

YOU ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD

1Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

Let us begin in the great and terrible wilderness in the desert in the days of Moses. This great desert generated an equally great thirst in the close to 2 million children of Israel. God led the children of Israel out into the desert to experience this severe thirst. This is a type and shadow teaching pointing to the great thirst the Christian should experience after repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus. Just as the first and most acute need in the great and terrible wilderness was water, receiving the Spirit of the Lord Jesus should be the overriding concern of the Christian. This sinful world is a great and terrible wilderness – the water it gives will not quench our thirst. “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again” (John 4:13). We should not dare take the first step into the desert of the world without desperately seeking the holy waters of heaven which alone can overcome the pangs of thirst in the desert of this world.

Num 20:1 Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

Num 20:2 And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

Num 20:3 And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD!

The children of Israel did well in demanding water; that was and is the will of God, but they should not have accused God of evil intentions. Jesus wants us to pester him with prayers and requests for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, but we should never doubt his good intentions to baptize us in the Holy Spirit. “If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:11-13). As the children of Israel chode with Moses, let us chide with the Lord to receive the Holy Spirit! We, too, who have already been baptized in the Holy Spirit ought to never be satisfied but continue to bother the Lord for more of his living water. There are measures or levels of infilling of the Spirit. “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him” (John 3:34).

Once we understand the importance of seeking and receiving the Holy Spirit, we must equally emphasize the importance of the principle of the body as the temple of God. The apostle Paul appears to criticize the Corinthian Christians when he asks the rhetorical question, “ Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (I Corinthians 3:16). The Corinthian Christians did not appear to have this knowledge. They lived carelessly and continued to some degree to live as they did before they received the Holy Spirit. In fact, some of them died as a result. “For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep” (I Corinthians 11:29,30).

Let us understand the doctrine of the body as the temple of God. Once again, the story begins with God in the great and terrible wilderness. “And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8). The sanctuary is, in reality, you and I. God has from the very beginning wanted to dwell in his people. What an honor! Note carefully that God made this declaration in this great and terrible wilderness. We cannot expect to overcome this great and terrible wilderness of this world without becoming the sanctuaries of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. The moment the Holy Spirit of the Lord tabernacles in us, we are guaranteed a place in heaven. “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Ephesians 1:13, 14). The Greek word for “earnest” is *arrabōn* and according to Strong’s lexicon means “money which in purchases is given as a pledge or downpayment that the full amount will subsequently be paid”. To buy a property in Norway, the current deposit required is 15% of the cost of the property. This means one already “owns” 15% of the property , so to speak. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we can say that this is proof that we already own 15% of the inheritance the Lord promised in heaven.

John 14:1 *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

John 14:2 *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

John 14:3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

The tabernacle was where the people of God congregated in the desert. People are supposed to gather around us. Not because we are special, but because the Spirit of Jesus, who dwells in us, attracts them. The tabernacle was the place the spiritual needs of the children of

Israel were met: forgiveness, peace, the Word of God, godly counsel and a need to glorify and worship the Lord. In the same vein, when people are attracted to us, through the grace that operates in us, they ought to find forgiveness, peace, the Word of God, godly counsel and be motivated to glorify the Jesus whom they find in us. Just as the children of Israel would leave the tabernacle in the wilderness with spiritual satisfaction, people who come to the Spirit-filled Christian ought to leave with immense blessings.

Act 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Act 2:43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

Act 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Act 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

May there always be people gathered around us; some inquiring about the identity of Jesus, others confessing their sins, and yet glorifying God, etc.! What purpose is a tabernacle with no congregants? God does not dwell in a sanctuary alone in the desert for no reason. He asked Elijah what he was doing in Mount Horeb because there was no one there to minister to. Jesus came to minister and to seek and save that which was lost – he did not come to dwell in majestic isolation, as some monks and nuns do in secluded monasteries in inaccessible landscapes. The tabernacle was clearly visible for everyone to see. I pray we who are Spirit-filled will always be visible for the people of God and the lost and dying world!

Furthermore, the tabernacle was constantly on the move. That was the original plan of God. It was David, not God, who desired to build a permanent, immovable temple. God wants the tabernacle to be mobile. We too must be flexible and mobile – God's nomads. The journey must constantly progress towards the Land of Canaan which is a type of heaven. The tabernacle moved when the lessons in that place and time were learned.

Num 9:18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.

Num 9:19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not.

There are places and people where the Lord expects us to tarry long and there are other situations where the stay is short. Let us be patient until the work the Lord planned is fulfilled. One day, the children of Israel entered the Land of Canaan. The manna stopped the same day, their clothes and shoes would now be subjected to the normal processes of age and

decay etc. However, one thing never changed: they entered the Land with the tabernacle and the Shekinah glory of God. We, too, will overcome this world and, the glory of Jesus that dwells in us, will take us to heaven. “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Romans 8:9). Understand that the Lord promised to pour out of his Spirit upon all flesh in the last days because we cannot be caught up to heaven without the indwelling Holy Spirit.

***Joel 2:28** And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*

***Joel 2:29** And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.*

Clearly, the time of the catching away of the Bride is drawing nearer – it is imminent. Each souls filled with the Holy Spirit is a testament to this truth. Our job is to proclaim loud and clear that everyone can become the temple of the living God. Stay thirsty for the Holy Spirit, let people gather around you so they can be ministered to and do not stay stationary but arise with the Spirit of the Lord and keep moving towards the heaven. Paul asked the question to the church: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (I Cor 3:16). Let us response with a resounding yes, we do!