

His Workmanship: Westside

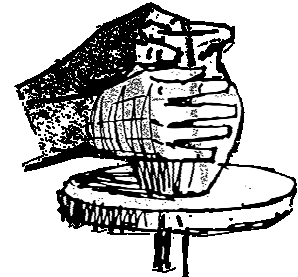
"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10

Vol. XXIII

October 12, 2014

No. 41



Isaiah 64:8

The Glory of Israel, by Jeff Strite

Where can you go to be close to God? Do you have to climb up into the heights of heaven to be near Him? Well, no. In fact, the Bible tells us we don't have to climb up to Him. God has repeatedly stepped down out of heaven to earth to be with us.

In the Old Testament God came down and dwelt in the Tabernacle. When the Tabernacle was first put together, God came down in the form a cloud "...and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle," Ex 40:34-35. Whenever the Tabernacle went, the glory of The Lord went. In fact, the glory of the Lord led the Israelites through the wilderness in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night.

Later, after the Temple was built and the ark was brought into the building, God did it again. He came down in the form a cloud and filled the Temple as He'd filled the Tabernacle centuries before: "When the priests (who'd carried the ark into the Temple) withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple," 1 Kg 8:10-11.

In both the Tabernacle and the Temple, the glory of the Lord came down and dwelt among His people. They didn't have to ascend into the heavens to be with Him; God stepped down from Glory to be with them. And that's the way it was for centuries.

But the day came when the sins of Israel became so terrible that God had had enough. God spoke to Ezekiel and said, "*The sin of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great; the land is full of bloodshed and the city is full of injustice. They say, 'The LORD has forsaken the land; the LORD does not see.'*" Ezek 9:9 (in other words: "We can do whatever evil we want. God isn't looking. He's not around. He's left town.") Since they figured He'd left town—He did. As Ezekiel watched, God's Spirit first left the temple and then the city. "*The glory of the LORD went up from within the city and stopped above the mountain east of it,*" Ezek 11:23; cf. 1:28; 3:12, 23; 10:4, 18. The glory of the Lord left the Temple and the city of Jerusalem—and never returned for the rest of the Old Testament era.

But in Luke 2, that all changed. At Jesus's birth the glory of the Lord returned to Judah. "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An

angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified," Lk 2:8-9.

A few days later, an old man named Simeon met Mary and Joseph and their baby in the Temple, and Simeon declared that this baby Jesus was to be "...a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel," Lk 2:32. God had once again stepped down out of heaven and come to Jerusalem. The glory of the Lord had returned to dwell with His people in the person of Jesus. John described it this way: "And the Word (Jesus) became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth," Jn 1:14 (ESV).

You see, Jesus was born—He had come down out of heaven—to be the consolation of Israel, to be their glory. Now, what does that mean? What does it mean that Jesus came to be "their glory"? It means Jesus came first for the Jew, and then for the Gentiles, to lift them up out of sin and to reflect His righteousness and glory. Jesus sent out His 12 apostles with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of

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**“The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.” Ps 104:3
“Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.” Psalm 138:5**

the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel,” Mt 10:5-6. Paul wrote, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile,” Rm 1:16. Jesus said that “repentance and forgiveness of sins (would) be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,” Lk 24:47. The gospel was to be preached first to the Jews. Thus, for the first three to ten years, the church was entirely made up of Jewish believers, because God wanted them (the Jews) to get first shot at the gospel.

Now, the question is, “Why?” Jesus came to die both for the Jew and the Gentile. But if that’s true, why would God put the Jews first in line for salvation? There are at least four reasons:

1. The Jews had been part of a covenant with God. God had created a contract exclusively with the nation of Israel. The Gentiles did not have that kind of contract with Him.
2. The Jews were the tribe of the Messiah. Jesus was born a Jew.
3. The Jews (and Israel) were the holders of the written Word of God. Imagine 6 plastic see-through pitchers, one of which is full of water. Hold up an empty pitcher. Imagine the empty pitcher represents that nation of Israel. Start to pour water from the full pitcher into the empty one. In this same way, God poured out His will and wisdom into Israel. Israel was responsible for collecting, guarding, and studying the word of God. Paul said, “*who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises,*” Rm 9:4. But ultimately God did not intend for the books we know of as the Old Testament to remain *only* in their hands. He planned for the day to come when the books they had so zealously guarded would

be poured out into the lives of people from the four corners of the world. Imagine pouring some of the water from the *Israel* pitcher into the remaining four pitchers, carefully leaving a portion still in the *Israel* pitcher.

