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C0644 – November 29, 2006 – Ex 25:8 – The Temple In History & Prophecy

INTRODUCTION TO THE TABERNACLE/TEMPLE

We've had a week break from Exodus but it was a good time to break because we are shifting from the Mosaic Covenant at Sinai to the Tabernacle Complex in the Wilderness. It's going to seem like we've entered a whole new book of the Bible here but this is the next logical step since God had now formally entered a blood covenant with Israel in Exod 24. Now we will study the Tabernacle and its furniture and its articles and priesthood and significance for worship and being in awe of God and His holiness.

The holiest of all planets is the earth, the holiest of all places on earth is the land of Israel, the holiest of all places in Israel is the Temple Mount, the holiest of all places on the Temple Mount is the holy of holies, the holiest place in the holy of holies is where the Ark of the Covenant rested. Covering this place today is the Dome of the Rock.

A firestorm of controversy between Jews and Muslims surrounds the Temple Mount today. The traditions of Ultra-orthodox (Hasidic) and Orthodox Judaism claim that the holy of holies, now housed in the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount, was the very place where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice (Gen 22). Their tradition also claims that the stone tablets that God etched the Ten Commandments in came from that same spot. They believe in a rich biblical history where Solomon built the first Temple as a house for the presence of God and a second Temple built by Zerubbabel and later expanded by Herod. These Orthodox sects of Judaism also believe in a future re-built Temple on the present day Temple Mount and there are several organized

Jewish groups ready to rebuild. Their desire to re-build the Temple is more fervent that you can imagine for the Jerusalem Talmud states,

“Each generation in which the Temple is not rebuilt is considered as if they destroyed the Temple.” – Jerusalem Talmud, *Yoma* 1:1

Yet Islamic Fundamentalism stands in the way of rebuilding since they were given sovereign authority over the Temple Mount when Prime Minister Moshe Dayan gave it to them in 1967 just one month after the 6-Day War.ⁱ For Muslims the Temple Mount is the third most holy place in Islam (Mecca and Medina being the first and second). Their Dome of the Rock (built in 690AD) shelters what they consider to be the spot that Abraham offered Ishmael rather than Isaac as a sacrifice (as-Saffat 37:102) and where their tradition claims Mohammed ascended to heaven to receive the Quran. They also claim that there has never been a Jewish Temple on the Temple Mount. This is why many Jews would like to find the Ark of the Covenant since it would be irrevocable evidence of a Jewish Temple on the Temple Mount (more on the search for the Ark of the Covenant next week). The Muslim zeal to maintain the Temple Mount under Islamic sovereignty and to destroy Israel is unparalleled in history, even by the Nazi Regime of the 1930's. Palestinian leader Jeris Soudah said,

“When it comes to that sensitive point—Jerusalem, I think there will be another war. The Islamic and the Arab world just cannot compromise concerning Jerusalem. They just can't...United Nations Resolution 242, which states that Israel has to pull out from the occupied territories, from the West Bank and Jerusalem, has to be taken into consideration. If this will not happen or if they will not at least negotiate about Jerusalem, another Civil War, another *Intafada*, will start...This time the entire Arab world will participate in that *Intafada*. It will be Arabs, Muslims, Christians—a huge *Intafada* that Israel cannot resist. Arabs are not going to give up the holy place that easily. Palestinians and the whole Arab world are ready to go for a new civil war...But talking about the Temple, Israelis say that it has to be built on the site of the Dome of the Rock. The Muslim community will not allow anything to happen to the Dome [of the Rock]...”

What the Arab world is preparing to do is keep anything from changing the status quo on the Temple Mount. This can be seen from this inflammatory sermon delivered in the Al-Aqsa Mosque on Sept 10, 1999:

“Oh Muslims, do you want glory? Do you want to remove the corruption around you? Do you want victory? Do you want to be able to carry Islam to the whole world? Do you want to please Allah?...The Islamic state that the Prophet (may peace be upon him) established was able to carry Islam to the world by *Jihad*. Allah says, “And fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevails justice and faith in Allah together and everywhere” (al-Anfal 8:39)...Islam says about the Jews that they are enemies. Islam says about the Jews: “Fight them,” “Kill them,” “Drive them out.” Islam says about the Jews that they are infidels...I swear by Allah that the Islamic state is close and it will overthrow their thrones [and] it will overthrow this alleged peace process...and we say to the rulers in the Muslim world, to the Jews, and to the rulers of the whole world, “We are coming to the promise of Allah about you!”

