

Friday, May 12, 2023 ◻ Read Exodus 34:29–35

Questions from the Scripture text: Who came down from where in v29? What were in his hand? What didn't he know had happened to himself? Who saw (v30)? How did they respond? So who called them (v31)? Who come near? What does Moses do with them? Who else come near in v32? What does Moses give them? What does he do, when he finishes (v33)? When would he take it off (v34)? Until when? What would he do until he came out? And who would see him again in that shining condition (v35)? Then what would Moses do again, until when?

What did God do for their prophet to help His people receive His Word? Exodus 34:29–35 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these seven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the Lord gave to His people to see light in their prophet's face in order to help them be receptive to His Word.**

A Merciful Divine Fright. We've already seen in the previous section (v8–28) that the Lord is giving Israel a “do-over” with respect to the covenant. Everything is as before the calf incident, as if it never happened. Now, v29 takes us back to 32:15. Forty days and forty nights have ended, just as before. Moses is coming down the mountain just as before. The two tablets of the Testimony are in his hands, just as before.

But there's a difference this time. Moses's face is shining. Not for his own sake—he didn't even know it at first (v29b). It's apparent that he discovers his shining face when all the children of Israel, including Aaron, are afraid to come near him (v30). They had previously said in a derogatory way, “as for this Moses, we do not know what has happened to him” (cf. 32:1). Now, the same is true, but in a way that has struck awe into their hearts. They are right to fear the mouthpiece of God, but God has been gracious to us, and the words that He sends us are words of welcome and mercy, and it was so with Moses and Israel (v31).

What a mercy from God this shining face was, for the sake of Israel! He knew their stubborn hearts, and that they would easily and quickly disregard Moses and God's own words on Moses's lips. So, He gives them a visual cue that gripped them through their senses, since they were slow to be gripped through their reason and conviction. Our pastor's face, or our husband's or father's in the home, is not going to suddenly irradiate light. We must see this mercy from God to Israel and seek from the Spirit that He would give us faith and conviction to treat His messenger with respect and receive His Word on the messenger's lips as the very words of God.

Merciful Human Wisdom. It seems that Moses understands the mercy of God to the Israelites in this—that God is helping them to honor His commandments (v32) on Moses's lips. But there's a problem. Whenever Moses is finished speaking “whatever he had been commanded” (v34), the light would begin to fade (cf. 2Cor 3:13).

So, Moses would veil himself when he finished speaking, so that the lasting impression with which he left them would be a divinely shining face and divinely authoritative words. The implication is that when he had delivered God's message, Moses would leave the veil on and his mouth shut until he had returned again with the light and words of the Lord.

Those who will be speaking the Lord's words to others would do well not to conduct themselves in such a way as to weaken or lessen the strength or weight of the Word of God on their lips. This applies to all believers, who do have a ministry of speaking the truth in love to one another. If such speech is interspersed with that which is unedifying, empty, or even coarse or foul, we hinder others from benefitting from anything that we speak from God's Word. Therefore, Scripture is full of instruction about self-control to speak only that which is edifying, gracious, etc. (cf. Mt 12:36; Prov 10:19–21; Eph 4:29, 5:4; Col 4:6; Jam 3:9–12; 1Pet 3:15; etc.).

And if this is a duty for every believer, how much more for those fathers and mothers who will be speaking God's words to their children, those husbands who will be speaking them to their wives, and those elders and pastors who will be speaking Christ's words to His congregation. Let us be quick to listen and slow to speak, weighing each word well, so that as much of our speech as possible will shine with the light of Christ and carry the weight of His glory and authority.

Greater, Effectual, Everlasting Mercy. When the apostle takes up this passage in 2Cor 3:12–4:7, there are two great factors that make the difference between the temporary effect of the mercy in today's passage and the eternal and effectual mercy that God was working through the apostle's ministry. Those two factors were (1) from where the veil was being removed, and (2) Whose face was seen to shine.

The veil was being removed not from the face of the speaker but from the heart of the listener, in Christ, by the work of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2Cor 3:14–18). This is something that no amount of careful speech on our part can do for those who hear us. It is a divine work, a Triune work. We use the means that He has ordained, and we pray that He will use them in His own almighty power, but it must at last be He who does so.

And, when the veil is removed, we see the glory of Yahweh not refracted dimly through a mere man like Moses, but reflected fully in the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ. When one believes, the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ shines upon them, displaying that He Himself is the display of God (cf. 2Cor 4:4).

This is what every evangelizing Christian, caring parent, loving husband, faithful brother or sister, or godly minister wishes: not that his hearer would behold him, but that his hearer would behold that Jesus Christ is the Lord. That the hearer would see Jesus—Yahweh, the Creator, the glorious One Who had proclaimed His own Name to Moses upon mount Sinai (cf. 2Cor 4:5).

