

1 Kings 8:1-11 and 2 Chronicles 7:1-22

The Dedication of Solomon's Temple

1 Kings 8:1 - "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion."

We are studying this passage just after having celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. This dedication took place at this exact time of year, and the seven days of celebration were combined or blended with the first seven days of Tabernacles.

So, adding to all the symbolism we discussed regarding Tabernacles, we can add the symbolism of this ceremony - the placing of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies, the fire descending and consuming the sacrifices, the glory or Shekinah of the Lord filling the Temple.

The Placing of the Ark

1 Kings 8:6-7 - "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above."

"oracle" = *debir*, from a root meaning to speak. The "oracle of the house" was the Holy of Holies, the inner chamber where God would dwell and would "speak" to Israel.

Since we are the temple of God as believers, Peter says we should speak as the oracles of God. In other words, to be mindful that we carry the holy presence of God within us as we prophecy, preach, exhort or comfort one another.

- **1 Peter 4:11** - "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Solomon had built two large cherubim and placed them in the Holy of Holies to overshadow the whole Ark with their wings. These were in addition to the two smaller gold cherubim already attached to the Ark's mercy seat.

1 Kings 8:8 - "And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day."

Drawing out the staves was a significant act - the Ark was no longer going anywhere.

Since the Ark had finally reached its resting place, the staves used to carry it were partially pulled out of the rings, because they would ideally never be needed again. Instead, the rabbis said the staves served to guide the High Priest when he entered the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur once a year to sprinkle the blood toward the mercy seat. When the curtain was drawn back to allow his entrance, the ends of the staves could be seen from the Holy Place but not from outside.

We need to see that the presence of God is resting within us permanently.

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."

The golden pot that had the manna (**Exodus 16:33**), and Aaron's rod that budded (**Numbers 17:6-11**) were missing. Possibly they were lost when the Philistines captured the Ark (**1 Samuel 4-7**).

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."

Why couldn't they stand? Because of the holiness of God. The priests immediately recognized their own sinfulness. They "could not stand..."

Like John did at the appearance of the Lord in **Revelation 1:17** - "...when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead."

This seems to parallel events in Exodus:

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."

When Israel turned away from God to idols, the Shekinah left:

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."

The return of the Shekinah to the restored Temple is solemnly promised by Haggai (**Haggai 2:7; Haggai 2:9**) in distinct reference to the coming of the Messiah, linked to the Feast of Tabernacles:

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. “

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 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.

The Shekinah Glory

God was settling into His earthly dwelling place among his people Israel. It was not only the culmination of the promise that God had made to Israel through Moses, but a picture of how He comes to dwell in believers personally - the Ark containing the Law is now written on our hearts, and we are consumed as living sacrifices by the Shekinah glory of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Shekinah means "resting place" or "presence" and came to be applied to God's visible presence in the Tabernacle and Temple. In this chapter it is manifested as a bright cloud.

- This is the cloud that stood by Israel in the wilderness (**Exodus 13:21-22**).
- This is the cloud of glory that God spoke to Israel from (**Exodus 16:10**).
- This is the cloud from which God met with Moses and others (**Exodus 19:9, 24:15-18, Numbers 11:25, 12:5, 16:42**).
- This is the cloud that stood by the door of the Tabernacle (**Exodus 33:9-10**).
- This is the cloud from which God appeared to the High Priest in the Holy Place inside the veil (**Leviticus 16:2**).
- This is the cloud of Ezekiel’s vision, filling the temple of God with the brightness of His glory (**Ezekiel 10:4**).
- This is the cloud of glory that overshadowed Mary when she conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit (**Luke 1:35**).
- This is the cloud present at the transfiguration of Jesus (**Luke 9:34-35**).
- This is the cloud of glory that received Jesus into heaven at His ascension (**Acts 1:9**).
- This is the cloud that will display the glory of Jesus Christ when He returns in triumph to this earth (**Luke 21:27, Revelation 1:7**).

“There is a parallel to this event in **Acts 2:1-4** in which God marks the inception of the church as the temple of the Holy Spirit by making his presence known through the

sound of a mighty rushing wind and by filling those present with the Holy Spirit.”

- Patterson, Richard D. and Austel, Hermann J. "1 & 2 Kings: The Expositor's Bible Commentary" Volume 4

See https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/1-kings/1-kings-8.cfm

Fire from Heaven

One more detail is recorded in 2 Chronicles that is not mentioned in 1 Kings:

2 Chronicles 7:1-3 - "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever."

This was always a sign of God's acceptance.

For David at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite - ! **Chronicles 21:26**

For Gideon - **Judges 6:21**

for Samson's parents - **Judges 13:19-20**

for Elijah in his contest with the priests of Baal - **1 Kings 18**

Thus, the tongues of flame that appeared over the heads of the disciples at Pentecost declared not only - as on a threshing floor - that the chaff of their old identities was being consumed, but indicated their willingness to be considered as living sacrifices, as well as God's acceptance of them.

Summary

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”
- (**1 Corinthians 3:16-17**)

When God dwells in us, we can know that we are accepted. We are the body of Christ, as well as his Bride. God looks at us and sees His Son when we get out of the way through repentance.

The Law, once contained in the Ark on tablets of stone, is now written on our hearts in the New Covenant.

- **Jeremiah 31:33-34** - "But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD. I will put My law in their minds and inscribe it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they will be My people. No longer will each man teach his neighbor or his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know

Me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquities and will remember their sins no more."

See Also **Hebrews 8:10, 10:16**

Finally, this knowledge should lead us to walk in humility and repentance, because we are aware of the constant presence and holiness of God. We will continually "reckon ourselves as dead."

The priests could "no longer stand" to minister in the presence of the Shekinah glory. Neither can we. If any ministering gets done, He must be the one who does it through us, as we fall down at His feet as dead before Him.

The two missing elements inside the Ark are present with us in the New Covenant - the manna is Jesus Himself, the "bread that comes down from heaven."

- **John 6:51-59** - "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Aaron's rod that budded is Christ's resurrection life. The seven days of the Tabernacles feast are a type of linear time in which life is shriveling up and dying like the leaves of the *sukkot* "booth." The 8th day of Tabernacles, after the booths are burned, represents the "budding" - the miracle of our transformation from death to life in Him, a transference from the Kingdom of darkness to His eternal Kingdom.

- **Colossians 1:13-14** - "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins...."