



governor. Another seal found said 'Jaazaniah, officer of the king' who may well have been one of king Zedekiah's men" (p. 81).

This period in Judah's history sees many events and invasions taking place, but the author has kept to the main story without being unduly sidetracked. A book of this kind, where there is an abundance of material to be used, is not the easiest to write, and our sister has done a very good job. I hope she and her illustrator will feel encouraged to produce more books for this age group. The lives of Daniel or David come to mind!

In any event, this book on Jeremiah has been a pleasure to read, and it is recommended not only to our younger readers but also to those more mature readers who would like a straightforward guide to the life of God's faithful suffering servant, Jeremiah.

Moses: earth's meekest man

21. The allegory of the veil

John Mitchell

Following a revelation of God's glory shown in His character, Moses' face becomes glorious and he has to veil his face. The children of Israel then build the tabernacle according to the instructions given to Moses in the Mount.

MOSSES, EQUIPPED with two new tablets of stone cut out of the rock by himself in accordance with Yahweh's instruction, had toiled once again to the top of the mount, this time on his own. There he had been granted a vision of the glory of the Lord closer than any yet seen by man, though the face of the Almighty had been turned away for his own safety.

The Name revealed

But what was it that Moses had sought when he had asked to see God's "glory"? Was it some Divine effulgence beyond the imagination of man? Was it some privileged intimacy exclusive to himself that would confirm his unique relationship with Yahweh, both as the medium between Him and His people and as God's special servant? No one knows for certain. One suggestion, put

forward by Edersheim,¹ is that Moses' real intent was to learn more of the character of the God with Whom he had to deal, and to see in what His glory consisted.

If that were so it appears that the proclamation of His Name that Yahweh gave to Moses as He passed by the rock in which Moses was sheltered fully supported it: "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished" (Ex. 34:6,7).^{*} This again was consistent with the promise already given: "I will proclaim My name, the LORD [Yahweh], in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (33:19). Not until, when the time was fulfilled,

1. Alfred Edersheim, *The Exodus and the Wanderings in the Wilderness*, p. 132.

* Quotations from the NIV unless otherwise stated.

there came One in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, was there to be a closer view, including the face, of the character of the Almighty.

The Lord Jesus, being the “express image” of God in the true sense, being “full of grace and truth”, expressed his Father’s glory in thought, word and deed in a manner greater by far than that shown to Moses, culminating in the sacrifice of himself on the cross. Just a short time before his crucifixion, he “lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: as Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given him” (Jno. 17:1,2, AV). Herein lay the glory of God through the crucifixion of His Son, in whom He “so loved the world”. “For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6, AV).

This and even greater truths were foreshadowed in the revelation of the glory of God that took place on Mount Horeb. There was an effulgence certainly that, even from the back view afforded to Moses, had a lasting effect upon him, though he did not realise it at the time. And, furthermore, the coincidence of it became a parable of the relationship of God’s people under the Law and under the Lord Jesus Christ. It took the percipience of one trained in the study of the Law and blessed with the revelation of God’s Son to realise and expound it, sad though its fulfilment proved to be.

The veiling of Moses’ shining face

The Law, written and engraved for a second time in the tablets of stone, was a “ministration of death”, but was nevertheless glorious. And that glory was transferred to the face of Moses to such a degree that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look it in the face, despite the fact that it would pass away. So greatly did the skin of Moses’ face shine that, when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw him, they were afraid to come near him. So he put a veil over his face while he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken to him while he was in the mount. Thereafter, as long as the brightness persisted, he wore the veil whenever he was speaking to the people, but took it off when he went in before the Lord in the tent of meeting situated outside the camp.

These things, by the pen of the Apostle Paul, were revealed as an allegory of the spiritual state of the Jews as they still clung to the Law that condemned them because they could not keep it, and ignored the “ministration of righteousness” in Christ, written not in stone but in the fleshy tablets of men’s hearts. They preferred the fading glory of the Law to the exceeding greater glory of God’s Holy Spirit in His only begotten Son. Even that which was made glorious in Moses had no glory by reason of “the glory that excelleth”. The minds of the children of Israel, wrote Paul, “were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read . . . [and] a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away” (2 Cor. 3:7-16).

Moses himself stood for a Law that could never make a man perfect, just and good though it was; therefore his “glory” faded. It reduced man to slavery; but where the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ was there was freedom. Those who believed in him would reflect “with unveiled faces” the Lord’s glory, which, instead of fading, would transform them into his likeness with ever-increasing glory (vv. 17,18).

The tabernacle

But, immediately, Moses’ glory greatly enhanced his stature, partly through fear and partly through the authority with which he spoke on behalf of the Almighty. The time had come for the construction of a centre of worship that would be an earthly pattern of the heavenly, and an everlasting type of the reconciliation of man to God. As such, it had to conform exactly to the measurements and prescribed materials Yahweh had shown to Moses during the past forty days while he had been in the mount. So he gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together and called for voluntary contributions from those “of a willing heart”, in gold, silver and brass; blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and fine linen; goats’ hair; rams’ skins dyed red, and seals’ skins; acacia wood; olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and the breastplate.

The making and building of the tabernacle was truly a community task and labour of love. All “wise hearted” men and women, under the direction of two master craftsmen, Bezaleel the grandson of Hur, and Oholiab of the tribe of Dan, designed the component pieces and parts

according to specifications presented by Moses, and trained the artificers and volunteers whom God endowed to do the work. Nothing was left to chance, and nothing was skimped, to make a sanctuary worthy of the worship of the God of heaven by His chosen people on earth. The details and the significance of it all would make a study in themselves beyond the scope of this series. Suffice it to say here that the work was completed in less than six working months, and the tabernacle was ready to be assembled on the first day of the first month of the second year of the Exodus from Egypt.

All in all, the tabernacle represented a magnificent concerted effort to the glory of God, both in the liberality of the offerings that were more than enough for the work that had to be done, and in the specialist skills that were needed. Under Bezaleel, the inspired craftsman, the major works, from the casting of the brazen laver made from the copper mirrors supplied by the women (and what a number of them that required!) to the carpentry overlaid with gold that both men and women had contributed from their ornaments, were fashioned to perfection beneath the watchful eye of Moses

as he faithfully carried out Yahweh's instructions. "The Israelites had done all the work just as the LORD had commanded Moses", and when Moses inspected it, he "blessed them" (Ex. 39:42,43).

So, when the great day arrived for setting up the tabernacle ready for the ministrations to begin, it was Moses again who, under the guidance of God, arranged it all, with every item in its prescribed and proper place. Although the occasion must undoubtedly have filled this humble man with great satisfaction, especially after all the tribulation his people had brought upon him in the preceding days, he quietly withdrew when the work was finished, and watched while the cloud of Yahweh's presence covered the tent of meeting and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. That cloud and that glory were to guide the children of Israel in all their journeys: "whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, they would set out; but if the cloud did not lift, they did not set out—until the day it lifted. So the cloud of the LORD was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel during all their travels" (40:36-38).

[\(To be continued\)](#)