The hope is that in the same almighty power that God exercises when He said “let there be light” (or even better, “Light, be!”), God the Spirit would shine in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (cf. 2Cor 4:6). Jesus is brilliantly and fully God in all His glory, and the One Whom God has displayed as that glory (cf. Heb 1:2–3)

Have you seen this about the Lord Jesus, dear reader? Does His glory shine brilliantly in your heart, when you read and hear His Word?

With whom have you established conversation patterns that hinder you from being able to speak with a credible weightiness in behalf of the Lord? What can you do about that? What must be removed from your own speaking habits, if you are only to speak words that build up, words that come from grace and give grace? Whom has the Lord put in your life that has a special duty of speaking God's Word to you? What are you doing to maintain an attitude of honor and respect to these mouthpieces, so that you are better enabled to receive God's Word from them? Whom do you know Christ to be? How do you seek the Spirit to apply this knowledge to you as you “listen” to Him in private Bible reading? In family worship? In public worship?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You and praise You for Your mercy to us, to display Yourself to us in Jesus Christ. Grant that Your Spirit's work in our hearts would be such that, whenever we read or hear Your word, we would do so with hearts full of awe and reverence for our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we ask it, AMEN!

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Exodus 34 versus 29 through 35. These are God's words. Now, it was so and 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 to them.

So, an erin and all the children of Israel saw Moses. Behold the skin of his face. Shalom. They were afraid to come near him. Then Moses called to them and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him. Moses talked with them. Afterward, all the children of Israel came near and he gave them as commandments.

All. That you always had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. But whatever Moses went in before you all wait to speak with him. You would take the veil off until he came out.

When he would come out and speak to the children of Israel, whatever he had been commanded. And whenever the children of Israel saw, the face of Moses, that the skin of his face, sharp. When Moses would put the veil on his face again. Until he went in to speak with him.

So, by the reading of God's inspired and their import. Now, this seems like a very strange thing but the Holy Spirit does give us a couple of clues for understanding it, well, and then a huge help in Second Corinthians, three, and four. Whenever the Lord's word interprets itself.

It is, of course, a great help to us. But already here just in Exodus, you have Moses coming down from the mountain, we have two new tablets of the testimony and Moses' hand. And this immediately reminds us that this is not the first time this has happened. Because this was coming down before with two new tablets in his hand.

And thankfully, there's no golden calf or feast with dancing. At the base of the mountain this time. But that had happened the previous time. Because in the 40 days and 40 nights, same amount of time that Moses has been up there this time. In the 40 days and 40 nights that time they had said, as for this Moses we do not know what has happened to him.

Well, they have a similar experience when Moses returns. Because his face is radiating light. Ordinarily, we see things. Because another light source is reflecting off of them. Moses's face is radiating here. Its own light. And you might well say because they are afraid to come near him in verse 30.

As for this Moses, we do not know. What has happened to him? That's what the Lord has done. Is actually a mercy for hard-hearted Israelites. It's not done for Moses. Benefit Moses doesn't even know that his face shines and tell everybody runs away. If it wasn't so serious, it might almost be comic.

Almost is coming down from the mountain. Uh, hey guys you waited for me that's great and everybody running and wait. Where are you going? But that indicates to us, doesn't it that the benefit of the face shining is especially for Aaron, and the other elders. And for all the people that the Lord gives them a visual cue.

To honor. The word of the Lord and messes his mouth. It's similar to. And there are other reasons for like lines of sight and acoustics. But it's similar to the reason for the high pulpit in the center of the room. The Reformed Presbyterian, worship service. It's not because God has said there shall be a high pulpit in the center of the room.

It's because God has made his word. The core. Of the worship service and the preaching of that word. The climax and the primary component. Of the word in the worship service. And we actually help ourselves. When the person has to stand somewhere and has to be at some height and it's good to have a desk so that he can read and use notes because he's finite and weak, and all of these things are ordered by the light of nature.

But we also know that it affects our souls to lift our faces a little bit and to see something that is over us. To remind us that we are sitting under it. And so, the Lord gives them a physical cue. To remind them that Moses is unto them. A representative of the one who dwells in unapproachable light, but if they think a little bit of a shiny faced man is unapproachable, they run away from him.

Maybe they are getting a little bit of the message. But God, dwells in another approachable light. And his commandments are to be heard. Well, Second Corinthians, three and four tells us. Uh, doesn't tell us how he learns about learns about the diminishing effect. Uh, but it does tell us that he knew that this light, the shining was fading. And so he would go in and he would get the words of Yahweh and he would come out and he'd immediately give them the words of Yahweh, as long as he was delivering the message that he had just gotten his light would shine with that visual cue to listen to me.

