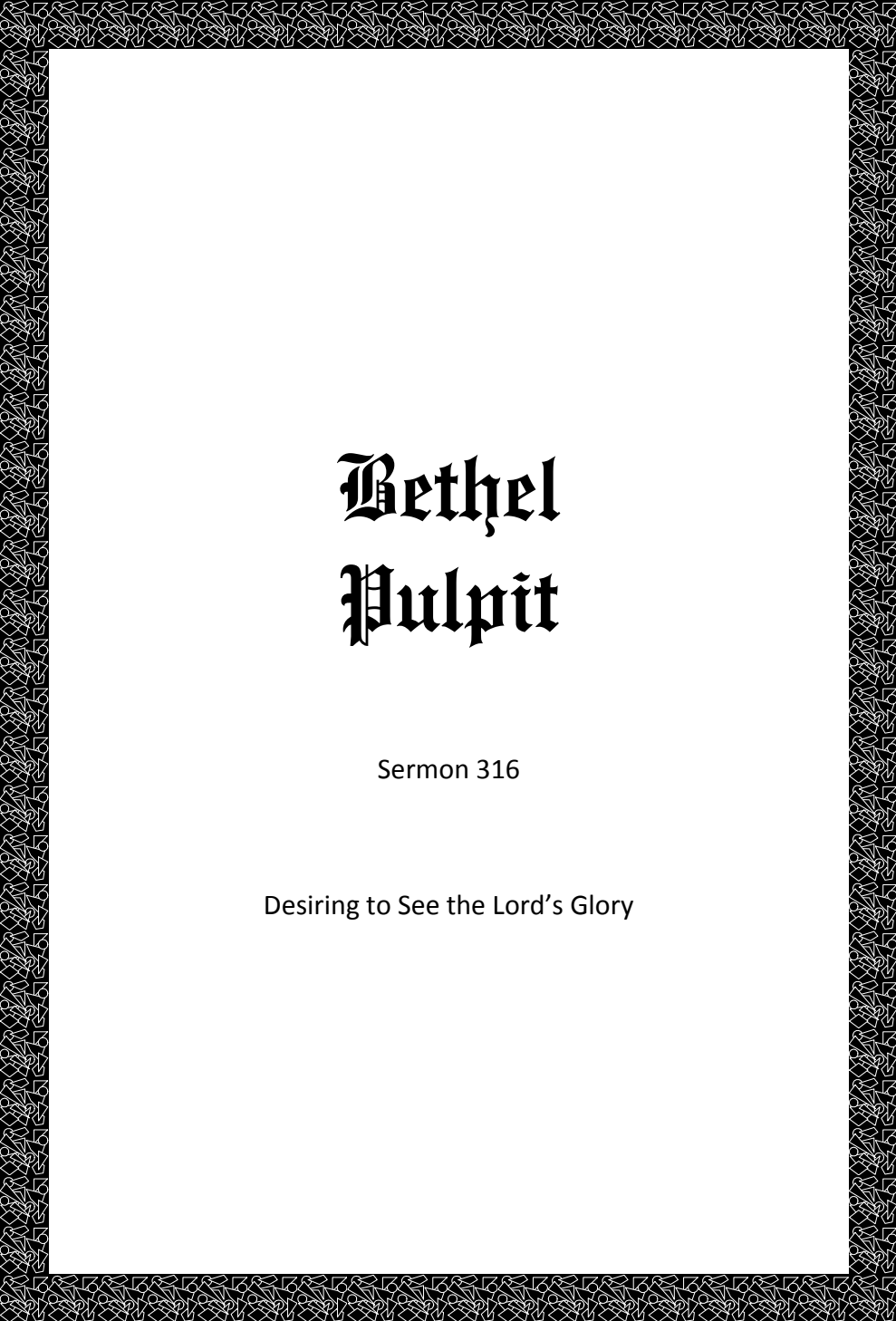




# Bethel Pulpit

Sermon 316

Desiring to See the Lord's Glory

**Sermon preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton,  
by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,  
on Lord's day morning, 26th December, 2010**

**Text:** "*Shew me Thy glory*" (*Exodus 33. 18*).

The Lord Jesus just before He died prayed for all His people to the end of time, and He prayed this prayer: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory." That was a prayer for all God's people that they might behold His glory – by faith here on earth and then eternally in heaven where "glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land." And that prayer must be answered. "That they may behold My glory."

Then the apostle takes up a most beautiful expression: "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And then we read this morning (John 1) the Apostle John says, "We beheld His glory." And when you read a word like that, this is surely faith's response in our heart: "Lord, shew me Thy glory." John said, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and *we beheld His glory*, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth," and our heart says, "Shew me Thy glory."

