

HABITATIONS OF PRAISE

“Go to Shiloh!”

The purpose of this message is to see that God’s desire is that we worship Him. The Lord over time has instituted different structures and customs to facilitate this worship, but these forms and customs were never to take the place of Him. They were only symbols of who He is and not Him in themselves. In order to do this, we are going to go forward in time from the tabernacle of David to look backward in time before the tabernacle of David to gain an appreciation of the Tabernacle of David. When God does a new thing, at times it helps to understand the state of the old order to fully appreciate the radical nature of the new revelation God is moving in.

Jer 7:1-14

- 1 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:
- 2 "Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and there proclaim this message: "Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD.
- 3 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place.
- 4 Do not trust in deceptive words and say, "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!"
- 5 If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly,
- 6 if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm,
- 7 then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your forefathers for ever and ever.
- 8 But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.
- 9 "Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known,
- 10 and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe"--safe to do all these detestable things?
- 11 Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.
- 12 "Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.
- 13 While you were doing all these things, declares the LORD, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer.
- 14 Therefore, what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your fathers. NIV

Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem in the twilight of the Judaic kingdom. This word, “Go now to Shiloh,” put him at risk of a death sentence by the priests and other prophets and resulted in the death of one of his contemporaries. In Jeremiah’s day, the people of Judea had trust in the Temple. Because they had the Temple, they felt that God would cover them. They didn’t realize that God was more interested in a holy people than He was in a holy place.

“Go to Shiloh and see what I did to that house,” the Lord declared to his people. What was Shiloh and what happened there?

Josh 18:1

1 The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there. The country was brought under their control, NIV

Shiloh is where Joshua set up the Tabernacle of Moses as a semi-permanent worship site in the land. It became the religious center of the nation and it is thought that permanent structures were built near it for the priests to dwell and serve in.

1 Sam 1:1-3

1 There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.

2 He had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.

3 Year after year this man went up from his town to worship and sacrifice to the LORD Almighty at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the LORD. NIV

This is about three hundred years later in Israel's history. Eli, who was from Ithamar's line, served as high priest and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests unto the Lord.

1 Sam 2:27-35 NIV

27 Now a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "This is what the LORD says: 'Did I not clearly reveal myself to your father's house when they were in Egypt under Pharaoh?

28 I chose your father out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod in my presence. I also gave your father's house all the offerings made with fire by the Israelites.

29 Why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for my dwelling? Why do you honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choice parts of every offering made by my people Israel?'

30 "Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and your father's house would minister before me forever.' But now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained.

31 The time is coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your family line

32 and you will see distress in my dwelling. Although good will be done to Israel, in your family line there will never be an old man.

33 Every one of you that I do not cut off from my altar will be spared only to blind your eyes with tears and to grieve your heart, and all your descendants will die in the prime of life.

34 "'And what happens to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will be a sign to you—they will both die on the same day.

35 I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his house, and he will minister before my anointed one always.

Because of the wickedness of Eli's sons and his failure to restrain them, the Lord was going to remove His glory from Israel. When the priests of God live unholily, they give the Lord a bad

name among the heathen. In the same way, when we present ourselves as Christians to the world but act ungodly, we give God a bad name among the unsaved.

1 Sam 4:1-3

- 1 And Samuel's word came to all Israel. Now the Israelites went out to fight against the Philistines. The Israelites camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines at Aphek.
- 2 The Philistines deployed their forces to meet Israel, and as the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand of them on the battlefield.
- 3 When the soldiers returned to camp, the elders of Israel asked, "Why did the LORD bring defeat upon us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the LORD's covenant from Shiloh, so that it may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies."

The elders of Israel expressed their faith in a thing, the ark. They wanted the ark to save them from their enemies. Their action shows their spiritual short-sightedness. In the history of Israel, what did defeat in battle usually mean? It usually meant that there was a sin problem nationally. Instead of seeking God for deliverance, they went to an artistic artifact as though it would save them. This is like the serpent Moses had made in the wilderness. King Hezekiah had to destroy it because the people had been worshipping it as an idol. Simply because God works through an object (like the handkerchiefs of Paul) does not mean that the object is powerful of itself. We must never lose focus on the True source, God Almighty.