4. Because Israel protected those books of the Bible, they provided Jesus with a paper trail, credentials (proof) that declared Who Jesus was to be and what He had come to do. This paper trail is very important. You see, when Jesus was born, He was born according to the Scriptures (that the Jews held and protected). He was born in Judah, in the city of Bethlehem Ephrata—just as the prophecies had said. And when He came, the prophecies that the Jews studied and closely guarded also said what this Messiah was going to do and how He was going to do it. Jesus fulfilled over 300 of these prophecies. (Some prophesied He would be “the glory of the Lord,” Is 35:2; 40:5; 58:8; 60:1; Ezek 43:5; 44:4; Hab 2:14. He fills Christians [God’s temple] just as God filled the tabernacle/temple in the Old Testament.) Now, compare that to a couple of other religious leaders.

- Buddha was born about 500 years before Christ. People thought Buddha was a powerful teacher. And when he died they built a religion around his teachings—Buddhism. But nobody ever said that somebody like Buddha would be born, or where he’d be born, or what he’d say, or do, or teach. Buddha simply popped up in history and his teaching began a world religion.

- Mohammed was born about 500 years after Jesus. People thought Mohammed was a powerful teacher. And a great world religion (Islam) has grown out of his writings and teachings. But nobody ever said that somebody like Mohammed would be born, or where he’d be born, or what he’d

say, or do, or teach. Mohammed simply popped up in history and his teaching began a world religion.

But when Jesus born, He didn’t just pop up in history. He didn’t just come up with a few great teachings. Jesus came in fulfillment of prophecies the Jews had guarded for centuries. Israel had been set aside by God to provide a special service to God—and to all mankind. And God was returning the favor.

But the Jews did not have a lock on God’s salvation. They were not the only ones Jesus came to save. The Gentiles had always been part of the plan of God. But the Jews were beloved (and are still beloved) by God because of the part they played in His salvation plan.

In the early church, there was a conflict between Jewish and Gentile believers. Some Jews tended to look down on the Gentiles because they weren’t Jews, and Paul spent several chapters in Romans explaining why this was not acceptable. The Gentiles weren’t fond of the Jews, either. Paul also told the Gentiles: “*You will say then, ‘Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.’ Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in His kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. And if they (the Jews) do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these (Jews), the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!” Rm 11:19-24.* continued on p. 3



Psalm 133:1

Let your faith be seen in 2014
“I rejoice to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.”
—Colossians 2:5

Glory of Israel, from p. 2

So the Jews were never saved because they were Jews, and they will never be saved because they are Jews. They will be saved in the same way non-Jews will be saved:

1. by belief in Jesus Christ
2. by repenting of their sins
3. by making Jesus the Lord and Master of their lives (confessing Him as Lord)
4. by being buried in the waters of baptism
5. by living for Jesus and in Jesus the rest of their lives.

Now, this is where it gets interesting. Moses and Israel came to the base of Mt. Sinai where God was going to give His ten commandments. *“The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the LORD called to Moses from within the cloud.”* Ex 24:16. Then Moses went up on the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments. What happened to Moses’s face when he spent time with the “glory of the LORD”? His face shone. It was radiant. *“When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him... (So) Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the LORD,”* Ex 34:29-30, 35.

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Discipleship Here At Home

4th Quarter Sunday Afternoon Schedule

10/12 – Fruit of the Spirit, Westin Cox, Tim Huelsman; 5 pm meet at Reingrovers’
 10/19 – Lessons from the Life of Christ
 10/26 – Questions answered*
 11/2 - Singing
 11/9 – Living Like Christ class
 11/16 - Living Like Christ class
 11/23 - Questions answered*
 11/30 - Singing
 12/7 - Living Like Christ class
 12/14 - Living Like Christ class
 12/21 - Questions answered*
 12/28 - Singing

* Please submit any questions you have about scripture, religion, or any other spiritual matters to DeWayne Howell for discussion and answers.

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr; Pat Wilkes, Tim Huelsman—asthma
Bill Dennis—adjusting pacemaker and meds
Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease
Jonathan Hadders—rheumatoid arthritis
Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome
Hannah Huelsman—polycythemia, thickening of blood; and acid reflux
Kirk Johnson—MS
Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak; **Virginia**, macular degeneration; high BP
Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes
Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; arthritis
Judy and Mike Strand—hepatitis trtment
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness
Rejoice Sandra Hampton, daughter of the Reameses, has returned to the Lord, and she needs prayer for her strength and her family’s protection
Elaine Isbell— has returned to Christ, confesses sin; asks prayers for strength; role model for children and grandchildren; courage in new, dangerous job (truck driver, hazardous material); return to good health
Liz Kosik’s blood tests were good

