MT. ROSE REFORMED
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Glory in the Church

Reverend Scott Johnson | October 25, 2026 | Exodus 40

Old Testament Reading

Our Old Testament reading in our sermon text this morning is Exodus chapter 40. This is God's infallible and inerrant word, Exodus 40, starting at verse one.

The Lord spoke to Moses saying, on the first day of the first month, you shall erect the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and you shall put in it the ark of the testimony, and you shall screen the ark with the veil, And you shall bring in the table and arrange it. And you shall bring in the lampstand and set up its lamps. And you shall put the golden altar, for instance, before the Ark of the Testimony and set up the screen for the door of the tabernacle. You shall set the altar of burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting and place the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it. And you shall set up the court all around and hang up the screen for the gate of the court.

Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it and consecrate it and all of its furniture so that it may become holy. You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils and consecrate the altar so that the altar may become most holy. You shall also anoint the basin and its stand and consecrate it.

Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall wash them with water and put on Aaron the holy garments. And you shall anoint him and consecrate him that he may serve me as priest. You shall bring his sons also and put coats on them and anoint them as you anointed their father that they may serve me as priests. And their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations.

This Moses did, according to all that the Lord commanded him, so he did. In the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected. Moses erected the tabernacle. He laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars, and he spread the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent over it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. He took the testimony and put it into the ark and put the poles on the ark and set the mercy seat above on the ark. And he brought the ark into the tabernacle and set up the veil of the screen and screened the ark of the testimony as the Lord had commanded Moses.

He put the table in the tent of meeting on the north side of the tabernacle outside the veil and arranged the bread on it before the Lord as the Lord had commanded Moses. He put the lampstand in the tent of meeting opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle, and set up the lamps before the Lord as the Lord had commanded Moses. He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the veil, and burned fragrant incense on it as the Lord had commanded Moses. He put in place the screen for the door of the tabernacle, and he set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering as the Lord had commanded Moses. He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing, with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. When they went into the tent of meeting and when they approached the altar, they washed as the Lord commanded Moses. And he erected the court around the tabernacle and the altar and set up the screen of the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

New Testament Reading

And now let's turn to John 1 for our New Testament reading. John 1, verses 14 through 18. John 1, 14 through 18.

And the word 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. John bore witness about him and cried out, this was he of whom I said, he who comes after me ranks before me because he was before me. For from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

The End of the Book of Exodus

You may turn back to Exodus chapter 40.

And today, as you can tell, we've come to the end of the book of Exodus. After about a year and a half of going through this book of the Bible, we have finally come to the last passage, the last chapter. And as we look back and think about what we have seen in Exodus, we can think of the fact that a lot has happened to the people of Israel since the beginning of the book of Exodus.

At the start of the book, the Israelites, they were an enslaved people. They were helplessly trapped in the iron grip of a cruel pharaoh, who not only afflicted them with punishing labor, but also oppressed them, even to the extent that he ordered all of the baby boys of the Israelites to be murdered. But the people of Israel, they cried out to the Lord for help. And the Lord was merciful. He heard their pleas. He heard their cries. He remembered the covenant that he had made with their fathers, the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And for the sake of his promises, the Lord rescued the Israelites from their bondage to Egypt. And he rescued them in a most spectacular fashion by bringing upon the Egyptians all kinds of signs and wonders, the 10 plagues, by the parting of the Red Sea, the destruction of Pharaoh's army, and all of that.

And the Lord not only rescued his people, but he came down and he met with his people, he was present with his people at Mount Sinai, and he confirmed his covenant with them. He confirmed that he would be their God and they would be his people. And the Lord promised the Israelites that he would lead them into the promised land that is the land of Canaan, the land of promise, the land flowing with milk and honey. And until that day that he brought them into that promised land, he promised that he would provide for them in the wilderness, And so he brought

manna down from heaven to feed them day by day. He caused water to gush out of the rock in order to give the Israelites the water they needed.

And the Lord also gave to his people his laws that they might obey him as their God. And so with these laws, the people of Israel received the will of God and how they were to serve him, how they were to worship him, how they were to live as a holy people, a holy nation belonging to the Lord.

