

### ***Pastor writes***

The theme for our morning's meditation is, 'The true glory of God is manifested in the humanity of Jesus.' It is only when we see Jesus in human form that we are able to understand who God is. It is only through Jesus that the nature and character of God can be fully understood. In the Old Testament period God revealed himself in all his glory at Mount Sinai when he made a covenant with the people of Israel. At Sinai God showed himself to be a merciful and compassionate God. Moses had particularly requested to see the glory of God after the covenant was broken. The Lord spoke to Moses face to face as one speaks to a friend. The people were not able to see Moses' face when he came back from the Lord because his face was shining. Moses used to put a veil to prevent Israel from seeing the glory of God which was reflected on his face.

In the New Testament reading Paul compares the glory of the old covenant made through Moses with the glory of the new covenant brought about by the Holy Spirit. The old covenant brought about death because even though it explained what was right or wrong, the people were not able to keep the commands and therefore it brought about death. The old covenant was written on tablets of stones but the new covenant was written on the hearts and minds of the people. The old covenant could not be understood because a veil still covered their hearts. It is only when the people turned to the Lord Jesus that the veil which covered their hearts is removed and they are able to see clearly. Paul says, 'And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit' (2 Cor. 3:18).

Paul reminds his readers that he had being given the ministry of the gospel through God's mercy. When God calls and commissions his people to his ministry he also gives the strength and the power to carry it out even in the midst of persecution and stiff opposition. There were false teachers in Corinth who were using secret and shameful ways to persuade people to follow their teaching by manipulating them. Paul says that he does not use such ways; nor does he use deception or distort the word of God. He appeals to the conscience of the people and maintains his own integrity. He was setting forth the truth of the gospel plainly before them, without obscuring it, or manipulating it, or resorting to deception. Paul continues to talk about the gospel as being one which is veiled particularly for those who are perishing. He says that the god of this age has blinded them so that they cannot see the light of the gospel which displays the glory of the Christ who is the image of God. Satan blinds the minds and hearts of the people that they are unable to discern what is right and wrong. The devil is the arch-enemy of God and the unseen power behind all unbelief and ungodliness. Those who follow him have in fact made

him their god. Because of this they have lost their ability to discern what is right and wrong. So we may see people persisting in some immoral activity or walking in the darkness, or hankering over power and authority without even batting an eyelid as though everything was okay. The reason is because their hearts and minds have been blinded that they are not able to see the reality of what they are doing. Paul uses the imagery of a veil covering their hearts and minds that they are not able to see. Therefore we are called to pray that the scales of the eyes of their hearts and minds will fall off and they would be able to discern right from wrong and turn to the good news of the gospel.

Paul then goes on say that what he preaches is not about themselves but about Jesus Christ as Lord and he and the apostles where their servants for Jesus sake. Paul reminds them that God had called them as light shining in the darkness. He now says that this light of the knowledge of God's glory is displayed in the face of Christ. In other words, Paul is saying that in the new covenant the Holy Spirit of God had come to reside in the heart of every believer and makes known God's glory in and through our lives.

In the light of God's glory which was revealed at the time of Moses, and in the light of God's glory revealed in and through the humanity of Jesus, the glory that was seen in all its splendour in the transfiguration continues to challenge each one of us today. As the followers of Christ we are called to reflect the glory of God in all that we say, do or think. This glory can only be revealed in us through the power of the Holy Spirit. May we in this Lenten season take time to make sure that the veils are removed and the scales are dropped off from our hearts and mind so that we may receive the gospel and reflect the glory of God in our lives.

**Shalom**  
**Paul Swarup**

3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2013