

# WHEN THE GLORY COMES

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September 7, 2008

What a moment was this: After King David had taken Jebus and made it Jerusalem, the capital of Judah and Israel, his one desire was to build a Temple there to the Great God of Israel, who had brought Israel through the wilderness and into this 'land flowing with milk and honey.' This God, Yahweh, was their Father, and Israel was His son. The Temple, in David's heart, would house the Ark of the Covenant and the 10 Commandments in one place, the Kodesh Kodashim, the Holy of Holies. David's was the dream, but the Lord would not let David build His temple. Instead, He chose Solomon. Before the Glory comes, Solomon stands at the head of the worshippers, then, after the music ceases, and before Solomon can pray, before the priests can offer their sacrifices, God's Glory enters the Temple. "Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God." The Glory that led Israel, the Cloud of Glory, the Shekinah Glory, the Cloud that received Jesus into glory, astounds them all and enters His earthly house, His temple, and so Awesome and Holy is this event that the priests cannot fulfill their services, and the people leave the temple. God had told Israel that if they were an obedient people, He would dwell with them, but if they were rebellious and sinful, He would withdraw His Glory. What a joy it was to the worshippers when the Glory, so long absent, came!

The *Expositor's Bible* tells us of this Glory: **14** The cloud, which was in fact "the glory of the LORD," had first guided the people of Israel out of Egypt ([Exod 13:21-22](#)) and then through the wilderness ([40:36-38](#)); and it is associated with the angel of God ([14:19](#); [23:20-23](#)), presumably the preincarnate presence of Christ (Payne, *Theology*, pp. 46-47, [168](#)). At the dedication of the Mosaic tabernacle, almost five hundred years before Solomon, the cloud of God's glory had filled that earlier sanctuary ([40:34-35](#)). In the days just before the Exile, Ezekiel had envisioned the sin of Israel as driving the glory cloud out of the sanctuary ([Ezek 10:18-19](#); [11](#)); and it had not returned to the second temple, of Ezra's day. Intertestamental Judaism still speculated about the "shekinah," as it came to be called, meaning God's "dwelling." It appeared during Christ's first coming ([Matt 17:5](#); [Acts 1:9](#)), and it will accompany his glorious second advent ([Acts 1:11](#); [Rev 1:7](#); [14:14](#); cf. R.E. Hough, *The Ministry of the Glory Cloud*).

## I. THE GLORY RETURNED BECAUSE THEY WERE READY TO WORSHIP THE LORD.

2 for all the priests *that were* present were sanctified, *and* did not *then* wait by course...

**A. THE PRIESTS WERE PRESENT.** #During a morning worship service, Ellen noticed a nice looking man sitting by himself on the back pew. As a single woman she had a vested interest in meeting him. She approached him with an extended hand and said, "Hi. I'm Ellen." He took one look at her and bolted out the door without saying a word. The following Sunday he returned to church and made this apology: "My name is Bob Price, and I owe you an apology for my rude behavior last Sunday. You see, my deceased wife's name was Ellen, and I had been praying, 'Dear God, please send me another Ellen.' When you approached me and said, 'Hi. I'm Ellen,' I lost it." Bob and

Ellen have now been married twelve years and are both very thankful for the way God answered Bob's prayer.

\* Houston Post, Jan. 2, 1995, p. C-4

I suppose that these priests didn't dare to cross the King, for Solomon, like his father David, knew well how to use power when he had to.

The Bible tells us that we should be Present in God's House on the Lord's day. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together on the first day of the week..." said the Apostle Paul. The Jews were commanded to remember the Sabbath Day and to keep it holy; we are commanded to keep the Resurrection Day Holy, but attending a service of worship. When you are not present, God looks down and counts you absent. Most of all, He feels sorry for you that you have missed the blessing of worship, that you have put yourself before His Glory, that you have put the lusts of the flesh before the fruits of the Spirit, that you have substituted the perishing for the eternal. "Live near to God, and so all things will appear to you little in comparison with eternal realities." —Robert Murray McCheyne

"Let temporal things serve thy use, but the eternal be the object of thy desire. —Thomas à Kempis." Someone once said, "We must not sacrifice the eternal on the altar of the temporal." Be Present in your place in Church. God counts you as an invited guest—invited by the King of Heaven Himself, and He is a much greater than Solomon in all his glory."

### **B.THE PRIESTS WERE DRESSED IN FINE LINEN.**

This obviously meant they were dressed to display righteousness. The fine linen emphasizes their cleanliness. Since we believe in the priesthood of all believers, we all need to come to Church with our robes washed in the blood of the Lamb. He also makes us clean.

#There was a butcher who ran a little shop on the edge of London. He decided one Sunday that he would go into town and hear the great preacher, Charles Spurgeon. His wife chose not to go with him. So the butcher went to town, went to church, and returned home. That afternoon his wife began to question him about the service. "What songs did they sing?" He said, "I do not remember." "Well, what was his text?" Again he said, "I do not remember." Somewhat exasperated, his wife wanted to know: "What good did it do for you to go to church this morning?" The butcher was quiet for a moment. And then he said, "What good? I will tell you what good. You know those scales out in the shop that really weigh just 14 ounces to the pound? Well, before we open for business in the morning, I am going to correct those scales to where they weight a full 16 ounces to the pound."

