

Front Page

2013 10 - Christ The Manifestation Of "I Am"

It was an ordinary day for Moses as he cared for the sheep. At a point of time in the day he saw a bush burning, nothing extraordinary in the desert, and as long as the sheep were not in any danger it was of no consequence. Some time passed and to his astonishment the bush was still burning, now this was interesting. Why did it not burn to the ground? The inspired record informs us that Moses said: "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt" (Ex. 3:3). In seeing Moses curiosity awakened, God immediately called to Moses. In that conversation Moses asked God for His name, and God answering said: "I AM THAT I AM: and He said, 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you'" (Ex. 3:14). That name was not isolated for God informs Moses He was:

- a) "The God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:6)
- b) "The God of your fathers" (Ex. 3:13)
- c) "The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:15, 16)
- d) "The LORD God of the Hebrews" (Ex. 3:18)
- e) "The LORD our God" (Ex. 3:18)

This man had an encounter with the living God which he would never forget. He had met the "I AM". What is meant by this name. Does the Lord use it to:

- a) Indicate His oneness with Jehovah?
- b) Is it synonymous with Jehovah?
- c) Is it the same as His revelation to John from: "Him which is, and which was, and which is to come?" (Rev. 1:4)

In my musing on this name, it has come to mean more that an indication of the eternity of God. God had given Moses a commission. He was going to leave the backside of the desert, go to Egypt and speak to Pharaoh (Ex. 3:10). At that time Egypt was the mightiest world power and Pharaoh was the head of both the political and religious worlds. He had two major titles: "Lord of the Two Lands" and "High Priest of Every Temple". In being called "Lord of the Two Lands" he was the ruler of Upper and Lower Egypt, owning all of the land, made laws, collected taxes, and defended Egypt against foreigners. As "High Priest of Every Temple", Pharaoh represented the gods on earth and was himself seen as god. This is mentioned to indicate that to go before such a one was very intimidating. God speaks to Moses: "I AM THAT I AM" is sending you. To know that God always was, is, and ever will be, is wonderful but what is that against such a power as Egypt? There is another meaning oftentimes missed and it signifies, "I will be all that I have said or revealed myself to be". (This is a translation of Ex. 3:14). With that in mind, what does God reveal of Himself to Moses at the burning bush?

The Manifestation of God

1) He is the God of holiness:

- a) God spoke to Moses: "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Ex. 3:5). When Moses heard and saw the manifestation of God he: "hid His face; for he was afraid to look upon God" (Ex. 3:6).

2) He is the God of sympathy:

- a) God heard the cry and saw the sorrows and afflictions of His people (Ex. 3:7, 9). They were unaware that God was aware of their darkness and "had come down" (Ex. 3:8), that God had "visited" them (Ex. 3:16).
- b) That which makes this amazing is that these people were not God fearing, but were idolaters. It was at this time God said: "Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt" (Ezek. 20:7). Furthermore, they were stubborn, for it is recorded: "They rebelled against me, and would not harken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt" (Ezek. 20:8). Despite knowing the purpose of God and the timing of God, they not only had lapsed back to that which their father

Front Page

2013 10 - Christ The Manifestation Of "I Am"

Abraham had left (Josh. 24:2), but despite warnings maintained it. How gracious of God to still respond to their cries.

3) He is the God of purpose:

a) The purpose of God is threefold:

- i) "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh" (Ex. 3:10)
- ii) "That thou mayest bring forth my people" (Ex. 3:10); "deliver them" (Ex. 3:8); "to bring them up" (Ex. 3:8); "bring forth my people, the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Ex. 3:10); "I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt" (Ex. 3:17)
- iii) "To bring them up . . . unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8)

b) The purposes of God which Moses is not told in Exodus 3:

- i) To fulfill His promise to Abraham that the nation they would serve: "Will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance" (Gen. 15:14)
- ii) "Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment" (Ex. 12:12)
- iii) To get honour: "Honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen" (Ex. 14:18).

The Manifestation Of Christ From The Manifestation Of God

When we consider our Lord we can easily observe the same characteristics in Him that are seen in the God who is the "I AM". This of course it to be expected since our Lord is God, He is the "image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4); the "Word of God" (Rev. 19:13); the "Son of God" (Mk. 1:1); and the "Fulness of the Godhead" (Col. 2:9).

1) The holiness of the Lord:

- a) The Psalmist records: "The LORD is . . . holy in all His works" (Psa. 145:17). This becomes very important for the body prepared for the Lord was a work of God. The power of the Highest overshadowed Mary (Lk. 1:35) and that which was conceived in her was of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 1:20). That was a work of God so the Lord had a holy body.
- b) When He was born He was holy for the angel said to Mary: "That holy thing which shall be born of thee" (Lk. 1:35).
- c) The works He showed them were: "from My Father" (Jn. 10:32). Furthermore, He said: "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works" (Jn. 14:10).
- d) He was holy when beating our sins. In the offerings of the Old Testament, when God speaks about the sin offering He repeats the fact that it was "most holy" (Lev. 6:17, 25; 10:17). When speaking about the trespass offering He says it is "most holy" (Lev. 7:5-6; 14:13). The teaching is very clear, when the Lord was on the cross, during the three hours of darkness he was not being made a sinner, nor was He "satanized" as some false teachers have taught. He was most holy.
- e) When our Lord died His body never saw corruption and that lovely man left the tomb as clean as when He was interned in it. It is recorded: "Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27; 13:35).
- f) He was raised from the dead by the "spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:4).
- g) He is now in glory functioning as our Great High Priest. The writer to the Hebrews writes: "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26).
- h) When discipling the church at Philadelphia He is the Holy (Rev. 3:7).

