

יהוה

“YHWH-Shammah: The Lord is There”

Introduction-

One of the purposes of this study is to better understand our Heavenly Father's nature. Accordingly, we are examining the redemptive names of God in relational groupings. One of the first things a child knows of his father is that the father provides for him.

Luke 11:11-13

11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?

12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" NIV

How is the father seen as the provider? Traditionally, the father works and supplies the where with all for the family to survive. At an early age, the child learns that although the mother is the nurturer, the father works to provide for the family. This provision takes the form of supplying the material needs of the family, helping the sick and injured (“Honey, can you carry the baby upstairs?”), and giving direction to the activities of the family.

Accordingly, we have looked at YHWH-Jireh, the Lord Who Sees and Provides; YHWH-Rapha, the Lord Who Heals Me; and YHWH-Ro'iy, the Lord Who Shepherds Me.

It is in the role of shepherd that father's basic role of provider takes on the added dimension of heart relationship. It is as shepherds that we become engaged with the personalities of our children.

John 10:2-3, 14

2 The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep.

3 The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. **He calls his own sheep by name** and leads them out.

14 "I am the good shepherd; **I know my sheep and my sheep know me**- NIV

A shepherd who is only concerned about providing for his flock ultimately winds up acting like the hireling. He will run away when danger comes. But the Good Shepherd is engaged with his sheep, not just physically by supplying food but mentally and emotionally as well. He knows their names and he knows their personalities.

So the role of shepherd, though a providing role, brings us into the class of redemptive names that deal specifically with fellowship. These names are YHWH-Shammah and YHWH-Shalom. We will deal with YHWH-Shalom at a later date.

I. The Presence

Ezek 48:35b

"And the name of the city from that time on will be: THE LORD IS THERE." NIV

YHWH-Shammah, the Lord Is There. If we think on this name for a little while, it may cause us no small consternation. First of all, our God is omnipresent, so what's so important about Him being there? And the word "there" is a little troublesome as well. Shouldn't He be here, wouldn't that be of greater comfort? And last but not least, the verse clearly states that it is the name of a city – not God! What gives?

Well, these are the types of problems we run into if we only meditate on the Scripture a little while! One of the principles of Hermeneutics is the Principle of First Mention.

Gen 2:8

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and **there** he put the man whom he had formed. KJV

*The word **sham** appears 834 times in the Old Testament. And even though it is a simple preposition used in many ways, isn't interesting that its first use deals with dwelling? "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and **there** he put the man." Adam dwelled in the garden, the **there** of where the Lord put Him.*

In Ezekiel's vision, Jerusalem gets renamed "The Lord Is There" because the presence of God is dwelling there. This takes us back to our first problem.

Ps 139:7-10

7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. NIV

God is everywhere! This is a truth that even the pagans of Paul's day realized.

Acts 17:28

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. KJV

So, if God is everywhere present, what's the big idea with Him being There? It has to do with His abiding and manifest presence. Going back to our analogy of the family, children may take delight in visiting their father at work but they are most happy when he is home. And when he is home, keeping track of where he is is very important to the children. Have you ever locked yourself in a room for some privacy only to have your children congregate at the door like so many flies on a screen? They want to be where you are!

Ex 29:42-46

42 "For the generations to come this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD. **There** I will meet you and speak to you;

43 **there** also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated by my glory.

44 "So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests.

45 Then I will **dwelt** among the Israelites and be their God.

46 They will know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might **dwelt** among them. I am the LORD their God. NIV

One could almost take the word "there" and replace it with "dwelt." The Lord promised He would dwell with the Israelites in the place of sacrifice and worship. He would meet with them and speak with them and they would know that He was YHWH their God. In dwelling with them, He revealed His Person (YHWH) as well as His position (God).

This dwelling place, in time, became the Temple.

2 Chron 6:19-21

19 Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence.

20 May your eyes be open toward this temple day and night, this place of which you said you would put your Name **there**. May you hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place.

21 Hear the supplications of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place; and when you hear, forgive. NIV

The Lord put His Name on the Temple. Though heaven is His ultimate dwelling place, the temple is where He communed with His children. It is where He heard their prayers. Like a child who knows where his father is and makes its requests in that direction, so the children of Israel prayed toward Jerusalem.

Dan 6:10

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. NIV

Even in the land of captivity, after the temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians, Daniel prayed toward Jerusalem. Why? Because it was the place of God's abiding presence and it was in accordance to the prayer of Solomon.

2 Chron 6:36-39

36 "When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to a land far away or near;

37 and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captivity and say, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong and acted wickedly';

38 and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken, and pray toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and toward the temple I have built for your Name;
39 then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you. NIV

The Lord answered Solomon's prayer with fire from heaven. Daniel could be sure his prayers were heard. Even though God is everywhere, Daniel focused his prayers toward the place where God had placed His name. But what had happened to His abiding, manifest presence?

II. The Parting

In visions of the Lord, Ezekiel saw the presence of the Lord depart from His dwelling place in stages. Knowing where the Lord is is not enough. We need to avoid practices that would drive Him away.

From the holy of holies to the threshold:

Ezek 9:1-6

- 1 Then I heard him call out in a loud voice, "Bring the guards of the city here, each with a weapon in his hand."
- 2 And I saw six men coming from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with a deadly weapon in his hand. With them was a man clothed in linen who had a writing kit at his side. They came in and stood beside the bronze altar.
- 3 Now the glory of the God of Israel went up from above the cherubim, where it had been, and moved to the threshold of the temple. Then the LORD called to the man clothed in linen who had the writing kit at his side
- 4 and said to him, "Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it."
- 5 As I listened, he said to the others, "Follow him through the city and kill, without showing pity or compassion.
- 6 Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple. NIV

*The Presence of God moved from the **mercy** seat in the holy of holies to the threshold of the holy place on the porch of the temple. In other words, He moved from His throne of grace from which He dispensed mercy to the courtyard of the brazen altar from which He dispensed judgment. And who was not judged? All those who mourned for sin. The abiding presence of God began to depart in judgment because His people no longer mourned for sin.*

From the threshold to the east gate:

Ezek 10:18-19

- 18 Then the glory of the LORD departed from over the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim.
- 19 While I watched, the cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground, and as they went, the wheels went with them. They stopped at the entrance to the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. NIV

Ezek 11:1-4

- 1 Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the gate of the house of the LORD that faces east. There at the entrance to the gate were twenty-five men, and I saw among them Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people.
- 2 The LORD said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who are plotting evil and giving wicked advice in this city.
- 3 They say, 'Will it not soon be time to build houses? This city is a cooking pot, and we are the meat.'
- 4 Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, son of man." NIV

Those left in Jerusalem after the first exile considered themselves special. They were the meat, the choice part, and those who went in exile were discarded bones. Even as the judgment of God had begun, they arrogantly refused to repent of their evil and arrogantly believed that judgment wouldn't happen to them. It's kind of like when the preacher is preaching and we are sure he is talking to the guy next to us, not us!

This move of God shows us the serious decay that sin causes. Bad enough that people weren't mourning for sin. But even as judgment was being carried out, they smugly considered themselves chosen and safe while plotting evil and giving wicked advice.

From the city to the Mount of Olives:

Ezek 11:21-23

- 21 But as for those whose hearts are devoted to their vile images and detestable idols, I will bring down on their own heads what they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD."
- 22 Then the cherubim, with the wheels beside them, spread their wings, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.
- 23 The glory of the LORD went up from within the city and stopped above the mountain east of it. NIV

Finally, in judgment of their idolatry and their refusal to recognize Him as God, the Lord departs to the Mount of Olives. (Does this progression sound at all familiar?) Jerusalem is left unprotected and God hands her over to her enemies. On August 14, 586 B. C., Nebuchadnezzar burned the Temple of the Lord to the ground.

III. The Place

Ezekiel's declaration that the LORD IS THERE is the capstone to a detailed description of the Land during the Millennial Kingdom. The return of His presence was contingent upon a promise.

Ezek 11:17-20

- 17 "Therefore say: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will gather you from the nations and bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you back the land of Israel again.'
- 18 "They will return to it and remove all its vile images and detestable idols.
- 19 I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.

20 Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God. NIV

The language of verse 19 is the language of the New Covenant.

Jer 31:31-33

31 "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. NIV

This new heart would have the law of God written upon it. It would no longer be a heart of stone but a heart of flesh. How was this to be accomplished?

