

Triennial Torah Study – 6th Year 14/03/2015



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This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:

<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

Ex 33	Isaiah 66	Prov 4-5	Acts 3
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Moses Intercedes for God's Presence and Asks to See His Glory (Exodus 33)

Following the incident with the golden calf, God told Moses to go ahead and lead the people to the Promised Land, and that His angel would go before them (32:34; compare 23:20-23)—a statement He repeats in this chapter (33:1-2). It is not clear whether this “angel” (Hebrew *malach*, “messenger”) refers to the preincarnate Messiah (as He sometimes conveyed the words of the Father) or to an angel such as Michael, who stands watch over Israel (compare Daniel 12:1). In favor of the latter is God's statement that He Himself would not go up in

Israel's midst (Exodus 33:3) and Moses' complaint to God: “You have not let me know whom You will send with me” (verse 12). Understandably, the people having to go to the Promised Land without God's presence is perceived as “bad news” by them (verse 4). However, if this is what God meant, He relents and agrees to accompany the people after Moses intercedes for them (verses 12-17).

Yet there is, perhaps, another explanation—one in which God intended to go with them all along. The Lord, we see, informs Moses that His presence would be with *him* (verse 14). And as Moses was leading the people, God's presence would necessarily be going before them. The key to this explanation is God's statement that He would not go up to the Promised Land *in the midst* of the people. The pillar of cloud and fire would lead them, but it would not come right down into the camp. Rather, the Lord descended in the pillar to meet Moses *outside* the camp. This is why Moses set up His own tent outside the camp and called it the “tabernacle of meeting” (verse 7)—God, at this time, would not meet with the nation. Moses' intercession is that it is not enough that He alone have God's presence with Him—all the people needed it (verses 15-16). So God responds that He will do as Moses has spoken. Thus, we later see that the tabernacle of the sanctuary is set up right *in the midst* of the people—and *it* becomes known as the “tabernacle of meeting” (40:2; Numbers 2:17), where God would, in a sense, meet with the entire nation. Of course, God's promise that His Presence would go in the midst of His people was ultimately fulfilled in the coming of Yeshua Messiah as a human being and then dwelling in His people through the Holy Spirit—eventually to bring them permanent *rest* in His Kingdom.

Indeed, Moses, the intercessor, was himself a type of Yeshua Messiah. In this chapter we see quite clearly the very special relationship that developed between this man and the Everliving One. God, the preincarnate Yeshua, spoke to Moses face to face as to a friend (verse 11). Perhaps this was similar to the way Messiah was manifested to Abraham. But Moses was allowed to see even more of God than is recorded of Abraham's experience. When Moses requested to see God's glory, God explained to him that no physical person could see His glory as it blazed from His face and survive—so He would let Moses see His *back*, proving that God does have form and shape, even as a Spirit Being. Indeed, God later says, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; he is faithful in all My House. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; *and he sees the form of the Lord*" (Numbers 12:6-8).

Reward for God's Servants and Indignation to His Enemies (Isaiah 66)

In Acts 7:49-50, Stephen quotes from the first two verses of Isaiah 66. They are the last words he says before exasperation takes over and he says things that directly result in his being stoned. Yeshua also referred to heaven and earth as God's throne and footstool (Matthew 5:34-35).

The contrast between those who obey God and those who don't continues. In verse 2, God says He is looking for those that are "poor and of a contrite spirit" (lowly and repentant in mind) and who tremble at His Word (properly fear to disobey God's instructions in Scripture). Service, gifts and prayers to God from those of a wrong heart and attitude are actually loathsome to God (verse 3). Those who "tremble at His word" will rejoice to see Messiah appear, while those who don't will be ashamed (verse 5). Indeed, the rebellious in heart will see their worst fears become reality (verse 4).