God's Purpose to Dwell Among His People

But perhaps most importantly of all, The Lord promised that in the tabernacle he would dwell among his people. And so the people of Israel received the promise from the Lord that he would be with them. He would be in their midst. He would dwell among them. In fact, according to one verse in Exodus, this was the whole reason for what God had, this was the whole reason why God had delivered his people from Egypt, so that he might be with them. Exodus 29, 46 says, the Lord says, and they shall know that I am the Lord, their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them. He brought them out of Egypt that He might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God, He says.

And so, as we look back, as we reflect on all that we have seen from the book of Exodus, we can see how the story of Exodus is really the story of God's goodness, His grace, His mercy towards His people. How many different ways did the Lord demonstrate and show Himself to be a God who loved His people, who cared for them, who provided for them?

Israel's Sin and God's Restoration

But the story of Exodus is also about the sin and the failure of the Israelites to respond in thankfulness and obedience to what God had done for them. If you remember, the Israelites complained in the wilderness. They complained about the lack of food and water, although the Lord always provided for them. They whined about how they wanted to go back to Egypt. The food was so much better there. Their lives were so much better there, they thought. They grumbled against Moses, the leader whom God had appointed to bring them out from Egypt. And in fact, at one time, their rebellion was so great that they wanted to stone Moses to death.

Worst of all, the Israelites at one point, they repudiated the covenant that God had made with them entirely. And they did this when they fashioned and worshiped the golden calf whom they worshiped when Moses was on top of the mountain. And so much of the story of Exodus is the story of the faithlessness, the rebellion, the unbelief of the Israelites despite all that God had done for them.

Thankfully, though, the book of Exodus ends on a positive note. It ends on a high note. And that is, after God mercifully restored His covenant with the Israelites, the people finally responded with faith and obedience. As we saw last week, they gave themselves entirely to providing all of the materials that were needed for building the tabernacle. In fact, at some point, Moses had to tell the people, stop, stop giving, you're giving too much. And not only that, but they devoted themselves to the construction of the tabernacle.

And what makes it even more true that the book of Exodus ends on a high note is that once the tabernacle is completed, God comes down from heaven and he is present among them in this cloud of glory. The glory of God fills the tabernacle, and so God is with his people. And so Exodus ends on a very positive note with this final passage. And as we take one final look at Exodus this morning, we'll focus on these two things in this passage. The faithfulness of the Israelites, at least in this passage, and also the presence of God among them, and we'll see how these things apply to us as the people of God today.

The Faithfulness of the Israelites

So our first lesson that we'll consider is the faithfulness of the Israelites. Again, as we have gone through our study of the book of Exodus, we've seen how over and over again, the people of Israel did not respond in faithfulness to the goodness of God. They were often ungrateful, they grumbled, they complained against God, even though he had blessed them in innumerable ways. And at the heart of their faithlessness, at the heart of their sinful, rebellious response against the Lord was unbelief. The people of Israel did not have a heart that entrusted themselves to the Lord. They did not believe his word. They did not believe his promises.

The unbelief of the Israelites in the wilderness was so great that in the New Testament, it becomes a paradigm, an example that we are to avoid as the people of God today. And so the author of Hebrews, as he is writing with the experience of the Israelites in mind, he tells his readers, and God tells us through Hebrews, in Hebrews 3.12, take care, brothers, lest there be

in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. In other words, don't be like those Israelites in the wilderness. Don't be unbelieving, but be believing. Trust in the Lord, trust in His promises.

Constructing and Erecting the Tabernacle

And the unbelief, the disobedience of the Israelites would continue throughout their time in the wilderness. However, Here, in the final chapter, at the end of the book, we do get a glimpse of what should have been, had the Israelites truly believed the Lord and did as he commanded. Here is a picture of what faithfulness to the Lord looks like.

Now, as you can see, today we skipped over some chapters. We skipped over the rest of chapter 36. We skipped over all of chapters 37 through 39. And the reason why we skipped over those chapters is not because I'm ready to be done with Exodus and to move on, but the reason we skipped over those chapters is because they essentially repeated all of the details about the tabernacle that we have already considered in some detail several months ago earlier in the book of Exodus.

The difference between those earlier chapters that dealt with the tabernacle and the chapters that we skipped over that deal with the tabernacle is this. Those earlier chapters tell us exactly how the tabernacle was to be constructed. We heard the words of the Lord to Moses as he was on top of Mount Sinai. He received the exact instructions on how he was to build the tabernacle. And we considered all those instructions, but the chapters that we skipped over, they tell us how the tabernacle was actually built, and it was exactly according to how the Lord commanded it, according to the pattern that the Lord had shown Moses.

