3 explanations about love that demonstrate the superiority of love

ii. The reason in the form of a contrast—vv.9-10

iii. The analogy that illustrates the contrast—v.11

iv. The reason for the analogy—v.12

2. Even though the triad of foundational elements of the Christian life continue on, love will solely be everlasting—v.13

3 explanations about love that demonstrate the superiority of love

Regarding 1 Cor. 13:12, Bruce Compton noted that:

Further support for this interpretation is found in Numbers 12:6–8. There God declares, "If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision. I speak with him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses…. With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly and not in riddles, and he sees the form of the Lord." From this passage, it is apparent that speaking with Moses "mouth to mouth" is metaphoric language and refers to God's speaking with Moses directly rather than through dreams and visions…Rather, the contrast in Numbers 12:6–8 is between the opaque and somewhat enigmatic revelation God gave to the prophets through visions and dreams and the full and direct revelation God gave to Moses.

This appears to be similar to the contrast Paul develops in his opening analogy in 1 Corinthians 13:12. Paul describes the church's perception of God's revelation based on the revelatory gifts with seeing something "in a mirror dimly," that is, seeing something indistinctly or unclearly. In contrast, when God's revelation for the church is fully disclosed, it will be like seeing someone "face to face," that is, clearly and distinctly. The word "dimly" Paul uses in this verse is the same word the LXX uses to translate the expression "dark sayings" in Numbers 12:8 to refer to God's giving revelation to the prophets in dreams and visions, not directly as with Moses. Thus, consistent with Paul's metaphor in the first part of the comparison about his seeing "in a mirror dimly," his counterstatement about seeing something "face to face" is also metaphoric. The phrase simply means to perceive God's revelation for the church clearly and completely.[1]

[1] R. Bruce Compton, "First Corinthians 13 And The Cessation Of Miraculous Gifts: A Critique Of Thomas Schreiner's 'Spiritual Gifts: What They Are And Why They Matter,'" *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 25, no. 1 (2020): 39.