

THE GLORY OF GOD

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

February 18, 2025

C.S. Lewis, in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, wrote that Susan and Lucy asked about Aslan the Lion, who represents Jesus, “Is he safe?” Mr. Beaver, a character in the book, replied, “Who said anything about safe? ‘Course he isn’t safe. But he’s GOOD. He’s the King, I tell you?” And when the children caught a glimpse of Aslan’s golden mane and his great, royal, solemn, overwhelming eyes, they couldn’t look at him...and they went “all trembly”! “Safe” means free from danger. “Not safe” means NOT free from danger. “Not safe” implies the presence of danger.

II Sam. 22:2-4 - *The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;*

³ The God of my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; my Savior. You save me from violence. ⁴ I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies. The “horn of my salvation” is used many times to direct our attention toward a person – Jesus!

The “horn of my salvation” is a weapon. A deadly bull or ox horn used to gouge your enemies. Deut. 33:17 - *His glory is like a firstborn bull, and his horns like the horns of the wild ox; together with them He shall push the peoples to the ends of the earth;*). In the context of II Sam. 22:2-4, David’s offense was his deadly and powerful horn/

The Priest, Zechariah, from the tribe of Levi, in the book of Luke, praised God at the naming of his new son, John. Luke 1:68-71 - *Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, ⁶⁹ And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David.⁷⁰ As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, ⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us,*

Luke 1:74-75 - *To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, ⁷⁵ In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.*

Luke 1:71 looks forward to the day that the Messiah, Who is described as the deadly weapon and the tremendous power which God uses to save His people from their enemies and all who hate them...to literally destroy Israel’s enemies and gather believing Israel into the land promised to them and rule them in peace in the Millennial Kingdom. And, both Jewish believers in Jesus and Gentile believer in Jesus will live together with Jesus in the Millennial Kingdom!

And let’s not forget that Revelation tells us that Jesus will return with a sword, ready to “strike down the nations” (Rev. 19:15). And, He, Jesus, is the One Who comes from Edom/ Bozrah (sheep pen; perhaps Petra in Jordan) with His garments bloodied – one of the stages of the battle of Armageddon! (Isa. 63:1-3)

God’s aim, noted in Luke 1:74-75, in raising a horn of salvation, is not merely to liberate an oppressed people, but to create a holy and righteous people who live in no fear because they trust Him. *Vengeance belongs to God, and as believers, we are to leave justice in his hands.*

Rom. 12:19 – ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. We know from Scripture that all will be made right...that our God is dangerous to those who are unrighteous, who are evil. And, He’s powerful enough to conquer even the wickedest and mightiest of foes.

The Apostle Paul told the Gentile believers in Rome, ...*consider the goodness and severity of God*.... God’s manifestation of Who He is displays various purposes.

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When was the first time “the glory of God” was mentioned in Scripture? After God miraculously parting 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 as 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 made this statement to the children of Israel!!??

Are we brought through difficult times 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!.

Understanding the goodness and severity of God requires recognizing both aspects of His character as complementary rather than contradictory. God's goodness is expressed through His love, mercy, and compassion, drawing us towards repentance and a deeper relationship with Him. His severity, His judgment of sin because He is holy, serves as a warning of the consequences of rejecting His grace and living in sin.

To fully grasp God's character, we must embrace both His goodness and severity. Consider Christmas. Jesus came due to both God's severity (addressing sin) and His goodness (demonstrating love).

By embracing both aspects of God's character, we can develop a deeper trust in Him, surrender our lives to His guidance, and experience a more fulfilling walk with Him – or perhaps a walk with Him for the first time.

At the burning bush not consumed, when God called Moses to tell Pharaoh in Egypt, “Let My people go”...did Moses say, “Sign me up – I’m rarin’ to go!”? NOT! Moses laid out excuse

upon excuse to GOD!!! Do we give God excuses as to why we cannot do what He is calling us to do? Or NOT take even the next step in moving ahead with what God has requested?

I decided to read a Bible teacher's summary of the communication between God and Moses from the middle of Exodus 3 through Exodus 4: "God gave positive responses to Moses' excuses and assured him that he would succeed in doing God's will through divine enablement." Is that how it played out? READ for yourself: Ex. 3:10 through Ex. 4:1-17.

When we get to Ex. 4:12-13, we read a change in God's response:

Ex. 4:12-13 – God told Moses, *Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.* ¹³ *But he said, 'O my Lord, please send (the message) by the hand of whomever else You may send.'* What was Moses expressing to God? His UNWILLINGNESS!!! Period!!!

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Ex. 4:14-17 - *So the anger of the Lord was kindled (burned) against Moses (Moses' unwillingness angered God), and He (God) said: 'Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.* ¹⁵ *Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. (it appears that Aaron was a smooth talker but as far as content was concerned, Aaron was lacking). And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do.* ¹⁶ *So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God..* ¹⁷ *And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs.'*

Aaron!!!!? It appears that God was chastening/disciplining Moses!! God is not giving into Moses. Aaron was more of a problem to Moses than a help! Firstly, following the celebration of the first Passover...following the departure/the Exodus from Egypt...if you're wondering after going through all Moses' excuses...if Moses took on this charge from God! YES he did...with Aaron! Following the parting of the Red Sea in Ex. 14...following Moses' song of VICTORY, of praise to God...and of Miriam's praise to God (Ex. 15)...the children of Israel came to Mt. Sinai (Sinai means "thorny).

