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The Appearance of the Sh'khinah Glory
9: 22-24

The appearance of the Sh'khinah glory DIG: Why was it necessary to have a mediator? Who is our mediator today? What does the fact that the bronze altar was heaped with offerings point to? What is important about Moses and Aaron coming out of the Sanctuary? What is the priestly blessing intended to do? What was the reaction of the people to the Sh'khinah?

REFLECT: The bible says, "For there is one mediator between God and mankind, the man Messiah Yeshua (First Timothy 2:5). When was the last time you felt especially in need of your Mediator? How did He help you through that time? How has He helped you since? When was your "tongues of fire" moment? How do you remember it? How can you help others?

Then the Sh'khinah glory of ADONAI appeared to all the people.

In order for the ritual to be properly presented to **ADONAI** (**to see link click Be – The Offerings for the People of Isra'el**), there had to be a mediator. And so the next step in the working out of the pattern of worship, before **the Sh'khinah glory** appeared, was the necessary work of **the high priest**. **The bronze altar** was heaped with **purification, the burnt, and peace offerings.** In the sequence of events recorded for this inaugural service (see **Bb – The Beginning of the Priestly Service**), **Aaron came down from the bronze altar, raised his hands toward the people, and blessed them (9:22).**[136]

The priestly benediction: Then **Moses and Aaron** went together into **the Holy Place** to apply the blood on **the gold altar of incense** (see the commentary on **Exodus Fp – Altar of Incense in the Sanctuary: Christ, Our Advocate with the Father**), and to pray for **YHVH** to fulfill **His** promise to **bless the people** by appearing to **them**. Then **they** both came out and **Aaron blessed the people (9:23).** If we weren't paying attention, it would be easy to miss the significance of

that achievement. **The priesthood** and **the sacrifices** were a success! The proof is that **Moses and Aaron** were able to enter into **the Sanctuary**. **They** were able to draw near, entering into the very **Presence** of **ADONAI**. It was the first time anyone had been able to enter **the Sanctuary** since **Exodus 40:34-35**. Now we read that **Moshe and Aaron** entered **the Sanctuary**, emerged from **it** and again **blessed the children of Isra'el.**

This is known as **the Aaronic Priestly Blessing**. It was, and is, intended to put **the Name of ADONAI** upon **the people of Isra'el**. **Traditionally, the priests blessed the people every morning after morning burnt offerings at the Tabernacle (and later the Temple). When recited, the priest raised his hands with the palms facing outward and the thumbs of his outspread hands touching. The four fingers on each hand are split into two sets of two fingers each (thus forming the letter Shin, an emblem for Shaddai).**[137] **ADONAI said to Moshe, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, and tell them that this is how you are to bless the people of Isra'el: you are to say to them, 'May ADONAI bless you and keep you. May ADONAI make His face shine on you and show you His favor. May ADONAI lift up His face toward you and give you peace' (Numbers 6:22-26)."**

This **blessing** is known by three different names, It is called the "Priestly Blessing" because **the priesthood** was commanded to bless **Isra'el** with it. Each day, following the daily, continual burnt offering, **the priests** would recite this **blessing** over **the Israelites**. It is also called *duchaning* (*the going up to the* platform) because in Temple times, **the priests** would first ascend to a platform (*duchan*) before conferring **the blessing**. The third name by which this blessing is called is "the lifting of the hands" because in Temple times, **the priests** would lift up their hands and make the sign of the Hebrew letter *shin* with their fingers (made famous by Spock on Star Trek). The *shin* is an accepted **Jewish** abbreviation for **the Name of God**. This was practiced in Temple times to fulfill the commandment: **In this way they are to put My name on the people of Isra'el, so that I will bless them (Numbers 6:27).**[138]



