

Sermon Handout

How We See God

Exodus 32:1-34:28

I. The narrative is framed with “seeing”

- a. Israel’s idolatry 32:1-10
 - i. The people “see” the delay v. 1
 - ii. Aaron “sees” the people worship the calf v. 5
 - iii. God “sees” the peoples’ idolatry v. 9
- b. YHWH revealed 33:18-34:35
 - i. Moses asks to “see” God’s glory 33:18
 - ii. Moses may not “see” God’s face 33:20
 - iii. Moses may “see” a glimpse of God’s glory 33:23
 - iv. The people “see” the work of God 34:10
 - v. The reflected glory of God is “seen” 34:29-35 (esp. v. 35)

II. The proper representation of God

- a. The people misrepresent Moses’ role v. 1
- b. Aaron misrepresents God (as “gods” – the calf) vv. 4-5
- c. God defends Moses’ role v. 7 *cf.* v. 11; 33:1
- d. God condemns the people’s misrepresentation vv. 8-10
 - i. They have turned aside v. 8a
 - ii. They have said, “these are thy gods” v. 8b
 - iii. They are a stiffnecked people v. 9
 - iv. I will wipe them out v. 10a
 - v. I will create a new nation from Moses v. 10b

III. Moses intercedes for Israel

- a. “Do not destroy them.” 32:11-14
 - i. God’s reputation is at stake vv. 12-13
 - ii. God agrees to let them live v. 14
- b. “Do not abandon your covenant with Israel” 33:7-17
 - i. Moses calls the people to repent v. 5
 - ii. Moses identifies himself with Israel vv. 12-16 *contra* 32:10b
 - iii. God agrees to renew covenant with Israel v. 17 *cf.* vv. 1-3

IV. The Lessons

- a. God is seen in his word and works, not in a visible image or manifestation
- b. God works through men that he has appointed and hears their prayers
- c. Godly leaders cast their lot with God’s people in faithfulness
- d. God is forgiving and restores erring members who repent