Listen to this quote published by Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME) and quoted in the Jerusalem Post in 1999.

“The Arab countries (and Iran) are frantically arming themselves with the most dreadful weapons of mass destruction. As the world knows, it is for one purpose only—their only political objective and their relentless obsession—namely, the destruction of Israel. Two or three nuclear weapons would wipe Israel off the map once and for all. Retaliation by Israel, the destruction of major Arab cities, and millions of Arab casualties would not deter the Muslim fanatics from pursuing their goal. For them it would be a small price to pay. With Israel dismembered, with five or six Arab states poised to attack with weapons of mass destruction, with 40,000 Palestinian “police” armed to the teeth in Israel’s midst, can anybody really doubt that a second Holocaust, even more terrible than the first one, is just about upon us?”

Is Israel on the brink of a war of unparalleled destruction? Dr Randall Price, a renowned theologian who has his Th. M. in Old Testament and Semitic Languages and a Ph. D. in Middle Eastern Studies and has done graduate

studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is director of archaeological excavations at Qumran recently interviewed one of the world's leading experts on the Muslim world, Yohanan Ramati. Ramati serves as the Director of the Jerusalem Institute for Western Defense. He served in the British Army during WWII and has witnessed from his home in Jerusalem every war fought in Israel over the last half century. He has known personally every past and present leader of Israel. He knows what he is talking about and he warned that this threat is not only against Israel but also the western world.

Well, if I'm allowed to hope, I want to hope that we have at least as many years in front of us as we have behind us. [But] I'm not sure of that at all. If I'm allowed to hope, let me hope that western civilization will survive another 30 or 40 years, which at the moment I rather doubt. That is so much for hopes. I'm not giving any scenarios. All the scenarios I can see are too pessimistic to give. One thing I promise you: There is not going to be any peace here [in Israel]. There may be peace treaties [but] there will not be peace because the Arabs do not want peace with us. They are using the peace treaties as a means to create a situation in which they can wage a victorious war...I don't know whether the Temple movement in Israel has any future, I can visualize an imaginary situation in a war where things could happen, but if that is to be we have to be in a situation to win a war...[However] everyone concerned, not only the Arabs, but [also] the [international] powers, seem to be determined to put us in a situation in which we cannot win a war. Obviously this cannot have a good end.

This is where we are today regarding Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. But it all began in Exodus 25 on Mt Sinai with the command "Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them" (25:8).

THE CENTRALITY OF THE TABERNACLE/TEMPLE

Let's look then at the meaning and significance of the Tabernacle/Temple motif from the Biblical and Jewish perspective.

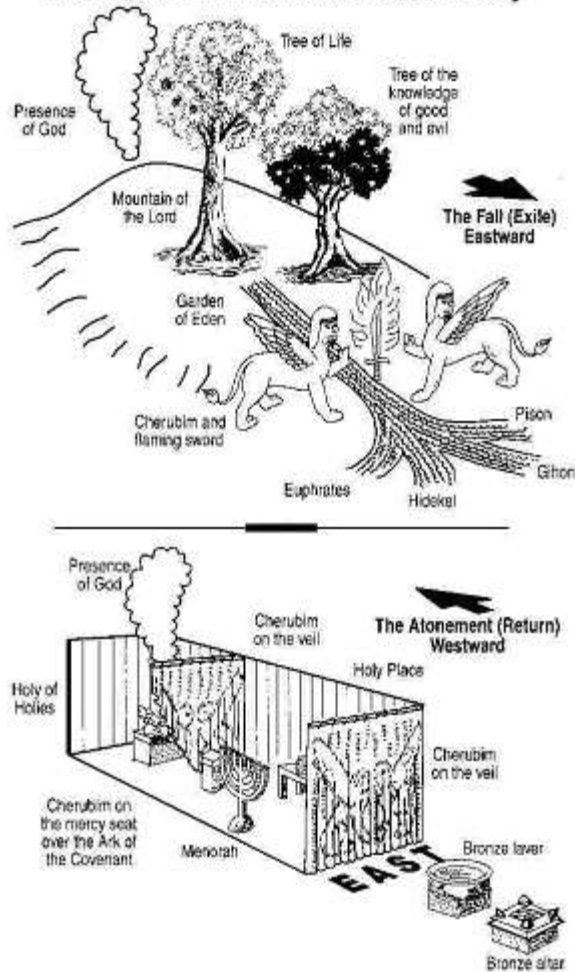
The Holy Temple was not just some magnificent building or synagogue rooted in Jerusalem's ancient Biblical past; it was an arena of cosmic