Verses 7-9 use an analogy of Zion in childbirth. The time of birth pangs is seen elsewhere to symbolize the period of trial and tribulation on Israel leading up to Messiah's second coming. With that in mind, notice that the "male child" is born before the time of pain and that the rest of Zion's "children" are born from "the earth" as a nation "at once" *after* she experiences the birth pangs. The "birth" here, then, appears to refer to the spiritual glorification of God's people, resurrected from the grave to immortality. The spirit birth of the "male child"—Messiah's resurrection from the earth—occurred long before Israel's tribulation. But the rest of His brethren, the Assembly, will not be spiritually born (i.e., changed into Spirit beings like Him) until the time of the resurrection of the just at Messiah's return.

God will reward His servants and destroy His enemies. All nations will at last learn to honor God. Israelites will be returned to God from around the world by nations that have not known Him before (verses 18-21). Verse 22 is perhaps a reference to the ultimate new heavens and new earth, which God "*will make*" *after* the Millennium and Last Judgment period—its permanence being used to parallel the permanence of God's redeemed people. In verse 23, "all flesh" of the Millennium and last judgment period will come to honor God according to *His* timekeeping scheme—the new moons (which define the beginning of months on His calendar) and Sabbaths.

The end of those who continue to transgress against God will see their flesh consumed by worms (maggots) and burned up by fire (verse 24; see also Mark 9:47-48). We will consider the specific wording here further when we come to the New Testament. Says *The Nelson Study Bible*: "Although the Book of Isaiah depicts God's coming salvation, it closes with a strong statement of the judgment of the wicked." Indeed, it is a rather sobering conclusion.

Proverbs 3

This chapter is one of the most excellent in all this book, both for argument to persuade us to be religious and for directions therein. I. We must be constant to our duty because that is the way to be happy, [Prov. 3:1-4](#). II. We must live a life of dependence upon God because that is the way to be safe, [Prov. 3:5](#). III. We must keep up the fear of God because that is the way to be healthful, [Prov. 3:7, 8](#). IV. We must serve God with our estates because that is the way to be rich, [Prov. 3:9, 10](#). V. We must hear afflictions well because that is the way to get good by them, [Prov. 3:11, 12](#). VI. We must take pains to obtain wisdom because that is the way to gain her, and to gain by her, [Prov. 3:13-20](#). VII. We must always govern ourselves by the rules of wisdom, of right reason and religion, because that is the way to be always easy, [Prov. 3:21-26](#). VIII. We must do all the good we can, and no hurt, to our neighbours, because according as men are just or unjust, charitable or uncharitable, humble or haughty, accordingly they shall receive of God, [Prov. 3:27-35](#). From all this it appears what a tendency religion has to make men both blessed and blessings.

Proverbs 4

When the things of God are to be taught precept must be upon precept, and line upon line, not only because the things themselves are of great worth and weight, but because men's minds, at the best, are unapt to admit them and commonly prejudiced against them; and therefore Solomon, in this chapter, with a great variety of expression and a pleasant powerful flood of divine eloquence, inculcates the same things that he had pressed upon us in the foregoing chapters. Here is, I. An earnest exhortation to the study of wisdom, that is, of true religion and godliness, borrowed from the good instructions which his father gave him, and enforced with many considerable arguments, [Prov. 4:1-13](#). II. A necessary caution against bad company and all fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, [Prov. 4:14-19](#). III. Particular directions for the attaining and preserving of wisdom, and bringing forth the fruits of it, [Prov. 4:20-27](#). So plainly, so pressingly, is the case laid before us, that we shall be forever inexcusable if we perish in our folly.

Acts 3

In this chapter we have a miracle and a sermon: the miracle wrought to make way for the sermon, to confirm the doctrine that was to be preached, and to make way for it into the minds of the people; and then the sermon to explain the miracle, and to sow the ground which by it was broken up. I. The miracle was the healing of a man that was lame from his birth, with a word speaking ([Acts 3:1-8](#)), and the impression which this made upon the people, [Acts 3:9-11](#). II. The scope of the sermon which was preached here upon was to bring people to Messiah, to repent of their sin in crucifying him ([Acts 3:12-19](#)), to believe in him now that he was glorified, and to comply with the Father's design in glorifying him, [Acts 3:20-26](#). The former part of the discourse opens the wound, the latter applies the remedy.