



ONE TORAH FOR ALL

One Torah shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.
Exodus 12:49

Zerubbabel ben Emunah
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The Dwelling Place of YHWH

Malakim Aleph (1st Kings) 8:10-11

10 And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of YHWH,

11 so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of YHWH filled the house of YHWH.

After Sh'lomo (Solomon) completed building the temple in Jerusalem, and during the dedication of that temple, YHWH came and filled the sanctuary with His cloud. He filled it with His glory. This is very similar to what happened when Israel and Moshe finished building the mishkan in the wilderness at Mount Sinai. In fact, it is because of this similarity, that the portion Pekudei from the Tanak is chosen as the Haftarah portion.

In both cases, the priests could not enter to perform their duties and services which YHWH had commanded. When His glory is present, man needs to do nothing. In fact, there is nothing man can do, except to worship YHWH.

King Sh'lomo then made a curious statement, in that, it was an untrue statement. Here is what Sh'lomo said.

Malakim Aleph (1st Kings) 8:13

"I have surely built You a house of habitation, a place for You to dwell in forever."

Why did this turn out not to be a true declaration? It turned out not to be a true statement for at least two reasons. One of the reasons was because of the sins of Israel. Because Israel went and worshipped and served other gods, YHWH removed them from His land and the temple was destroyed. Therefore, as it turned out, the building that Sh'lomo had built, was not His habitation forever, but rather for only a short time, i.e., only until the temple was destroyed.

The other reason Sh'lomo's statement was not a true statement is found in the following passages.

Malakim Aleph (1st Kings) 8:27

“But will Elohim in very deed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!”

Even king Sh'lomo confessed that the temple he had built could not contain YHWH.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 66:1

Thus says YHWH, “Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; what manner of house will you build for me? And what place shall be My rest?”

The truth is that man cannot build a structure sufficient for YHWH. Only YHWH can do that.

We need to pause here and discuss the place where YHWH chooses to have His name dwell.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:16

“Three times in a year shall all your males appear before YHWH your Elohim in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before YHWH empty.”

There are to be three times in a year that we are to gather together to meet YHWH and to be with His people. One of those times is the feast of Unleavened Bread, which follows Pesach (Passover). It states in the above verse that we are to gather in the place that He will choose to place His name. Historically, in the past that place was Jerusalem. However, today most of us cannot go to Jerusalem to celebrate one feast a year, let alone three feasts a year.

However, there is also another thing to prayerfully consider. Does His name dwell there now? Let us consider this from a Scriptural point of view. First, we must answer the question of what does it mean for His name to dwell there?

Yehoshua (Joshua) 18:1

And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled themselves together at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there; and the land was subdued before them.

When YHWH first brought Israel into the land under the leadership of Yehoshua son of Nun (pronounced noon), He had them set up the tent of meeting at Shiloh. He caused His name to dwell there. It is important to understand that when YHWH speaks of His name dwelling in a place, He is speaking of the mishkan, or the temple, being there. One or the other has to be present and being used for His name to dwell somewhere on earth.

This is what YHWH clearly states in this next passage.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 7:12-14

12 “But you go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I caused My name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel.

**13 And now, because you have done all these works," says YHWH, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you heard not; and I called you, but you answered not;
14 therefore will I do to the house which is called by My name, wherein you trust, and to the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh."**

Not only did YHWH cause His name to stop dwelling in Shiloh by removing the mishkan, but He also laid it in ruins. He states that He will do likewise to Jerusalem. Did He not do this in 70 A.D.? To be sure, He did!

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 26:6

"then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth."

While Jerusalem has been rebuilt, neither the mishkan nor the temple has been set up again. Does His name dwell there as before? No. Will it dwell there again one day in the future? Yes, to be sure, it will. But that day is not yet.

Therefore, while a person could certainly go up to Jerusalem and gather together with others to celebrate His feasts, and it would not be wrong to do that, His name does not now dwell there as He made it to dwell there in the past. Today, for us in the Diaspora, we need to gather together so that He can be in our midst as a people. When we do this in His great name, then He will come and meet with us.

Yechezqel (Ezekiel) 11:16

"Therefore say, 'Thus says Adonai YHWH: "Whereas I have removed them far off among the nations, and whereas I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them a sanctuary for a little while in the countries where they are come."'"

