

The GLORY of God and JESUS

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THE BIBLICAL TEXT -

¹⁸ "The Jews then said to Him, 'What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?' ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' ²⁰ The Jews then said, 'It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body" (John 2:18-21).

In God's Story, Jesus is the fulfillment of all preceding shadow. As it relates to the idea of God dwelling among His people for their joy it is clear Jesus identified Himself as the Temple.

"But I say to you that something greater than the temple [**hieron**] is here" (Matt. 12:6).

"And said, 'This man stated, 'I am able to destroy the temple [**naos**] of God and to rebuild it in three days'" (Matt. 26:61).

"And saying, "You who *are going to* destroy the temple [**naos**] and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matt. 27:40).

The Apostle John speaks to this idea. In John 2 we have the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11). Verse 11 tells us this was at the front end of His earthly ministry, "This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and **manifested His glory**, and His disciples believed in Him."

Verse 12 has Him celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem and clearing out the Temple. This would be different than what is experienced in Matthew 21 with Palm Sunday. What this would suggest is that this saying was common with our Lord. Notice the wording in John's Gospel.

¹⁸ "The Jews then said to Him, 'What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?' ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' ²⁰ The Jews then said, 'It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' ²¹ **But He was speaking of the temple of His body.** ²² **So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.** ²³ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. ²⁴ But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, ²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man" (John 2:18-25).

In Jesus, the glory returns to the Temple. He is the merger of those two themes. Jesus as the Temple in which the glory of God resides is the theme of the New Testament. He is the presence of God in flesh and the glory of God seen.

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt [tabernacle] among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

John would say it in the following manner in his first Letter to the churches of Asia Minor (1 John 1:1, 2).

¹“What was from the beginning, **what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands**, concerning the Word of Life— ² and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us” (1 John 1:1, 2).

John will use the same word for God dwelling [tabernacle] among His people in the Book of Revelation. “In Revelation it is used of God tabernacling with men and here of the Logos tabernacling, God's **Shekinah** glory here among us in the person of his Son.”¹¹

It is important to remember how the glory of God had departed from the Temple prior to Israel's fall and did not return to Herod's Temple in THAT form.

God literally was in the temple when Jesus was presented to Simeon when he held the eight day old child, and when twelve year old Jesus taught the Elders in Herod's Temple and when Jesus overturned the tables. The glory was literally present in human form.

God as Trinity was literally “with us” in the Garden. He occupied the Tabernacle and the Temple. Now Jesus begins to turn us back to what it was: God literally with us as He “invades” this planet with his presence at the time of His birth. He again tabernacles among us, as John says, literally, pitched His human tent in our midst, strolled among His people as He had once done in the garden. Thus, the glory of God was here once again. Here is how the Gospel of Luke captures this idea.

⁸“In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and **the glory of the Lord shone around them**; and they were terribly frightened” (Luke 2:8, 9)

¹⁰“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for behold, **I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹ for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.** ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:10-12).

¹³ And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ ‘**Glory to God in the highest**, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased” (Luke 2:13, 14).

Consider what he notes for us in Luke 2:9, “The angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them and **the glory of the Lord shone around them . . .**” The shepherds were looking for Messiah, for a sign, and recognized “the glory of the Lord shining around them” for what it was: **Shekinah**, and were terribly frightened. God would now be among men.

This same idea is present when aged Simeon came into the Temple to see the newborn Christ child.

²⁶ “And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ **And he came in the Spirit into the temple**; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, ²⁸ then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said” (Luke 2:26-28).

²⁹ “Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, according to Your word; ³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation, ³¹ which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² **A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, and the glory of Your people Israel**” (Luke 2:29-32).

We can add to this thought **His Transfiguration** in Matthew 17.

“And He was transfigured before them; and **His face shone like the sun**, and His garments became as white as light” (Matt. 17:2).

What Peter, James and John saw was the glory of the Lord. What they saw was the Shekinah glory, the presence of God in Jesus Christ. The author of Hebrews speaks to this idea of Jesus being the glory of God.

“And **He is the radiance of His glory** and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3).

Our Lord's entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday speaks to this idea of the glory returning to the Temple.

⁸ “Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. ⁹ The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David; **BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD**; Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matt. 21:8, 9)

¹⁰ “When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, ‘Who is this?’ ¹¹ And the crowds were saying, ‘This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.’ ¹² And **Jesus entered the temple** and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who were selling doves” (Matt. 21:10-12).

In Jesus Christ the glory would once more return to the Temple of God. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of ancient promises whereby God's glory would return.

In His death and resurrection and ascension into heaven we will once more witness the departure of God's glory from the Temple.

DEATH/RESURRECTION

“Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘**It is finished!**’ And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit” (John 19:30).

“He is not here, for **He has risen**, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying” (Matt. 28:6).

These events must be seen as one event. Notice the language of His ascension.

ASCENSION

⁹“And after He had said these things, **He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.** ¹⁰And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them, they also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? **This Jesus**, who has been taken up from you into heaven, **will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven**’” (Acts 1:9-11).