1 Sam 4:4-11

- 4 So the people sent men to Shiloh, and they brought back the ark of the covenant of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim. And Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.
- 5 When the ark of the LORD's covenant came into the camp, all Israel raised such a great shout that the ground shook.
- 6 Hearing the uproar, the Philistines asked, "What's all this shouting in the Hebrew camp?" When they learned that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp,
- 7 the Philistines were afraid. "A god has come into the camp," they said. "We're in trouble! Nothing like this has happened before.
- 8 Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? They are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the desert.
- 9 Be strong, Philistines! Be men, or you will be subject to the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Be men, and fight!"
- 10 So the Philistines fought, and the Israelites were defeated and every man fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great; Israel lost thirty thousand foot soldiers.
- 11 The ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died. NIV

The ark was present and there was a great shout. But it was not the shout of the Lord. It was a shout in the flesh and brought no deliverance. There was great emotion in the camp of Israel; excitement, enthusiasm, and even courage. But the flesh never wins in a spiritual battle. As God had spoken, Hophni and Phinehas died on the same day.

1 Sam 4:12-22

- 12 That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh, his clothes torn and dust on his head.
- 13 When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair by the side of the road, watching, because his heart feared for the ark of God. When the man entered the town and told what had happened, the whole town sent up a cry.
- 14 Eli heard the outcry and asked, "What is the meaning of this uproar?" The man hurried over to Eli,
- 15 who was ninety-eight years old and whose eyes were set so that he could not see.
- 16 He told Eli, "I have just come from the battle line; I fled from it this very day." Eli asked, "What happened, my son?"
- 17 The man who brought the news replied, "Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has suffered heavy losses. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured."
- 18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward off his chair by the side of the gate. His neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man and heavy. He had led Israel forty years.
- 19 His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near the time of delivery. When she heard the news that the ark of God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she went into labor and gave birth, but was overcome by her labor pains.
- 20 As she was dying, the women attending her said, "Don't despair; you have given birth to a son." But she did not respond or pay any attention.
- 21 She named the boy Ichabod, saying, "The glory has departed from Israel"-because of the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband.
- 22 She said, "The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured." NIV

Phinehas' wife named her child Ichabod, the glory has departed. The unthinkable had happened to Israel. Not only had they lost the battle, but they had actually lost the ark of the covenant. The very thing that they had put their hope in, that which the Lord had told Moses to build to house the covenant with Israel and act as a physical contact point of His presence, was gone. It is hard to imagine the impact on this on the nation. For forty years they had followed the ark in the wilderness. The tabernacle itself was built with the express purpose of housing the ark. Without it, the Tabernacle of Moses was all form and no power because without the ark there was no presence of God. This is why she name the boy Ichabod, for in the mind of the Israelites, the presence of the physical ark was synonymous with the presence of the Lord.

Hophni and Phinehas proved that they had no regard for the holiness of the Lord in the manner in which they lived their lives. Scripture calls them "sons of Belial."

1 Sam 2:12

Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD. KJV

They were sons of worthlessness, they did not know the Lord. They were presumptuous in their actions in at least three ways:

- ◆ The ark was only to be moved when the glory cloud moved.
- ◆ The ark was to be covered by the veil. The tabernacle was still standing.
- ◆ Hophni and Phinehas took the ark. Without dismantling the Tabernacle, this meant that they had to go into the holy of holies, which was only allowable by the high priest.

The sin of presumption leads to defeat in the face of the enemy. The news was tragic enough to cause Eli to die.

How is this like Jeremiah's time?

