

O.T. Shadows of the Church – Tabernacle/Temple Was Filled with God’s Glory

(Exodus 40:16-35)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Today we return to our monthly study of O.T. shadows with our emphasis this final quarter being on the O.T. shadows, or types, of God’s people, the church.
 - A. In our last lesson we focused on the Tabernacle/Temple as God’s dwelling place and how these were to be built *according to God’s pattern* (Ex. 25:8-9 – “And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. ⁹ According to all that I show you, that is, the **pattern** of the **tabernacle** and the **pattern** of all its **furnishings**, just so you shall make it.”).
 - B. In relation to that we considered how the church, God’s temple today, must be built according to His pattern revealed for us in the N.T. and how serious it is that we do just that.
2. Today I would like to return to the shadow of the Tabernacle/Temple, but for a different reason.
 - A. I want to consider how when completed God filled these structures with His glory/presence.
 - B. Then, I want us to apply how God filling these structures should affect our view of God’s church and our roles as being part of the church, God’s temple and dwelling place today.

BODY:

I. Shadow: The Tabernacle and Temple

- A. The Tabernacle was a *furnished tent*, made to be mobile so the Israelites could take it with them as they made their way to the Promise Land.
 1. When it was completed God’s presence/glory filled it (Exodus 40:33-35 – “And he raised up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the screen of the court gate. **So Moses finished the work.** ³⁴ Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the **glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.** ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and **the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.**”).
 - a. God’s glory in the form of a cloud *completely engulfed* the Tabernacle!
 - b. God’s glory was so *overwhelming* that Moses was unable to enter.
 2. God’s action here was important because it assured Israel that God’s grace was upon them (Ex. 33:13-14, 17 – “Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may **find grace in Your sight.** And consider that this nation is Your people.” ¹⁴ And He said, “**My Presence will go with you,** and I will give you rest...¹⁷ So the Lord said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; **for you have found grace in My sight,** and I know you by name.”).
- B. Later, Solomon built God a temple, a more permanent place for God’s dwelling.
 1. As the last piece of furnishing, the Ark of the Covenant, was brought in, note what happened (1 Kings 8:10-11 – “And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy place, that the **cloud filled the house of the Lord,** ¹¹ so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for **the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.**”).
 - a. Again, God reassures Israel of His glory/presence/grace being with them.
 - b. God’s glory filling the temple was so overwhelming the priests could not stay there.
 2. What can we learn from this shadow and its connection to the church?

II. Shadow Vs. Substance: The Superiority of the Church

- A. **Shadow:** the O.T. house of God, was a physical building, a *place* that Israel connected with God.
 1. Israel’s worship/service, as well as God’s presence in it, was *place* oriented.
 2. When Israel entered the Land they were warned to **seek out God’s place of worship** (Deut. 12:5-7 – “But you shall seek the **place where the Lord your God chooses,** out of all your tribes, to **put His name for His dwelling place;** and **there you shall go.** ⁶ **There** you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. ⁷ And **there** you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.”).

3. Solomon's words in dedication of the **temple** echoed this same *place* characteristic (1 Kings 8:29-30 – "that Your eyes may be open toward **this temple** night and day, toward the **place** of which You said, My name shall be there,' that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes **toward this place**.³⁰ And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they **pray toward this place**. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive.").
- B. **Substance:** God's dwelling place today, the church, **is not a physical building in a specific place**, but is found in the *individual followers* of Christ.
1. Jesus addressed this on more than one occasion:
 - a. **Not a place**—woman at well (John 4:21-23 – "Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.").
 - b. **Indwelling of God**—to his disciples in connection with His departure (Jn. 14:20, 23 – "At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and **I in you**...²³ Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and **make Our home with him**.").
 2. Peter spoke of us as *living stones* used by God to build His *spiritual temple* today (1 Pet. 2:4-5 – "Coming to Him [Jesus] as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,⁵ **you** also, as **living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood**, to offer up **spiritual sacrifices acceptable** to God through Jesus Christ.").
 - a. So, wherever Christians are, there the temple of God exists, there it is being built!
 - b. Christians make up both God's spiritual house and His *holy priesthood* that serve in that house by offering up *spiritually acceptable sacrifices* to God through Jesus.
 - c. We are *God's special people*—His *exclusively*—chosen to show the world God's excellence in saving sinner from darkness and bring them into His wonderful light (1 Pet. 2:9 – "But you are a **chosen** generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **His own special people**, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light").
 3. Do not miss the *greater relationship* we have with God today as part of the church than existed for Israel of old.
 - a. No longer is there the separation seen in closed doors and walls that separated God's people from the service to Him going on inside His temple.
 - b. No longer does the fullness of God's presence drive men out of His place of dwelling, but *instead fills our lives that we might serve Him* (Eph. 3:16-19 – "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,¹⁷ that **Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith**; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that **you may be filled with all the fullness of God**.").
 4. We have moved from the *shadow* of **physical buildings/place** where God's presence was seen and worship took place, to God's **temple**, His dwelling place, being found in the *hearts* of Jesus' disciples who are *filled with God's fullness* as they all *serve as priests*.

III. How must God's glory and presence in us affect us today?

- A. **Application 1:** When I am saved and God takes possession of me as His temple, I am to be *filled with His glory/presence!*
1. Like the tabernacle/temple of old, my salvation means *God must so fill my life that nothing else can exist within that space*—nothing holds the exalted position that God holds!
 - a. Being filled with God's glory/presence means life is no longer about me/world, but about *whatever I need to change or do to provide God with a proper dwelling place*.

