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The Glory of the LORD Filled the Tabernacle 40: 34-38

The glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle DIG: Why couldn't Moses have installed the Sh'khinah glory himself? How important was the physical presence of God to the Israelites here compared to their exodus from Egypt, or the giving of the Torah? Why? What purpose for the Tabernacle did the Sh'khinah glory confirm? What role did the Sh'khinah glory play in confirming it when it was time to travel again?

REFLECT: When in your life did you most noticeably feel the physical presence of God? How is it made real to you now? What most reassures you about God's presence in your life? Are you willing to move as YHVH directs?



The promise that **God** would indeed dwell with **His** people was finally fulfilled. **Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the Sh'khinah glory of ADONAI filled the** Sanctuary. It is important to understand that the Hebrew verb translated **filled** is in the infinitive state, which means it reflects an ongoing, dynamic situation. That means that **ADONAI** would be with **His** people on a continuous basis, and **He** would go with them as they traveled to the Promised Land.

Although **Moses** had earlier said: **Show me your glory (33:18)**, even he **could not enter the Tabernacle, because** the sight of **God's glory** within was so overwhelming and awe-inspiring. **(40:34-35)**. Therefore, **the Sh'khinah glory**

then dwelt in the midst of the people of **Isra'el**. It would remain there until Solomon would build the Temple (**First Kings, Chapters 9 and 10**). At that time, **the Sh'khinah glory** left the Tabernacle and took up residence in the Most Holy Place in the Temple. It would remain there until shortly before the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians in 586 BC. **Ezeki'el** describes the three-stage departure (**Ezeki'el 10:3-5; 10:18-19; 11:23**). When **Christ** returns to rule and reign for a thousand years, the Temple will be rebuilt and **the Sh'khinah glory** will once again dwell in the midst of the nation of **Isra'el (Eze 43:1-5)**.

In all the travels of the Israelites, whenever the cloud lifted from above the Tabernacle, they would set out. But if the cloud did not lift, they did not set out - until the day it lifted. So the cloud of ADONAI was over the Tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the house of Isra'el during their travels (40:36-38). The book of **Exodus** ends with a short poetic unit regarding this **cloud** (see the commentary on **Numbers Bk - The Pillar of Cloud and Fire**). The verbs in this paragraph are imperfects, which point to the fact that they occurred repeatedly (see **Numbers Chapters 9 and 10**). This was the method throughout the forty years of wilderness wanderings. But **the pillar of cloud and fire** was different than the Sh'khinah glory. The Sh'khinah dwelt permanently in **the Tabernacle**, while **the cloud** changed depending if it was daytime or nighttime, **it** dwelt outside of **the Tabernacle**, and **it** moved.

Haftarah P'kudei: M'lakhim Alef (First Kings) 7:51-8:21 (A); 7:40-50 (S)

(See my commentary on Deuteronomy [Af](#) - Parashah)

The Ruach Ha'Kodesh is brought to the forefront in the dedication of **Solomon's Temple** in the same way **He** was witnessed at the dedication of **the Tabernacle**. But at the dedication of **Solomon's Temple, the Sh'khinah glory filled the Temple** so much, that **the priests could not perform their service**. This spectacular event was seen by **the whole assembly of the people (First Kings 8:10-11 and 14)**. Next, **Solomon** gave thanks for **YHVH** fulfilling **His** word that **David's son** would **build a house for ADONAI** and **sit upon the throne (First Kings 8:20)**. The concluding verse makes the interesting comment that **Solomon** had **provided a place for the Ark (First Kings 8:21)**. Long ago, **Moshe** once spread the curtains of **the Tabernacle**, and then followed up by bringing **the Ark**, with the tablets of stone, into **the Most Holy Place (Exodus 40:17-19)**. Now, **Solomon** does the same thing, with the same result!

B'rit Chadashah suggested reading for Parashah P'kudei: Revelation 15:5-8

John, on the island of Patmos, **looked and saw the Most Holy Place in heaven opened (Revelation 15:5)**. The Tabernacle on the earth during **Moses'** day was a mere replica of **the true Tabernacle in heaven (Hebrews 8:2)**. During the Great Tribulation, **seven angels will emerge from the Most Holy Place with the seven bowls of plagues (15:6)**. The TaNaKh teaches that once a year on the Day of Atonement, the high priest would take a bowl of blood from a goat into **the Most Holy Place**. He would dip his fingers in the bowl and sprinkle the goat's blood on the mercy seat. This was done to offer atonement for the sins of **the people of Isra'el** for the previous year. Since **the antichrist** and his followers will not accept the blood of **Yeshua** as an atonement for their sins, **one of the four living creatures** will give **the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God (Jeremiah 25:15)**, and instead of sprinkling the blood on the mercy seat, **they** will pour them out upon a sinful and unrepentant world **(15:7)**. **Then, the sanctuary was filled with smoke from God's Sh'khinah (Exodus 34-35; First Kings 8:10-11; Isaiah 6:1-4), that is, from His power; and no one could enter the Sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels had accomplished their purpose (15:8)**.

There will be a day in the future, when **Moses** will see **the glory of Christ** in all **His** fullness. **Moses and Elijah appeared** on the Mount of Transfiguration with the radiant **Christ** and **spoke to Him about His departure**, or *exodus* in the Greek text of the New Covenant. **Moses** had led his people in an *exodus* from Egypt, and then, nearly fifteen hundred years later, **Luke** was talking about a second *exodus*, which **Jesus** would make from this world. Sharing that moment of revelation on the mountain through sleep filled eyes were three of **Jesus'** disciples. When they looked at **Jesus**, they **saw His glory (Luke 9:31-32)** along with **Moses and Elijah**. Needless to say, **Moses** saw that **glory** also, and his centuries long wait had been very worthwhile. For **Moses**, faith had finally become sight.

What do the closing verses of this book have to say to us? Many times I have quoted the book of **Hebrews** to help us understand the book of **Exodus**. That is because **Hebrews 3:1** through **4:13** is somewhat of a commentary on **Exodus**, at least more so than any other section of the New Covenant. The basic analogy that the writer to the **Hebrews** draws is that **Isra'el's** desert wanderings correspond to our daily lives as we journey to our Canaan.

Therefore, the end of **Exodus** is among the most applicable parts of the book. These last verses have something to say to us, since we too, have been delivered and are waiting to arrive at our final destination. We, like the **Hebrews**, are poised to reach our rest.

On this journey, we follow our holy **Redeemer** as **He** leads and guides us to the Promised Land. Admittedly, there is no **cloud** overhead, but we have **the Holy Spirit** living within us. **He** brings us to our final destination just as surely as the **cloud** guided **the Israelites** to theirs. We should take comfort in this. **ADONAI** of the exodus *is still guiding*. **He** is present with **His** people wherever they go, not only to Canaan, but also to **a better country - a heavenly one (Hebrews 11:16)**.

The end of **Exodus** is the end of one story, but the beginning of many others. This was not only true for **the Israelites**, whose triumphs and tragedies we have seen, but for us as well. We who have been redeemed by **Jesus Christ** are also poised daily for journeys that we will take. This is the recurring theme in C. S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* series. As we reach the end of **Exodus**, I am reminded of how Lewis ends his series, on the final page of *The Last Battle*, He writes,

Now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth has read; which goes on forever, and which every chapter is better than the one before.

This is the message of **Exodus**. This is the message of the gospel.⁷²⁸

Hazak, hazak, v'nik'chazek!

Be strong, be strong, and let us be strengthened!