

1 Kings 8:9-18

This haftarah for **Deuteronomy 10-11** is chosen because Moses tells the story of the giving of the tablets of the law and placing them in the ark, as well as the separation of the Levites to carry the ark. This passage locates those tablets in the ark as it is carried into the new Temple in Jerusalem built by Solomon.

The bowl of manna and Aaron's rod were placed "before the ark" or in the "side of the ark" and not inside of it.

Since we're reading this in the season of Hanukkah, compare the two events - the dedication of the Temple of Solomon and the rededication by Judas Maccabeus.

1 Kings 8:9 - "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt."

1 Kings 8:10-11 - "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD."

The Shechinah Glory evidenced by "the cloud" was the visible symbol of the divine presence

More detail of this scene is given in **2 Chronicles 5:11-**

"And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:) It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD."

The Shechinah of the Divine Presence, at once cloud and fire — which had been the sign of the presence of God on Sinai (**Exodus 24:15-18**), and had hallowed the consecration of the Tabernacle (**Exodus 40:34-35**) ,

The Pillar of Cloud and Fire also was darkness and confusion to the Egyptians but light to Israel:

Exodus 14:20 - "And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so

that the one came not near the other all the night."

The Pillar of Cloud and Fire Rested on The Tabernacle

Exodus 40:33-38 -

"And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys."

The glory (light) was shrouded or clothed in darkness (the cloud).

1 Kings 8:12 - "Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness."

The Targum has: "the Lord is pleased to cause his Shechinah or divine Majesty to dwell in Jerusalem"

When the Temple is destroyed and Israel taken into captivity, Ezekiel sees a vision of the Shechinah leaving the Temple, to the Mount of Olives and then presumably back to heaven. This is also the path of Jesus at his Ascension from the Mount of Olives (**Acts 1:9-11**):

Ezekiel 11:23 - "And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city."

Rashi - That is the Mount of Olives, which is east of the city, and this is the third stage [of the Shechinah's departure].

God had warned Israel in **Deuteronomy 31:17-18** - "Then My anger shall be aroused against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?'"

God also warned in **Hosea 9:12** - "Woe to them when I depart from them!"

The return of the Shechinah to the restored Temple is solemnly promised by Haggai (**Haggai 2:7**; **Haggai 2:9**) in distinct reference to the coming of the Messiah.

God promises a similar blessing in the days of Messiah for believers:

Isaiah 4:4-6 -

When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for "upon all the glory shall be a defense" (i.e. a wedding canopy - *chuppah* - will accompany the Lord's presence). And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

The "Latter House"

Haggai, speaking after the exile about the building of Zerubbabel's Temple, launches into a prophesy about the coming of the Messiah:

Haggai 2:7 - "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts."

Haggai 2:9 - "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts."

Why? The "latter house" is not the second Temple but the very body of Jesus Himself. The more mystical rabbis interpreted **Exodus 15:17** - "You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of Your inheritance, in the Dwelling Place that You alone made, O Lord, the Holy Temple that Your hands have established" - as meaning the verse in Haggai referred not to a building made by men, but one created by God in heaven and brought down to earth.

Concerning this, it says (**Psalms 127:1**), "If the Lord does not build the House, its builders work in vain"

The Zohar : Even the future city of Jerusalem will not be the work of human hands, all the more so then the Temple, God's habitation.

Haggai 2:18-19 - "Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation (chief cornerstone) of the LORD'S temple was laid, consider it. Is the seed (*zeroah*) yet in the barn (womb, or possibly stable)? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth (a term also for a child being born, see *Matthew 1:21*): from this day will I bless you (of Him a season to bless God)."

Hanukkah

"the four and twentieth day of the ninth month"

The date of Chislel 24-25 is important. It is the date of Haggai's prophesy (and the

laying of the foundation of the second Temple). It is the date (25 Chislev) when Antiochus desecrated that Temple, and later when Judas Maccabeus rededicated it. Antiochus chose the date to sacrifice on the Temple altar because it was considered to be the birthday of Zeus by his mother-goddess Rhea, and the also winter solstice. (Later, Constantine arbitrarily set the celebration of Jesus' birth on that date, to try to co-opt the pagan holiday).

The vessels, tapestries, wall sections and other components of the Tabernacle were completed on the 25th of Chislev (see Tur Orach Chaim 684), but its assembly was delayed until the first of Nisan. Thus the Torah reading for every day of Hanukkah are the offerings of the princes in Numbers 7.

Exodus 39:32-33 - "Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished: and the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they. And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses..."

According to the Midrash: Hashem told Moshe to wait with the dedication until the auspicious day of Rosh Chodesh Nisan because in the month of Nissan our forefather Yitzchak was born. The simchah — joy — would be enhanced with the mixing of the two joyous occasions (the erection of the Mishkan and commemoration of Yitzchak's birth). Hashem also said that "In Nisan when I informed Avraham through my angels about the birth of Yitzchak they said in My behalf 'I shall return to you' (Bereishit 18:10, Rashi). Thus, I will return — i.e. rest My Glory among Klal Yisrael, i.e., in the Mishkan — in the month of Nisan when Yitzchak was born." The 25th of Kislev felt somewhat slighted. As an appeasement, the rededication of the second Beit Hamikdash, in the days of the Hasmoneans, took place on the 25th of Kislev — Chanukah.

Therefore, the [sages] modeled Hanukkah after the dedication of the Mishkan, which had seven days of inauguration, followed on the eighth by the service commencing under the administration of Aaron and his sons, as the Torah explains.

Within the word Hanukkah itself there is a hint implying the connection with the 25th (of Kislev): חנר"כ"ה - "they dedicated it- on the 25th." (Ran)

Scholars now calculate that Jesus was probably conceived around this time (and then born near Rosh Hashanna).

If conception began on the eve of Dec. 24th (Kislev 25th) in the idea Jewish year, and went forward 271 days, one would end up on the first day of Tishri or Rosh HaShanah. I found that date even more interesting because it is also the traditional birthday of Adam, the first Man. Jesus is called the "last Adam" (1 **Corinthians 15:45**)

His conception was announced by the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:26-38), perhaps by the light of Mary's own Hanukkah lamp. No clouds of glory or singing here, only the appearance of the angel Gabriel. But later in the act of conception, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee" - a personal-sized experience of what happened at Solomon's Temple - God takes up

residence.

At Jesus' birth, the heavens seemed to re-enact the original dedication of the Temple, with angels singing - like the Levite choirs. And the Shechinah Glory makes an appearance:

Luke 2:9, 12-13 - "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. ... And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'"

The Shechinah departed with Jesus at His ascension:

Acts 1:9 - "he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight"

Two angels appeared and told them, "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (**Acts 1:11**).

The Shechinah at Pentecost

The Shechinah then comes back to mark the outpouring of the Holy Spirit sent to reside with believers, at Pentecost:

Acts 2:1-4 - "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Finally, the prophets of the Messiah returning "with clouds" setting foot on the Mount of Olives first - i.e. the Shechinah glory returns in the same way it departed, and Jesus returns the same way He departed.

Zechariah 14:4-5 - "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. ... Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with Him"

Mark 13:26 - "Then the Son of Man will be seen coming in the clouds with great power and glory"

Revelation 1:7 - "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him..."

Matthew 26:64 - "Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, iHereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in

the clouds of heaven."