- b. Being filled with God's presence means my focus in life is on *accomplishing God's spiritual business* and *offering up acceptable spiritual sacrifices!*
- 2. When people interact with me, they should know by what I *say* and *do* that *God fills my life*, that I am *His holy dwelling place!*
 - a. This can't happen through some fake, manufactured behavior.
 - b. As a Christian I must seek to give my *real life* so completely to God that people cannot associate with me without seeing that God controls my life, attitudes, and behavior.
 - i. When people observe me at work, they should see that I want God to live in me.
 - ii. When I am at home among my family or friends, or involved in recreation, etc., they should not fail to see that God is in charge of my life.
 - c. When my morality is examined, all who do so, including God when I am in secret, should know that I believe my body is *God's temple*, *His holy dwelling place* (1 Cor. 6:18-20 – "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you**, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own?** ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore **glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.**").
- 3. So, if I am a Christian, the focus of my heart is to assure that God's presence in my life is evident *to all in all* that I do (Col. 3:17 – "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.>").
- B. **Application 2:** God's glory/presence must fill His Church, His body, which is also His Temple (Ephesians 2:19-22 – "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and **members of the household of God**, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ** Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ **in whom the whole building**, being fitted together, grows into a **holy temple** in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are **being built together** for a **dwelling place of God** in the Spirit.>").
 - 1. Because the church is God's temple/dwelling place today, I must value the church, my brethren, and their well-being.
 - a. Intentional care for others (Phil. 2:1-4 – "Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.>").
 - b. By attendance to encourage others (Heb. 10:24-25 – "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.>")
 - 2. That the church is God's temple today must affect my view of the local church/assemblies.
 - a. I must understand that when the church, God's people, assemble, it is not some not ordinary, mundane activity that I can take or leave. **I must be there!**
 - b. God's people *assemble before God* as His *temple* and His *priests* to offer up in His *presence* the proper spiritual sacrifices as *He has commanded*.
 - c. Your dedication, or lack thereof, to what this church does, to its efforts to teach God's word and worship *in His name*, says much to God about *how you value* His grace in bringing His temple and dwelling place among men today!
 - 3. As God's temple, we must assure that our assemblies reflect His presence (Mt. 18:20 – "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them").
 - a. I am not referring to some mystical, better felt that told approach to the assemblies.
 - b. I know that this passage may not be specifically addressing a church assembly. Yet, the context addresses the church along with the apostles' role in the church.

- c. And, it speaks of a *special sense* in which Christ is present when His people are *assembled and acting in His name*, which must affect our attitude/actions in these assemblies.
- d. We had better be sure that our thoughts/actions reflect God's presence among us.
- 4. As God's temple, we must assure our assemblies are characterized by God's truth and love.
 - a. The church, God's house, is to be the pillar and support of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15 – “but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”).
 - b. Paul emphasized the importance of *prophecy*, or *Spirit-guided* preaching of God's *truth*, in their assemblies because it would show to others God was among them (1 Cor. 14:24-25 – “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is **convinced by all**, he is **convicted by all**.²⁵ And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that **God is truly among you**.”).
 - i. Yes, prophecy was a miraculous gift we no longer have today.
 - ii. But, **preaching truth in love** is still required of His church today (Eph. 4:14-15 – “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,¹⁵ but, **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ”).
- 5. The reality of God's presence should be acknowledged in our acts of worship.
 - a. The Lord's supper must recall Christ's presence (Matt. 26:27-29 – “Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you.²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.²⁹ But I say to you, **I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day** when I drink it new **with you in My Father's kingdom**.”). We are in the kingdom today!
 - b. Our singing is to come from being **filled with God's Spirit** (Eph. 5:19-20 – “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be **filled with the Spirit**,¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”).
 - i. This, again, is not some mystical takeover of our beings by the Spirit.
 - ii. Being filled with the Spirit in our singing/worship means we are fully aware of God's presence and fully supplied and directed by His word (Col. 3:16 – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”).
 - c. These same points could be made for all our acts of worship! God's presence and the solemnness it invokes must be an integral part of our worship!
- 6. As God's temple our assemblies must provide the holy environment His presence demands.
 - a. Remember, the blemished, unclean, etc., could not enter and serve in God's temple!
 - b. We cannot be lax toward sin among the members of Gods' temple.
 - i. Corinth failed (1 Cor. 5:1-2 – “It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife!² And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.”).
 - ii. This failure would cost them their purity (1 Cor. 5:6 – “Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?”).
 - iii. Thus, all were commanded to purge this sinful person from their lives (1 Cor. 5:4-5, 7, 11 – “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,⁵ deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus...⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you

truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us...¹¹ But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.”).

- c. Yet, this is one of the most ignored and disobeyed commands within God’s church, bringing untold *defilement* to God’s temple and His dwelling place.
 - i. Whether it be the refusal to withdraw from impenitent sinners, or the refusal of the members to *personally* follow through with it and actually withdraw themselves from the sinner, both defile God’s temple with sin!
 - ii. I know we find all kinds of justification to ignore this, but it is still serious disobedience (1 Corinthians 3:16-17 – “Do you not know that you are the **temple of God** and that the **Spirit of God dwells in you?** ¹⁷ If anyone **defiles the temple** of God, God will **destroy** him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”).

CONCLUSION:

1. As God filled the tabernacle and temple when He took possession of them, so must God fill our lives His church as His temple and dwelling place today.
2. I think there is much that can be improved on among us in this area, whether it be personally or as a congregation. We need to acknowledge God’s presence in our lives and our actions here and respond and live accordingly!
3. Have you provided the proper dwelling place for God in your life and properly served Him as His priest offering holy sacrifices to him through your daily thoughts and actions?
4. Why don’t you come to God and allow Him to save you, to wash your sins away that He might take possession of you and fill your life with hope of glory in heaven?
5. Why not F-R-C-B? If you are a Christian and haven’t provided a proper home for God in your life, what not come repenting of your sin and confessing it as you seek God’s grace/forgiveness today!