We are to take the ascension narrative and couple it with the **Icabod** [event]: “**The glory departing**” in 1 Samuel 4:21-22 when Eli’s daughter-in-law gave birth during Israel’s defeat at the hands of the Philistines. It can also be coupled with the glory departing the temple in Ezekiel 10:4, 18.

Acts 1:9 could almost be that event again. Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, God’s glory departing “**after He said these things He was lifted up while they were looking and was lifted out of their sight.**” He departed. **Except** that we have verse 8 before verse 9 and we know this is different: “**but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.**” This refers back to the upper room discourse where Jesus assures His disciples that the glory will not leave (John 14:16; 15:26; 16:7).

“**I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever**” (John 14:16).

“**When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father**, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me” (John 15:26).

“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; **but if I go, I will send Him to you**” (John 16:7).

This departing is not the same; He leaves us God the Holy Spirit. God is **STILL** with us to carry on. God remains now in the Church, His body. “**Don’t you know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you**” (1 Cor. 3:16, 17). Immanuel remains. God is still with us not in a general sense but in a literal, spiritual sense inside His Church, His Temple.

Jesus is the glory of God. He is the Temple of God. Inside of God's *Story* He will leave by ascension, but in His absence He leaves another, the Holy Spirit. And **the Holy Spirit is the Shekinah glory**. Fifty days after His ascension from earth into heaven, the glory of the Lord will once more occupy His Temple.

Jesus is the New and Better Temple
<http://www.councilroad.org/jesus-is-the-new-and-better-temple>

Jesus is the New and Better Temple. Next Sunday we are celebrating Palm Sunday and will study together the events surrounding the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. I've been thinking this week about His intentionality as He approached the holy city. He deliberately set his face toward Jerusalem knowing He would die there. In fact, there are hints the disciples understood the incredible danger Jesus was putting himself in as they journeyed toward Bethany near Jerusalem in the weeks leading up to crucifixion. Jesus was a marked man at this time. The religious and political leaders in power had already begun to plot how they would kill him. It was Thomas who voiced what all the disciples must have been thinking as Jesus announced they were traveling to Bethany:

So Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we might die with him." (John 11:16) And yet Jesus was not just going to Jerusalem as a stop along the way. He seems to have a specific objective that centers on the temple. His purpose there is revealed in the text we will be studying this Sunday.

When Jesus entered the temple courts, he began to drive out those who were selling. "It is written," he said to them, 'My house will be a house of prayer'; but you have made it 'a den of robbers.'" Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words. (John 19:45-48)

What are we to make of the fact that Jesus intentionally went to the temple and began stirring things up at a time when people were seeking him out to kill him? Wouldn't it have made more sense for Jesus to lay low and stay out of the way until the controversy surrounding him died down and the danger had past? Did Jesus have a death wish? Was Jesus going to Jerusalem just so He could be crucified or was there a deeper meaning to his journey there?

I think the answer is that Jesus is making the point to us that the meaning of the temple finds fulfillment in His redemptive work. Notice that Jesus moves into the temple courts and starts rearranging the furniture.

He is proclaiming His authority over the place.

Remember that He had done it once before at the beginning of His ministry in John 2. In that event He told the onlookers "Destroy this temple and in 3 days I will raise it again." (John 2:19) This statement is a direct foreshadowing of his death and resurrection and a direct correlation of that event fulfilling the meaning of temple.

The work of Jesus fulfills the temple in the following ways:

1. The temple embodies the presence of God. John 1:14 tells us that in Jesus we have "God's dwelling" among us. The literal translation of dwelling is "tabernacle". God's incarnation has

now come to us in full fruition with the coming of Jesus. As long as the tabernacle stood, it was reminder that the messiah had not yet come.

2. Through Christ and His work, a new temple is being built up in us. (1 Corinthians 3:16)

3. The temple was constructed in a way to keep people out. But now because of the work of Christ, all people are invited in, and those who call upon His name are "grafted in". (Eph 2:15,19)

4. We were once separated from God by our sin, but now in Christ the curtain has been torn in two and a new and living way has opened up to us. (Hebrews 10:19-20)

5. Jesus is the fulfillment of the vision of Ezekiel who saw a new spiritual temple out of which rivers of living water would flow. (Ezekiel 47:1; John 7:37-38)

So when we think of Jesus trip to Jerusalem and His subsequent visit to the temple in light of what we now know about His redemptive work within the context of hundreds of years of sacrifices at the temple; and we see now that all of that pointed to the day when the unblemished Lamb of God would be slain and the temple work would be fulfilled, it becomes more clear to us now that Jesus was making a very specific and important statement by walking into Jerusalem and going straight to the temple.

Jesus, The True Temple

09 Wednesday Apr 2008

Kim Riddlebarger...

When Jesus declared of himself, “I tell you, something greater than the temple is here,” (Matthew 12:6) and when he told a Samaritan woman that he can give her “living water” (John 4:10-14), we are given a major clue that the authors of the New Testament have reinterpreted the pre-messianic understanding of God’s temple in the light of the coming of Jesus, Israel’s Messiah.

