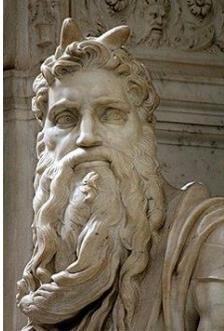


Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



Michael Angelo misunderstood Moses glory thanks to St. Jerome. Jerome read the Hebrew word which can mean “ray” or “horn.” Jerome wrote in his Bible that Moses came away from the Lord’s presence with horns on his head. So Michael Angelo put horns on Moses head in a statue he made of him. It is not what we think of when it comes to Moses. Michael Angelo probably should not feel too bad, as this event has been mis-understood by a number of people.

The King James translates that Moses covered his face because the people were frightened about the light coming from him. St. Paul lets us know that this isn’t correct. Moses covered his face AFTER he spoke with the people. The reason was because he didn’t want them to see the glory on his face was fading. What does all of this mean?

The Lord will help us understand the message from Exodus 34. We will take into account the Transfiguration of Jesus as well as the words of St. Paul in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians. What we want to see is that...**Two Mediators Bring us God’s Glory, but One is Greater.**

### **1. Glory in God’s Word**

The prophets were known for bringing the people God’s word. Both Moses and Christ brought God’s word. This was a glorious task.

A. What did Moses bring? He brought God’s commands.

1. One of the classic images of Moses is of him coming down the mountain with the tablets of stone. He was bringing God’s laws to the people of Israel.

When the original tablets were destroyed, the Lord had Moses make two more. It was very important the Moses deliver God’s word.

2. The part that interests us the most is the 10 Commandments. Knowledge of the Ceremonial (worship) and Civil laws are helpful as we read our Old Testament, but 10 Commandments demand the attention of every Christian. They reflect the natural law written on our hearts. We should know them.

B. Christ also brought God’s word for us to receive. He brought good news.

1. In this season of Epiphany we have not just talked about miracles. Jesus

taught the people. Three Sunday's ago he was teaching from a boat before the miraculous catch of fish. Jesus gave the people God's important words.

2. I mentioned before that it was good news. The key element in the New Testament teaching was the imminent fulfillment of the Messiah's work. Jesus taught that the Messiah was bringing forgiveness and salvation as the Old Testament had predicted.

C. Today God is still sending his word with his messengers. Nothing is being added to the Law and the Gospel. But Moses and Jesus often repeated their message and so it is being repeated today. God's word is glorious and so this is where we prominently see the glory of God today. We will want to listen to the messengers and read our Bibles and we will enjoy God's glory.

## 2. Glory in God's Work

What exactly is the glory? Let's look at both Moses' and Christ's work.

A. After Moses delivered the law, he also had the role of instructing people in the meaning and use of the law.

1. One example would be the 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment, **“You shall have no other gods.”** This meant no idols or false gods. It meant nothing in the created world was to take the place of the living God. A practical consequence at that time was that the Israelites were not allowed to marry and have children with idol worshippers.

2. If the Israelites obeyed the Lord, he would be present in their lives and bless them. We see in the days of Joshua and King David and King Solomon, that the people outwardly followed the laws and there were blessings.

Practical: Have you ever tried to keep track of obeying all of God's commands? God does command that we be perfect if we want to earn salvation. I think we don't count because we know that it is impossible. That leaves us with a problem. Who can fulfill God's law and be saved?

Even Moses, the Law Giver, preached the gospel. He pointed to the day when a righteous Savior would come and would bring forgiveness and salvation.

B. Christ also came to do glorious work. Our Savior fulfilled God's Gospel promises to Israel and the world.

1. Jesus kept every law commanded by God. The heavenly Father said as much when he said from cloud in Luke 9, **“This is my Son, whom I have**

**chosen; listen to him.”** Jesus was God’s perfect Son. The light shining from his skin and clothes tells us this. (Luke 9:29)

2. Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus about his departure or as states in the original language, “exodus.” The prophets had written that God’s chosen one would suffer and die. Did Jesus tell Moses and Elijah that he would be crucified outside of Jerusalem? Did they know? Very soon the whole world would be hearing that a rabbi who called himself the Son of God was crucified and on the third day rose from the dead.

Practical: Do you see the glory of Jesus’ work? Moses tells us what to do. “*Keep God’s glorious law.*” Jesus kept God’s law for all people. Moses would say, “*Stay right with God.*” Jesus says, “*I have made you right with God.*” The work of both men is important. However, the work of one is greater.

### **3. Glory that never fades.**

There is glory both in the Law and the Gospel. We don’t want to discount either one. But one is greater than the other. One glory never fades.

A. The glory of God at Sinai faded. We are told by St. Paul that Moses covered his face because he did not want the people to see that the glory was fading.

1. “Nomos” is the Latin word for “law.” Antinomian = anti law or against the law. Some people feel that now we have Gospel, the law is of no use. Not true. The Law has a glory all of its own. It is useful. It shows us our sins. We are reminded that we need a Savior. It also serves as a wonderful guide for our Christian lives.

2. As useful as the law is, it cannot bring us to the glory of heaven. It cannot save us. So it is useful for a little while on earth, but that is it. It’s glory stays only a while and then fades. As humans we want to live. As Christians we want to live forever in heaven. That will not happen with the law.

Thankfully there is another, greater glory. It is found in Jesus. This is the glory our faith is focused on.

B. In the hymn, *Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*, we sing, “*Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer’s praise, The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of his grace!*” (CW:340) The triumphs of Christ’s grace are important to you and me. This is why his glory never fades.

1. In 2 Corinthians, St. Paul tells us where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (3:17) When we have Christ and his Holy Spirit we are free. What freedom does Christ give us? This isn't freedom from debt or a lot of work or bad health. We would like those things, but Jesus has freed from our sins so that we belong to God. Since we belong to God, not only will he bless us in this life, but he will bless with life everlasting. It means no worries!

2. There is more. St. Paul tells us that we are being transformed into his image with ever increasing glory. What does that mean? I am changing. I am becoming more and more like Jesus. Not only do we not like the evil we see in the world. We don't like it when we are not good as we should be. As we look at the glory of Jesus in word and sacrament, we are changing to be more and more like him. We become more kind, loving and patient. Some day in heaven, we will perfectly imitate him.

Conclusion: I have beautiful picture that was sent to me of snow in the Arizona Mountains on the edge of the valley. The snow is beautiful in contrast to the desert. But the glory of the moment is fading as the snow melts and the brown desert underneath is revealed.



This is good picture of the Law of Moses. It is beautiful and glorious in its own right. But its glory is fading. (pic) Jesus and his cross reveal a glory that never fades. Jesus has given you eternal salvation. Moses and the law could never do this. As we go through Lent, look for the glory. Do not look in the law, but in Jesus the fulfiller of the law and our Savior. Rejoice in the glory that he has brought to you, his people. Amen.

THE FIRST LESSON - Exodus 34:29-35 (NIV 2011)

29 When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. 30 When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. 31 But Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them. 32 Afterward all the Israelites came near him, and he gave them all the commands the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai.

33 When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. 34 But whenever he entered the Lord's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, 35 they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord.