Message uploaded

 **The glory of the Lord filled his temple.**

**1 Kings 8:1-21**

**Key Verse 8:11
“And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple.”**

Today’s passage reveals when the ark of the Lord was placed in the right place, the temple was filled with the glory of the Lord. The same thing happened about 1,000 years ago at the time of Moses. When Moses completed the Lord’s tabernacle on the mount of Sinai the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. The glory of the Lord revealed in the cloud was upon the tabernacle during 40 years of the Israelites’ desert life. Then it disappeared.

Now about 1000 years later in today’s passage, the Lord revealed his glory through the cloud again when Solomon built the temple for the Lord. So today we would like to know what brought back such glory of the Lord again, and how we can experience of the Lord’s glory in our lives.

My message has two parts.
**Part I. The priests brought the ark of the Lord’s covenant to its place (v.1-13)
Part II. The Lord has kept the promise he made (v.14-21)**

**Part I. The ark of the Lord’s covenant (v.1-13)**

Look at verses 1-13.
**Verses 1-5
“Then King Solomon summoned into his presence at Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite families, to bring up the ark of the Lord’s covenant from Zion, the City of David. 2All the Israelites came together to King Solomon at the time of the festival in the month of Ethanim, the seventh month.
3When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark, 4and they brought up the ark of the Lord and the tent of meeting and all the sacred furnishings in it. The priests and Levites carried them up, 5and King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted.**

In order to bring the ark of the Lord, king Solomon summoned all the leaders of Israel. **the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite families.** The distance to move the ark of the Lord’s covenant was not long. It was moving from the city of David, Zion, to the inside of the temple. Verse 2 shows King Solomon chose the seventh month to bring the ark of the Lord to the temple he built.

The festival in today’s passage probably refers to the festival of the Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot (or Feast of Booths). It is a week-long festival. It is to remember the Lord’s provision and grace of 40 years during the time of Israelites’ wandering in the wilderness living in booths.

If we understand that Solomon finished the temple in the eighth month, we can see that he could have waited almost one year to bring the ark of the Lord’s covenant in the seventh month. Probably he wanted to do so when the most people gathered in Jerusalem. He thought the bringing the ark of the Lord’s covenant should be done with the participation of as many as people if not all.

**When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark, 4and they brought up the ark of the Lord and the tent of meeting and all the sacred furnishings in it. The priests and Levites carried them up, 5and King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted.**

When the priests and Levites took the ark without repeating David’s mistake, they also brought the tent of meeting and all the sacred furnishings in it. And king Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel sacrificed so many sheep and cattle that they could not record or count. How many were there? We don’t know. But we can guess. **1 Kings 8:63 reads, “Solomon offered a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to the Lord: twenty-two thousand cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep and goats. So the king and all the Israelites dedicated the temple of the Lord.”**

The sacrifice recorded in 1 Kings 8:63 are 22,000 cattle, and 120,000 sheep and goats. The sacrifice is for dedication of the temple. According the Chronicles, they spent one week to dedicate the altar. But the sacrifice of today’s passage was even greater. They could record 22,00 cattle and 120,000 sheep and goats. But the sacrifice they brought in today’s passage was so great that they could not record or count. It was sacrifice before they put the ark in the Most Holy Place.

When we look at how many animals were sacrificed, we can imagine the blood was flowing like a river on the temple mount.

 **Verses 6-8
“6The priests then brought the ark of the Lord’s covenant to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim. 7The cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and overshadowed the ark and its carrying poles. 8These poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are still there today.**

The place of the ark of the Lord’s covenant is a specific place. It is described as “**in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim. 7The cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and overshadowed the ark and its carrying poles.”**

Verse 8 says “**8These poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are still there today.”**

What is the meaning of the long pole which can be seen from the Holy Place? Probably it is the visible sign that the Lord is there in the Most Holy Place.

The expression, “and they are still there today” shows today’s passage was written before the destruction of Solomon’s temple.

Verse 9-11 reads, “**9There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the Lord made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.” 10When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the Lord. 11And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple.”**

The two stone tablets were in the ark. They were given when the Lord made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt. When Moses built the tabernacles in Exodus, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

**Exodus 40:33-35**

**33Then Moses set up the courtyard around the tabernacle and altar and put up the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. And so Moses finished the work.34Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. 35Moses could not enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.**

Now in today’s passage, the ark has the same tablets stones which Moses received from the Lord about 1,000 years ago. There were 10 commandments written on them.

The ark is called as the ark of the Lord’s covenant. So the essence of the ark is the covenant. It was the covenant where the Lord made with the Israelites at Sinai after they came out of Egypt.

Moses’ tabernacle was not as luxurious as that of Solomon. But still the Lord’s glory filled the tabernacle. So what is the reason that the Lord’s presence was there, filling the temple with his glory in today’s message?

The real reason is “covenant”. How did the Lord make the covenant with the Israelites?

**Exodus 24:4-8**

**4Moses then wrote down everything the Lord had said. He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. 5Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the Lord. 6Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he splashed against the altar. 7Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, “We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey.” 8Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, “This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.”**

So the covenant was based on the blood. But it was also “in accordance with all these words.” So the covenant was the covenant of the blood and the words of God which included the ten commandments.

There would be no covenant with the Lord without the blood because without shedding blood there would be no forgiveness. So animals shed their blood in order to atone their sins. The Israelites would die if they disobey the words of the Lord. But as we know no one was able to obey all the words of the Lord completely. That was why the animals’ blood was shed day after day, year after year.

Now the old covenant based on animals’ blood was replaced by the blood of Jesus for us.

**Luke 22:19-20**

**19And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”**

**20In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.**

Jesus said, his blood is the new covenant and it is poured out for believers. The “cup” was the cup of suffering and death.

Now all believers in Jesus Christ live under the new covenant in his blood. They are forgiven of their sins completely. As forgiven children of God they are to obey the word of the Lord. God’s forgiveness in Christ should encourage them to keep the words of God all the more. They are obeying the words of God as the expression of their great thanks for God’s forgiveness and salvation.

**1 Peter 2:24**

 **“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”**

Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds we have been healed.

Because of the new covenant in Jesus’ blood all of our sins have been forgiven. We can live a new life by dying to our sins and living for righteousness. Through Jesus’ blood we can experience the Lord’s healing from our sickness.

So the glory of the Lord in today’s passage was shown because of the covenant.

Now let us think about how we can experience the glory of God. How can we experience the glory of God even to the full? How can we be filled with the glory of God? As I prayed I believe this is what God showed to me.

**Romans 8:17 “Now if we are children, then we re heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”**

According to Romans 8:17 we can share the glory of God by sharing in the sufferings of Christ.

I believe I misunderstood the meaning of the word “glory”. I thought the word ‘glory’ means ‘no suffering’. The glory of God means there is no suffering involved. God is exalted and honored and praised all the more. That is true. But the Lord God we know, who is Jesus Christ, is not free from sufferings even now.

Not only he is the crucified Lord at his life time, he is still suffering with his people who are suffering. Can any of you claim that you are not suffering? No one can do so.

When apostle Paul persecuted early Christians, the Lord Christ appeared to him and said, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Paul said, “Who are you Lord?” The Lord answered, “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.” (Acts 9:4-5) Paul was persecuting early Christians, but the Lord Jesus was saying Paul was persecuting him. The Lord identified himself with suffering Christians.

The same truth applies here today. Does any of us suffer? Does anyone of us troubles from physical illness, addictions, financial matters, relationship issues, job matters, children, school studies, friends, parents and siblings? The Lord Jesus Christ identifies himself with you, sharing all your sufferings. The Lord Jesus is invisible. But bible shows the Lord Jesus Christ identifies himself with you and suffer together with you. He is praying for you. People may forget to pray for you because of busy schedule. But the Lord will never fail to pray for you.

Why does he do so for us? It is because of the covenant in his blood. He gave his body and blood for us. Now we are united with him. So whatever we suffer he suffers together with us. That is why we can come to his mercy seat everyday bringing all our supplications and prayer topics and ask his help.

Since we are united with Christ through his body and blood, the way for us to experience his glory or even to be filled with his glory is to suffer for him. It is to participate in his sufferings. That is the way for us to participate in his glory. We participate in Christ’s suffering by participating in the sufferings of our brothers and sisters. For example, we bear each other’s weaknesses in love. Bearing others’ weaknesses comes with suffering. But that is how Christ is doing among us, and that is how we can participate in his sufferings. When we do, we can participate in his glory.

I wanted to be filled with the glory of God. It means I should be filled with the sufferings of Christ. This is what I learned.

Solomon explained in verses 12 and 13 in order to help his people not to be surprised, saying, “**“The Lord has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; 13I have indeed built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever.”**

What Solomon was saying is that the dark cloud is the Lord’s presence. Now it is the visible sign that the Lord began to dwell in the temple.

**Part II. The Lord has kept the promise he made (v.14-21)**

Look at verses 14-21.

**Verses 14-15a
“14While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned around and blessed them. 15Then he said:
“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who with his own hand has fulfilled what he promised with his own mouth to my father David.**

**Verses 15b-18
“For he said, 16‘Since the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built so that my Name might be there, but I have chosen David to rule my people Israel.’** **17“My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. 18But the Lord said to my father David, ‘You did well to have it in your heart to build a temple for my Name.**

**Verses 19-21 19Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.’**

Verses 17-19
“17“My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. 18But the Lord said to my father David, ‘You did well to have it in your heart to build a temple for my Name. 19Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.’

**20“The Lord has kept the promise he made: I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the Lord promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. 21I have provided a place there for the ark, in which is the covenant of the Lord that he made with our ancestors when he brought them out of Egypt.”**

Basically in this part, Solomon said the temple was built according to God’s promise given to his father David.

In conclusion, we learned that the glory of the Lord filled the temple of Solomon because of the covenant. It was based on animal’s blood in accordance with all of God’s words. In Christ, we have new covenant in his blood. Now we all want to experience of the glory of God in our lives. How can we do? It is by participating in the sufferings of Christ because we are united with Christ based the covenant in his blood. As we participate in the sufferings of Christ we will participate in his glory. For example, we can participate in the sufferings of Christ by bearing one another’s weaknesses. It comes with sufferings, but that is God’s way for us to be filled with the glory of God.

One word: The glory of the Lord filled his temple.