Jer 3:16

16 In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land," declares the LORD, "men will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another one be made. NIV

2 Chron 35:1-3

1 Josiah celebrated the Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and the Passover lamb was slaughtered on the fourteenth day of the first month.

2 He appointed the priests to their duties and encouraged them in the service of the LORD's temple.

3 He said to the Levites, who instructed all Israel and who had been consecrated to the LORD: "Put the sacred ark in the temple that Solomon son of David king of Israel built. It is not to be carried about on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and his people Israel. NIV

Early in Jeremiah's career, the ark of the covenant was not in the Temple. It has never been recovered. The days of Jeremiah were like the days of Eli in that Israel was seeking comfort in physical symbols, but they were not seeking God. In a word, they were being religious. In presumption, Hophni and Phinehas lost the ark of the covenant. It would not be sought after in worship for another hundred years.

Sixty-some years from Israel's defeat at Ebenezer, a Philistine champion confronted the armies of Israel. 1 Samuel 17 documents his encounter with a young shepherd. The Targum of Jonathan gives an amplification of what Goliath challenged the Israelites with.

1 Samuel 17:8

And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me.

[I a Philistine] The Targum adds much to this speech. This is the substance: "I am Goliath the Philistine of Gath, who killed the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas the priests; and led into captivity the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, and placed it in the temple of Dagon my god; and it remained in the cities of the Philistines seven months. Also, in all our battles I have gone at the head of the army, and we conquered and cut down men, and laid them as low as the dust of the earth; and to this day the Philistines have not granted me the honour of being chief of a thousand men. And ye, men of Israel, what noble exploit has Saul, the son of Kish, of Gibeah, done, that ye should have made him king over you? If he be a hero, let him come down himself and fight with me; but if he be a weak or cowardly man, then choose you out a man that he may come down to me." (from Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Biblesoft)

You know the story, the shepherd boy David killed the giant. He would not only gain the victory through the spirit of the Lord, he would also regain the glory of the Lord for Israel.

Ps 78:1-4

A maskil of Asaph.

1 O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old--

3 what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us.

4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. NIV

We should tell our kids of the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord.

Ps 78:55-61

55 He drove out nations before them and allotted their lands to them as an inheritance; he settled the tribes of Israel in their homes.

56 But they put God to the test and rebelled against the Most High; they did not keep his statutes.

57 Like their fathers they were disloyal and faithless, as unreliable as a faulty bow.

58 They angered him with their high places; they aroused his jealousy with their idols.

59 When God heard them, he was very angry; he rejected Israel completely.

60 He abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent he had set up among men.

61 He sent [the ark of] his might into captivity, his splendor into the hands of the enemy. NIV

The ark was lost.

Ps 78:62-72

62 He gave his people over to the sword; he was very angry with his inheritance.

63 Fire consumed their young men, and their maidens had no wedding songs;

64 their priests were put to the sword, and their widows could not weep.

65 Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, as a man wakes from the stupor of wine.

66 He beat back his enemies; he put them to everlasting shame.

67 Then he rejected the tents of Joseph, he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim;

68 but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which he loved.

69 He built his sanctuary like the heights, like the earth that he established forever.

70 He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens;

71 from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance.

72 And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them. NIV

Gen 49:8-10

8 "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you.

9 Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?

10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. NKJV

David was the commencement of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Messiah's coming. He was the vessel through which the Lord built his sanctuary in Jerusalem.

Both the Tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon are all structural shadows. We are given dimensions, materials, colors, etc. They were both types that exemplified structure through structure; the structure of sacrifice, cleansing, and approach as well as the structure of time and the universe.

The tabernacle of David is a concept shadow. We are only given the ark and the tent, God and his residence. The importance and significance is placed not on the structure, but what occurred within it. All the types point to ideals; ideal worship, praise, access, kingdom, and warfare.

To understand the heart of worship in the tabernacle of David, we need to understand David's heart and what was in the heart of the tabernacle. To this end, we will be looking at the movements of the ark of the covenant and David's life.