

Date: June 3, 2018  
Where Is the Glory?  
1 Sam. 4

This morning we are going to study one of the times that the glory of God departed from Israel. Before I get too far into this, I want to remind you what the glory is. The word is a word that includes the meaning, "weighty." In fact, the word is kabod, and you will find that word in the name that this woman gave to her son: Ichabod.

Let me set the stage for you, if I can. First, there was a battle between the Philistines and Israel. Israel was defeated on the first day and decided that they should send for the ark of the covenant, which sat in the holy of holies in the tabernacle. Eli's sons came along with the ark; they likely were the ones who carried it. The Philistines were at first mortified, then rallied to defeat Israel yet again. They killed the sons of Eli and captured the ark. The text we read tells what happened next.

Some of the authors I studied asserted that the glory of God departed for some 20 years. Others claim that the glory of God departed for a full 100 years, until the time that Solomon built the Temple. Either way you slice that, you can see that there were periods of time that God left people to their own devices. His presence was scarcely felt. His Word was scarcely heard. His protection, His provision, and His power were seldom recognized. That's not a place you want to be. Let me take you through this concept and look for the answer to the question, where is the glory?

I. The Beauty of God's Glory

A. The glory of God is a consuming fire – Ex. 24:17

1. The Lord is a consuming fire – Dt. 4:24; He. 12:29

2. John the Baptist said the day was coming when we would be baptized in the Spirit and in fire – Mt. 3:11

B. The glory of God is a covering cloud – Ex. 40:34

1. The first time you see this is in Ex. 13
2. The glory of God was protection
3. The glory of God was for direction

C. The glory of God is a convicting presence

1. Israel was convicted – Ex. 34:29-35
2. Gideon was convicted – Ju. 6:22
3. Samson's father was convicted – Ju. 13:20-22
4. The priests were convicted – 2 Chr. 7:2
5. Peter was convicted – Lu. 5:8
6. John, the one whom Jesus loved, was convicted – Re. 1:17

D. The glory of God is a converting presence – it changes you

1. On the day of Pentecost, the glory of God came down and changed the men and women in that upper room
2. When Saul was on the road to Damascus, the glory of God shone down on him, and Saul became a changed man
3. Throughout history, we see instances of the glory of God falling on people and on churches, and even on entire nations

## II. The Battle for Glory

- A. The devil wants the glory that only belongs to God
  - 1. He craved it before creation
  - 2. He craved it when he tempted the Creator
- B. The world wants the glory that only belongs to God
  - 1. Our story is about a nation who was at war with Israel
  - 2. Please understand that these nations believed that whoever won a battle did so because their god or gods were stronger than the other nation's god or gods.
- C. Your own flesh seeks the glory that only belongs to God
  - 1. The sons of Korah rose up against Moses and demanded to be equal in leadership with him
  - 2. No flesh will ever glory in God's presence

## III. Israel's base violation of the glory of God – 4:3 – 5

- A. Israel believed that the glory of God was a thing
  - 1. For them, it was called the ark of the covenant – v3
    - a) They looked for the ark of God
    - b) They should have been looking for the God of the ark!
  - 2. For some, they think the glory is in a preacher (statements I have heard):

- a) If we can just get so-and-so in here, our church will be the best in the city
- b) If we can just get one this age, we will attract all kinds of people
- 3. Some think the glory is in a building
- 4. Some think the glory is bound up in a book (a lady told me once that she keeps her Bible in her car so that God will be with her wherever she goes)
- 5. What is the glory of God for you?
- B. Israel forgot that the ark was a throne
  - 1. When the throne became a thing, the glory departed
  - 2. When the throne was carried by two condemned thugs, the glory departed
- C. Israel bade goodbye to the glory of God – 4:21
  - 1. It happened again in the future of Israel
    - a) Ez. 8 – the glory departed from between the cherubim
    - b) Ez. 10 – the glory departed from the threshold of the temple
    - c) Ez. 11 – the glory departed from the Mt. of Olives
  - 2. The glory of God departed from that nation
    - a) The glory departed from England
    - b) The glory seems to be ready to depart from this nation
  - 3. The glory of God can depart from a church

- a) There are those who were soul-sensitive, and they became self-centered
  - b) There are those who were once concerned, but they became careless
  - c) There are those that were a convicting place who became a complacent place
4. The glory of God can depart from a family
  5. The glory of God can depart from a person

Conclusion: If God were to write over the door of your heart today, what would He write? I pray that God would not write Ichabod over the heart of a single one of us; but it has happened before. I can happen again. For 20 years, Israel lived in the misery of the absence of the glory of God. 1 Sa. 7 tells us that they lamented after the Lord. Samuel told them, if you want to see the glory again, you need to put away some things. If you want to see the glory again, you need to prepare your hearts for the Lord. If you want to see the glory again, you need to purpose to serve Him again.

Invitation: