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MINISTRIES

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Parashah Points: Pekudei – God’s Dwelling Place

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Pekudei, which is Hebrew for “accounts,” and it goes from Exodus 38:21 – Exodus 40:38.

This Torah portion tells of the setting up of the tabernacle and the glory of the Lord filling it.

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re going to share some thoughts on the significance of God’s glory filling the tabernacle and how it anticipates something bigger.

For the past couple of Torah Portions, we’ve been learning about the construction of the tabernacle. In this week’s Torah Portion, the work is finally finished. All the furnishings are arranged in accordance with God’s direction. The priests are washed and anointed. And then something amazing happens:

Exodus 40:34

[Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord \[YHWH\] filled the tabernacle.](#)

God’s dwelling was among his people. The eternal presence of YHWH inhabited a temporal space within a tent in the wilderness. A finite physical structure on earth somehow housed the infinite.

However, as glorious as the tabernacle was, God is much too big to be contained in a tent. The tabernacle was a foretaste—it pointed forward toward a greater outpouring of God’s glory to come.

We see this anticipation again centuries later. King David is inspired to design a beautiful temple in which the presence of God would dwell. David’s son, King Solomon, built this temple according to his father’s design. When the temple is dedicated, something amazing happens again—the glory of YHWH fills the temple just like it filled the tabernacle:

1 Kings 8:10-11

And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord [YHWH], so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord [YHWH] filled the house of the Lord [YHWH].

The temple was magnificent, but even this amazing structure could not contain the infinite YHWH, as Solomon himself acknowledged (1 Kings 8:27). YHWH's vision was for His glory to fill His entire creation.

Sadly, when Israel was taken into exile in Babylon, Solomon's temple was destroyed (Jeremiah 52). During the exile, the prophet Ezekiel foretold of a new temple that would be built. He said this new temple would be even more magnificent than Solomon's. The glory of YHWH will fill it (Ezekiel 43:1-4) and it will have living water flowing from the sanctuary, bringing life and healing to the whole land (Ezekiel 47:1-12). Once again, a greater outpouring of God's glory is prophesied to come.

However, when Israel returned from exile and rebuilt the temple, it didn't live up to the hype of Ezekiel's prophecies. According to the prophet Haggai, the second temple was "as nothing" compared to the splendor of Solomon's temple (Haggai 2:3). There is no mention of YHWH's glory filling the temple like it had before (Ezra 6:13-15). However, YHWH promised that "in a little while" his glory *would* fill it, and this temple's latter glory will be greater than its former glory. This event is also accompanied by a promise that God would bring peace (Haggai 2:6-9).

The second temple was later expanded and adorned under King Herod, and it even surpassed the size and magnificence of Solomon's temple. The best part is that the glory of YHWH *did* eventually return to dwell among us in accordance with Haggai's prophecy—though it wasn't in the way anyone expected at the time. God made His dwelling among us in His Son, Yeshua the Messiah:

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Colossians 1:19-20

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Since Haggai's prophecy, the only reference to the glory of YHWH entering the second temple before it was destroyed was when Yeshua entered it to chase out the moneychangers (John 2:13-17). The temple was intended to be a house of prayer but it had been turned into a "den of robbers" (Matthew 21:13). After this event, Yeshua interpreted the temple in terms of his own body, which would be destroyed and raised up again in three days (John 2:19-22).

Yeshua's connection to the temple becomes even clearer during his conversation with the Samaritan woman. Yeshua declared himself to be the source of the living water, making a direct allusion to the waters of life that flow from the sanctuary of the temple in Ezekiel's vision (John 4:10-14). The Holy Spirit is later portrayed as this living water, echoing a number of passages that connect the Spirit with water (Isaiah 44:3; Joel 2:28; Ezekiel 36:25-27). Furthermore, those who believe in Yeshua will, themselves, become connected to this source from which the living water flows (John 7:38-39).

After Yeshua's resurrection, the Holy Spirit was poured out on his disciples in the Book of Acts, dwelling within them and empowering them to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and

eventually to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8). Throughout the New Testament, followers of Messiah are portrayed as the temple where God's presence dwells (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:4-5). The dwelling place of God began expanding from Jerusalem to fill the entire earth, and continues to this day through Messiah's followers.

This fits the trajectory of Scripture's teaching on the Temple. God's dwelling grows from the tabernacle to Solomon's temple to Herod's temple. The expansion continues through Messiah's body—his followers. God's dwelling among Yeshua's followers, through the Spirit, does not diminish the value of the physical temple. But the temple was always intended to function as a symbol pointing toward this greater outpouring of God's presence through the Messiah.

The greater outpouring of God's glory has come, and it continues to flow through his people until "the whole earth is full of his glory," like we see in Isaiah's temple vision (Isaiah 6:3). And at the end of the age, God will establish a new heaven and new earth, bringing down a New Jerusalem from heaven (Revelation 21:1-2). There will be no physical temple in this New Jerusalem because "its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (Revelation 21:22). The river of life will flow from the throne of God and the Lamb, bringing life and healing to the world (Revelation 22:1-5).

Finally, at long last, the dwelling of God will be with man in fullness:

Revelation:21:3

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries

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