

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for October 25, 2009

“The Greater Glory of Paul’s Ministry”
2 Corinthians 3:7-8

It is universally accepted that Paul’s teaching in 2 Corinthians 3:7-18 amounts to a commentary on Exodus 32-34, the account of God’s response to Israel breaking its promise to keep the law.

Though God, in response to the intercession of Moses, had chosen not to annihilate Israel, He also told Moses that He had no intention of continuing to dwell among them (Exodus 33:1-3).

Though God planned to remove Himself from among the people of Israel because of their sin, He relented based on the intercession of Moses in Exodus 33:12-17.

God, in response to Moses’ repeated requests for the Lord’s glorious presence to continue to be manifested among the children of Israel, made Moses himself a visible manifestation of that presence (Exodus 34:29-35).

Moses veiled his face to protect Israel from being destroyed.

Paul, in order to highlight the greater glory of Paul’s ministry of the new covenant in 2 Corinthians 3:7-11, provided us with three different comparisons between the new and old covenants.

The ministry of death compared to the ministry of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:7-8).

The ministry of death is the Law.

The Law was called the ministry of death not because it was designed to kill, but because it did kill by exposing sin and pronouncing the judgment of death upon it (Romans 7:12-13).

The word translated “fading as it was” (KATERGEO) when it was used by Paul meant, “to make of no effect, to make powerless.”

In other words, the glory on Moses’ face was continually being brought to an end or cut off in regard to its effect by the veil that Moses had put over his face.

Paul, through his use of a question in 2 Corinthians 3:8, communicated that whatever glory might have been associated with the ministry of death would be far exceeded by the ministry of the Spirit.

The ministry of the spirit is a life-giving ministry that provides lost sinners not only a new heart, upon which the laws of God have been written, but also the resources to live them out (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

May God give us the grace to appreciate the glory of the new covenant and the boldness to proclaim its message.