When we consider the fact that the temple occupies a major role in the witness of Israel’s prophets regarding God’s future eschatological blessing for the nation, and that this imagery points forward to person of Jesus, we are greatly aided in our understanding of the nature and character of the millennial age as a present reality.

We begin with the Old Testament expectation regarding the temple of the Lord. Both Isaiah 2:2-4 and Micah 4:1-5, speak of God’s future blessing upon Israel in the last days, when God’s people will go up to mountain of the Lord, and to the temple, where God’s people will once again learn the ways of the Lord.

In Isaiah 56, we read of those who hold fast to God’s covenant (v. 4), and who love the name of the Lord and keep his Sabbaths (vv. 6-8). They will be brought to the holy mountain and house of the Lord, which is that temple and the house of prayer for all the nations (v. 7). A similar vision is given in Isaiah 66:20-21. Here we are told that the Israelites will bring their grain offerings to God’s temple, and God will renew his priesthood (vv. 20-21). In Zechariah’s prophetic vision, we learn that one day the sacrifices of Israel will once again be offered and will be acceptable to God (Zechariah 14:16-19).

With all of this prophetic expectation in the mind of virtually every Jew living in Palestine in the first century, it is no wonder that Jesus’ declaration of God’s judgment upon the temple—“Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down” (Matthew 24:2)—came as such a shock and offense. How dare this man say that all of this expectation of a glorious temple is fulfilled in him. Speaking of himself, Jesus said, “destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19).

It was not until after Christ’s resurrection that the meaning of these words became plain—when Jesus spoke of the destruction of the temple, he was speaking of his own body (John 2:22). This is what he meant when he said that one greater than the temple has come![Click here: Riddleblog – The Latest Post – Amillennialism 101 — Jesus Christ: The True Israel](#)). It is in Christ’s church—as Jesus’ mystical body—that we find the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies regarding Jerusalem and the Mountain of the Lord. The promise of a land, will be fulfilled in a new heaven and earth in the consummation (cf. Romans 4:13; Hebrews 11:9-10). The New Testament clearly teaches that Christ is the New Temple and that any new order of

commemoration involving the ceremonies typical of the earthly temple found in a future millennium, can only commemorate the types and shadows, not the reality.

Furthermore, there is the Old Testament prophecy of a new and glorious temple, found in Ezekiel 40-48. Ezekiel envisions a future time for God's people in which the temple will be rebuilt, the priesthood will be re-established, true sacrifices will once again be offered and the river of life will flow forth from the temple. How we interpret this prophecy will have a significant bearing on the question of whether or not there will be a future millennial age upon the earth.

It should come as no surprise that dispensationalists believe that this prophecy will find a literal fulfillment in the millennial age. According to J. Dwight Pentecost, "the glorious vision of Ezekiel reveals that it is impossible to locate its fulfillment in any past temple or system which Israel has known, but it must await a future fulfillment after the second advent of Christ when the millennium is instituted. The sacrificial system is not a reinstated Judaism, but the establishment of a new order that has its purpose the remembrance of the work of Christ on which all salvation rests. The literal fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy will be the means of God's glorification and man's blessing in the millennium" (J. D. Pentecost, Things to Come, Zondervan, 1978, 531).

Sensitive to the traditional amillennial criticism that such images of perpetual animal sacrifice and temple worship after the second advent of Jesus undercut his saving work, especially given the fact these aspects of Mosaic economy of the Old Testament are fulfilled at calvary, Pentecost is careful to argue that Ezekiel's prophecy is not connected a renewed Mosaic economy, but to an entirely new order, one which commemorates the saving work of Christ in the distant past.

Again, because Pentecost is committed to a "literal fulfillment" of Old Testament prophecies, and because he is aware that the Christ's own redemptive work fulfills the typology of the Mosaic economy, Pentecost is forced to argue that temple worship in the millennial is associated with a wholly new order.

But is this what the authors of the New Testament teach us about these prophecies? Elsewhere, the New Testament teaches that Christ is the true Israel and David's greater son (

This presents a serious problem for dispensationalists, who argue, in effect, that redemptive history takes a U-turn in the millennial age, as the reality which is in Christ now supposedly returns to the types and shadows of the Old Testament.

How, then, is the temple imagery from the Old Testament fulfilled by Jesus Christ in the New? In Exodus 40:34, we are told that the glory of the Lord filled his temple. When viewed against the overall backdrop of redemptive history, we can see how this pointed forward to the day of Pentecost, when, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, the glory of the Lord filled his true temple, the mystical body of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12 ff.–cf. Kline, Structure of Biblical Authority, 194).

If Christ's body is the true temple—as Paul puts it, “For we are the temple of the living God” (2 Corinthians 6:16)—what use remains for an a future literal temple? That to which the temple had pointed, is now a reality through the work of the Holy Spirit. Why return to the type and shadow?

It is also clear from chapters 8-10 of Hebrews, that in his death, Jesus fulfilled the priesthood typology of the Old Testament, and in his own blood, he puts an end to the sacrificial system, once and for all! Says the author of Hebrews, “Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man” (Hebrews 8:1-2).