themes; a place where man could meet with his Creator...It is the reality of the living memory of that relationship as it once was, and the dream of its renewal—as promised by G-d Himself—that keeps the fires of the Temple altar burning within the collective heart of the nation of Israel, and the hearts of all who cherish Israel's G-d and His message for humanity. – Rabbi Chaim Richman

“The Holy One, Blessed be He, desired to have an abode below, just as He has one above...and when Israel stood before Him at Sinai, He told them: “There is only one reason I delivered you out of Egypt—in order for you to erect for Me a Tabernacle so that My presence will dwell amongst you”’. – *Tanhuma Bechukoti* 65

This quote was based on the divine command of Exodus 25:8 “And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.” To appreciate the gravity of such words we must recall the context they were spoken in. This was the Lord who had descended on Mt Sinai in a terrifying Theophany of smoke, fire, thunder and lightning. The holy mountain had been roped off so no one would break through and be consumed by God's holy presence. In terror they asked Moses to speak to God alone lest they die! Now Moses is going to come down the mountain and say, in effect, “God is going to move into your camp! Can you imagine their fear? For the Israelites of that day it was felt that God could not co-exist with man. Once God had done that in the Garden of Eden but when man changed into a sinner he could no longer go to God. But here with the Tabernacle God was setting up a way in which He could return to man. God's way was through this structure that would keep Israel from being consumed by His presence. What we have therefore is a restoration of what had been lost in the Garden of Eden—a personal relationship manifested by His presence.

The Garden of Eden and the Sanctuary



The arrangement of the Garden of Eden's landscape corresponds to that of the Tabernacle and Temple with its furniture. Eastward movement (out of the Garden) is away from God's presence; westward movement (through the Sanctuary) is a return toward God. On the Day of Atonement the high priest reverses the people's spiritual exile from God and restores them to a relationship with God (through a blood sacrifice for sin).

The Tabernacle was the means of restoring through which God would commune with man. This is why such detailed instructions are given in the building of the tabernacle, its furniture and articles. Everything must be carried out according to the strict instructions of a holy God. Any deviation could result in God's consuming the person. Continued violations would result in His departure from the structure which signals exile from God. Eventually the Shechinah did depart from Solomon's Temple in 586BC (Ezek 10:4, 18; 11:23). The prophecies of Ezek 40-48 state that He will return to dwell in the Millennial Temple (Ezek 43:4, 5; 44:).

In Exodus 25:8 we read the words, "And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst." The word **dwell** is *shakan* from which is derived

Shechinah. On this verse Mordecai Kornfeld says, “This verse itself leaves much to explain. If Hashem [God] fills all of creation, how can He be said to “dwell” in one particular place? The *Sefer ha’Chinuch* (Mitzvah #95) explains the reasoning behind the Mitzvah [“commandment”] to build Hashem a Temple. It is not in order to provide a place of dwelling for Hashem that we built the Holy Temple, he explains, but it is for our own benefit. The point of our prayers and sacrifices in the Temple (at least on a simple plane of meaning) is in order that we may bring ourselves closer to the service of Hashem. The magnificent Temple, the purity in which it is kept, the dedicated service of the priestly Kohanim [“priests”], all combine to instill in those who witness them the awe of the Almighty in a most tangible manner. This, he explains, is what is meant by saying that Hashem “rests his Shechinah” in the Temple. That is, the Temple is a place which “arouses us” to recognize our Creator.” We should add that it is a strict NT doctrine that the earthly Temple did not contain God but only manifests Him (Acts 7:48-50; 17:24-25). Thus, the Tabernacle and Temple served where man could be protected from the manifest glory of God which is often described as a consuming fire! Thus, the Tabernacle is God’s means of restoring the fellowship that man had with God in the Garden of Eden.

