

30. Exodus 34:9-35:35

(10/5/16)

Last week in our study we got as far as chapter 34 verse 8—but let’s back up and take a closer look again at verses 5-7.

Exodus 34:5-7 (NKJV)

⁵ Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶ And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, ⁷ keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

“The LORD, the LORD God”

This sacred name of God is known as the *tetragrammaton* (“four letters”).

The English word *Jehovah* comes from the Hebrew *YHWH*.

The word is actually a verb meaning “*to be*” or “*to become*”—the idea being that God wants to be or to become to us whatever we need—which is why it is often coupled with a noun.

And so we read in the O.T.—“Jehovah-Shalom” (the Lord is our Peace); or “Jehovah-Jireh” (the Lord is our Provider); or “Jehovah-Nissi” (the Lord is our Victory); “Jehovah-Rohi” (the Lord is our Shepherd)—but the greatest of all is “Jehovah-Shua” (the Lord is our Salvation).

The Hebrew name “Joshua” and the Greek name “Jesus” come from Jehovah-Shua.

Our greatest need was for salvation so God came down from heaven, became a Man and died in our place in the Person of Jesus—our Y’shua (the Lord has become our salvation).

“**Merciful**” is better translated, *‘full of compassion’* or *‘tenderly pitiful’*.

The same word was also used regarding Israel and the Exodus in Psalms 78:38—

Psalm 78:38 (NKJV)

³⁸ But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, And did not destroy *them*. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, And did not stir up all His wrath;

The word translated “**gracious**” comes from the idea “*to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior; to give or bestow favor or blessings upon the undeserving.*”

One scholar said, “*...there is no greater word in the language than the word that stands for the undeserved, free gift of the love of God [in salvation].*”

The idea behind the word “**longsuffering**” means that God is *slow to anger*—He doesn’t have a short fuse but is utterly patient with us.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)

⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

“**Abounding in goodness**” comes from a Hebrew word that is often translated “*lovingkindness*”, “*steadfast love*” and also “*loyal love*”.

“**Truth**” is also translated “*faithfulness*” in other translations.

“Keeping mercy for thousands” (v.7)

The Hebrew word for **mercy** (*chesed*) is the same word translated **goodness** in v.6—the word for *covenant love* (loyal love).

Although the wording is not identical, verse 7 seems to echo the second commandment—

Exodus 20:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

The covenant people of God (including and especially the new covenant people) are promised by God to see His covenant love, patience and faithfulness from generation to generation—

“Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (v.7)

These are three categories of unrighteousness.

“Iniquity” means to *“turn aside”* from what is right and good—also translated *“wickedness”*.

“Transgression” means *“deliberate sin”* also known as *“rebellion”* and is more defiant.

The last term **“sin”** is the most general and refers to any kind of moral failure.

The point is that God is willing to forgive any and all kinds of sin.

One author put it this way—

“Sometimes we feel so weighed down with guilt that we wonder whether there is any way for God to forgive us. We are tempted to feel that what we have done is so evil that we have fallen beyond the reach of his grace. But however we define what we have done, God is willing to forgive...He forgives wickedness, rebellion, and sin.” (Romans 5:20)

But for those who refuse to repent and come to Him for forgiveness, He has this to say—

Exodus 34:7 (NKJV)

⁷ ...by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

The idea behind the statement that God will by no means clear the guilty is that He will by no means *leave the guilty unpunished* (eternal judgment) if they don't repent (Gal.6:7).

God is inviting all to come to Him and receive His Son for forgiveness—but if they refuse the wrath of God will continue to be upon one generation of sinners in a family to the next.

One scholar said that the phrase *“to the third and fourth generation”* is a common Semitic idiom to express *continuance*.

Exodus 34:8-16 (NKJV)

⁸ So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. ⁹ Then he said, "If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we *are* a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance." ¹⁰ And He said: "Behold, I make a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you *are* shall see the work of the LORD. For it *is* an awesome thing that I will do with you. ¹¹ Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. ¹² Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. ¹³ But you shall destroy their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their *wooden* images ¹⁴ (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous

God),¹⁵ lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and *one of them* invites you and you eat of his sacrifice,¹⁶ and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.

Here God is reaffirming His covenant with His people—a covenant of exclusivity and fidelity as in any marriage covenant.

Jealousy is a righteous response toward the one you've entered into a marriage covenant with when another is trying to come between you or trying to take them from you.

It is absolutely legitimate for a husband to be jealous for his wife when he sees another man flirting with her or trying to woo her away from him—and the same is true for God.

Alan Redpath—

“God’s jealousy is love in action. He refuses to share the human heart with any rival, not because He is selfish and wants us all for Himself, but because He knows that upon that loyalty to Him depends our very moral life ... God is not jealous of us: He is jealous for us.”

