was still valid and significant!! Here was the same God that dealt with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Was that not ASTOUNDING?

Ex. 3:6 - *And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.* How loving of God to reveal Himself to Moses. How respectful of Moses to, in humility, come before God. Moses knew that God is holy and that he/Moses was NOT!

Some in the days of Moses might have thought that God neglected or forgot His covenant in the 400 years of Israel's slavery in Egypt, since the time of the patriarchs. Nevertheless, God was at work during that time, preserving and multiplying the nation. And, here God had come to Moses to deliver the children of Israel from bondage to slavery in Egypt and to return to the land of promise!

This is the first time the Bible uses the word "holy" with reference to God (Ex. 3:5). At the burning bush God revealed His holiness in a way it had never before been revealed. Moses was so awed by this experience that, in his writing of a victory hymn/the Song of Moses in Ex. 15, he praised God and proclaimed, *Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?"* (Ex. 15:11) How does God reveal Himself to us? What songs are we singing to Him?

There are several reasons why God revealed Himself to Moses out of the burning bush. Firstly, God reveals Himself as _____.

God's _____ means that He is _____. the Creator, God is _____ from His creation. Ex. 3:5 – *do not draw near to this place.*

Secondly, God revealed Himself to Moses out of the burning bush as an image of His glory. God manifested His majesty. And tho' dark times lay ahead for the children of Israel, God would manifest His holiness and glory to the entire nation of Israel...and they would know

God's protection. From that time on, God told the children of Israel to REMEMBER what He had done for them (find the Scripture) Moses and the children of Israel would soon learn that God's glory is like a consuming fire, a pillar of fire that radiates light.

God was also concerned for the suffering of His people Israel. Ex. 3:7 - And the Lord said: *I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.* This was the first time God had called Israel "My people."

Additionally, God gave Moses His own personal name: "God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'" (Ex. 3:14). God is eternal and sufficient unto Himself. This is also expressed in the term "Yahweh," meaning "I Am the One Who Is." It is the most significant name for God in the Old Testament. By identifying Himself as "I AM," God is declaring that He always exists in the immediate now. HOW POWERFUL IS THIS NAME TO YOU?

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For what purposes have we seen God manifesting Himself? God walked with A&E, Enoch, Noah. WHY? _____ Abraham and God negotiated the outcome of the people in Sodom and Gomorrah? WHY? _____ Why did God test Abraham in Gen. 22? _____ Why did God rescue 8 people and animals from the global flood? _____

When was the first time "the glory of God" was mentioned in Scripture? After God miraculously parted the Red Sea, we read that they began to grumble against Moses and Aaron because they lacked food. LOOK at God's response! The Lord told Moses that He would rain bread from heaven for them – and that they would gather a certain quota every day...and on the sixth day they would gather twice as much! Moses and Aaron told the children of Israel that they would then know that the Lord had brought them out of Egypt. AND, that they would see the glory of the Lord in the morning, and know that God would provide for them – He would be their Deliverer and Sustainer!

AND, BEHOLD, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. And the Lord said to Moses, *I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'* (Ex. 16:6-12). God desires that the world would come to know Him.

Are we brought through difficult time for a purpose...to then discover that God provides BEYOND what we could ever imagine?

In the book of Ezekiel alone, as God interacts with Israel and with the Gentile nations, we read that God states, after He reveals Himself in various ways, *Then you shall know that I am God.* God proclaims this truth 63 times in the book of Ezekiel alone!

God desires to display His glory! And, in so doing, God gives us the ABSOLUTE JOY in responding to His glory.

QUESTIONS

What do you find most helpful in this lesson?

Has your relationship with God grown closer/stronger? How?
What has impacted you most about the glory of God?
Can you explain the glory of God?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Read Week 3's handout with Bible references

How is your Glory of God Journal coming along? Are you enjoying recalling, in your daily walk with the Lord, how He is revealing Himself, His glory to you?

Pray about sharing the glory of God with someone.

Read Week 4's handout when you receive it.