

Sunday, June 26, 2022 am

CLOSER TO GOD (20)
Holiness (4)
The Holiness of God (4) – Glory Manifested

Currently, we are continuing our study of the holiness of God in our pursuit of drawing closer to Him. In the previous 2 lessons we have noted how holiness is the foremost quality that describes Him. But we have also noted other qualities that demonstrate and factor into His holiness. We noted that in scripture both His name and the place where He dwells are holy. In our lesson today, we want to address some responses to holiness found in scripture. These help to paint a picture of what it means to be in His presence and how we are to pursue holiness (Hebrews 12:14, 1 Peter 1:15-16). In today's lesson I want to continue to address the holiness of God, but from the lens of His appearances as described in scripture. I believe this helps us appreciate His greatness which will contribute to how we ought to respond to Him.

I. The Glory of God

- I. Glory – The Dictionary of Bible Themes describes glory as¹, *“The distinctive feature of the presence of God, often compared to power, weight or brightness. Scripture affirms that God’s glory is made known through His work of creation, His acts of intervention in history and supremely in the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”*
- II. God’s glory in creation – Psalm 19:1 – the heavens declare the glory of God. Psalm 29:1-3, *Give unto the Lord, O you mighty ones, Give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. The voice of the Lord is over the waters; The God of glory thunders; The Lord is over many waters...* This is followed up with descriptions of the power of His voice. TRULY, in creation we can see the glory of God. Because of His creation, when man rejects Him he is without excuse (Romans 1:20)
- III. God of light – the glory of God.
 - i. In previous studies we have addressed light and darkness. In scripture, light is typically associated with God and good – His holiness. Darkness is usually associated with evil and unholiness, especially when they are contrasted (cf. John 3:19-21)
 - ii. Recall how last week, in our evening lesson, we noted how God created light before the sun and moon (Genesis 1:3 – 1st day, 14-19 – 4th day).
 - iii. As with everything about God, He is pure light.
 1. 1 John 1:5 – He is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
 2. James 1:17 describes Him as the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.
 3. 1 Timothy 6:16 speaking of Jesus “dwelling in unapproachable light”
 - iv. 2 Corinthians 3:18 – we all with unveiled face beholding ... the glory of the Lord

II. Those who had been in His presence realized how serious that was –

- I. **Exodus 3:5** – as Moses approaches the burning bush, – *“Take off your sandals, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”* As noted previously, this is the 1st usage of the word “holy” in the Bible.
- II. **Exodus 33:18-23** – as Moses prepares to meet with the LORD on Mt. Sinai the second time (after he broke the tablets), he requests, “Show me Your glory.” The LORD does this for Moses (Exodus 34:5-9). NOTE: When Moses comes down from Mt. Sinai, his face is shining so brightly that he had to put a veil over it when speaking to the people (34:29-35). This would continue as Moses interacted with the people. When he went in to the presence of the LORD, he would remove his veil, but when he came out and spoke to the people, he would put on the veil. That is HOW powerful being in the presence of God was (is).

¹ Manser, Martin H. *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies*. London: Martin Manser, 2009. Print. Glory.

- III. **Exodus 24:9-18** – Moses and some others go up on Mt. Sinai to meet with the LORD. Vs.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.
 - IV. **Exodus 40:34-35** – as the cloud covered the tabernacle, the glory of the LORD filled it. Even Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting because of the glory of the LORD.
 - V. **Numbers 12:4-9** – Aaron and Miriam criticize Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman and for invoking his authority. Immediately, Miriam breaks out with leprosy. There is immediate pleading with the LORD to spare her.
 - VI. **Numbers 14:10, 21** – all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. After Israel refuses to enter and possess Canaan because of the bad report of the 10 spies, they turn on Moses & Aaron (and possibly Joshua and Caleb). The glory of the LORD appears at the tabernacle. Moses and the LORD converse. We find the seriousness of God when He declares that those who had seen Him and still rebelled would not enter the promised land (likely spiritually as well), and they are judged immediately.
 - VII. **Joshua 5:13-15** – as Israel prepares to conquer Jericho, the Commander of the Army of the LORD appears to Joshua. When he realizes it, he falls on his face to the earth and worships. Like Moses, he was instructed to take off his sandals because it was a holy place.
 - VIII. **Judges 6:22-23** – Gideon sees the Angel of the LORD and is fearful of death because he had seen the angel of the LORD face to face. Exactly who the Angel of the LORD is we do not know, but he clearly represents YHWH. NOTE the reverence of the event. Gideon immediately builds an altar there and calls it, “The LORD is Peace” (YHWH shalom)
 - IX. **Judges 13**, Manoah and his wife – the parents of Samson. Israel is again in trouble because of sinful rebellion against God. The angel of the LORD appeared to them announcing they would have a son and gave them specific instructions (he was to be a Nazarite) (6, 17, 20) – Judges 13:15-23 describes how the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of a burn offering. They feared (rightly so) because they had been in God’s presence. Then they followed His instructions.
 - X. **1 Kings 8:10-11** – when the ark is brought into the temple, we have an experience like that of the tabernacle in Exodus 40. (2 Chronicles 7:1-3 - 3x),
 - XI. **2 Chronicles 7:1-3** – as Solomon dedicated the temple, fire came down from heaven and consumed sacrifices and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. Priests could not enter because of the glory of the LORD...
 - XII. **Isaiah 6:5**. Isaiah 6 records the calling of Isaiah. He sees (whether in a dream, vision or actually). He sees the LORD sitting on His throne (vs. 1) and the train of His robe filled the temple. Angels hovered above crying, “Holy, holy, holy...” and the house is filled with smoke. Isaiah fears because he knows he is unclean and in an unclean land. One of the seraphim touches his tongue with a hot coal and makes him clean. He becomes the LORD’s prophet to a condemned Israel.
 - XIII. **Ezekiel 1 and Daniel 10** also record glorious visions of a man of God. The descriptions are “awesome” and both men are shaken by what they saw.
 - XIV. They are similar to the vision John has in Revelation (**Revelation 1:9-20**), as well as the throne scene of Revelation 4 & 5. Both are powerful visions of glory. Revelation 4:9-11 – they give glory to God.
 - XV. **Luke 2:9** – shepherds in the fields, - the “*glory of the Lord shone around them*”
- III. **Some observations about God’s holiness and His presence**
- I. Concerning these examples:
 - i. God has directly interacted with His people. By faith we accept this.
 - ii. God’s presence was always spectacular and undeniable. There was always a sense of awe at His appearance – His appearance was truly awesome
 - iii. They knew who God was – had learned of Him. Those to whom He appeared knew of Him and knew what it meant.
 - iv. They realized His holiness and greatness – and their standing before Him. They knew they could not resist or reject His will (i.e. His will was going to be accomplished).
 - v. It changed them!
 - II. To dwell in His presence requires that we be holy
 - i. Psalm 24:3-4, who can dwell in His presence – clean hands and pure hearts.

- ii. Matthew 5:8 – the pure in heart, they shall see God.
- iii. Exodus 29:37 – the altar was most holy. Therefore, priests were required to make atonement for themselves for 7 days to be able to offer The call for sanctification to be in His presence.
- iv. Nadab and Abihu burned to death on the spot – Leviticus 10:1-3, notice the warning.

May this give us greater appreciation of Hebrews 12:28-29. We may not experience God in the same way these examples did, but we can certainly learn from their examples. In hindsight, as we study the holiness of God, what type of a response does it invoke in us?