And so, the work of the Israelites in actually constructing the tabernacle, it's summed up for us. If you look at chapter 39, chapter 39, verses 42 and 43, let me read those verses to you. According to all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so the people of Israel had done all the work. And Moses saw all the work and behold, they had done it. As the Lord had commanded, so had they done it. Then Moses blessed them.

And so they finished the tabernacle, they did it exactly as they were commanded, and the Lord, or Moses, the Lord through Moses, blessed them. And because the people were faithful to provide the necessary materials, and because they constructed the tabernacle and they built all

of its individual parts, when we get to chapter 40, The tabernacle is ready to be assembled. All of its various components have been built and constructed, the priest's garments and all of that. Now it's ready to be put together.

And that is what chapter 40 is all about, how Moses oversaw the assembling of the tabernacle. And so if you look at chapter 40, verses one and two, we read this, the Lord spoke to Moses saying, on the first day of the first month, you shall erect the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. And notice the date there, on the first day of the first month, that is significant. The first month of the year was the month in which the Lord brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. And so the Lord then, In his sovereign arranging of all things, he orders it that almost exactly one year after the exodus from Egypt, the people of Israel will erect this tabernacle and worship the Lord with it.

And in verses three through 15, God tells Moses exactly how he is to do that, which we heard. And then verses 16 through 33, we read how Moses obediently did all that God commanded in setting up the tabernacle. And even though the passage tells us that Moses did this, Moses did that, Moses completed that, it wasn't that Moses himself personally was doing all of this. He was overseeing the work, but it's just a manner of speaking. And so the Israelites under Moses's direction built and erected and assembled this tabernacle into its final set-up form. And so, one year after the Israelites were rescued from Egypt, the tabernacle is ready. God's very own tent that He will dwell in is prepared, and He is ready to meet with His people in the wilderness.

God's Grace and Our Response

So, on the one hand, we would attribute everything that we read in chapter 40 to the grace of God. It was by the sheer grace of God that the Israelites had the heart to faithfully contribute everything to the tabernacle, to build everything for the tabernacle as the Lord commanded it. And so the faithfulness then of the people of Israel is a result of God's grace. But we do want to notice that they were faithful. The Israelites did what the Lord commanded. In verse 43 of chapter 39, which I read just a minute ago, we read words that we don't often read in the Old Testament. As the Lord had commanded, so had they done it. We don't often read that as a characterization of what the people of Israel have done, but here it is. As the Lord had commanded, so the people did it.

And so God was merciful and gracious to his people to bring them to this place. As we saw in earlier weeks, the Lord was gracious. He restored his covenant with them. And because of the grace of God, the Israelites responded, at least here, they responded in faith and obedience, and they did just as the Lord had commanded them.

And here's the lesson for you and me to take from this. As a Christian, know that this God, this God who was so merciful and so gracious to the Israelites who dealt with them out of his faithfulness, out of his steadfast love for his people, this God who forgave their sin, know that this God is your God. As a believer in Jesus Christ, this God is your Father in heaven who loves you, who is merciful and gracious, and kind towards you. Because just like the Israelites, you and I are often guilty of not doing what the Lord commands. You and I often transgress God's commandments. We are often ungrateful, we complain, we grumble. We do not do what God has told us to do. And often we act out of a heart of unbelief rather than out of a heart of faith.

But as a believer in Jesus Christ, God gives us, you and me, the assurance that because we belong to Christ, God is at heart towards us, merciful, forgiving, kind, and gracious. He is ready to forgive. God is always ready to forgive His people. And when, by His grace, He repents and seeks His forgiveness, He does forgive you. He forgives you. He is abundantly gracious to you.

Consider the grace that God gave to the people of Israel. They acted in unbelief. They even rejected His covenant. They repudiated their status as the people of God, and yet He restored them to Himself. He was merciful, and He is merciful to you and me as well. And it's because of His mercy, because of His grace towards us that we, out of gratitude, out of thankfulness, that we can serve Him. We can render to Him true obedience as God enables us by His grace to do so.