Now when did the Apostle John behold the glory of the Lord Jesus? Well, of course in an outward sense, in a remarkable sense he saw the glory of the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Well, the very word is recorded: "They saw His glory" – that is Peter and James and John, and John never forgot it. "They saw His glory." That was the one occasion when there was a glimpse of the eternal, essential glory of the Son of God, when His garments shone with this amazing brightness. John says, "We beheld His glory," and the Word of God speaking of the transfiguration, Peter, James and John, says, "They saw His glory." Peter did not forget it, neither did the Apostle John.

There was another way in which John beheld the glory of the Saviour. As he saw His miracles, as he heard His words, as he felt His love, as he knew He was a real Man without sin, as the sacred realisation fell upon him: this is none other than the Son of God. In all that the Saviour did, John beheld His glory. And in our reading this morning, those two disciples who came in listening to John the Baptist's preaching – you realise that the one whose name is not mentioned, the unknown one, it is

obvious that this is John speaking of himself. As far as we can tell, this is the first time that John ever met the Saviour, had a view of Him. The next day John the Baptist stood and he cried, “Behold the Lamb of God.” And there was this young man, John, and he beheld His glory, and in a sense it was as precious a view of His glory as on the Mount of Transfiguration. That first glimpse he had of the dear Lamb of God and He beheld His glory, and some of you remember the first time when you beheld His glory, when you saw the dear Lamb of God crucified for sinners, bearing away sin, bearing away your sin, making atonement for your soul, and you said, “And we saw His glory.”

And John never forgot it. And remember this, that it seems exceedingly clear that when the Lord called John, he was a very young man, possibly only a boy – he might have been only sixteen – and yet he beheld His glory. What a word that is: “Behold the Lamb of God”! “And the two disciples” – Peter and John – “heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” John the Baptist did not want any glory. He said, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” He wanted to point out the glories of the Lamb of God. John the Baptist could have said what our hymnwriter says: “Behold the glories of the Lamb.” John said, “We beheld His glory.” They left John the Baptist, “and they followed Jesus,” at this sight of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ.

Now there was one person in the Old Testament who specially saw the Lord’s glory. I am thinking of the prophet Isaiah. In his vision he went into the temple, and there he saw the Lord “high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple.” Let us be clear, the best commentary on Scripture is Scripture itself, and in the New Testament, in the gospels we are told that in Isaiah chapter 6, it was the glory of Christ that the prophet Isaiah saw (John 12. 41). He saw the Lord high and lifted up, the glories of Christ. His train filled the temple, the holy seraphim crying, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.” And the effect was he was prostrated. He was alone before his God, and he felt the chief of sinners. O but one of the seraphim flew with a live coal from off the altar – where the atonement was made, where the blood was shed – and he touched his lips saying, “Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.” And Isaiah was never the same again. That is what we need, to be found alone in the presence of the Lord Jesus viewing His glory, “the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

“We beheld His glory.” But considering these last few days, the things we have been thinking about and talking about, there is much about the glory of the Lord. The shepherds saw the glory of the Lord. “The glory of the Lord shone round about them,” those holy angels descending from heaven. Yet it was when they came to the manger they really beheld the glory of the Lord. There was not any outward glory in that stable; it was a place of poverty; it was a place of humiliation; it was a place of shame. But those godly shepherds in the newborn Babe saw “the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” But as we think of all these things, we have this at this time of year in our hearts: *me*, Lord; “Shew *me* Thy glory.”

And Simeon, when he took the infant Christ in his arms, he beheld His glory. “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.” “Shew me Thy glory,” and let my eyes see Thy salvation. And godly Anna coming in at that moment, O didn’t she have a glimpse of that glory she had long waited for! She spoke of Him and she spoke of His glory. “She ... spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” And the wise men saw the glory of the star, but they were not satisfied with the glory of the star, but when they entered that poor house and saw the young Child with His mother Mary, there was no outward glory. It must have been a poor home, because the Son of God was born in poverty, but they “fell down, and worshipped Him.” They beheld His glory.

And we think of all these things, but has it not been something like that with you – “The glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” – O but your heart says, “Shew me Thy glory”? Real religion is personal, and at a time like this we do not want just to hear and sing and speak of these blessed things, these glorious things, these eternal truths, and the glory of the Babe of Bethlehem. But O it is this: “We would see Jesus.” I believe there are some of you here this morning and that is your chief desire. You want to have a little glimpse by faith of the glory of the Lord. The ancient prophet said, “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,” and faith says, “Shew me Thy glory.” Real religion is personal. You will be concerned about others; you will be concerned about those you love; but you will say, It is me.