If the reality to which the Old Testament sacrifices and priesthood pointed is to be found in this true sanctuary and tabernacle in heaven, why look for a return to the shadows in the form of an earthly temple, which served throughout Old Testament revelation to point us to this very heavenly scene?

Contrary to the view of dispensationalists, the prescribed New Testament commemoration of the ratification of the New Covenant is not to be found in a new order of temple worship, an order which includes a new temple, a new priesthood and further animal sacrifice, supposedly yet to be reinstated in an earthly millennial kingdom. Rather, when Jesus utters the words of institution, “this is my body, this is my blood, do this in remembrance of me,” he institutes the divinely-approved method of commemoration of his sacrificial work, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is in this way that the people of God feed on the savior through faith and commemorate his doing and dying on their behalf.

When Jesus tells the Samaritan women that he can give her living water and that “everyone who drinks from this water will never be thirsty again,” Jesus is self-consciously declaring that he fulfills that prophetic image of which Ezekiel had foretold in the thirty-seventh chapter of his prophecy, when he spoke of the water flowing from the sanctuary (Leon Morris, The Gospel According to John, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Eerdmans, 1971, 259-261). If Jesus is the true temple of God, then he alone gives us that “living water” which takes away the thirst of human sin and longing.

Therefore, the dispensationalist's insistence upon a return in the millennial age to the shadows and types associated with the Old Testament prophetic expectation, amounts to a serious misunderstanding of the very nature of redemptive history. By arguing for a new commemorative order based upon Old Testament typology and yet to begin in the millennial age, dispensationalists see the future not as a consummation, but as a return to the past. And this, of course, sadly obscures the person and work of Christ by seeing the ultimate reality not in him, but in those types and shadows which were destined to perish when the reality himself entered the theater of redemption.

Intro: What do we know about Ruth? She left her home land and her home. When she leaves, no one comes after her or tries to dissuade her: no father, mother, brother, sister. We know she leaves with Naomi, an unlikely person to stick with; Orpah makes no ref to Ruth when she leaves. We know that she was married for 10 years, but no children are mentioned.

Perhaps leaving Moab was not as difficult for Ruth, as it was for Orpah. But she wasn't just leaving Moab, she was going to Israel.

I. What did it mean to be a Moabite, in Israel?

- A. The origins of Moab in Torah. Gen 19:36-37. Shameful, disgusting origin.
- B. Then this: Deut 23:3-4, 6. This is a pretty severe curse. It certainly seems to solidify Moabite's status in Israel's eyes as bottom-class people.
- C. + Israel was at war, off and on, with Moab throughout this whole period.
- D. A big concern for R in Israel: Assault. 2:8-9, 22. →Time of Judges (1:1) →Judg 19...Moabite, so who cares?

Sum. Moabites were considered disgusting; they were enemies of God's people! Ruth is seeking a new home, okay. But in Israel? That doesn't sound like a good fit.

- E. Trans. Why risk it? 1:9→3:1. (Remember, she's looking for a home, for rest.) And there is Salvation no where other than with the God of Israel, in His promises, so there is rest for our souls no where else.
- F. Anywhere else, Ruth will find the *opposite* of Rest, of "comfort and joy." Distress and disappointment and desolation and death: she's already experienced enough. She must go to Israel.

Q leaving chp 1: What will happen to Ruth in Israel? PRAY. Will God accept this Moabite?

II. Massive Problem: she's from Moab. How can God accept Ruth? Deut 23?

- A. First, Ruth shows courage; she is renouncing her Moabite heritage. She no longer wants to be a Moabite, 1:16: rejects people +gods. She switches teams.

That took a lot of courage. Maybe going with Naomi was smart, but losing people and rejecting god? Most people would just gain a god rather than trade.

- B. Will that work? We are not allowed to forget who she is, where she is from: 1:4, 6, 22; 2:2, 6, 21; 4:5, 10. Don't forget, readers, what Ruth is.
- C. What will she need to find rest in Israel? Courage from R, but she'll need Mercy from God.

What is Mercy? Mercy is a subset of love/grace: it's a gift. ...It is not merely NOT doing something, but it is doing something good too. It is withholding deserved bad, but also welcoming the person into fellowship with you. (withhold, *so that...*) That's what makes mercy special: not just the forgiveness, but the hug after: Mercy is Welcoming the Undeserving.

III. So what happens to Ruth? She receives mercy. 2:12 happens. She is welcomed into the assembly of God's people, as are her descendants after her: i.e. David, Jesus.

- A. Is this ok? Is this a prob for us? Mercy brings out the worst in people; Pharisee urge: "don't you know who is/what done? They should get what they deserve." In R's case: "God should stick to His guns! There are rules for a reason!"
- B. →Jam 2:13b. Reality: There are rules for a reason, and God always sticks to His guns. But we don't always appreciate what His real guns are. (guns =values, priorities)
- C. God, what are your real guns? What is your most essential characteristic that you want us to know and rejoice in? It's what we see Him do for Ruth: Mercy. The thing that God most wants us to know about Himself: He is rich in mercy.