And consider how many times and how grievously the Israelites failed and yet God was gracious. And the same is true for you and me. It doesn't matter how many times you have failed. It doesn't matter how grievous your sin and your failure has been. When you truly repent and seek the grace of God, He will restore you. He will forgive you. He will fill your heart again with that joy of His salvation, with the peace of knowing Him as your God, the peace of conscience, knowledge that you are forgiven, God will bless you with that as you come to Him in humility and repentance and faith.

So God is gracious, He is merciful, and we see that as we come to the end of Exodus. He shows us His grace as He was gracious to the people of Israel. They responded in faithfulness, but really that was a testimony of God's grace.

The Presence of God Among His People

The second way that Exodus ends on a high note is this, God's presence with his people. Just after Moses finished assembling the tabernacle, just after he offered all of the required sacrifices, this is what we read in verse 34. Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Now, this is the reason why God commanded the Israelites to build this tabernacle in the first place, that he might be present there, that he would dwell among his people. If you remember in the tabernacle, there was the innermost sanctuary, the most holy place. And in that most holy place was the Ark of the Covenant that was overlaid with gold. And on top of the Ark of the Covenant was the mercy seat or the lid that rested on top of the Ark. And on top of the mercy seat were two cherubim that were made entirely of pure gold. And the Lord promised that above the cherubim, above the Ark, in the most holy place, His presence would be there. He would dwell among His people.

And here, the presence of Almighty God was manifested to the people of Israel in the form of a cloud, this glory cloud that filled the tabernacle. We've already seen this cloud as we've gone through Exodus. It's the same cloud that led the people of Israel in the wilderness. At night, its appearance was a pillar of fire. And here, too, we are told that the cloud of glory would lead the people in the wilderness. When it was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would follow the Lord in His leading. As long as it remained encamped over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would remain encamped there, whether it was for a day or for a week or for months. The people of Israel would be led only as the Lord would guide them with this glory cloud.

Moses doesn't give us a detailed description of what this cloud looked like, but it's safe to say that it radiated the glory of God, that it was God's own divine splendor and glory and effulgence that radiated or beamed from this glory cloud. And what it signified was not only the divine majesty and the splendor and the glory of God, but it also signified the reality that this God was with his people.

Communion Restored in the Wilderness

And this is the reality, this is the truth that is at the heart of God's covenant with his people. At the very heart of God's covenant with his people is this promise. I will be your God, and you shall be my people. I will be your God, and you will be my people. And what that promise implies is a genuine communion and fellowship between God and His people.

So God's covenant promise is really the promise of restoring that original communion, that original fellowship that we had as human beings with God before Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. And so now here with the sacred tabernacle, the Lord has restored that communion between himself and man. Think about the people of Israel, where they are at this point. They're living in a desert. Who wants to live in a desert? We might even say that this was a God-forsaken place that the Lord had led them into. But as long as God was with them, it was not God-forsaken. As long as the Lord was with his people, the desert became a new Eden, a new garden, the place where the Creator and His image bearers whom He created to have fellowship with Him, where they could enjoy that communion with one another.

This is why it's so significant that the Lord, He made His presence known among His people by commanding them to build Him a tabernacle, a tent. It was to demonstrate the reality that the Lord fully identified with his people, Israel, just as they were living in tents in the wilderness. So the Lord had his own tent. He had his own tent among all of the other tents of the Israelites in the camp of the people of Israel. And so he would be with them. He would be one of them as long as he was present there with them. He became a tent dweller just like they were.

The Need for a Greater Mediator

As wonderful as that was, we need to observe a couple of things about this presence of God with his people. First of all, he can only be present with them, he can only bless them with his presence as long as there was a mediator between God and the people. We saw this truth earlier as we looked at the priesthood. Although God dwelt in his tabernacle in the midst of his people, the common Israelite could not just walk into the tabernacle and come into the presence of God to pray to him or to worship him. That was forbidden because it was a holy place. But God gave the Israelites a representative, a priest, a priest who would bear the names of the tribes of Israel when he would go into the most holy place to worship the Lord. And so, The people of Israel needed a mediator. And the primary mediator, at least this time in the history of

Israel, was Moses himself. It was Moses who spoke the words of God to the Israelites. It was Moses who prayed to the Lord on behalf of the Israelites. But the point is that unlike Adam and Eve, who enjoyed immediate access to God, who enjoyed unmediated fellowship with the Lord, the people of Israel could not come into his presence apart from a mediator.