Some of those strange old Negro spirituals have some good divinity in. There is one and the chorus keeps coming in: “It’s me, O Lord;

it's me; it's me, O Lord; it's me." There are things like, "Not the preacher, or the deacon; it's me, O Lord; it's me." That is good divinity. "O when wilt Thou come unto me?" Thou didst come to this sinful earth. "When wilt Thou come unto me?" "Remember *me*, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto thy people: O visit *me* with thy salvation."

"Shew me Thy glory." Well, perhaps some of you say, This is Moses who said it, and you have not been mentioning Moses. How this word rests with me today is not so much concerning Moses; it is concerning you and it is concerning me. "Shew *me* Thy glory." But I feel I ought to say a little bit about Moses here, and I would like to say something about Moses here. It is a beautiful chapter. Moses the man of God was sad, because God's people sometimes are sad. What made him sad was this: because of Israel's sin the Lord had said He would no more go with them. He said, I will fulfil My promise; I will bring you safely through; I will send an angel. But an angel would not satisfy Moses. "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." Some of you know that, especially as we come to the last Lord's day of the old year, and we are soon passing into the new year, the unknown way. We do not know what it holds. We do not know what is in store. "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." And Moses received that very, very blessed answer: "And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

You would think that would satisfy Moses. Well, in a sense it did, and heavenly blessings do satisfy, but Moses felt that the Lord had given him something and he could use that as a plea to ask for something else. And that is good praying. I would recommend it to you if the Holy Spirit leads you in that way. I remember just once in my life entering into that. There had been a matter I had been burdened about for some time. It was a young minister I knew and I admired, and he said he had never really heard of any blessing upon his preaching, and I seemed to have a burden for a time to pray for him. One morning I received a letter saying how someone had been specially blessed under that young minister's preaching. I was so pleased I had had an answer to my poor prayers. It seemed to come like this: ask for something else; the Lord has favoured you; you have the Lord's ear. And I especially prayed that as I had had this remarkable outward answer, also to have more of a personal answer, and it was that day I was so sweetly, solemnly, sacredly led into that word: "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate

saith unto them, Behold the Man!” I trust that day by faith I did “behold the Man.” It was a second blessing.

So if the Lord answers your prayers, especially if He gives you an answer in providence, then “urge your claim through all unfitness.” Press your point at the throne of grace. Hast Thou blessed me in providence? Then bless me in grace. Hast Thou given me this answer? Then give me this other answer.

So Moses said, “Shew me Thy glory.” Really, in two different ways it was answered. In one way, the first one we think of, Moses did just have a little glimpse of the essential, eternal glory of God. He was told, “Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by: and I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen.” He had just a glimpse of the eternal glory of God. There was only one place where he could see the glory of God and live, and there is only one place where you and I can ever see the glory of God, His essential glory, and live, and that is *in the cleft of the rock*, the sinner’s hiding place, the wounds of a crucified Jesus.

Moses said, “Shew me Thy glory.” Is there any place where a sinner can behold the glory of God and yet live? Is there such a place? And the Lord said, “There is a place by Me.” There is not any place anywhere else. “There is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand.” O what a blessed place! “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”

“Shew me Thy glory.” So Moses received that blessed answer immediately. But he also secondly received the answer in a somewhat different way. Moses said, “Shew me Thy glory,” and the Lord said, “I will make all My goodness pass before thee.” The old divines used to say, if words mean anything at all, then the Lord’s goodness is His glory and the Lord’s glory is His goodness. This was with Moses through all the days of his life. “I will make all My goodness pass before thee.” There are a lot of scriptures concerning the goodness of the Lord. “My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, saith the Lord.” “Surely goodness and

mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” “The goodness of God endureth continually.”

“Shew me Thy glory. And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee.” It would be a wonderful thing if you and I and us as a congregation sweetly proved this during this coming year.

“Goodness, immortal and divine,  
The bliss of endless day,  
The Lord our God will make to pass  
Before us in the way.”

“And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee.”

“Shew me Thy glory.” I do not know whether any of you read Dr. Owen. You should, because I think perhaps of all the godly writers, Dr. Owen is one of the greatest. His greatest work is entitled, *The Glory of Christ*. Now I read *The Glory of Christ* probably when I was a late teenager and I found it a most profitable, edifying book. But Dr. Owen was dying and the work was not entirely finished, and the last day of his life he just wanted to complete it. Laying everything down he said, “Now today I am going to behold the glory of Christ of which I have been writing.” It would be a wonderful thing if that should be our favoured portion at last, to behold the glory of the Lord in heaven for ever where “glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel’s land.”

