

# The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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How Will You Worship the Next Time? (Part 3)

Exodus 24:1-2, 9-11

Last month we finished with a few comments about the second part of this introduction—**The Display of God**. The first thing we notice in verses 9-11 is The Reality of this display. The words clearly state “*they saw the God of Israel*.” There is nothing else in the verse, or mentioned elsewhere in the Bible, that would indicate that this was not real. It does not say here or anywhere else that this account is only a dream or vision. It is literal—“*they saw the God of Israel*.” Other verses, such as Exodus 33:20, do let us know that they did not see the face of God or God’s full manifestation. God told Moses in Exodus 33:20, “*Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live*.” It was not a full manifestation because their human bodies could not have experienced that, but it was enough that the Scripture plainly says, “*They saw the God of Israel*.” Because God’s feet are mentioned, perhaps that is all they saw. But it was enough that God expected them to be transformed forever and to take what they saw and worship Him and lead the rest of the people in worship. To help everyone understand the reality of what was seen on the mountain, God had Moses restate it in verse 11—“*they saw God*.” It is just a few words, but what an impact it should have on us. How much more should it have had on these men! They saw God with their own eyes. Just thinking about that astounds me. Do you understand what is being said here? They saw God. Should that not have transformed them in such a way that they faithfully served God for the remainder of their lives? It is beyond my imagination that anyone on that mountain could have desired anything else but what Moses would desire in just a few chapters. However he would be the ONLY one that would attempt to worship God correctly another time. The rest, as we will see, will worship God unscripturally the next time they attempt to do so.

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How about you? Have you ever seen God? We mentioned this earlier in the message, but it needs to be repeated at this time. Have you ever seen God? For us, it will not be with our literal eyes. God does not manifest Himself in that form any more. But we can still “see” Him with our spiritual eyes and heart. To be honest, that is just as real as seeing with our physical eyes. Have you seen Jesus, God in human flesh, dying on the cross for you? If you have never seen Him on the cross as your Savior, then you cannot worship Him now. You must accept Him as Savior in order to worship Him. If you are saved, have there been some times after salvation when you truly “saw” God again? He wants to fellowship with you. He desires for you to worship Him. Will you give Him what He deserves?

There is something else to notice about The Display of God. The Richness of this display is described in the remainder of verse 10. It mentions the feet of God and then says “*as it were*.” This lets us know that it was not really this way, but it is the best description that others would understand. This “*as it were*” is not referring to the actual seeing of God, but only to this description. We have already discussed that the men really saw God. The “*as it were*” is referring to the details, not the reality.

Something else that we need to observe is the phrase “*under his feet*.” The details that we will discuss in just a minute are referring to what happens under God’s feet, not His feet. God’s feet are mentioned, but they are not described. The things under his feet are what God the Holy Ghost led Moses to describe. That leads to the question, “Were God’s feet touching the mountain, or were they hovering over the mountain?” At that point we can only conjecture because the verses do not give any more detail. Also some might ask, “Does God always have feet, or did He just take a visible form at this time? Again, we can only base our thoughts on what Scripture says. God is a spirit, but that does not necessarily mean that He does not have a shape or form of some kind. However, speculation about that would be endless. We will only deal with what these verses say. The verses say that there was a wonderful beauty to behold under God’s

feet. This is my conclusion—God took a physical form and manifested Himself to these men on Mount Sinai. However, He only allowed them to see His feet and the transformation of the mountain where His feet touched it.

Now notice two things about The Richness of this display. The first thing the verse describes is *The Pleasantness* in the richness of this display. Verse 10 says it was as “*a paved work of a sapphire stone.*” A sapphire is a gem of sky blue color. The phrase “*paved work*” is used to describe something pleasant to the eye, such as a processed stone. Most people like looking at jewelry. Everyone can appreciate something beautiful whether they can afford to own it or not. The language used in this verse is not describing a jewel just removed from the earth. Such a stone may or may not be beautiful before rough edges and dirt are removed, and then it is polished. The language here is describing something that everyone appreciates and that everyone describes as beautiful.

The last clause of verse 10 describes *The Purity* in this display. The verse says, “*And as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.*” The “*body of heaven*” may be a reference to the brightness of the stars. Clearness often refers to purification. Because God is absolutely pure, and had declared that to them earlier in the ten commandments, He is giving them a visual display to impress upon these men the reality of His holiness and purity. What most of them did afterwards is even more astounding after realizing what they saw on the mountain.

Now we can draw a conclusion about what these men saw on Mount Sinai. God revealed Himself to them as a gloriously pleasant sight to behold (paved work of sapphire stone) Who is absolutely pure in every aspect (body of heaven in his clearness). Others might see some other things, and no doubt other conclusions could be made, but we will stick with these two. The sapphire stone refers to the beauty or pleasantness of God, and the clearness refers to God’s holiness or purity. God desires worship, but you can only truly

worship Him when you understand something about Him. God had given some information about Himself in the Ten Commandments, and He would reveal more about Himself in the remainder of Exodus. But before He gives more details through words, He is manifesting Himself through sight to these leaders, so they can relate God to the people. He wants these men to truly understand something about Him, so they can reveal God to others.

It is interesting to note that of all the things that God could reveal about Himself, He made the men mindful of His beauty and holiness. It is also interesting to note that the phrase “*beauty of holiness*” is found four times in the Old Testament: I Chronicles 16:29, II Chronicles 20:21, Psalm 29:2, and Psalm 96:9. Three of these verses give the command to “*worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*” The other verse, II Chronicles 20:21, describes Jehoshaphat appointing “*singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness.*” God wanted these men and us today to realize that He is absolutely glorious and beautiful in all aspects and absolutely holy in everything. In a day in which man has minimized holiness, God still wants it emphasized. He is holy, and He demands that His people be holy. But the combination of the two is interesting. Holiness is beautiful and there can be no true beauty without holiness. Sin mars everything. It makes everything ugly. God makes everything beautiful. His holiness is what makes it beautiful. We can only be beautiful in God’s sight when we are made holy by being washed in the blood of Christ, and when we endeavor to be holy in actions. When we are holy, we can worship a holy God.

After pondering the reality and richness of this display, notice The Restraint. Verse 11 says, “*And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand.*” “Laying the hands” upon someone can mean different things. We often think of something good such as when Moses laid his hands on Joshua to let everyone know that Joshua would be the next leader (Deuteronomy 34:9). Also, in the New Testament, the church in Antioch sent out Barnabas and Saul after they had “*laid their hands on them.*” These two accounts and

others elsewhere in Scripture speak of commissioning for service. However, laying hands on someone can mean punishment such as Athaliah in II Kings 11:16 and the servant in the parable recorded in Matthew 18:28. Because Exodus 24:11 says that God did not lay His hands on the leaders, He is withholding judgment and commissioning for service. They are not going to die because they saw God, and now is not the time to talk about service. He wants them to worship Him. There are times when service for God is necessary. But there are times when we need to spend time worshiping God. For these men at this time, worship is necessary. We need to seek those times as well.

The final part of the Display of God is The Restatement. The next to last clause of verse 11 says, "*Also they saw God.*" It almost seems as if God knew that some people would doubt that the men really saw God. Perhaps the men themselves might doubt later that something really happened. Whatever the reason is, God had Moses to restate the truth—"*they saw God.*" The people could believe the men when they came down the mountain and told them what they saw. God did manifest Himself to them. He wanted them to worship Him, and He wants you to worship Him today. Will you take some time to worship God?