We're told in Ex. 19:3 that Moses went up to God – the LORD having called to Moses from the mountain. We read of God giving Moses the ten commandments and MANY other commandments (total of 613 commandments in the Torah [first five books of Moses – the Law]).

And Moses spent two sets of 40 days/40 nights on the mountain with God!

Ex. 24:16-18 - *Now the glory of the Lord rested 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.* ¹⁷ *The sight of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the*

children of Israel. ¹⁸ So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

And God showed Moses the pattern of the tabernacle in heaven...and showed Moses all the furnishings. And God told Moses. Ex. 25:8 - *And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.* GOD desired to DWELL with the children of Israel! How does that speak to you?

The word translated “dwelling place” in the original Hebrew language means “refuge, shelter, habitation.” “You are my hiding place,” says Psalm 32:7 of the Lord, “You, God, will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.” Psalm 71:3 declares, “Be to me a rock of habitation to which I may continually come”

The concept of God as our dwelling place expresses the stability, dependability, and eternal constancy of God. Moses, in Psalm 90:2, recorded, *Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.* God is our fixed address for all of time and eternity. Describing God as our dwelling place is also a picture of the unbroken, intimate fellowship God desires to have with His people. He longs to bring us home, near to Himself – FOREVER!

And, while Moses was communing with God and receiving the ten commandments, what were the children of Israel engaged in down below...in the camp?

The people were UNRESTRAINED - because Aaron had NOT restrained them (Ex. 32:25). They were OUT OF CONTROL! They were worshiping a golden calf!

Aaron instigated the worship of the golden calf. Aaron fashioned the calf himself and built the altar himself (Ex. 32:1-4 - The people said, “Where’s Moses? Aaron, make us gods that will go before us. As for this Moses, we don’t know what has become of him.” Aaron told the

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people to break off their golden earrings. He rec’d their gold and fashioned it with an engraving tool and made a molded calf. Ex. 32:24 – when Moses, having come down from Mt. Sinai, asked Aaron what HAPPENED? Aaron said, *...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.’*

What was the outcome of Moses approaching Pharaoh with God’s message, *Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.* ² And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.

Pharaoh had already made up his mind, wouldn’t you say? Pharaoh hardened his own heart. God therefore executed a series of judgments on the Egyptians, so that they would know God is the Lord over all. This is God’s desire throughout Scripture!

God sent Moses to tell Pharaoh to let God's people go out of Egypt and back to Israel. Pharaoh refused to respond to God's plans by hardening his heart. God therefore executed a series of judgments on the Egyptians, so that they would know God is the Lord over all. Is that not God's GRACE? The final plague on Egypt, the death of the firstborn in each household, was God's JUDGMENT! But, JUDGMENT on Egypt brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. The departure out of Egypt on the part of the children of Israel and the "mixed multitude" of Gentile slaves was God's GRACE!

God disciplined Israel via their wilderness wanderings due to their disobedience/unbelief. Ten of the twelve spies who engaged in a reconnaissance mission to check out the land of promise that God had already given to them, told the Israelites that they should NOT go in and possess the land. JUDGMENT: 38+ additional years of wandering, a plague, and the first generation died in the wilderness!!! GRACE: the children who were delivered from Egypt were able to enter the land of promise with their families. JUDGMENT on the Canaanites/the Amorites (Gen. 15:16). GRACE: the land's conquest under Joshua. JUDGMENT following Joshua's death, Read Judges 2:1-3, 10-13.

God sent Moses to tell Pharaoh to let God's people go out of Egypt and back to Israel. Pharaoh refused to respond to God's plans by hardening his heart. God therefore executed a series of judgments on the Egyptians, so that they would know God is the Lord over all. Is that not God's GRACE? READ Isa. 19:19-22!!!! In the future, the Egyptians will cry out to the Lord because of their oppressors, and God will send them a Savior Who will deliver them...and heal them!

Holiness and judgment point to salvation: God's holiness and judgment ultimately highlight the need for salvation, which He provides through Jesus Christ. The cross becomes the place where God's holiness, judgment, and mercy converge.

Read Ex. 12:1-13 - PASSOVER – GOD'S GRACE – to Israel and to Gentiles!

Read Ex. 12:48 – GOD'S GRACE!

Read Ex. 14:1-4, 9, Ex. 14:13-31 – NOTE JUDGMENT AND GRACE!

QUESTIONS

What is your take-away? What are your questions?

What will you share with others? How is God speaking to you? And, the outcome?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Reread Week 4 w/ the Bible references. Continue to write in your Glory of God Journal.

Share what you've been learning. Read Week 5 when you receive it.