I hope you are seeing that the Tabernacle/Temple is central to Biblical History and Prophecy. Many believe that the first temple is the heavenly temple and was not a part of this creation (Heb 9:11). Then you have the garden of Eden as an earthly temple. Then the tabernacle in the wilderness. Then Solomon’s Temple in the land of Israel. Shechinah Glory was present in all of these temples. Then we had the Zerubbabel/Herod Temple (515BC-70AD). During the Church Age believers individually and corporately are temples of the Holy Spirit. Our study of the Tabernacle/Temple will shine significant light on the positional sanctification of the believer and the high importance of experiential sanctification by avoiding sin (1 John 2:1). In the Millennium there will be another physical temple built by Messiah Himself. This temple is described in Ezekiel 40-48. Accompanying this Temple there will be continual sacrifices, a Zadokite priesthood and of course, the Lord Jesus Christ enthroned in the Holy of Holies. The whole world will come to worship Him at His earthly temple palace. The sacrifices held in His Millennial Temple are said to be for “atonement” and this has caused great difficulty for those who are dispensational and attempt to interpret all Scripture literally because of the once for all sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah.

Those who are non-dispensationalist and reject literal interpretation allegorize Ezek 40-48 and claim it is blasphemous for dispensationalists to believing in a future sacrificial system. Since Christ is our sacrifice once for all how could there be a return to a sacrificial system. What they fail to understand and many dispensationalists fail to understand is that the Millennium is a return to a kind of dispensation of law that is, of course, intrinsically linked to grace under the new covenant where both internal and external conformity to the Messiah's law will be required. A typical explanation for Millennial sacrifices by dispensationalists is that they are memorial of Christ's sacrifice just as the Lord's Supper serves as a memorial during the Church age. But this will not do since the text never says they are memorial and explicitly states multiple times they are for atonement (cf Ezek 43:20, 26; 45:15, 17, 20). The solution to this difficulty relates to the OT word "atonement" and its cognates. In particular it is related to the lid or top of the Ark of the Covenant which was called the "Mercy" or "Atonement Seat". I'm going to show you some cutting edge research with respect to atonement. We're going to look at the Hebrew word *kipper* (atonement) and from which the lid of the Ark of the Covenant is derived and I'm going to show you that it does not mean "to cover" as has been traditionally understood. This meaning was borrowed from the cognate of the Arabic word *kapara*. Nor does the ransom/propitiation view work which is based on the noun form *kopper* and sees atonement as the "averting of divine wrath by the paying of a ransom". The real meaning of *kipper* is derived from an Akkadian cognate which means "to cleanse" or "purify". Combining this meaning with fresh insights gleaned from Leviticus and Ezekiel sheds new insights about what the OT sacrifices accomplished why they will be required in the Millennium and how this is perfectly reconcilable with the once for all sacrifice of Christ. Indeed it will be shown that they are required but only when we understand the true purpose of these sacrifices to begin with. Only when the traditional meaning of atonement is corrected by new linguistic evidence will we have a true solution to this most difficult part of Scripture. This is cutting edge stuff. Finally, even after the Millennium, in the New Jerusalem the temple is still central. "I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple" (Rev 21:22). Even though it is quite explicit that the temple is a person there is also evidence that the city seems to be in some sense a Temple (cf Rev 3:12). So, the Temple is central to Biblical history and prophecy.

THE HEAVENLY ARCHETYPE OF THE EARTHLY TABERNACLE/TEMPLE

How was the earthly temple constructed? OT and NT confirm the presence of a Temple in heaven which served as an archetype for the earthly tabernacle and temples. In a very real way, God who dwells in His heavenly Temple had the earthly temple built so He could dwell with man.