2) The sympathy of the Lord:

- a) The hymn writer wrote: "Up Calvary's Mountain one dreadful morn, walked Christ my Saviour, weary and worn". The last twelve hours had been hours of unspeakable torturing, both verbal and physical. His back had known the laying on of the lashes; the face had been bruised; the hair plucked off; mocked, despised and hated; now being led out to be crucified. The next hours were now going

Front Page

2013 10 - Christ The Manifestation Of "I Am"

to be an exceedingly agonizing suffering death, but before His physical death He would endure from the hands of God the cup of suffering. In hours preceding suffering we think of ourselves and what we have suffered and will suffer. This was to be an experience the Lord had never known before. Being forsaken by God, He was entering the unknown. Yet, on that horrific morning He saw the daughters of Jerusalem weeping, and not thinking of their sympathies for him but of His for them, He said: "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children" (Lk. 23:28). That is compassion.

b) Matthew wrote:

- i) "He saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion" (Matt. 14:14)
- ii) Concerning the blind men: "Jesus had compassion on them" (Matt. 20:34)
- iii) To the delivered demonic He said: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them . . . the Lord . . . had compassion on thee" (Mk. 5:19)
- iv) The father with the demonic son asked the lord: "have compassion on us" (Mk. 9:22)
- v) The leper came to the Lord and besought healing, then reading the lovely words: "Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him" (Mk. 1:41). This was not the touch of indifference but of feeling for the individual. The Lord could have simply healed him by His will, but He touched him. What must that have meant to that man.

His compassion did not end when He left the earth for one of the qualifications for priesthood is: "Who can have compassion on the ignorant" (Heb. 5:2). To be compassionate one must be a sensitive hearted character. A person who is self centered cannot be sensitive and compassionate.

3) Christ lived with a purpose in heart and mind:

- a) One of the most precious evidences of the Lord's purposeful life was in the upper room. The Lord's supper had been instituted, and John records the Lord saying: "That the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father hath given me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn. 14:31).
- b) Or consider the times He said: "let us go", but He never went anywhere without a purpose.
 - i) "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also" (Mk. 1:38), for therefore came I forth.
 - ii) "Let us go over unto the other side of the lake" (Lk. 8:22)
 - iii) "Let us go into Judaea again" (Jn. 11:7)
 - iv) "Let us go unto him" (Jn. 11:15)
 - v) "Let us go, lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand" (Mk.14:42) and He went out to met the approaching crowd who would bring Him to Caiaphas.
- c) When it came to the night before His death and looking back on His earthly sojourn, He could say: "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do" (Jn. 17:4). What a man, able to look back over life knowing that every word, deed, attitude, and response, always glorified God. Reviewing His life there were no regrets, no words which could have been said better, never a moment of time wasted, but all for the glory of God. With that in mind, He says: "I have finished the work". This is not Calvary, it is spoken before Calvary therefore, what was it that was finished, His giving the disciples the word of God? Having said I have finished the work He says: "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me" (Jn. 17:6); again, "I have given unto them the words Thou gavest me" (Jn. 17:8); and again: "I have declared unto them Thy name" (Jn. 17:26); and now looking back He says: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do".

Front Page
2013 10 - Christ The Manifestation Of "I Am"

- d) An even more wonderful finishing is when after the three hours of darkness our Lord cried: "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30). He had become the "propitiation for sins" (1 Jn. 2:2) and He finished it to God's complete satisfaction.
- e) There was another time when He finished a work but He does not use the word "finished". It was when He rose from the dead. In so doing He not only entered the strongman's house, but depleted his power and rose triumphantly (Matt. 12:29). He who had the "power of death" (Heb. 2:14), when Christ "led captivity captive" (Eph. 4:8), rose never to die again (Rom. 6:9; Heb. 7:16; Rev. 1:18).
- f) The stoppages of the Lord were also with purpose. Two times over we read that Jesus "stood still". Matthew tells of a time when there were two blind men, they were used to people passing them by, ignoring them as they sat at the entrance to the temple, etc. Then they heard Jesus was passing by and they began to cry for His attention. Then unseen by them, "Jesus stood still" (Matt. 20:32; Mk. 10:49) (It appears to me that these are the same incident with one man more vocal than the other.) One can visualize the scene as the crowd would grow silent, but with eager eyes, watch as the Lord touched their eyes. Thank God He stood still waiting for those in need to be brought to Him.

In summary, this lovely man walked an earthly sojourn, uncheered by earthy smiles or approval, but moved without toleration or compromise, and when it came toward the end of that earthly journey we read: "When the time was come that He should be received up, He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. (Lk. 9:51).

... Rowan Jennings