The rules themselves are grace, which we fail to take advantage of; but that's okay b/c God really, really wants to let us in on this essential aspect of Himself: He is a God of mercy. God gives His good rulers to sinners SO THAT we might come to know His mercy and thus know Him for who He really, most deeply, is.

- D. What Ruth reminds us is that she was accepted same way anyone is accepted before God: by Mercy. Eph 2:1-4; Titus 3:3-5; Rom 11:32.

IV. 2:12, again. "under whose wings." Imp. b/c this is the thing on which all the other things depended.

A. Boaz coined this expression. Where did Boaz get this image?

1. I want you to think of the camp of Israel (on Ex) as a kind of symbol (donut) of the life of Israel; life that God commanded; i.e. what God wants us to know about Him; how God wants us to live with Him and why.
2. What did God want? Laws; do/don't. Laws govern life. Clear.
3. But what was at the center of the camp? And Law? Temple

Temple represent? Can't do all do/don'ts. IOW, center of camp a rev of something bigger, more important to God, imp for us: that God expects us to fail; but when we fail, He wants us to come to Him. He built a building, center, gold, to say: it's OK, come HERE; Here's what I really want you to know about Me; here's what's most essential to me and most ess' for you: that even when you screw up, I still love you; when you screw up, I've made a way back to me.

4. Center of the Temple? Holy Place; Holy Holies. Center? Ark. Center? Ex 25:17-20a, 22. Mercy Seat. (This is the only other place prior in OT where it references something "under" "wings.") →this is where Boaz got this image; an image of mercy.

Learn? God wants us to know that Mercy is the essence of who He is. It's the most central thing about God; The Thing that sets Him apart; The Core of what it means for God to be Holy... If the OT is God answering the Q, "Tell us about yourself, God." The thing He wants us to know most clearly is that He is Merciful. →Ex 33:18-23...34:6a.

B. Expl. So, what is Boaz praying? Boaz knew that Ruth was going to need mercy first – she’s a Moabite, don’t forget! So he prays that the Lord would Welcome Ruth, even though she is undeserving. That the Lord would withhold what she deserves, and accept her anyway.

C. Boaz knew this God. He borrowed this imagery from the world of Israel. It becomes special to the family, a way of remembering that they had been welcomed in, even though they were undeserving; ...who God is. So David R+B’s G-Gson, only person to use this expression in the OT: Ps 57:1.

V. What is mercy? Welcoming the Undeserving. But why? This is “the Mystery of Mercy.”

A. Mercy is always mysterious. Mercy is the only real mystery in the universe: why would God forgive? Sacrifice Himself? Covenant Himself to us? Why God? Shrug; “It’s who I Am.” Mercy is just the word we use to name this mystery.

B. Mercy is the Essence of God’s Holiness; it is THE Thing that sets God apart from us; the thing about God we least understand. We don’t understand it at all; but we want it.

C. Here’s the Million Dollar Lesson, VIP: God is Merciful. He always wants to be a refuge for all of us; he wants to welcome us, though we don’t deserve it. Mercy.

VI. There’s one other place in the Bible where we see this expression: Mat 23:37. Jesus is God spreading His wings, again. God is saying in Jesus exactly what the whole Law and life of Israel said, in language of Ruth: Come and Receive Mercy. Matt 11:28.

A. Jesus’ entire ministry was showing mercy; welcoming the undeserving. This is who God is and what He does: The Lord, the Lord, Merciful... So when God shows up, He is loved for, hated for, but always defined by, His mercy.

How does a person enjoy mercy? → Think of Jesus’ stories and situations: Prod Son, Publican vs. Pharisee. Woman-sinner, “Guys, I know who she is; she knows who she is: But do you know who you are?” = See yourself for who you really are: Eph 2:1-3. It’s only when we see who we are that we take advantage of God’s love and come for mercy.

B. Good News/Bad News: you are far worse than you ever feared true; and you are loved far more deeply, fully, eternally, than you ever dreamed possible. The size and signif of God’s love in our lives depends on how clearly we see our sin.

C. Practical: This takes courage, like R. Let yourself name your sins, shame, weaknesses, w/o spin/qualifiers/excuses/pro’n’con. Let yourself know yourself. Say it, in your heart. It’s true. But it’s not the biggest, truest truth. But it’s necessary.

D. Advent says, Emmanuel has come! And then, Advent asks: Do you know why Emmanuel came? Had to come? B/c He is God The Merciful. And B/c we need mercy. → May the God of Israel give us courage to seek refuge under His wings, with His mercy.

Tuesday, June 22, 2010

The Shekinah Dwelling (Part 1)

<http://www.thefaithlog.com/2010/06/shekinah-dwelling-part-1.html>

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

The Greek verb for “dwell” is *skenoo* and means to tent or encamp. The noun form is *skenos*, which speaks of a tent or tabernacle. In the Septuagint (or LXX), which is an ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, *skenos* is used to translate the Hebrew word for “tabernacle,” which is *mishkan*. *Mishkan* is from the Hebrew verb *shakan*, which means to dwell or inhabit.

