

## STBC IMPACT Bible Study:

### “I’D RATHER BE ZERUBBABEL’S TEMPLE THAN SOLOMON’S TEMPLE”

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, Dr. Chris Williamson

**OPENING THOUGHTS:** What does Solomon’s temple, Zerubbabel’s temple, Herod’s temple, the upper room, and Azusa Street have in common? The **glory of the LORD** visited each place. Have you ever considered that oftentimes, **God’s glory** tends to rest stronger and greater on people and places we least expect? Therefore, it would be wise to not be the kind of people who overlook the overlooked because God dwells in them and with them.

**QUESTION:** Why was Jesus largely “overlooked” when He came to earth? (**John 1:12, 14**)

We know God is **spirit** (**John 4:24**), which means He’s **invisible** (**Hebrews 11:27**). He dwells in **unapproachable light** (**I Timothy 6:16**) because He is **light** (**I John 1:5**). God is described as a **consuming fire** (**Hebrews 12:29**). He is also called “**the God of glory**” (**Psalms 29:3**). The NT word “**glory**” (Gr. “doxa”), when spoken of God, means to be **heavy** or **weighty**.

And when it comes to God’s awesomeness and weightiness, His glory is often manifested by **light, lightning, wind, smoke, or fire**. This is called the **Shekinah glory of God**, which is a visible manifestation of the invisible God. When God’s presence manifests amongst believers (**Psalms 22:3**), God’s power, miracles, wisdom, joy, and peace show up with Him.

**QUESTION:** What do you recall about Moses meeting God at the burning bush (**Ex. 3:1 – 6**)?

**QUESTION:** What should this story teach us about the glory of God?

**QUESTION:** What did David and Stephen say about God’s glory? (**2 Chron. 2:6; Acts 7:8**)

#### 1) THE 1<sup>st</sup> TEMPLE: SOLOMON’S TEMPLE

**2 Chronicles 7:1 – 3**, *When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD’s house. <sup>3</sup>When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying: “For He is good, for His mercy endures forever.”*

The temple was destroyed in 586 BC, and many of the Jews were deported to Babylon. After 70 years of being in captivity, God allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem:

- Under **Zerubbabel** the governor in 538 – 516 BC to Restore the Temple
- Under **Ezra** the priest in 458 – 456 BC to Revive the People
- Under **Nehemiah** the governor in 444 BC to Rebuild the Wall

## **2) THE 2<sup>nd</sup> TEMPLE: ZERUBBABEL'S TEMPLE**

**Ezra 3:10 – 13**, *When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. <sup>11</sup> And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord: "For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel." Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. <sup>12</sup> But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, **wept with a loud voice** when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. **Yet many shouted aloud for joy**, <sup>13</sup> so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off.*

**QUESTION:** If you were there, how would you have responded to seeing this temple?

**Haggai 2:1 – 9**, *In the seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying: <sup>2</sup> "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: <sup>3</sup> 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, **is this not in your eyes as nothing?** <sup>4</sup> Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the Lord; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the Lord, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the Lord of hosts. <sup>5</sup> 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!' <sup>6</sup> "For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; <sup>7</sup> and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and **I will fill this temple with glory**,' says the Lord of hosts. <sup>8</sup> 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the Lord of hosts. <sup>9</sup> **'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And in this place, I will give peace,'** says the Lord of hosts."*

**CLOSING THOUGHTS:** A "greater glory" of God oftentimes rests on people and places we least expect. Although it was outwardly less impressive than Solomon's temple, God said a **greater glory** would abide with Zerubbabel's temple. If experiencing God involves doing so with overlooked people in underwhelming locations, we should be quick to show up.

### **GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1) Knowing that God has no problem pouring out His glory on the poor, the overlooked, the sinful, and the disenfranchised, how should this knowledge affect you?
- 2) Have you ever experienced the glory of God's presence in an unimpressive, destitute, and unexpected place? If yes, explain.