

And we have seen His glory...

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Readings: Ex.33:18-23; 34:4-8
John 12:20-33

John 1:14 = **most revolutionary verse in NT**

Recapitulation:

Part 1 (28 December): “Word became flesh”: **embraces full human reality** (total commitment/involvement of Incarnation: bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh)

Part 2 (18 January): “made His dwelling [**“tabernacled”**] among us”: God presences Himself amongst us; Jesus the *Shekinah* [**manifest presence**] of God with us; **Temporary** Incarnation? >>> **permanent** abiding in Christ by the Holy Spirit

“And we beheld His glory...” (“glory” = one of John’s key words – 37x in John):

2 questions:

- What is the glory of God?
- When and where did John behold it?

Experiment: try to visualise the Glory of God – do you see it in terms of **light**? = standard perception (i.e. halo)

Certainly used in this sense of “light”/“splendour”, e.g.

- Luke 2:9 “An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the **glory** of the Lord **shone** around them...”
- Luke 9:29-32 “²⁹As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and **his clothes became like a flash of lightning**. ³⁰Two men, Moses and Elijah, ³¹appeared in **glorious splendour**, talking with Jesus... ³²Peter and his companions ... saw his **glory** and the two men standing with him.”

But **John doesn’t refer to either of these events** (cp. Synoptics) – “glory” therefore not used in this sense?

So what is His glory?

Multiplicity of meanings:

- *Kavôd* (Heb.) = “weight, heaviness//impressive appearance// splendour, magnificence//distinction, respect, mark of honour”
- *Doxa* (Gk.) = “(good) opinion//splendour, brightness// magnificence//majesty”

Ex.33:18-23; 34:4-8

v.18 “Now show me your glory...” (God agrees to do so, but with conditions)

- **What did Moses SEE?** No account given of what glory looked like (Has he been “short-changed”?)
- **But note proclamation [*qara* = call] of God’s character** v.19 “Goodness//Name “the LORD”//mercy// compassion; 34:5-7 Name “the LORD”//compassion//gracious// slow to anger//abounding in love and faithfulness//maintaining love to thousands//forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin//but not leaving guilty unpunished
- **Moses’ face shone as a result of God’s glory** (halo) v.29

Is God’s glory His moral/ethical character? (i.e. goodness, mercy, compassion, grace, slow to anger, abounding in love, etc.)

- R.H. Strachan, *The Fourth Gospel*, 103-106: “‘**Glory**’ is the whole personal activity of the ‘**Living God**’, not merely one of his attributes.... [It is] his very self and essence.”
- Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 301: “The ‘**glory**’ of God, what he is like in the very depth of his being is ... his love which stops for nothing.”
- God’s glory = His revealing of Himself (who he really is....)

This is why John could say “we beheld his **glory... full of grace and truth**” (John 1:14)

When and where did John behold his glory?

- Natural inference is the Transfiguration (not mentioned in John)
- Demonstrated in Jesus’ miracles (John 2:11)
- But special time and place of Jesus’ glory being seen:

John 12:20-33

- v.23 The **hour** has come for the Son of man to be **glorified** (show who he really is) – cp. John 17:1 “Father, the **time [hour]** has come. **Glorify** your Son, so that your Son may **glorify** you.”)
- vv.24-26 Parenthesis about kernel of wheat falling into ground and dying...
- v.27 Jesus doesn’t seem to be happy about his hour of being glorified (“troubled” = agitated; “**save me from this hour**”) >>> “Father, glorify your name!” (Show who you really are...)
- **CLIMAX** in vv.31-33:

- v.31 **“Now is the time** for judgement on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out...”
- v.32 ‘But I, **when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself**’ (Not just a bouncy praise song: e.g. “Lift Jesus Higher! Lift Jesus Higher! Lift Him up for the world to see...”)
- v.33 **He said this to show the kind of death that he was going to die** (i.e. “lifted up” on the Cross)

ALL THE KEY THEMES OF JOHN’S GOSPEL CONVERGE AT THE CROSS

- **Jesus’ hour** >>> the Cross
- **Word made flesh** (full human reality) >>> the Cross
- **Dwelt among us** (in common with us) >>> the Cross
- **We beheld his glory** >>> the Cross

When and where do we behold His glory (moral/ethical glory = essence of God’s character)? >>> **AT THE CROSS**

This is the kind of God He is....

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All His <u>love</u> ● All His <u>compassion</u> ● All His <u>mercy</u> ● All His <u>grace</u> ● All His <u>truth</u> | } | <p>IS REVEALED (ONCE AND FOR ALL AND IN ALL HIS FULNESS) AT THE CROSS!</p> |
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Cross is the place where John beheld Jesus’ glory:

- The reality of what he was like in the very depth of his being
- All of God’s goodness, mercy, compassion, grace, love, faithfulness and forgiveness revealed at the cross
- The cross is God’s love stopping for nothing
- The cross shows the kind of God that he is

Consequences of the Cross: Because of the Cross, John can say:

- v.14: ‘We **beheld** (physically saw/witnessed) his **glory**... full of **grace** and **truth**’
- v.16: ‘From the **fullness of his grace we have all received** (one blessing after another – grace *anti* grace = overlapping waves of grace)’
- v.18: ‘No one has ever seen God; but God the Only-Begotten, who is at the Father’s side [i.e. Jesus], has **made Him known**’

This is why John 1:14 is so revolutionary:

- It shows **God's total commitment to us in the Incarnation** (becoming “bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh”)
- It reveals **God dwelling in our midst in the person of his Word made flesh** (becoming totally accessible to us in Christ)
- It demonstrates **what kind of God he is** (his essential character [i.e. his glory] revealed at the Cross)