

## I. THEOPHANIES

- A. A theophany is a manifestation or appearance of God to man.
- B. Why study theophanies? For devoted followers of God who have given their lives to love and serve Him, it would be inconsistent for us to not know about these encounters with God.

1. What if some of the people who pursued God had full on encounters with the Living God and lived to tell about it?

Moses (Exo. 24, 34)  
Isaiah (Isa. 6)  
Ezekiel (Ezek. 1, 10)  
Daniel (Dan. 7, 10)  
Peter (Matt. 17)  
John (Rev. 1, 4, 19, 21)

2. Theophanies affect the way we think about God. This affects the way we pray and the way we live. We can pray to God as He has revealed Himself.

- a. *A. W. Tozer (The Knowledge of the Holy): "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."*
- b. *"The man who comes to a right belief about God is relieved of ten thousand temporal problems."*

- C. Theophanies answer the questions: Where is God? What is He like? What is He doing?

1. We become aware of the spiritual realm where God dwells. If we pray to "Our Father in heaven," we need to understand where God is. We do not pray "to the ceiling or into the air."

- a. One of the postures of Jesus in prayer was to look up to heaven.

***John 11:41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.***

***John 17:1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,***

***Matt. 14:19 Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes.***

2. We begin to interact with God's power, majesty. We get a much fuller understanding of God. These passages show us who God really is.
  - a. There is a heavenly council that discusses the affairs on earth (Job 1; 1 Kings 22). We learn how our visible world interacts with the invisible realm of the spirit (Dan. 10).

*2 Kings 6:16-17 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." <sup>17</sup> And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*

## II. SHOW ME YOUR GLORY (EXODUS 33:12 – 34:9)

- A. The people of Israel were living as slaves in the land of Egypt. God uses Moses to deliver His people. God delivers them with miracles, signs and wonders. Now God teaches them how to live not as slaves, but as the people of God.

*Exo. 20:2-3 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. <sup>3</sup> You shall have no other gods before Me."*

- B. But immediately, Israel begins running after other gods and idols, by setting up a golden calf.
- C. God gives them this promise: He would send His Angel and drive out the other nations before them (Exo. 33:2). The reason is that God would consume them because of their sin. Moses begins to dialogue with God about it and asks God for His presence to go with them, not just His Angel.
- D. Moses asks God to make him understand 2 things:
  1. Show me now Your way (v. 13). Moses wanted to know the principles on which God deals with human beings.

*Exo. 33:13 "Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people."*
  2. Show me Your glory (v. 18). Moses has seen God's power and presence, but now He asks for an intimate knowledge of God Himself, the inner reality that makes God Who He is.

*Exo 33:18 And he said, "Please, show me Your glory."*
- E. **CHABOD** – "Glory" comes from the word: "weight." It refers to something weighty which gives importance. The root of this word occurs 375 times in the Old Testament. It speaks of the weight, worthy, value, splendor of God. Of course, who can measure God?!

### III. THE GOODNESS OF GOD AND THE PROCLAMATION OF HIS NAME

- A. God responds by telling Moses what He will do: God will reveal His goodness and proclaims His name before Moses. Moses cannot see God's face, the full manifestation of the Divine Radiance. Moses will see God's back, the "afterglow."

*Exodus 33:19-23 Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." <sup>20</sup> But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." <sup>21</sup> And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. <sup>22</sup> "So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. <sup>23</sup> "Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."*

- B. God's goodness and His name is the answer to Moses' request to know God's way and His glory.

- C. Name of the Lord: denotes the Divine essence, nature, and character of God.

D. **GOODNESS**

1. *Tozer: "The goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and His unfailing attitude toward all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people."*
2. *"Since God is immutable He never varies in the intensity of His loving-kindness. He has never been kinder than He now is, nor will He ever be less kind."*
3. If God were not good, it would be scary. Sin makes us timid and self-conscious. God makes provision for us in Jesus Christ that He would not count our sins against us, but that in confidence we can enter God's presence as if we had never sinned.  
*Stephen Charnock (The Existence and Attributes of God – Discourse 12). 146 pages:*
4. God is good in and of Himself. It is inseparable from His nature. He is not dependent upon anyone else. He is good in His essence and He is the chief in His goodness. Everything else good is good because of Him. God is infinitely, perfectly, unchangingly good. We could not think of anything or anyone else who is better than God.
5. God is good, even in His justice. God is just because He is good. If God were not just, He would not be good. Even in judgments, God sends ample warnings, mercy in his execution of justice, His judgments are given to lead us to our good, to repentance, to God's mercy. His motivation is good. God causes all His goodness to pass before Moses. It includes His justice. His justice is to remove all that hinders love.

a. *Matthew Henry "There is a malignity in sin that taints the blood."*

6. What is God's way of relating to mankind and His magnificent glory? It is His goodness and how He relates to mankind.
- E. In Exo. 34:5-8 God reveals Himself in what Jewish tradition calls the 13 Characteristics of the Divine Nature.

***Exodus 34:5-8 Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped."***

1. God was gracious to deliver Israel out of the slavery in Egypt.
2. God was gracious to not consume them. God was gracious to send His Angel.
3. Moses asks to know God as He truly is. When Moses gets a revelation of God, He asks for God to go among Israel.

***Exodus 34:8 So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. <sup>9</sup> 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.***

4. Moses descends from the mountain encounter with God with his face glowing (Exo. 34:29-35).
5. God's glory goes with Israel (Exo. 40:34-38).

#### IV. APPLICATION:

- A. Receive the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ

1. Jesus, is the ultimate tabernacle of God's glory (2 Cor. 4:6; John 1:14; Hebrews 1:3)

***2 Cor. 4:6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.***

***Hebrews 1:3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.***

- B. Meditate on God's appearances. It affects the way we think about God. This affects the way we pray and the way we live. We can pray to God as He has revealed Himself.

***Eph. 1:17-18 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened...***

- C. Imitate God in His goodness. Once we have encountered His goodness, our hearts cannot continue to stay small.

***Matt. 5:44-45 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, <sup>45</sup> that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.***