Let's say if thus sayeth Yahweh. But then Moses would stop talking and cover his face. And that does two things. One, it leaves them with the memory, the most recent impression. As Moses's face shining and Moses's lips. This is his face shining with the Lord's light. Moses's lips, resounding, with the Lord's words, so that they would be helped to keep respecting and revering.

For the word of the Lord on Moses's mouth. But also, when he puts his face over the veil over his face, it says. When he finished speaking with them, he puts the veil over his face. And, what that does is it reminds Moses how important it is to him.

To weigh his words, carefully. Now, like we've just heard from Proverbs. Uh, yesterday in Providence 10. 19 to 21, it's important for all of us to lay our words. But especially if you're going to be one. Who is speaking? The actual words of God. To another. And yes, this means especially those who seek to be elders or hope that God's mercy will be to make of them elders and ministers the gospel, which are so necessary.

To every generation of the church in every generation of the nation and every generation of every household. There is not a minister, an elder in every household, in every household, spiritual health, depends on ministers and elders. So it's good for you to desire that and think about that and see if the Lord might not be calling you to that.

And if we are going to be speaking, The Bible under the authority of upon the authority of God to others and we should weigh. Our words and not use too many. I went through a phase of my ministry. Where I was convinced by people even in the ministry, even my presbytery.

Oh you should really be the people's friend. By which they didn't mean. The one who has a profound interest in their souls and you love them and they love you. But they meant someone who can kind of get down in the worldly with them and they all feel familiar with. But all that did.

Was. Weaken the waitiness of god's words on my lips when i talk to them. And here, moses shows, wisdom from the lord. To put in the veil over his face. And reserving his words for when he has words from the lord. And the shiny face. But we too can learn from that.

Husband, and a father should be able to have Fun with and enjoy his wife, his family. And it doesn't have to be. Um, Grave. Solemn all the time. And yet he should always be speaking in such a way. That immediately if he has some some words to give To enter into the situation.

That is from the scripture, an application for his family lead them before his daughter puts in a word for the lord. As That it would be consistent. With the way that he has been speaking. But it's not just those who are an authority. Is that the whole body? Every joint supplies.

Something every member does it's share and in that context and Ephesians 4 part of the share that everyone has for one another. Is to speak the truth. And love. But coming back here from from that extended application, We see the need. For the people of god. To respect the word of god.

In the face of their, From the lips of their profit. By the light of god in the face of their prophet and for us, This should be the easiest thing in the world. Because our prophet is not Moses whose glory was fading. That's the application that the apostle makes, when you gets into chapter 4, it's like a grid kids.

Our prophet is the lord jesus. The light of whose face never fades. Because he's not a man. Reflecting or refracting. The light of god's glory. He is god. And when we are brought to faith, the spirit makes the light of the knowledge of god's glory. To shine in his face to shine in the face of jesus christ.

In our hearts. And so each of us needs to, when we read our Bible, when we study it together and family worship, when we come together in the public assembly, We need to be asking ourselves. Am i treating the words of jesus? As that very words of god. And my receiving them with joy and responding with love and submitting.

With obedience to all he says, and convicted faith. Convicted faith to all that he teaches and obedience to all that. He commands. Would I be helped? If god made, My preachers face to shine up like an led. How sad the state of the soul of the one. Who would be more affected by that than he would be.

By the fact that christ sits on the throne of heaven and that we have his spirit now. The god convinced each of us. That the words of scripture are the very words of jesus. So that we will respond. To our god and his glory correctly. Remember, let's pray.

Well, thank you for this portion of your word. Thank you for what you did. For constantly rebellious stubborn hearted israel. And we do pray that you would Make us to treasure your word. Make us to respect even. Your words that we might want to have. Might be right to have on our lips.

At one moment or another for a brother or a sister. Speaking, the truth and love. But make us especially to respect your word, we pray on the pages of scripture. But on the lips of those whom you've said over us in the home. In the church to be ministers of that word to us.

And especially from your son who speaks from heaven. Where his blood has gone, that speaks better than the blood of able, but who speaks to us. Who are on earth from heaven. Grant that we would have submissive hearts by the work of your spirit. That we would not refuse him, who speaks.

But that we would know him to be got and see in our hearts by faith, a light of The glory of god shining in his face. And would submit ourselves entirely to the lord jesus, and to his words.

We pray that you would, Give us to believe everything, he teaches us in obey. Everything he commands us that we would rejoice at the fellowship that we have with him that we would love him. Who has so loved us and continues to love us with his words. Do this for us, we pray in jesus name. Amen.