And the second thing to note here is that Moses, though he was the mediator between God and the Israelites, even he could not enter the tabernacle when the glory cloud filled it. Look at verse 35. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Now we read this and we say, wait a minute. Wasn't this the Moses who stood on the holy ground in front of the burning bush as the Lord spoke to him from that bush? Wasn't this the Moses who went up to Mount Sinai and entered into the cloud and the presence of God to receive from the Lord, from his very mouth, the law of God? Wasn't this the Moses with whom the Lord used to speak face to face as a man speaks to his friend? Wasn't this the Moses who would go into the presence of God and when he came out, his face would radiate with the glory of God? But not even Moses was able to enter into this tent, this tabernacle when the glory cloud filled it?

Well, what does that mean? Well, it means that even though God was truly and really present with his people, still there was a distance that even Moses could not bridge. There was still a distance between the Lord and his people that even the great Moses was not able to bring together. And it means that for there to be a complete and perfect and whole restoration of fellowship and communion between an almighty God and a sinful people, there must be a greater mediator than Moses. Because as great as Moses was, he too was a man who came from Adam. He was guilty of sin. He was born a sinner, and therefore he could not enter the tabernacle when it was filled with the glory of God, not even Moses.

But this shows us that it was God's purpose and God's plan all along to raise up for his people a greater mediator, one who was not only man, but one who also shared in the infinite holiness of God so that he could bring men into God's presence, who could do that which Moses could not do, to bring us to God completely, entirely holy. And of course, that greater mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ. And as the incarnate Son of God, as God the Son, God himself who became man, Jesus both shares in the holiness of God and in our humanity. And so he can enter the presence of God where Moses could not because he himself is God. And because he is man,

he can bring us into the presence of God in a way that Moses could not. And because he is both God and man, Jesus can bring a holy God and a sinful people together in communion, in blessed and perfect communion in a way that Moses could never do.

Jesus: The True Tabernacle and Fullness of Grace

I've pointed out this before, and I know that many of you already know this, but it bears repeating. In the New Testament passage that we heard from the Gospel of John, in John chapter one, verse 14, when it says, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us, the Greek word there that is translated dwelt, it's a word that literally means in Greek to pitch a tent. Or we could say, if we could use it as a verb, to tabernacle. And so we could say, the word became flesh and tabernacled among us.

And John uses that word there to show us that in Jesus Christ, we now enjoy the fullness of that reality that the Israelites could only enjoy in parts. The Lord was with them, and yet there was still a separation. Not even Moses could enter that tent, but now, in Jesus Christ, God has set up the greater tabernacle, the new tabernacle. In the incarnation, in the person of Christ, God has become man. Therefore, by faith in Christ, because he is both God and man, you can come into the very presence of God. You can do what the Israelites could not do in the wilderness. You can come into that most holy place, the inner sanctuary, by faith in Jesus Christ, covered with his righteousness. And in him, you have that direct access to the Lord. You have that communion and fellowship with him, which is eternal life itself.

And Jesus brings us into that blessed communion with God, not only because of who He is as God and man, but because of what He has done when He came into the world. He came to take away our sin, to remove that guilt from us, to take away that sin and impurity that keeps us from the presence of Almighty God. When scripture speaks about the incarnation of Jesus, it not only tells us that the Son of God came into the world as man, But it also says that Jesus came into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh. And so just as the Lord here in Exodus fully identified with His people in that He came and He dwelt among them in a tent, just like the Israelites were living in tents, so the Son of God, when He came into our world, He fully identified with us. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh.

Of course, Jesus was personally without sin. He was holy. He was without any trace of sin. Nevertheless, He came into the world just like one of us. And when he suffered upon the cross,

when he bore the judgment of God, the wrath of God against sin, it was as though Jesus was suffering for the sin that was personally his. But it wasn't his, it was yours, it was mine. But he suffered for it as though it were his. So he is completely satisfied God's righteous judgment against us for our sin. And so we died that curse of death that we deserve so that we might have the life, the righteousness, the sonship that belongs to Christ. But now he gives to you and me.