“Shew me Thy glory.” Well, just a few things concerning this prayer as it touches you and me this morning. Shew me the glory of Thy finished work. When the Saviour with a loud voice cried, “It is finished,” and the whole work of redemption was for ever complete, the glory of it, nothing could be added to it; nothing will ever be taken from it. O the glory of that work which saves “the vilest sinner out of hell who lives to feel his need”! Now shew me the glory of Thy finished work.

Shew me the glory of Thy love, that “matchless, boundless love that brought the Lord of glory from above,” that love that having loved Thine own which were in the world, Thou didst love them unto the end. O shew me the glory of Thy love at Calvary. Shew me the glory of Thy love in my own heart.

“Shew me Thy glory.” “Shew me Thy glory” shining forth in Thy Word, shining forth in the promises. “Shew me Thy glory” in the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure as Thou didst become

the Surety for Thy people and undertook to do everything necessary for them to bring them to heaven at last. O “shew me Thy glory.” Shew me the glory of Thy great salvation, and the great point: shew me I am personally interested in it. “Shew me Thy glory.” “Shew me Thy glory” in the supplying of my needs. Give me strength equal to the day; uphold me; preserve me. Shew me the glory of the Lord as revealed in providence. “Shew me Thy glory.”

Shew me the glory of Thy wonderful characters, the glory of Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, His glory as the Shepherd of the sheep, His glory as the Rock of Ages that never moves, His glory as the great and glorious High Priest. “Shew me Thy glory,” the glory of Thy mercy, mercy to sinners, mercy in pardon, mercy in forgiveness. Shew me the glory of that precious blood, the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Shew me the glory of Thy loving, tender compassion: Thou wilt not break the bruised reed; the smoking flax Thou wilt never quench. And shew me the glory of Thy righteousness.

“No age can change its glorious hue;  
The robe of Christ is ever new.”

Shew me the glory of Thy birth and the glory of Thy death and the glory of Thy resurrection and ascension and exaltation. And above all, “shew me Thy glory,” the glory of this, Thy glory as the Son of God from all eternity, and the glory of Thy sacred, spotless humanity, “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Shew me Thy glory as the Mediator, God and Man in one glorious Person.

“Shew me Thy glory.” This is what divine revelation is. People sometimes are afraid of talking about a revealed Christ. I think it was Whitefield, when his preaching was blessed to thousands in England, used to say that an unrevealed Christ is no Christ; an unapplied Saviour is no Saviour. It is this: shew it to me, Lord. Shew it to me and let me feel it, let me understand it, let me possess it. You have it so often in Scripture. Israel at the waters of Marah. They are in despair, no way of escape, no remedy, and Moses cried, and the Lord *shewed* him a tree. That is what we want: the Lord to reveal the remedy and then apply it. And then John on the Isle of Patmos. He said, “He *shewed* me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” The Lord showed it me. We want that religion where these things are

shown us. That is what divine revelation is. That is what the work of the Holy Ghost is. “He shall take of Mine,” says the Saviour, My glory, “and shall shew it unto you.” We say,

“Show us that loving Man  
That rules the courts of bliss,  
The Lord of Hosts, the Mighty God,  
The eternal Prince of Peace.”

O may these things be shown to us when we are in darkness, when we are tried and tempted, assailed by Satan, in unbelief.

“This my incessant cry shall be,  
Jesus, reveal Thyself to me.”

O “shew me Thy glory,” shew it to me personally and savingly and eternally. “Shew me Thy glory.” And shew me this in all Thy blessed suitability to meet my deepest need, and “shew me Thy glory,” the glory of that wonderful fulness, all that a sinner can ever need, all that the Saviour can ever give. “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell” – that glorious fulness. “Shew me Thy glory.” O but above everything else, as I am a sinner, shew me my personal interest there.

“Jesus! to Thee I breathe my prayer;  
Reveal, confirm my interest there.”

Because as this blessed season passes from us once again, and we think of the shepherds and the angels and the glorious revelation of the Saviour born at Bethlehem, we do not want these things just to pass us by or go over our heads. We want that blessed, personal, saving, eternal interest in them. This is it, beloved friends; this is it: me, you. “Shew *me* Thy glory.”

Before coming to chapel, I had a strange thought. I know today is Boxing Day, but really the name for it is *The Feast of Stephen*. And I thought of dying Stephen, and he was dying in agonies and blood as a martyr, and he looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” Now in his death he beheld the glory, and in his agony he beheld the glory. What a wonderful thing to be favoured like Stephen! Some of you are walking a pathway of trial, difficulty, sorrow – but may you look up to heaven and may you behold the Saviour standing at the right hand of God, and may you behold His glory and His love and His

favour toward you. But O may you and I like Stephen when we come to the end be favoured to behold His glory and then to behold it eternally.

“Shew me Thy glory.”