The Hebrew root for *mishkan* (משכן) and *shakan* (שכן) are the three Hebrew consonants *shin*, *kaf*, *nun* (שכנ). Note how similar these are to the consonants in *skenos* (the s-k-n sound). This may be an indication that the Greeks borrowed the Hebrew word *shakan* and transliterated it into *skenos*.

Not to overburden you with too many ancient and foreign terms, but I would like to talk to you about *shekinah*. It is from the same root as *mishkan* and *shakan* and speaks of dwelling, resting, abiding, even nesting. In ancient Jewish writings, it is used to speak of divine presence, the manifestation of the glory of God. In the Old Testament, the Tabernacle (*mishkan*) was the place God chose to reveal His presence in a special way to His people. The Targums, ancient translations of the Old Testament from Hebrew into its sister language, Aramaic, speak of God’s manifest presence as the “*shekinah* of His glory.”

The tabernacle was the place of God’s divine presence, the place where He manifested His glory. This manifestation was the *shekinah*, the divine glory resting and abiding with His people.

The Gospel of John says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” John is speaking of Jesus as the Word (Greek, *Logos*), which was consistent with the Jewish practice of referring to God by the Hebrew and Aramaic equivalents for “Word,” because God revealed Himself by His Word.

That is the point John makes: God has now revealed Himself in human flesh as Jesus, the Word who was with Him from the beginning and, indeed, is God (John 1:1-2). He is that Word by which God created the heavens and the earth, the Word by whom all things were spoken into existence.

This same Word became flesh – incarnation is the theological term – and dwelt among us, tabernacled among us, manifesting the presence of God among us. “And we beheld His

glory," John says, and the Jews of his day would have understood this as the *Shekinah*. The divine glory was revealed uniquely in Him, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

This *shekinah* glory, John says, was "full of grace and truth." In the Old Testament, the combination of "grace" and "truth", or rather, the Hebrew equivalents, *hesed* and *emeth*, spoke of God Himself. *Hesed* is the word by which God was revealed in His mercy and kindness; *emeth* revealed Him in His faithfulness and truth. The word "full" speaks of completeness, leaving nothing lacking. As Paul says, "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

Jesus is the Living Tabernacle, where the presence of God is fully manifested among His people. His glory, the *shekinah* glory, fully reveals the faithful love and mercy of God.

The Shekinah Dwelling (Part 2)

Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

King Jesus the Messiah is the Word who became flesh and tabernacled among us, manifesting the divine presence, the dwelling place of the *shekinah* glory of God. Since then, He has ascended, in His body, to the right hand of the Father, where He now rules over heaven and earth forever. **But what of the *shekinah*, the glory of the divine presence?**

In the Old Testament, the dwelling place God chose to manifest His presence was the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, then the Tent of David, and finally, the Temple in Jerusalem. With the sacrifice of Messiah Jesus for our sins, the temple system of burnt offerings and sacrifices, which served as a type or foreshadow, was fulfilled, and the temple itself was rendered obsolete. This was one of the points the author of Hebrews emphasized:

- The Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing ... But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. (Hebrews 9:8, 11)

Jesus came as the mediator of a *new* covenant, the one foretold by Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Ezekiel 36:25-27), in which God would write His law upon our hearts and place His Spirit within us. This required a temple not made with human hands.

But God has not left Himself without a place to manifest His presence, His *shekinah*, on earth. The apostles teach us that there remains yet a temple on earth, a dwelling place where God has chosen to reveal His glory. It is not a temple of wood and stone, but a temple made without hands. **It is the people of God themselves.** The apostle Paul says,

- Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

Again, Paul says, quoting Ezekiel,

- For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (2 Corinthians 6:16)

Those who have received King Jesus the Messiah are now the temple of God, because He has placed His Spirit in us, just as He promised in Ezekiel. **Collectively, as a people, we are the place where God dwells on earth.** But even individually, we are, each one, the temple of God. He dwells in our bodies as well as our spirits:

- 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? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

The apostle Peter likewise understood his own body to be a tabernacle, or tent.

- Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. (2 Peter 1:13-14)

The Greek word for "tent" here is *skenoma*, which is used of the divine dwelling. And indeed, that is how Peter would be thinking of it here, fully aware, as he wrote just a few verses earlier, of the "exceedingly great and precious promises" God has given us and that those who belong to Jesus the Messiah have become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:3-4).

God's promise of a new covenant and a new temple was not just for the Jews but also for all the nations. In his letter to the believers at Ephesus, Paul speaks to both the Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus:

- Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

Paul makes the point again in Colossians: Jesus the Messiah comes to dwell in believing Gentiles as well as believing Jews.

- To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

Messiah – God, the Word that became flesh and dwelt *among* us – now dwells *in* us. Paul calls it “the hope of glory.” The Greek word for “hope,” speaks of a positive expectation, a joyful anticipation. Surely, the glory of God’s presence dwelling in us is the *shekinah*. Because King Jesus the Messiah dwells in us by His Spirit, we can expect and anticipate the *shekinah* glory of God to be made known in us, to us and through us.