Tragically Israel did not heed these warnings and they did in fact become involved in Canaanite worship practices (sexual orgies) and even intermarried with the Canaanites—which eventually led to their exile from the land for 70 years.

Exodus 34:17-28 (NKJV)

¹⁷ You shall make no molded gods for yourselves. ¹⁸ "The Feast of Unleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the month of Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt.

¹⁹ All that open the womb *are* Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock, *whether* ox or sheep. ²⁰ But the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem *him*, then you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. ²¹ "Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.

²² And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end.

23 Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the LORD God of Israel. 24 For I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year. 25 "You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven, nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning. 26 The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk." 27 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." 28 So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

And so here the Lord is renewing the covenant He made with His people—repeating the terms of the covenant that He had given to them earlier in chapters 20-23.

Exodus 34:29-30 (NKJV)

29 Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. 30 So when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

Moses had been up on the mountain for another 40 days and nights in the presence of God.

While he was in God's presence all of that time something remarkable happened—he 'absorbed' some of God's glory and his face 'shone'.

The Hebrew verb for **shone** literally means, "*shot forth beams*"—a word that is spelled very much like another Hebrew word for "horn".

This is why the Latin Vulgate mistranslated this verb as "*having horns,*" and so in most medieval works of art Moses wears a pair of horns on his head.

It's interesting that Moses didn't realize his face was shining with God's glory—but the people saw it.

The same is true with us—the more time we spend in God's presence the more we will 'radiate' with His glory—we may not realize it but others will!

Exodus 34:31-35 (NKJV)

³¹ Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him; and Moses talked with them. ³² Afterward all the children of Israel came near, and he gave them as commandments all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. ³³ And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. ³⁴ But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take the veil off until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the children of Israel whatever he had been commanded. ³⁵ And whenever the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone, then Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with Him.

Why did Moses cover his face with a veil? —not because he was frightening the people, but because the glory was fading away—

2 Corinthians 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³ unlike Moses, *who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.

Apparently, Moses knew that the glory of the covenant Israel had just received from the Lord (the Mosaic covenant) was temporary and would 'fade away' and be replaced with another covenant—the new covenant (Jer.31:31-33).

And as Paul tells us—this is why he put on the veil—it prevented them from seeing the glory of the old covenant fade away.

Even though it would be another 1500 years for the Mosaic covenant to officially and completely fade away and end—when Jesus, the Mediator of the New and better covenant would come.

The word translated ‘**end**’ in 2 Corinthians 3:13 has two meanings: “*purpose*” and “*finish*.”

The veil prevented the people from seeing the “finish” of the Mosaic covenant as it faded away—but the veil also prevented them from understanding the “purpose” behind the fading glory.

The Law had just been instituted, and the people were not ready to be told that this glorious system was only temporary.

The truth that the Mosaic covenant (the covenant of law) was a preparation for something greater was not yet made known to them—

Galatians 3:19-25 (NLT)

¹⁹ Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins. But the law was designed to last only until the coming of the child who was promised. God gave his law through angels to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people. ²⁰ Now a mediator is helpful if more than one party must reach an agreement. But God, who is one, did not use a mediator when he gave his promise to Abraham. ²¹ Is there a conflict, then, between God’s law and God’s promises? Absolutely not! If the law could give us new life, we could be made right with God by obeying it. ²² But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God’s promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ. ²³ Before the way of faith in Christ was available to us, we were placed under guard by the law. We were kept in protective custody, so to speak, until the way of faith was revealed. ²⁴ Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. ²⁵ And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian.

Philippians 3:9 (NKJV)

⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

2 Corinthians 3:14-16 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. ¹⁵ But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. ¹⁶ Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

In other words, at the time that Paul wrote this epistle, when the Jews read the Old Testament, they did not discover the secret which Moses hid from their forefathers beneath the veil.

They did not realize that the glory of the law was a passing glory, and that the law had found its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And this continues till today as one author said—

“The veil over the face of those who live by the Old Covenant blinds their own eyes to the reality and identity of their Messiah, Jesus Christ. That is why you can talk by the hour with Jewish people about the way Jesus perfectly fulfilled Old Testament prophecy—and they still won’t see Him as their Messiah. There’s a veil over their eyes. And because this veil is done away in Christ, it is only as they turn to Christ that they are able to see clearly.”

Unfortunately, this kind of thing is all too common in the church among God’s people today.

We want to put a veil or a ‘mask’ on to keep people from seeing that the glory of our relationship with God is fading because we are not in His presence as we should be.

So we put on a spiritual ‘covering’ to hide our true selves from others so that they don’t see what we know is going on.

Chapter 35

Exodus 35:1-3 (NKJV)

¹ Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, “These *are* the words which the LORD has commanded *you* to do: ² Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. ³ You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day.”