And so if your trust is in Jesus Christ, the son of God, then your sins are forgiven, because Jesus bore them for you as he hung upon the cross. And in Jesus Christ as one who belongs to him by faith, you have the unspeakably glorious blessing of being able now to enjoy that true communion, that fellowship, that relationship with the God who created you, the God who knew you from before the foundation of the world, the God who gives you life, the God in whom there is eternal blessedness and joy and that he gives to you through his son. And so again, As we reflect upon Exodus and the people under the old covenant, we see how much better we have it than they did because of Jesus. God dwelt among them, and it would have been a glorious thing to see this glory cloud over the tabernacle, and yet we have it so much better than that because we can come into the presence of God through faith in Jesus Christ. We're not kept apart from that most holy place, but we can come into God's very presence and know that he receives us for the sake of Christ, his Son. And so this presence of God with the Israelites is the second way in which the Exodus, or the book of Exodus, ends on a high note. It points us to this glorious reality of God's presence with us in his Son, Jesus.

The Glory of God in the Church

And before we leave off with Exodus, so, before we I'll leave off with this passage. I want to draw one more lesson from it. And that is this, that in Jesus Christ, we have the glory of God in the church. God's glory was with the Israelites. We have God's glory in the church in Christ.

Think about the people of Israel. As we think about what we've learned from Exodus, If you took away everything that God did for his people, there wouldn't be much left for the people of Israel to be proud about or to boast about. They certainly weren't a powerful people. They had no national glory to speak of. They were miserable slaves under Pharaoh. At this point in history, they weren't a cultural force in the world. About all you can say about the Israelites at this time, apart from God, about the only thing you can say about the Israelites is this. They made some mighty fine bricks. There was no nation that made bricks as well as the Israelites. They can

make bricks with straw. They can make bricks without straw. Now, no offense to brickmakers, but that is not a lot to glory in as a nation or as a people.

but the Lord was their glory, and that was everything. They were a weak people, they were an oppressed people, but because they had the cloud of the glory of Almighty God dwelling among them in their midst, there was no nation on earth that had such glory as the people of Israel.

And for the church today, Jesus Christ is our glory. And just like the Israelites then, we too, apart from God and His grace, we have very, very little to be proud about, to boast about, to glory in. In fact, the scriptures make it a point of telling us that in ourselves we have very little to be proud of. What Paul said to the Corinthians has always been true of the body of Christ. He says in 1 Corinthians 1 26 and 27, for consider your calling brothers, not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth, but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.

And so the next time you may be tempted to glory in your accomplishments or in your success or your wisdom or your knowledge. Remember this verse in 1 Corinthians. God chose you for salvation because as a rule he chooses that which is foolish and weak according to the standards of the world. The very fact that you belong to Christ is an indication that most likely you don't have much glory in terms of what the world considers glorious.

And so as a church, our glory is not in our wealth. Our glory is not in our resources. Our glory is not in how influential we are in society. Our glory is not how powerful we may be in politics. Our glory is not in our human wisdom, but our glory is that in Jesus Christ, God dwells among us, that God is with us, that we are his people. He is our God. That is our glory.

And so our task as the church is not to try to impress the world with our wealth. Our task as the church is not to try to win the world over with our great influence and power or wisdom and intelligence. Let the world glory in all of these things. Our task as the church is to testify to a perishing world of the wonderful good news that with Jesus Christ, there is the forgiveness of sins and eternal life and true communion with God, our creator. So our glory is in Jesus Christ and our message to the world is his gospel of salvation. That is our glory. That is what God wants us as the church to do in this world, to bear witness to the truth that there is redemption, hope and salvation in Jesus Christ. And we are his redeemed people. And that is the glory that God has given to us.

Our Personal Dreams of Glory

But let's make this more personal. What are your dreams of glory? Do you desire to be famous? Do you want to be an influencer? Do you want to earn the admiration of others? Do you want to gain a reputation of how competent, how good, how successful you are? Do you want to be known as a super dad or a super mom? Do you want to gain power and influence through wealth, success in your career? What are your dreams of glory? Where is your true glory?

It is the same glory that the Israelites had in the wilderness. The Lord was their glory. He was their life, their security, their hope, their joy. And Jesus Christ has all of these things for you and so much more. And so you don't need to seek your significance, your worth, your value in the things that make you look better in comparison to others and the things in which you can glory before men. but your significance, your value is this, that you have Jesus Christ, that you have been loved by God, that you have been set apart to belong to him, that he is your Lord, he is your God, and you are his child, that God is your Father in heaven. There is no greater glory than that.

2 Corinthians 10, 17 says this, and we'll end with this. Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.

Let's pray.