The appearance of the Sh'khinah glory: The Aaronic blessing was immediately followed by a startling manifestation of the presence of **ADONAI**. **Then the Sh'khinah glory of ADONAI appeared to all the people** (see the commentary on **Isaiah Ju – The Glory of the LORD Rises Upon You**)**! Fire came forth from the presence of ADONAI, consuming the burnt offering and the fat on the altar (9:24a).** In consuming **the sacrifices**, **YHVH** signaled **His** approval. **He** had brought **Isra'el** near. **Their** *korbanot* (*things brought near*) had been accepted. **Fire** shot out from inside **the Sanctuary** and consumed the heap of **sacrifice**s that **Aaron and his sons** had laid upon **the bronze altar**.[139]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, **You** are **the Light of the world**! **Your** glory is magnificent! Someday soon, all who love **You**, will live with **You** in **Your** eternal home in heaven **(John 14:1-3)**. I thank **You** so much for all it cost **You**, the great pain and shame of my redemption, by **Yeshua's** death and resurrection. I desire to live as a bright light for **You**, shining out by my acts of love that tell others of **Your** holy love and also of **Your** righteous judgment for those who love themselves as more than they love **You**. **And the testimony is this – that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has life; the one who does not have Ben-Elohim does not have life (First John 5:11-12). You** are my joy**!** In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

When all the people saw it. When the Hebrew text tells us that **all the people saw it (9:24b), the Hebrew idiom means the vast majority, not necessarily every single individual.** Nevertheless, **the fire** was such that it made an impression on **the** whole **nation**. It was not a little **fire**. Nor could **it** have been merely **a fire** on **the bronze altar** if **all the people saw it**. **It** had to be visible

even on **its** way down from **the LORD** in order for a gathering of some two million to have seen **it**.

They shouted (Hebrew: *vaiyaronnu*) **for joy (9:24c):** Then we are told that **the people** *sang a glad song.* The root of the Hebrew word in this text is *ranan.* It is used elsewhere to signify *ringing cries,* especially in prayers and joy. **Targum Onkelos rendered it, "and they praised."** Putting it all together, it seems that **when all the people saw the Sh'khinah** and **the fire**, **they shouted** a great noise of praise and worship, a sound of joy.

No matter when **God's fire** came down from heaven to consume an **offering** it always had the same reactions from **the people**. **And they fell** (Hebrew: *vaiyippelu*) **on their faces** to worship **the LORD** in reverence and awe **(9:24d). They** worshiped with the same fervency as when **they** first came out of Egypt. It truly was a time of national unity in **their** devotion to the **God** who redeemed **them** and entered into a personal relationship with **them**. Between **the Sh'khinah** and blessing, **the children of Isra'el** must have felt so accepted and intimate with **the LORD**. **God** was dwelling with **His people**, and **His people** had access to **His Presence**.

The goal which **ADONAI** set for **Isra'el** in the words: **Let them build Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell among them (Exodus 25:8)** was achieved at last. The appearance of **the Sh'khinah glory** within **the Sanctuary** and descent of the heavenly **fire were** the culmination of the miraculous events signaling that intimacy had been established between **the nation of Isra'el** and **her God**. The supreme dignity of **Isra'el** as **the chosen people** was being confirmed by **the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob Himself**.

Tongues of fire: There was another time in **Isra'el's** history when **fire** came down from **ADONAI** in a miraculous way. The instance is recorded in **Acts Chapter 2** (see the commentary on **Acts Al – The Ruach Ha'Kodesh Comes at Shavu'ot**). And it happened when **the people of Isra'el** were worshiping at the Temple – *also offering the prescribed sacrifices!* **The fire** on that day was the visible manifestation of the coming **Spirit of God** to empower **the Jewish believers** in **Yeshua** to share the Good News of **Messiah** with thousands of other **Jews** who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate **Shavu'ot** from all over the Diaspora. As a result, because **Ha'Shem** gave **the Jewish believers** a supernatural spiritual gift to speak the languages of the worshipers from all over the world, about 3,000 **Jewish people** came to have their sins atoned for by trusting in **Yeshua the Messiah**. On

that occasion, as in **Leviticus Chapter 9, fire** miraculously came from **the LORD**, there was atonement for sins, and great blessing came upon **the people of Isra'el**.

It would have been wonderful to write at this point, "and they lived happily ever after." But as the text indicates, it was not meant to be In fact, some commentators say that right from the beginning of this parashah (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Af – Parashah**) we have a hint that it was not all going to be singing and rejoicing from then until eternity. **The midrash speaks of this when it says, "Whenever the words *vayehi bimei* (literally, now it came about** (as seen in **Leviticus 9:1**)**, or and it came to pass in the days of) are used in Scripture, there is misfortune connected to it (Vayikra Rabba 11.7).** Sadly, such is the case here in **Leviticus** (see **Bh – The Death of Nadab and Abihu**).[140]