

2Corinthians – Week 9

I. Review: 2Cor. 3:7-11

- A. The Old Covenant called *“the ministry of death”* and *“the ministry of condemnation”*...
- i. It cannot justify us (Gal. 3:11)
 - ii. It declares us unrighteous (Rom. 3:20)
 - iii. It brings death and condemnation to those fail to keep it!
 - iv. It had glory as seen by Moses’ face (Exodus 34:29ff)
 1. When Moses received the new set of tablets, his face shown with great radiance!
 2. Moses would place a veil over his head so that the people would not gaze upon the radiance.
 3. But its glory was transitory (that is, temporary)
 - a. The NIV 2011 translation corrects its earlier translation in verses 7, 11, and 13, using *“transitory”* and *“passing away”* as opposed to the word *“fading away.”*
 - b. No where do we read in Exodus 34 that the glory upon Moses’ face was dimming little by little.
- B. The New Covenant called *“the ministry of the Spirit”* and *“the ministry of righteousness”*...
- i. Has a greater glory than the Old because it brings justification!

II. Continuation – An Unobstructed Glory!

- A. 2Cor. 3:12 (ESV), *“Since we have such a hope, we are very bold,”*
- i. What hope is Paul talking about?
 1. The hope regarding the New Covenant as conveyed in vv. 7-11!
 - a. It’s a ministry of life, not a ministry of death and condemnation!
 - b. It’s a ministry of the Spirit and of Righteousness!
 - ii. The hope of the new covenant energized Paul and his companions to speak boldly as ministers of this glorious covenant!
 1. KJV says *“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech”*
 - a. The ESV phrase, *“we are very bold”* denotes speaking plainly and confidently, without veiling the message with obscure language...
- B. 2Cor. 3:13 (ESV), *“not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end.”*
- i. Here, Paul figuratively uses Moses’ veiling of his face as an action of concealment.
 1. Paul didn’t “veil” his message – he spoke with plainness of speech!
 - ii. The veil prevented Israel from gazing at Moses’ face.
 1. Exod. 34:29ff says that Moses veiled his face, except for the times when he consulted with God and proclaimed God’s Word to the people.
 - iii. What does the phrase *“might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end”* mean?
 1. Some think that this means that Moses was trying to prevent the people from seeing the glory fading from his face.
 - a. However, Exodus 34 does not tell us that the glory on Moses’ face was fading away.
 - b. The Greek word used in this passage does not denote a “fading away” – even NIV 2011 corrected their 1984 translation on this.

2. Others think that this means that Moses was trying to prevent the people from seeing the termination of the old covenant.
 - a. However, it seems strange that God would conspire with Moses, telling him to veil his face so that people will not figure out that the Law was temporary.
 3. I believe Paul was referring to the glory (“*the outcome*”) of the old covenant (“*that which was being brought to an end*”).
- C. Paul continues to, again, use Moses’ veil metaphorically, but in a different way...
- i. 2Cor. 3:14 (ESV), “*But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away.*”
 1. The veil now signifies the darkened minds of the Jews!
 - a. Just as the Moses’ veil prevented the people from gazing on the glory, the proverbial “veil” prevented the Jews of Paul’s day from seeing the glory of the gospel of Christ!
 - i. As Paul puts it in Romans 10:4, Christ is the end of the law!
 - b. The Old Testament prophets spoke of Messiah (Christ)...
 - i. Regarding His birthplace – Bethlehem (Micah 5:1-2)
 - ii. Regarding His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14)
 - iii. Regarding His coming to the temple (Malachi 3:1)
 1. Note: Christ came 70 years before the temple was destroyed.
 - iv. Regarding His death and reason for his death (Isa. 53:5-6)
 - c. When a person (in this context, a Jew) receives the gospel, the veil that lies over his heart is taken away.
 - i. By the way, the word “*taken away*” is the verb form of the word “*katargeo*” which the NIV 1984 translates “*fade away*” but later corrects in its 2011 version.
 - ii. Therefore, vv. 7, 11 and 13 are not to be translated as “*fade away*”
 1. Christ’s removing the old covenant and replacing it with the new was not gradual but immediate!
 2. In the like manner, when a Jew accepts Christ, the veil over his heart is immediately removed (not gradually removed).
 - ii. 2Cor. 3:15-16 (ESV), “*Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts.*”
¹⁶*But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.*”
 1. Here, Paul uses a figure of speech called “metonymy.”
 - a. Metonymy is a figure of speech using a person or an object to refer to something related. For example...
 - i. “The White House (metonym) has decided...” means “The President has decided...”
 - ii. In this verse, “Moses” (metonym) represents “the old covenant.”
 - b. When a Jew (or any person for that matter) understands that Christ is the Messiah who was to come, the proverbial “veil” of ignorance is removed!

2. Did Moses speak of Christ? Yes!

a. Deut. 18:15-18 (ESV), “*The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—¹⁶ just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’¹⁷ And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken.¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.*”

i. This passage is Messianic in nature.

ii. Just as Moses was a mediator between God and fearful Israel, Messiah will be a mediator between God and sinners.

iii. Was Moses a type of Christ?

1. As a child...

a. Moses was nearly murdered as a child (Ex. 1-2)

b. Jesus was nearly murdered as a child (Mt. 2:16)

2. As a leader...

a. Moses lead Israel out of Egyptian slavery

b. Jesus leads sinners out of sin’s slavery

3. In setting up a reminder of deliverance...

a. God ordered Moses to institute the Passover to remind Israel of her deliverance from slavery (Ex. 12:17)

b. Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper to remind Christians of their deliverance from sin (Luke 22:19-20)

4. As a mediator, concerned for souls...

a. Moses was willing to die for stubborn Israel. (Ex. 32:32)

b. Jesus was willing and died for sinners.

D. 2Cor. 3:17 (ESV), “*Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*”

i. Christ is the life-giving Spirit who takes away the veil off from the hearts of believers!

ii. And where Christ is, there is freedom!

1. Freedom to speak boldly and plainly!

2. Freedom from death and condemnation!

E. 2Cor. 3:18 (ESV), “*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*”

i. This freedom makes it possible to behold the glory of the Lord unhindered!

1. In other words, those under the new covenant are beholding Christ!

a. Beholding suggests the concept of contemplation and meditation, not a momentary glance!

b. This beholding transforms us into the image of Christ one degree of glory at a time! (cf. Rom. 8:29)

ii. Just as the glory of the Lord caused Moses’ face to shine, the glory of the Lord causes us to be transformed, degree by degree!

iii. As we continue to gaze upon Jesus and His life through the study and meditation of Scripture, the more we will be like Him!

iv. And all this is made possible through the transforming power of the Lord!