

God in His Temple Bible Study Notes

"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.... 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...."

1st Cor. 3:16 & 6:19-20

God sits upon His glorious, flaming throne in His Heavenly Sanctuary (*Temple*), *'Thy way oh God is in the sanctuary.'* **Psalm 77:13, Dan. 7:9**

It is the true tabernacle which He erected by His own hands, **Heb. 8:2**, where He sits upon the throne in the Most Holy Place. It is here (*in the temple*) where Jesus intercedes for us before the presence of the Father, mingling our prayers with the smoke from the altar of incense. It is here where thousands upon thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand of the heavenly angelic hosts minister before Him, **Dan. 7:10**. His Temple is holy and sacred because He that dwelleth within it is Himself Holy and Sacred.

This Heavenly Temple, however, is not the only temple where God resides that we read of in the Bible. The Scriptures show us that the Lord has resided or resides in a total of five temples and in this Bible study we will attempt to briefly study these other temples and how they all relate to God's Heavenly Temple and His Holiness.

These temples are:

- The Temple in Heaven.
- The Tabernacle in the days of Moses.
- The Temple in the days of King Solomon.
- The Temple rebuilt in the days of Ezra.
- Our Body Temple

*In the Scriptures, the term *temple*, *tabernacle*, and *sanctuary* are all used interchangeably as we will see later on. As we have already briefly discussed the Temple in Heaven as our foundation, I will now go straight into the tabernacle in the days of Moses.

The Tabernacle in the days of Moses:

This tabernacle was built under the supervision of Moses, after he had led the Israelites and those Egyptians who had joined the Israelites during the Exodus, out of Egypt.

Says God to Moses, *"and let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 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."*
Exo. 25:8,9

Notice here that the Lord required that the people of the nation of Israel should build Him a sanctuary that He could dwell among them as they travelled throughout the wilderness to the Promised Land. It was to be built according to the plans and patterns that God gave to Moses when he was upon Mt. Sinai for 40 days and nights.

Exo. 24:18

God made it clear to Moses that even the furnishings within the sanctuary should be built according to the patterns and plans which He gave to him. Why is this? Well, the Book of Hebrews has the answer.

"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore, it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law, who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." Heb. 8:1-5

Here we have the answer. The earthly tabernacle constructed under Moses was a type and shadow; a representation of 'the true tabernacle which the Lord erected and not Man' in Heaven.

All that composed the earthly tabernacle was a copy of that which is in Heaven, from the altar of incense to the seven-branch candlestick, to the mercy seat and the ark of the covenant and so on; they all had their beginnings in the Heavenly Temple. Therefore, as God would descend and dwell within this earthly tabernacle it had to be made exactly as His Heavenly Temple was also made.

Notice some verses that show the correlation between the Tabernacle built under Moses and the Heavenly Temple.

"You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand shall be of hammered work. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its ornamental knobs, and flowers shall be of one piece. And six branches shall come out of its sides: three branches of the lampstand out of one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side... and see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain"

Exo. 25:31-32,40

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw... Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man." Rev. 1:1-2, 12-13

Notice that in both the earthly tabernacle and the Heavenly Temple, we see the Seven Branch Candlestick mentioned.

"And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height. And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around... And you shall put into the ark the Testimony (Ten Commandments) which I will give you... And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from

above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.” **Exo. 25:10,16,22**

“Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple.” **Rev. 11:19**

Again, notice that we see the Ark of the Covenant in both the earthly and Heavenly Sanctuaries. Notice that the earthly tabernacle was also holy, as it was consecrated by anointing it and everything within it with the anointing oil. Even the priests who were to enter the tabernacle to minister and intercede for the people were also to be made holy by being anointed and consecrated. Nothing impure could enter into the tabernacle lest they die for God’s Temple in Heaven is Holy and sacred and all who come before His presence whether in Heaven or on earth must be Holy just as He Himself is Holy.

“And you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it; and you shall hallow it and all its utensils, and it shall be holy. You shall anoint the altar of the burnt offering and all its utensils and consecrate the altar. The altar shall be most holy. And you shall anoint the laver and its base and consecrate it. Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle of meeting and wash them with water. You shall put the holy garments on Aaron, and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.” **Exo. 40:9-16**

For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy... For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. **Lev. 11:44-45**

God will not dwell in a temple which is defiled, for a defiled temple is an unholy temple and He Himself is Holy, therefore, we also are called to be holy.

Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 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. **Exo. 40:34-35**

The Temple in the days of Solomon:

We read of this account in the Books of 1st Kings and 1st & 2nd Chronicles. The Tabernacle, which was built in the time of Moses, was in use up until the days of David. The Lord had given David the plans and patterns to build the Temple when the Israelites had settled into the Promised Land, however, David himself did not build it but it was built by his son Solomon.

“Then King David rose to his feet and said, “Hear me, my brethren, and my people: I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it... Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things” **1st Chron. 28:2,11,12**

"And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD." 1st Kings 6:1

Read **2nd Chronicles 3 & 4** to see the grandeur and more detail of the Temple built by Solomon.

We also see that just like with Aaron and his sons, that the priests in the days of Solomon were also consecrated and made holy, **2nd Chron. 5:11**.

This temple followed the same design of that which was built under Moses, however it was a larger and more permanent version. It possessed the same divisions and furnishings as we see from reading the account in **2nd Chron. 3,4 and 5**, also compare with **1st Kings 6,7 and 8**.