Ezek 36:26-27

26 **I will give you a new heart** and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

27 **And I will put my Spirit in you** and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. NIV

By placing His Spirit in us, the Lord changes our hearts from stony rebellion to living (fleshy) obedience.

2 Cor 3:3

You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. NIV

What was the point of God dwelling in the Temple? It was to be a house of prayer for all peoples. By His abiding presence, the world would know that the Lord is God. His purpose in abiding in us is no different. By our relationship with Him, people come to know that the Lord is God, that the LORD IS THERE and He is real!

The River:

In his open vision, Ezekiel was shown the river of God in the Millennial Kingdom. In that age, a real river will pour out of the Temple of God in Jerusalem west to the Mediterranean and east to the Dead Sea. In progressive stages, Ezekiel is taken into the branch of the river that flows to the Dead Sea. His journey is analogous to our walk by the Spirit and shows us how to walk in and enjoy the presence of God.

Water to the ankles:

Ezek 47:3

As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then **led me through water that was ankle-deep.** NIV

The feet speak of our walk.

Gal 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. KJV

The Spirit convicts us of sin, righteousness, and judgment. If we are following Him, we will mourn over sin ("Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." The Holy Spirit is the Comforter!). We will avoid the pitfalls of the flesh and be able to enter the land.

Josh 3:15-17

15 Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge,
16 the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho.
17 The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground. NIV

Water to the knees:

Ezek 47:4a

He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. NIV

The knees speak to us of prayer and lordship. In that Ezekiel was in the river up to his knees, we see the principle of praying in the spirit.

Jude 20 NIV

But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor 14:15

So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. NIV

Rom 8:26-27

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. NIV

Prayer keeps us humble. When we pray, we recognize our dependence upon God and His grace. Prayer is the fellowship hall of our relationship with our Heavenly Father. Prayer takes us There!

Phil 2:9-11

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. NIV

An attitude of pride is hard to maintain while on your knees! As we relate to the Lord in prayer and worship Him on our knees, we avoid the pitfall of smug arrogance.

Water to the Loins:

Ezek 47:4b

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. KJV

Here, the loins speak to us of faithful serving and waiting upon the Lord.

Luke 12:35-40

35 **Let your loins be girded about** [*dressed ready for service – NIV*] and your lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. KJV

If we live our lives in the watchful anticipation of our Lord's immanent return, we will not give our hearts to detestable idols.

Waters to Swim in:

Ezek 47:5

Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. KJV

When you swim in a river, you commit yourself to its course. We're talking about full immersion, full commitment to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. NIV

John 3:8

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." NIV

When we avoid the sins that cause a departure of the abiding, manifest presence of the Lord by walking in the Spirit, praying in the Spirit, and faithfully waiting upon Him, we are led to the depths of a life fully committed to His course. And His course leads to fruitfulness.

A Great Number of Trees:

Ezek 47:7

7 When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river.

12 Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing." NIV

Every father desires his children to be fruitful and multiply (if they don't, we wouldn't have any grandchildren to spoil!). We received this desire from the Lord Himself.

John 15:15-16

15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. NIV

We were ordained to bear fruit and our fruit should remain. Fruit is the result of a vibrant relationship with our Father.

Conclusion-

After his journey through the River, Ezekiel was given the plan for division of the Land and the dimensions of the City. At the end of his vision, the glory he had seen depart has returned to dwell forever and the prophet declares The Lord is There. But we don't have to wait for the reestablishment of the Temple to make the same declaration.

Eph 2:21-22

21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. NIV

1 Cor 6:19-20

19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. NIV

The Lord resides in us. Where we are, He Is There. Therefore, we should seek to honor God with our bodies, making sure our walk is guided by the Spirit, our prayer is done in His power, and our watchful service is rendered unto Him. As we fully commit our ways unto Him, people will see and know that our Lord is God.

1 Cor 14:24-25

24 But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, 25 and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!" NIV

The Name YHWH-Shammah is a comfort, and exhortation, and a promise. It is a comfort for we know He is always with us (Matt. 28:20). It is an exhortation because knowing He is There is a reminder that we cannot hide from Him. And it is a promise because we know that the time is coming when God will make His dwelling upon the earth.

Rev 22:1-5

1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb
2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.
3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.
4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.
5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. NIV

Amen!