<http://www.hebrew-streams.org/works/ntstudies/divrei-yishkon.html>

The Greek verb **skeno'o** is usually translated "dwelt among." Its root signifies dwelling in a tent (**skene**). The tri-literal S-K-N root reflects the Hebrew influence of the verb **shakhan** (SH-K-N) and the noun **mishkan**, tabernacle (dwelling tent).

John says Yeshua "tabernacled" or "dwelled in a tent" or "lived in a mishkan" during his life. Another view thinks of Yeshua as the mishkan himself. Jewish readers would have heard the allusion to the portable Mishkan in the wilderness, in which the Glory of God dwelled in the midst of the camps of Israel.

Note: "we gazed upon his **Glory**."

The contextual timing of his birth suggests that it took place, not in December during Hanukkah, but during the festival of SUKKOT ("tabernacles"). The author's choice of the verb "mishkaned among us" shimmers with allusion, as well. Messiah was born in a temporary shelter and lived as a portable Tent (in his human flesh).

Birth of Christ & Feast of Tabernacle

<http://heartofwisdom.com/biblicaltholidays/2014/07/28/birth-of-christ-feast-of-tabernacles/>

This year the Feast of Tabernacles/ Sukkot begins September 30 (at sundown) – October 7, 2012

The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us . John 1:14

Many scholars believe Jesus was born during the Feast of Tabernacles. The Hebrew word “stable” is called a sukkoth (Gen. 33:17).

In John 1:14, the word “dwelled” is literally “tabernacled” in the Greek – and this comes as the climax to John’s “version” of the story of Christ’s incarnation.

Feast of Tabernacles is a week-long fall festival commemorating the 40-year journey of the Israelites in the wilderness. The word *Sukkot* means “booths.”

Was the Birth of Christ during the Feast of Tabernacles?

To the Israelites the Feast of Tabernacles depicted their forty years of wandering in the wilderness before entering the Promised Land. Peter and Paul referred to our physical bodies as tabernacles, or temporary dwellings (II Corinthians 5:1-4, II Peter 2:13-14).

Matthew Henry states:

It is supposed by many that our blessed Saviour was born much about the time of this holiday [Feast of Tabernacles]; then He left his mansions of light above to tabernacle among us (John 1:14), and he dwelt in booths. And the worship of God under the New Testament is prophesied of under the notion of keeping the feast of tabernacles, Zec. 14:16.

The gospel of Christ teaches us to dwell in tabernacles, to sit loose to this world, as those that have here no continuing city, but by faith, and hope and holy contempt of present things, to go out to Christ without the camp, Heb. 13:13, 14.

When Was Jesus Born?

The Bible does not specifically say the date of Jesus’ birth. We know it was not during the winter months because the sheep were in the pasture (Luke 2:8). A study of the time of the conception of John the Baptist reveals he was conceived about Sivan 30, the eleventh week.

When Zechariah was ministering in the temple, he received an announcement from God of a coming son. The eighth course of Abia, when Zekharya was ministering, was the week of Sivan 12 to 18 (Killian n.d.). Adding forty weeks for a normal pregnancy reveals that John the Baptist was born on or about Passover (Nisan 14).

We know six months after John’s conception, Mary conceived Jesus (Luke 1:26-33). Therefore, Jesus would have been conceived six months later in the month of Kislev. Kislev 25 is Hanukkah.

Was the “light of the world” conceived on the festival of lights?

Starting at Hanukkah, which begins on Kislev 25 and continues for eight days, and counting through the nine months of Mary’s pregnancy, one arrives at the approximate time of the birth of Jesus at the Festival of Tabernacles (the early fall of the year).

During the Feast of Tabernacles

During the Feast of Tabernacles, God required all male Jews to come to Jerusalem. The many pilgrims coming to Jerusalem for the festivals would spill over to the surrounding towns (Bethlehem is about five miles from Jerusalem). Joseph and Mary were unable to find a room at the inn because of the influx of so many pilgrims. They may have been given shelter in a sukkah, which is built during a seven-day period each year accompanying the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. Due to the difficulties during travel, it was common for the officials to declare tax time during a temple Feast (Luke 2:1).

We know our Messiah was made manifest into a temporary body when He came to earth. Is it possible He also was put into a temporary dwelling? The fields would have been dotted with sukkoths during this harvest time to temporary shelter animals. **The Hebrew word “stable” is called a sukkoth (Gen. 33:17).**

- And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7).

Joseph and Mary took the child and fled to Egypt and remained there until they were told by God that Herod was dead. Joseph and Mary brought the baby Jesus into Jerusalem forty days from His birth for Mary’s purification and the child’s dedication (according to Torah this had to be done within forty days of the birth of a male child-not doing so is considered a sin).

This indicates that Herod died within the same forty days, because as long as Herod was alive, they could not appear at the Temple. (According to Josephus’ calculations, Herod’s death occurred during the Autumn in the fourth year before the Common Era 4 b.c.e.).

Later in His life, Yeshua celebrated His birthday on a mountain with three of His disciples. In contrast to birthday parties, such as Herod’s, where people were killed for entertainment, His was a celebration of life. On the Festival of Succoth, Moshe and EliYahu (Elijah), from centuries past, representatives of the Torah and the Prophets, appeared and talked with Yeshua.