### **C.THE PRIESTS WERE SANCTIFIED.**

One of the most prominent messages of the prophets was of the sinfulness of the priests and false prophets. Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others chided them for their sinfulness, excoriated them for their deceptiveness, and condemned them for sinful

lifestyles. Jesus called such men 'blind leaders of the blind' and 'hypocrites.' And John the Baptist called them snakes and vipers. John Milton the poet called such leaders "blind mouths" to show that they were both blinded and gluttonous.

When we come to Church having prepared ourselves spiritually, having confessed our sins to God, having promised God to put those sins between himself and the blood of Jesus Christ, then the Glory will return and Fill our temple too.

3A Connecticut farmer came to a well-known clergyman, saying that the people in his neighborhood had built a new meeting-house, and that they wanted this clergyman to come and dedicate it. The clergyman, accustomed to participate in dedicatory services where different clergymen took different parts of the service, inquired:

"What part do you want me to take in the dedication?"

The farmer, thinking that this question applied to the part of the building to be included in the dedication, replied:

"Why, the whole thing! Take it all in, from underpinning to steeple."

That man wanted the building to be wholly sanctified as a temple of God, and that all at once. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16).

## **II. THE GLORY RETURNED BECAUSE THEY WERE INVOLVED IN WORSHIP.**

**A. THEY USED THEIR TALENTS IN WORSHIP.** I am concerned that many of you have talents that you are not using for your Lord in worship. Do you sing? Then sing for Him! Can you preach? Then preach for Him! Can you teach? Then teach for Him! Can you play cymbals, or harps, or lyres? Play them for the Lord! Can you play the trumpet? Trumpet for the Lord! Can you play other instruments? Play them for the Lord! I cannot read my Bible and say, as some of our friends do, that we should not use musical instruments in Church; I cannot say, as some do, that any talent is sinful; and I will not, do as some do, withhold my talents from worshipping my God. The Glory will return when you worship Him.

**B. THEY WERE THERE TO WORSHIP GOD.** Henry Ward Beecher, the famous pulpit orator, once had to be absent and his brother was invited to speak for him. The church house was crowded, but when it became evident the eloquent Henry Beecher was not going to appear, many started to leave. Beecher's brother was not disturbed. He stood up before the murmuring crowd, called for silence and said, "All who came this morning to worship Henry W. Beecher may now leave. The rest will remain and worship God." We are in Church to worship God, not to exalt man, to glorify God, not to gratify man, to serve God, not to satisfy man.

No doubt some of the priests wanted to make a great impression on the great King Solomon. But their mouths were stopped when they knelt in the presence of the Lord of Glory.

When Albert Thorwaldsen had completed his famous statue of Christ, he invited a friend to see it. The Danish sculptor had created a portrayal of Christ with his arms outstretched and his head bowed. The friend looked at the figure but said, "I can't see his

face." Thorwaldsen replied, "If you want to see the face of Christ, you must get on your knees." Only when we worship Christ as servants on bended knee can we see him clearly. The Glory will return when we worship God in Spirit and in Truth, not as a spectator, but as a participant.

### **III. THE GLORY RETURNED BECAUSE THEY WERE UNITED IN WORSHIP.**

#### **A. SPIRITUAL UNITY.**

The Bible says, (Psa 133:1 KJV) Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!(Psa 133:2 KJV) It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;(Psa 133:3 KJV) As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.(Psa 134:1 KJV) A Song of degrees. Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD.(Psa 134:2 KJV) Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.(Psa 134:3 KJV) The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Now look at the unity the first Temple Worshippers possessed. (2 Chr 5:11 KJV) And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: Did not wait by course means that they were all there without any appointed preference. The NIT says, (2 Chr 5:11 NIV) "The priests then withdrew from the Holy Place. All the priests who were there had consecrated themselves, regardless of their divisions." The priests were united in consecrating themselves to the worship of God. We know from the example of Achan, that one unconsecrated person, one sinful person, one lying man, can keep the Glory out.

Notice also that "The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the Lord." What an example of Unity—The trumpeters and singers were totally in sync, totally in tune, playing the same song and singing the same song, in unity, in harmony, with the melody of love. When we worship God in Spirit and Truth, when we humble ourselves before Him, when we call upon His Holy Name in the Unity of the Spirit, the Glory will return.

**B. THE GLORY COMES IN POWER WHEN WE PRAISE GOD IN UNITY.** The Bible says, "vs. 13, "The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, **to give praise and thanks** to the **Lord**...they raise their voices in praise to the Lord and sang:

He is good;

His love endures forever."

Billy Graham said, "The three secrets to successful ministry are: prayer, prayer, and more prayer." We could add to that, "The three secrets of successful worship in praise, praise, praise." I guess we should also add, "The other 3 secrets of successful worship is thanksgiving, thanksgiving, thanksgiving."

Look what happens: The Glory Returns to Israel, Israel is no longer Ichabod, Israel is no longer without the strong Present Help of God. The Glory has returned. But,

Oh, that breaks my heart, for I think of this church, and I pray that God's glory will return, that the Shekinah Glory of Jesus Christ will fill our sanctuary like a cloud. If we come to this house of God ready to worship, if we are all here, and all involved in worship, and if we are united in the music and the song-Jesus, crucified and Alive, and here with us, then the Glory will Return. After all, His Name is Immanuel, God with us.