

The Cloud of Glory Has Moved

I recently did a study on the cloud that led Israel through  the wilderness and settled over the Tent of Meeting (see Ex. 37). The cloud of glory appears as a visible evidence or sense of the Presence of God, His radiant and sometimes visible goodness. We feel it. Sometimes we see it.

It's the tangible sense of His love and peace. It's the heat or feeling of electricity flowing through you when someone prays for you and you know you're being touched. At our church and others it's also been audible angel song, feathers that fall from the air or angelic instruments we sometimes hear.

According to Exodus 37, when the visible cloud descended at the tent of meeting, the people came out of their tents to see and experience the Presence of God.

Prophetic Word, Part I: *When the cloud of the Lord's Presence descends, those who love Him must come to the doors of their tents and bow down in order to be present for the manifestation.*

The cloud of His Presence has appeared in recent years in places and gatherings where God has been welcome and free to be Himself. Whenever the cloud appears, you must put behind you whatever is going on inside your tent, your home, your family or your life. The Presence is more important than any trouble or problem residing within your tent. Jesus made this clear when He said, "Seek first the kingdom of God" and all these other things will be taken care of (Matt. 6:33).

Exodus 13:21-22 reads: "The Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people."

Notice the quality of motion inherent in the Presence and glory of God: The cloud was sent “that they [the Israelites] might travel.” This held true throughout the 40 years they were wandering in the wilderness. God in His goodness takes us to a destination—but we won’t arrive at our promised land if we fail to move when the cloud moves.

Prophetic Word, Part II: *The cloud has moved.*

I’ve been around charismatic renewal 51 years—since I was 7 years old—and have seen all the movements and their emphases come and go. For more than 40 years the emphasis in renewal circles has fallen primarily on personal blessing, personal healing and being filled with the Spirit. Now the cloud of glory has moved from renewal, physical healing, inner healing and a focus on self not into revival, but into something much more than that.

It’s not that God will stop doing all these things to help and heal the individual, but the cloud has moved and the emphasis has shifted onto the kingdom of God. By that I mean the focus is now on the will of God done on earth in signs and wonders to win lost souls. In this paradigm, we live beyond ourselves for a purpose greater than ourselves in order to affect and change the world around us by ministering the powers of heaven come to earth.

Previously we’ve been about receiving, being healed and being blessed. These things will continue, but the order of the day is now the kingdom of God.

We may want to camp out on some past experience, but it’s time to move, pack up our things and our households, and put all the issues of life—blessings, problems, loves, hates, fears, joys, hurts—behind us so that we can make the move. The emphasis has shifted. We’d like to remain where once the cloud rested, but the season has ended. As a result some of us cry out, “Take me back to Egypt. I was comfortable there,” or we

wonder what happened to the last move of God that so blew us away.

The cloud has moved.

The cloud takes us to unfamiliar places that we're not prepared to face unless we've determined to come out to the door of our tents with our backs to the problems to focus on the glory and then pack everything up to move with God. We must either trust Him or go back to slavery.

Motion and change for the Israelites meant that the glory cloud led them out of Egypt—a place where they understood the way of life, every meal was certain and they knew where they would sleep at night. It was a familiar but comfortable misery. God took them out of slavery directly into a place of exposure, danger and risk where they could survive and win only if they trusted God. Unless the Lord provided, they couldn't even feed themselves.

God moved Israel from a comfortable slavery in Egypt into an uncomfortable freedom. In a similar way, God constantly moves us out of our comfort zones and out of spiritual slumber in order to keep us awake and alive—to do us good. If we don't grow, we die. There's a destiny for us to step into that will overshadow all other issues in life.

Revival ends when God moves and His people don't follow because they've camped out on what He used to be doing—or because they've surrendered it but they don't see or accept what He is doing now. As a result they resist the shift and miss the glory.

We have entered into a strategic time when we must move beyond the focus on personal healing and restoration—which has been the emphasis for most of my life—to a focus on the kingdom of God. The cloud of glory has moved into the age of the kingdom of God, an age in which we must cross boundaries and minister the power of the kingdom of God to a world that doesn't know

Him. If you don't pack up everything and move with it, you will stink up your house and die.

Destiny is at our doorstep.

About the author: R. Loren Sandford is the founder and senior pastor of New Song Fellowship in Denver, Colorado (). He is also the author of several books, including *Understanding Prophetic People*, *The Prophetic Church* and his latest, *Renewal for the Wounded Warrior* (all published by Chosen).