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Samantha Harrod—very contagious strep virus
Baby Emma Sangellino—rash over entire body
Hannah Huelsman—heart murmur, chest pain, reflux
Mike Strand—stage 3 cancer diagnosed Fri
Christine Adams—recovering from ankle surgery with 14 pins & plate; homebound 5 weeks see **Judy Sartin** to co-ordinate meals; cards to 10050 W. 8th Place, Lakewood, 80215; email tinaadams48@gmail.com; 720-984-8323
Virginia Menard—new ankle injury; knee pain
Eric Perry—intensive dental work for awhile
DeWayne Howell’s and **Michelle Mailloux’s** father, **Dick Howell**—back surgery recovery
Sylvia Chapman, Brett’s grandmother—third stage pancreatic cancer; chemo
Giles Free—seizure from fall; confined at home, no driving for a few mos; scheduled for scan
Pat Wilkes—recovering from knee surgery; pain
Ed Fink—prostate cancer; current treatment for brain tumors. Undergoing chemo this month.
Irene Robinson, Mina Gonzalez’s friend of Fulton church—husband **Clay, Sr.**, stomach cancer; son **Joe**, needs colon surgery; grandsons **Joey** and **Mike, Jr.**, legal problems; and son **Clay, Jr.**, domestic difficulties
Judy Sartin’s son, **Dave Sartin**—colitis and severe depression
Judy Sartin’s friends—**Vicky Keyes**, cancer spread after mastectomy, discouraged; **Summer Jensen**, multiple tumors, cysts on both kidneys
Brittany Tope’s grandmother—dialysis
Noah Hadders’s friend—eye surgery
Sandra Perry’s daughter’s boyfriend, **Donald Redden**—gangrene from diabetes
Sharon Rupinen, Sandra Perry’s sister—heart surgery expected
Kay Ransom’s mother, **Zona**—COPD
Andrea Arvola (in FL), **Justin Hambrick**, and **Gary Boyd**—spiritual strength
Service Opportunity Help the Reameses move Sat, 10/25, 8 am
Travel **Pat Campbell** is in AR visiting her father for 2 wks; **Larry Campbell** is in FL for work 1 wk; **DeWayne Howell** will be in FL 10/13-20 and **Ethan** 10/15-20; **Kim Howell** will be in Cincinnati 10/15-20

The Glory of Israel, from p. 3

The glory of the Lord caused Moses's face to shine with such a radiance that the people became afraid—and so he had to put a veil over his face. Paul wrote about this: "We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ... And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, Who is the Spirit," 2 Cor 3:13-14, 18.

Jesus came to be the glory of Israel. But when He died and rose from the grave, He became the glory of everyone who becomes God's children. When you and I became Christians our faces became capable of reflecting His glory. A Hindu trader in India once asked an evangelist, "What do you put on your face to make it shine?" With surprise, the man of God answered, "I don't put anything on it!" His questioner began to lose patience and said emphatically, "Yes, you do! All of you who believe in Jesus seem to have it. I've seen it in the towns of Agra and Surat, and even in the city of Bombay." Suddenly the Christian understood, and his face glowed with joy even more as he said, "Now I know what you mean, and I will tell you the secret. It's not something we put on from the outside, but something that comes from within. It's the reflection of the light of God in our hearts."

Paul tells us that we—as Christians—reflect God's glory. And the closer we get to God, the more of His glory we reflect. "And we...are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, Who is the Spirit." 2 Cor 3:18. We reflect His likeness in ever-increasing glory. The KJV says, we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." It's like climbing a staircase. We all start out on the ground floor. It doesn't matter who you are, who you know, what you own, or how influential you are. We all start on the same level. But the more time we spend with God, the further up the staircase we climb. The further up the staircase we go, the more we begin to reflect the glory of God.

But it would be a mistake to believe that God's main focus is to affect how we look. That's a by-product of the real focus of God's presence in our lives. Jesus becomes our light—He becomes our glory—so that we can reflect His light and glory in what we do. Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven," Mt 5:16. Every time you or I do good deeds in the name of Jesus we glorify Him. But we must remember: those good deeds don't save us. Only Jesus's blood can do that.

- We don't have to climb a mountain to get close to God.
 - We don't have to orbit the earth or take a spaceship to the stars.
- We don't have to climb up to God. God stepped down to us. He came so that we could share in His light and glory. But until you belong to Jesus you can't have that. That is why we teach the gospel of Jesus at every service and invite people to respond to His invitation to belong to Him, to put Him on in baptism, to be His child.



meets at
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Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

• **adult Bible class**, *Portraits of Discipleship*, Lesson 2, "An Athlete: The Disciple's Commitment," Kenny Boyd

• **Sermon**, "The Day of the Lord," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

• **Sermon**, "The Fruit of the Spirit Is... Self-Control," Westin Cox, Tim Huelsman

Wednesday night: Studies from **Ezekiel**.

Get materials for both Sunday and Wednesday adult classes from website under "Member Files."