

Lesson 35 - The Temple of the Lord

In this lesson we are going to look at the temple of the Lord. What is special about The Lord's tabernacle? Does He dwell there? Does He reveal Himself there? We are going to attempt to discern what The Lord is teaching us through scripture about His house?

The Lord had instructed Moses in **Exodus 25:8** to "**let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them**". The definition of sanctuary is a consecrated place, a holy place, the holy of holies, a place of refuge and immunity; a place of protection. The Lord's house or sanctuary therefore is a holy place. It is holy because it is the place where the Lord will dwell.

Psalm 99:1

The Lord reigns; Let the peoples tremble! He dwells between the cherubim;

This verse states the Lord dwells between the cherubim. But where are cherubim? Maybe these verses from the book of Exodus will help.

Exodus 25:17a, 21 & 22

*You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that 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.*

The cherubim were part of the mercy seat. The mercy seat was the lid or top cover of the Ark of the Covenant and the Ark of the Covenant was placed within the tabernacle. So from this first verse we can see that the Lord states he will dwell within His tabernacle.

The Ark of course was the chest where the Lord's commandments were placed. I believe in the verse above the Lord referred to them as the Testimony. The mercy seat sat atop it and this is the place of which the Lord said, "**And there I will meet with you**". For me it is like thinking that the Ark and its contents are at the center of the Lord's tabernacle and it is at this place where He will meet with us.

However, before the priest could approach the Lord a sin offering had to be made.

Leviticus 16: 14-16

"He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and

because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.”

And in Leviticus 16:30

“For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.”

Thus we learn that the temple of the Lord was to be a holy place where the Lord would dwell and meet with us. We have learned that his commandments were placed at the center of His tabernacle. And we’ve learned that a sin offering was required to cleanse and make atonement for us. However in the days of old, despite His guidance, the Lord could see what was in His people’s heart. Therefore He spoke through the prophet Jeremiah to His people. The message he had for them still applies today.

Jeremiah 7:

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, 2 “Stand in the gate of the Lord’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all you of Judah, who enter in at these gates to worship the Lord!” 3 Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. 4 Do not trust in these lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these. 5 For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; 6 If you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, 7 then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.

*8 Behold, you trust in lying words, that cannot profit. 9 Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after **other gods** whom you do not know; 10 And then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? 11 Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I have seen it, says the Lord.*

The Lord is guiding us in the above passages to a better understanding of His temple. He is addressing our human nature and its impact on the Lord’s temple. He is addressing the manner in which we stand before the Lord which we will discuss further in a moment. But I also wanted to bring another point to your attention, when the Lord states above *“Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely,”* He is referring to the Ten Commandments with this statement and remember the Ten Commandments were placed in the tabernacle within the Ark above which sat the mercy seat.

Now we have a picture in our mind of the Lord’s temple as it was built in this physical world and we have a basic understanding of the Ark and the Mercy Seat. But what about what Our Lord Jesus says in **John 2: 19-22**

*19 Jesus answered and said to them, **Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.** 20 Then the Jews said, “It has taken 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 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.*

Jesus refers to himself, his body as the temple but how can that be when we just went through all those verses about the Lord's temple and Him dwelling in his tabernacle etc. Paul explains in **Acts 7: 48-50**

48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands; as the prophet says, 49 Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will you build me? Says the Lord, or what is the place of My rest? 50 Has My hand not made all these things?"

Thus according to Paul God does not dwell in temples we build. Well, then where does he dwell you might ask?

2 Corinthians 6: 16

*16 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." He goes on to say in verse 17 Therefore, "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you."*

Also 1 Peter 2:5

5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Building line upon line, from the word of God, we see we are the temple of the living God. Understanding the dynamics of how the Lord teaches will help you grasp this revelation. The Old Testament tells us of occurrences which happened in the material, physical world. The essence of these stories is to be applied to our spiritual life. For example in the Old Testament when the Lord calls for unbelieving pagan people to be killed not only are you receiving a historical account but He is also teaching you to kill off any pagan beliefs in your life today. So we learn about our spiritual life from the stories the Lord presented to us from the Old Testament. Consequently, when The Lord is teaching us about his temple in this physical world He is also teaching us about his spiritual temple which is within us. The verses from the New Testament clarify this spiritual picture for us.

Okay, so we understand that we are the temple of the living God. We learned earlier that it was a holy place and that's why an atonement for sin must be made. We learned that a bull or goat was sacrificed and it's blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat as the atonement for sin and this is where Christ blood enters into the equation.

1 Peter 1:18-19

knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Hebrew 9:11-14

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. Not with the blood of goats and calves but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Thus we are the temple of the living God; we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ. We are to be holy for He is holy and we are to keep his ten commandments within us just as they were within the Ark. We are to take to heart the warnings of the prophet Jeremiah and we are to amend our ways.

The temple of the Lord is not a building. It is within you. It is where the Lord dwells. It is where you keep Him close to your obedient heart. Remember **Leviticus 11:44** *“For I am the Lord your God, You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. So Do not trust in these lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord. Trust in the Lord Instead*

The Lord can teach us many lessons from one item, story or illustration. He uses the temple to teach us other lessons as well. From the THH website regarding meetings <http://www.takehisheart.com/goldenmeetingroadmap.htm> with the Lord.

Ephesians 2:19-22

19 Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household (corporate body) of God; 20 And are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building (corporate body) fitly framed together grows to a holy temple (corporate body) in the Lord: (He said He is the Meeting) 22 In whom you also are built together (corporate body) for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

In the above instances the Lord uses the temple to teach us about the corporate body and meeting with Him.

May God Bless and Keep You,
Cindy

<http://www.takehisheart.com>