This is why Friday (or any day before the Sabbath) came to be known as the ‘day of preparation’.

They were forbidden by God from lighting a fire and from cooking food on the Sabbath so all food preparation had to be done the previous day.

To this day the orthodox Jews won’t turn on a light switch (which they believe is work)—but also to do so, they believe, is to ‘start a fire’ in the light bulb.

They get around it by putting all of their lights on timers so they automatically turn on keeping them from doing work and kindling a fire.

Exodus 35:4-9 (NKJV)

⁴ And Moses spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying: ⁵ 'Take from among you an offering to the LORD. Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the LORD: gold, silver, and bronze; ⁶ blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, and goats' *hair*; ⁷ ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; ⁸ oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; ⁹ onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.

Notice how the Lord commanded that their offering to Him was only to be done out of a *willing* heart.

2 Corinthians 9:7-8 (NLT)

⁷ You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. “For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.” ⁸ And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

One pastor I know said,

“Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring an offering to the Lord.” I like that. I sometimes hear preachers say, “Give until it hurts”—but that’s not the Lord. If it hurts to give, don’t do it because Paul tells us the Lord loves a cheerful, or literally a hilarious giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).

As Jesus sat against the wall in the temple, we are told He watched not what people gave, but how they gave (Mark 12:41). The Lord loves a cheerful giver because when I give cheerfully, I am freed from my fleshly, selfish, small tendencies and I become more like Him in the process. That is why Moses asked only for those with willing hearts to give. How much would those with willing hearts give? By today’s standards, approximately one billion dollars’ worth of gold and silver alone. That’s a big offering!”

Exodus 35:10-29 (NKJV)

¹⁰ 'All *who are* gifted artisans among you shall come and make all that the LORD has commanded: ¹¹ the tabernacle, its tent, its covering, its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; ¹² the ark and its poles, *with* the mercy seat, and the veil of the covering; ¹³ the table and its poles, all its utensils, and the showbread; ¹⁴ also the lampstand for the light, its utensils, its lamps, and the oil for the light; ¹⁵ the incense altar, its poles, the anointing oil, the sweet incense, and the screen for the door at the entrance of the tabernacle; ¹⁶ the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles, all its utensils, *and* the laver and its base; ¹⁷ the hangings of the court, its pillars, their sockets, and the screen for the gate of the court; ¹⁸ the pegs of the tabernacle, the pegs of the court, and their cords; ¹⁹ the garments of ministry, for ministering in the holy *place*--the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests.' " ²⁰ **And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. ²¹ Then everyone came whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, *and* they brought the LORD'S offering for the work of the tabernacle of meeting, for all its service, and for the holy garments. ²² They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart, *and* brought earrings and nose rings, rings and necklaces, all jewelry of gold, that is, every man who *made* an offering of gold to the LORD. ²³ And every man, with whom was found blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, fine linen, and goats' *hair*, red skins of rams, and badger skins, brought *them*. ²⁴ Everyone who offered an offering of silver or bronze brought the LORD'S offering. And everyone with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought *it*. ²⁵ All the women *who were* gifted artisans spun yarn with their hands, and brought what they had spun, of blue, purple, *and* scarlet, and fine linen. ²⁶ And all the women whose heart stirred with wisdom spun yarn of goats' *hair*. ²⁷ The rulers brought onyx stones, and the stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate, ²⁸ and spices and oil for the light, for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. ²⁹ The children of Israel brought a freewill offering to the LORD, all the men and women whose hearts were willing to bring *material* for all kinds of work which the LORD, by the hand of Moses, had commanded to be done.**

What a beautiful thing to see the people of God giving with a willing, joyful heart.

Once again, this is the only kind of giving to God that pleases Him and which He will honor and bless.

And notice that the leaders didn't merely say, "*I'm glad the people are giving.*"

No, the leaders gave the most which is the way it should be—the leaders (pastors, elders, deacons etc.) should lead when it comes to giving and set the example for the flock.

Paul mentions an important principle when it comes to giving to God—

2 Corinthians 9:5-6 (NLT)

⁵ So I thought I should send these brothers ahead of me to make sure the gift you promised is ready. But I want it to be a willing gift, not one given grudgingly. ⁶ Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop.

Exodus 35:30-35 (NKJV)

³⁰ And Moses said to the children of Israel, "See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; ³¹ and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship, ³² to design artistic works, to work in gold and silver and bronze, ³³ in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship. ³⁴ And He has put in his heart the ability to teach, *in* him and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. ³⁵ He has filled them with skill to do all manner of work of the engraver and the designer and the tapestry maker, in blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine linen, and of the weaver--those who do every work and those who design artistic works.

"Whom the Lord calls He equips."