After the completion of this Temple (*it took 7 years to complete*, **1st Kings 6:38**), Solomon dedicated the Temple to God along with the required sacrifices and just like in the days of Moses, God descended in a cloud of glory upon the Mercy Seat and the temple was filled with the glory of 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 endures forever," that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God." 2nd Chron. 5:13-14

"When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house." 2nd Chron. 7:1-2

However, despite all this, Israel proceeded to go into apostasy after the death of Solomon and as a result they were overtaken by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and this Temple was subsequently destroyed. The Israelites engaged in idolatry in the temple of God, they worshiped molek and baal and asharoth and committed evil in the sight of the Lord. Many of the kings which followed Solomon, though not all, did evil in the sight of the Lord, the worst of which was Ahab, who married Jezebel.

As a result of all this the Lord gave them over to the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar and he laid siege to Jerusalem, destroyed its city wall, the temple built by Solomon and took the Israelites as slaves.

"Therefore, He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave them all into his hand. And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all these he took to Babylon. Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions. And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia." 2nd Chron. 36:17-20

The Temple rebuilt in the days of Ezra:

The Israelites who were taken into captivity remained captives for the next seventy years, as prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah. See **Jer. 25:9-13** Jerusalem laid in ruins until the time of the Persian Empire came to power and

Cyrus the Great, gave the decree that the Israelites were able to return to their land to rebuild their temple and their city.

Close to fifty thousand people made the journey back, **Ezra 2:64-65**, and under the leadership of Ezra, Zerubbabel, Joshua, Haggai, Zechariah, and others, they began to rebuild the Temple of the Lord.

The Temple was completed, and the people of Israel returned to worshipping God according to His statutes and His Law. **Ezra 6:15, Neh. 8 & 9**

We do not get much insight into the details of this Temple as with the previous two, however, Haggai tells us that the temple rebuilt in the days of Ezra would be greater than the glory of the one built by Solomon.

"The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former," says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place, I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts." Haggai 2:9

This Temple was greater than that which was built by Solomon not in grandeur but because it was graced with the presence of Jesus. This Temple remained intact until the year AD 70, almost forty years after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. In the tabernacle built by Moses and the Temple built by Solomon, we see the glory of God literally descending from Heaven like a cloud and filling their presence, however, in the Temple built in the days of Ezra, this presence was not seen. Instead, it was in the days of Jesus, some five hundred plus years later, that He walked, preached, and taught within this Temple, thus fulfilling the prophecy spoken of by Haggai the prophet.

"Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of thieves." Matt. 21:12-13

"Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"

And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Mark 13:1-2

The Temples in Moses and Solomon's day did not have the privilege of Jesus coming into them when He came as a man, thus fulfilling the prophecy given by Haggai that the latter temple would be greater than the former.

Also notice that Jesus, because of the irreverence and unholy behaviour which was taking place in His Temple began to drive out all of the heathens from the presence of the Temple as it was not being respected or kept holy as it was in times past.

He then proceeded to tell His disciples that this temple will also be destroyed and from history we can trace this back to AD 70 in the 'Siege of Jerusalem' when the Romans overpowered the nation of Israel and took back control over it. As a result, many Jews were killed, and the temple was destroyed in the siege.

"...If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him." 1st Corinth. 3:16

The Body Temple:

The final temple which we see in the Scriptures is our bodies. As we see in the days of Moses and Solomon, the glory of God dwelt in the Temple when He descended like a cloud, so does the Holy Spirit descend and dwell within us when we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Says Paul to the Corinthian Church, *"and what agreement has the temple of God with idols? 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."* **2nd Corinth. 6:16**

And again, to the Church in Ephesus he says, *"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."* **Eph. 2:19-22**

"...but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end." **Heb. 3:6**

Now from observing the holiness, sacredness, righteousness, and utmost respect that was given in all of the previous examples from the Tabernacle built under Moses, the Temple built under Solomon, the Temple rebuilt in the days of Ezra and let us not forget the Heavenly Temple, should we not treat our bodies with the same level of respect as we know that the Holy Spirit dwells within us?

God requires a consecrated and holy Temple for His dwelling, and He should have it no other way for He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We must take care of these bodies which the Lord has given us, in diet, in health, in well-being and also from a spiritual standpoint.

God will not dwell in a temple that is defiled whether physically or spiritually, as we saw earlier. God's dwelling place must be set apart for a righteous purpose, it must be anointed and consecrated to do a special work. We were bought at a price; we are not our own, therefore we must glorify God in body and in spirit. We must take care of the bodies he has given us and allow Him to cleanse us of all our iniquities through righteousness by faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

In the Book of Exodus, we see that if a priest were to enter the Tabernacle without making atonement for his sins, then he would die for sin cannot enter into the presence of the Most High. In the same way, should we refuse to seek atonement for our sins through Jesus Christ, then we too shall be cut off eternally, for the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Says the Lord, *"Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."* **2nd Corinth. 6:17**

Conclusion:

Brethren, let us allow God to cleanse us of our unrighteousness, let us glorify God in our bodies by putting the right things into our bodies, let us not defile our temples with unhealthy foods & drinks, stimulating substances, and the like for God wants to dwell within us and He will only dwell in a temple that has been consecrated, anointed, and set apart for His glory. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and he requires a Holy Temple and if anyone defiles the Temple of God, God will destroy him.

God will dwell amongst His people as He did in the times of old as we see in **Rev. 21:3**, however, before that time comes, we must make sure that we are found blameless and spotless for He is returning for a spotless Church, **Eph. 5:27**, without wrinkle and without blemish. Therefore, let us allow Him to come into our hearts, that He may transform and purify us from the inside that we may provide for Him a Holy Temple suited for a King.

"Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God... But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple."

Rev. 21:2,3,22