One disciple, Kepha (Peter), suggested building three succoth for Yeshua, Moshe, and EliYahu, because it was required for the festival, but he did not understand that these three were fulfilling that which the festival symbolized: they were dwelling in their succoth (temporary tabernacles) of flesh, awaiting their eternal resurrection temple.

A number of Christians are celebrating Christ’s birth during the Feast of Tabernacles, complete with decorations and lights on the sukkah, and music celebrating Jesus’ birth.

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:15-16)

He Tabernacled Among Us

<http://christianchurchofgod.com/page/15/HeTabernacledAmongUs>

More than one hundred years ago the scholar E. W. Bullinger published his Companion Bible, popular for its scholarly appendices and insights. From internal Scriptural evidence, Bullinger makes the case that Jesus could not have been born in December. **More than likely his birth was in the fall of the year, specifically during the High Holy Day season at the Feast of Tabernacles.**

His explanation is complex but understandable, though a little too involved to explain here. But if Bullinger is right, the theological typology of the birth of Christ can lend even more hope and comfort to a world in need than even the traditional Christmas story.

To the Israelites the Feast of Tabernacles depicted their forty years of wandering in the wilderness before entering the Promised Land. During the feast they lived in "booths", or "tabernacles", which were temporary dwelling places. This was to show that they were strangers and pilgrims, and that their permanent home awaited elsewhere. (See Leviticus 23:34-43). In synagogues today the book of Ecclesiastes is read during the Feast of Tabernacles, for that book laments the temporary nature of life in the flesh and the futility of life without God. Both Peter and Paul referred to our physical bodies as tabernacles, or temporary dwellings (II Corinthians 5:1-4, II Peter 2:13-14).

Anyone with just a passing acquaintance with Christian theology knows that the death and resurrection of Christ is central to salvation. I agree with that. But Jesus' first coming has a rich connection with this ancient festival, and the typology overflows with encouragement in what might seem like hopeless times.

In John's gospel we read that "*the Word became flesh and dwelt [or 'tabernacled'] among us*" (John 1:14), the point being that this one who was the Word from the beginning actually emptied himself of his immortality and became a man. He took on a temporary nature and became a stranger and pilgrim.

It's a noble thing to put one's life at risk for another, but it is love without limit to risk one's eternal life for those who are undeserving. That is precisely what the one called the Word has done. He emptied himself and became subject to the same aches, pains, and temptations that we have.

Put differently, Jesus understands whatever you are going through because he has been there. Have you been lonely, tempted, or afraid? Have you been wracked with pain or hungry beyond measure? Have your friends betrayed you? Have you suffered through imprisonment? Have you felt forsaken by God? Have there been times when your family didn't believe in you? Have you been hounded by your enemies or sycophants, have nowhere to sleep, or so beset upon that you have no time to eat?

Well, because Jesus chose to tabernacle with us, he understands it all, for in the days of his flesh he experienced all those trials and more.

The writer of Hebrews says, "*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*" (Hebrews 4:15-16)

It's a good thing to recognize that Jesus was born. But too much richness is lost by misunderstanding the context of his birth. He tabernacled among us! He understands our struggles in a way that comes

only through experience. He can sympathize with our weaknesses. That's a wonderful message of hope.

Lenny Cacchio

Our word **skenoo** is literally “to live or camp in a tent.” In the Septuagint, it is rare. It is used twice in Genesis 13:12, “Lot **settled** in the cities of the valley, and **moved his tents** as far as Sodom.” The noun form of this word, **skenos**, is of a literal tent or tabernacle, as in Hebrews 11:9. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in tents. A tent speaks of a pilgrim journey. They were looking for a permanent place of abode. In the New Testament, it doesn't refer to dwelling in a real tent, only metaphorically. Revelation 7:15 refers to God's dwelling among the redeemed; the sense is that of residing permanently, since context speaks of God's sitting on His throne, not of a divine tent in heaven. Revelation 21:3 is a figure of speech for His abiding and gracious presence. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, the verb is in compound form: **epi**, meaning “upon,” and **skenao**). In KJV: “... power of Christ may **rest upon** me”; in NASB: “... may **dwelt** in me.” Literally, it is: “may **spread a tabernacle over** me.” The image is that of the Shekinah glory descending upon the faithful. **JOHN 1:14** suggests the **skenos** of the incarnate Word is to be regarded as an expression of the fact that His earthly stay was for Him no more than an episode between the pre- and post-existence as the exalted Lord, in which case the translation “He **tabernacled** among us” is more suitable than “He **dwelt** among us.” It is designed to show that this is the presence of the Eternal in time. Wuest states: “*Out of the ivory palaces, the King of Glory came to live in a tent among a people who lived in tents. In Revelation 21:3, literally, 'the tent of God is with men, and He will live in a tent in company with them.' This tent is the same human body in which our Lord lived while on earth, glorified. The King condescends to live in a tent all through eternity with His Bride. If His Bride lives in a tent, He will. He chose her for Himself notwithstanding the tent.*”ⁱ

ⁱ <http://greekwordstudies.blogspot.com/2007/04/dwell.html>