GLORY OF YAHWEH

by Rev. Vince Finnegan

The tabernacle in the wilderness was a specific location for Yahweh to dwell among His people. He said of this place, “I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God. They shall know that I am the Lord [Yahweh] their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them; I am the Lord [Yahweh] their God.”

The tabernacle provided tangible evidence of the presence of Yahweh; it was a place to receive forgiveness of sins and to worship Him. Yahweh gave meticulous, detailed instruction on the construction of the tabernacle and placed His spirit upon the builders so that, in the end, it was exactly what He wanted. He even provided instruction on how to bring the implements into the tabernacle. He consecrated the tent, altar, Aaron, and his sons. After all was set, His glory filled the tabernacle signifying Yahweh’s approval and presence.

The cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD [Yahweh] filled the tabernacle. Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD [Yahweh] filled the tabernacle” (Exodus 40:34 and 35).
The tabernacle was supposed to remain central for Israel in the wilderness and eventually in the Promised Land. Howbeit, they failed to maintain reverence for Yahweh, and the tabernacle faded in significance to them. After hundreds of years of neglect, David, a man after God’s own heart, brought the Ark of the Covenant that was in the tabernacle into Jerusalem and restored its centrality and significance to Israel.

David earnestly desired for Yahweh to have a more permanent dwelling place in God’s city, Jerusalem, and made provisions by collecting the money and materials necessary for building the Temple. David’s son Solomon carried out the construction under God’s direction. The Scriptures reveal that Yahweh provided the same kind of meticulous, detailed instruction with the construction of the Temple and placed His spirit upon the builders, so that in the end it was exactly what He wanted. As with the tabernacle, so with the Temple – the glory of Yahweh came upon it.

2Chronicles 7:1-3
Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD [Yahweh] filled the house. The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD [Yahweh] because the glory of the LORD [Yahweh] filled the LORD’S [Yahweh’s] house.
All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and \textit{the glory of the LORD [Yahweh]} upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD [Yahweh], saying, "truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

Shamefully and deplorably, Israel failed miserably to maintain faithfulness to Yahweh and in time brought idols into to the holy Temple and worshipped them instead of Yahweh. In the place of which the psalmist said, “O Yahweh, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells” (Psalm 26:8) and “…In His temple everything says, ‘Glory!’” (Psalm 29:9), they worshipped vile idols. Their filthy, irreverent behavior desecrated Yahweh’s holy sanctuary and caused Him to withdraw His glory.

Ezekiel 8:6
Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations which the house of Israel are committing here, so that I would be far from my sanctuary?"

Yahweh showed the prophets Israel’s despicable, idolatrous behavior, with Ezekiel receiving perhaps the most graphic and shocking revelations. Additionally, God also foretold of the destruction of the nation, city, and Temple if Israel did not repent. They failed to
respond; therefore, the destruction which was foretold happened in Ezekiel’s lifetime. Ezekiel received extraordinary revelation wherein he saw the glory of Yahweh moving carried by the four cherubim and four wheels. Directly before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Babylonians, Ezekiel observed the glory of the Yahweh move away from the Temple.

Ezekiel 11:22 and 23
Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them. The glory of the LORD [Yahweh] went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain, which is east of the city.

Both the tabernacle and the Temple were sanctified or consecrated by Yahweh’s glory, according to Exodus 29:43. Once His glory was removed, the Temple was no longer holy and, therefore, was fit for destruction.

In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, seventy years after Israel’s captivity, the Israelites returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the city and the Temple, but nothing is said about the glory of the Yahweh returning to the Temple. The rededication and the offering were meager at best in comparison to the time of David and Solomon.

The second Temple, Herod’s Temple, existed between 516 BC and 70 AD. Herod the Great was interested in
perpetuating his name for the ages through building projects, so among other things, he built temples for various pagan gods and the Temple for the Jews. He completely rebuilt the Temple, even going so far as to replace the foundation stones and to smooth off the surface of the Temple Mount. Obviously, Herod’s motivation was the opposite of David’s and Solomon’s with the first Temple. Yahweh’s complete involvement and direction seen in the first was lacking with Herod’s, as was the Ark of the Covenant, the sacred fire, plus the glory of Yahweh. The Romans under Titus destroyed this Temple during the siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD. No reconstruction has happened since save the Dome of the Rock, a pagan temple constructed in 691 AD by the Muslins. So, in the place that was once Yahweh’s holy city, on His holy mount, where His holy Temple stood, for over 1,300 years, there is a pagan temple!

On the other hand, Yahweh promised that the day will come when His Son will return, and just as David once did, he will take control of Jerusalem and bring back the Temple and the Glory of Yahweh. Ezekiel, among other prophets, tells of this new Temple.

Ezekiel 43:4 and 5

The glory of the LORD [Yahweh] came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east and the spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold,
the glory of the LORD [Yahweh] filled the house.

Haggai 2:6-7
For thus says the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts. The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts. The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace,’ declares the LORD [Yahweh] of hosts.”