[Jewish] literature avers that in heaven there is a Temple that is the counterpart of the Temple on earth. The same sacrifices are said to be offered there and the same hymns sung as in the earthly Temple. Just as the Temple below is located in terrestrial Jerusalem so the Temple above is located in celestial Jerusalem. – Victor Aptowitzer

From the OT we know that there is a Temple in heaven. Psalm 11:4 says, “The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord’s throne is in heaven”. It is believed by Jewish sages that the heavenly holy of holies is positioned parallel to the earthly holy of holies, even to this day. Because they are parallel they say that God can dwell in both places at once. Therefore, it is a most holy site even when there is no Temple on that place.

In the NT book of Hebrews we also learn of the Tabernacle in heaven. In Hebrews 8:4-5 for example, “Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; ⁵ who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “SEE,” He says, “THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN.”

Hebrews 9:1-28 Now even the first *covenant* had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. ² For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which *were* the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. ³ Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, ⁴ having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; ⁵ and above it *were* the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these

things we cannot now speak in detail. ⁶ Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship, ⁷ but into the second, only the high priest *enters* once a year, not without *taking* blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance. ⁸ The Holy Spirit *is* signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, ⁹ which *is* a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, ¹⁰ since they *relate* only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. ¹¹ But when Christ appeared *as* a high priest of the good things to come, *He entered* through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹² and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ¹⁵ For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. ¹⁶ For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. ¹⁷ For a covenant is valid *only* when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. ¹⁸ Therefore even the first *covenant* was not inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ saying, "THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU." ²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. ²² And according to the Law, *one may almost say*, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. ²³ Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but

the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴ For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; ²⁵ nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷ And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment, ²⁸ so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to* sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Verses 11 and 24 especially highlight the distinction between the heavenly tabernacle and the earthly tabernacle.

In order to build the earthly Tabernacle and furniture Moses according to the precise standards of the heavenly Tabernacle Moses was shown a “pattern” of the heavenly Tabernacle accompanied by detailed verbal instructions during a period of 40 days and 40 nights on Mt Sinai (Acts 7:44). What exactly did Moses see? Some say what Moses saw was architectural plans or drawings of the Tabernacle, others say it was a model or replica of the Tabernacle, and still others say he saw the heavenly tabernacle itself. The Hebrew word describing what Moses saw is translated “pattern” in Exod 25:9. This is the Hebrew word *tabnith*. This word is not definitive on whether it was an architectural blueprint, a model or the actual Tabernacle. However, other passages that describe what Moses saw indicate it was the actual Tabernacle after which was made an earthly model or replica. Further, the NT word used to translate this Hebrew word in Heb 8:5 is *tupos* and refers to a “form”. Also, what Moses made in the wilderness was a “copy and shadow” of heavenly things. The word “copy” is *hupodeigma* and refers to a “figure” of the heavenly things. Lastly, there are many detailed pieces of furniture and articles (e.g. the golden lampstand, table of the bread of presence, three pronged fork, silver shovel, incense chalice, etc...) that had to be made for the tabernacle. If Moses did not see the actual furniture and articles in heaven it would be difficult to re-construct them after the heavenly articles. So, it seems that what Moses actually saw the heavenly things and the earthly temple was a model or replica of those heavenly things.

ⁱ The immediate reason Islam stands in the way of rebuilding on the Temple Mount is because Prime Minister Moshe Dayan gave sovereignty over the Temple Mount to the Islamic Wakf one month after Israel's victory in the 6-day war of 1967. He did this because He believed such concessions would appease the Muslims into a lasting peace. Dayan believed that they would call him an hour later to negotiate peace. 39 years has passed and Israel is still waiting to hear the phone ring. Rather than issuing in a lasting peace the Muslims interpreted Dayan's giving up of the Temple Mount as a sign of weakness which has only spurred Islamic Fundamentalist terrorist groups toward war on Israel and the west.

^y Heb. 9:1, 2; See ch. 36:1-4

^z ch. 29:45; 1 Kin. 6:13; 2 Cor. 6:16; Rev. 21:3

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