YHWH even tells us that when He scatters us among the nations that He personally will be a sanctuary where we dwell. This way, when we begin to return to Him, we can begin keeping the festivals and other commandments just like He has commanded us to keep them.

Now please consider that in which His glory is supposed to dwell.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 3:16

Do you not know that you are a temple of Elohim, and that the Spirit of Elohim dwells in you?

The temple Sh'lomo built was of mortar and stone. It was a physical edifice built by man. However, a person is created by YHWH. A person is not built by man. YHWH has created man in His image that He might dwell in Him via His Spirit. Let us keep this in mind as we continue.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 3:17

If any man destroys the temple of Elohim, him shall Elohim destroy; for the temple of Elohim is holy, and such are you.

We are then admonished that we are not to destroy this body in which YHWH has placed us, as it is His temple and it is to be treated as set-apart. If a person does not treat this body as set-apart, then YHWH our Elohim will destroy such a person who destroys his own body.

This does not mean that we are to worship our bodies as many do today who make physical training and eating healthily into an act of worship, i.e., worship of self. A person is not to pursue that any more than he is to destroy his body.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 3:18

Let no man deceive himself. If any man thinks that he is wise among you in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise.

What this passage is admonishing us to do is to become foolish concerning the ways of this world. The ways of this world are full of darkness, debauchery, and every evil thing. We are to be foolish, or naïve, concerning these things. It is when a person does not know the ways of this world, but pursues the ways of YHWH, that he can become wise, not as the world counts wisdom, but as YHWH considers wisdom. Let us be wise according to YHWH and forsake the ways of this present darkness.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 6:19-20

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have from Elohim? And you are not your own;

20 for you were bought with a price; glorify YHWH therefore in your body.

When one comes to YHWH through Yeshua, confesses his sins, asks for forgiveness, and accepts Yeshua as his Mashiach, then He forgives him, cleanses him, and fills him with His Spirit. When He fills a person with His Spirit, he becomes a temple of His Spirit.

Also, since He has redeemed us, in effect, purchased our salvation with His own Blood, He owns and holds the title deed to our bodies and to all that we are or ever will be. We belong to Him. Such a person does not belong to himself.

As such, each person is to bring glory and honor to YHWH in all that he says and does.

Considering all this, here is something for us to ponder. Let us bring back to the forefront of our minds, that in the Torah and in the Haftarah portion Pekudei, when the mishkan in the wilderness was completed, and when the temple in Jerusalem was completed, in both cases, YHWH came and filled the dwelling place with His presence. The cloud of His presence was so overwhelming that in both cases the priests could not enter to do the ministry of service YHWH had commanded. In both cases, it was YHWH who filled these respective places with a cloud. It was the cloud which prevented the work of the priests from being done.

Now let us consider what happens in our own personal bodies since Scripture clearly teaches us that our bodies are His temple and He dwells therein. What happens when a person smokes? That person is artificially filling his body with a cloud, a cloud of smoke. In the Torah and Haftarah portions the filling of the dwelling places prevented man from working and worshipping YHWH as

commanded. So this brings us to this question: when a person fills himself with a cloud of smoke, does this prevent YHWH from working in him? Since this cloud is manmade in the Elohim made temple, does it prevent YHWH our Elohim from entering the Elohim made temple (our body) and performing the work necessary for us to have eternal life, in much the same way that when YHWH filled the manmade edifice with His cloud, it prevented man from entering to do the work of service?

We then could expand this question to include drunkenness or any other thing with which a man can fill himself. Whatever it is with which a man might fill himself, does this prevent YHWH from entering in and doing a cleansing work? Let YHWH be your guide to true knowledge and understanding!

This is not to say that YHWH cannot work in a person's life to bring that person to Himself, because He can do as He wills as the Creator of heaven and earth.

Romans 1:29

being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

Notice in the above passage some of the things with which man can fill himself that will prevent the work of YHWH from being done in a person's life. This next passage contrasts that a person should not be filled with wine, but he should be filled with His Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit;

May YHWH fill each one of us to overflowing with His Spirit in grace, truth, and knowledge!

ABBA YHWH, please fill us to overflowing with Your Spirit; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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