



Week 17: Understanding the Old Testament: God's Presence on Earth

MV: *"Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" (Exodus 33:15-16)*

ASK: What could be worse than being separated from Almighty God?

God gave covenants to show that he wanted to be with us.

He gave laws to show how people should conduct themselves in His presence

He established sacrifices when sin separated people from His presence

The tabernacle was unique. God was crating a home for Himself on earth—HUGE!!!

In Eden, man lived in God's presence and at peace with God

Adam and Eve destroyed that fellowship

God offered a solution for what went wrong in the garden—a tent where God presence would dwell on earth

The Ark of the Covenant:

- * 10 Commandments-His law
- * A jar of manna-His provision
- * Aaron's rod budded-His life-giving power

God's presence sat between the two cherubim (angels) on top of the ark—mercy or "bema" seat.

God again blessed the people with the greatest gift, HIMSELF

It was a clear sign of God's presence on earth

It was a glimpse of the kingdom of God amidst the kingdoms of the earth

But Israel almost lost the presence before it got started.

In Ex. 32 the people built 2 golden calves and worshipped them. They broke commandments 1 & 2 and paid a terrible price, with many dying for their false worship, idolatry and sexual sin that day.

"Then the LORD said to Moses, "Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites." (Exodus 33:1-2)

ASK: What is missing?

God's presence!!! "the people" not "my people;" an angel not myself
I will not dwell with you any longer.

It's a choice now. Life without God; blessings without a relationship. Isn't that what most of us want anyway??? We want the stuff of God, but not God himself....

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What sets them apart is GOD! There is no hope and no point if God is not with them.

God's presence was their distinctiveness. He is ours as well!

The tent remained until David planned the temple and Solomon built it. It took 7 years.

God's presence went from a portable tent to a permanent temple.

With the temple, God was signifying the reestablishment of His reign on earth

But just as he dwells there, He warns His people

He will stay only as long as they are faithful to the covenant and obey His laws

He would dwell only if their lives acknowledged His presence among them.

The warning of 1 Kings 9 becomes reality

Ezekiel 10-11 records the departure of God's glory from the temple.

Jesus solves the problem...

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

Dwelt=tabernacled=set up a tent

The tabernacle/temple exists in the person of Jesus

Now God's presence dwells in us through the presence of the Holy Spirit in us

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;" (1 Cor 6:19)

"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." (Eph 2:21-22)

God's glory fills the entire Church in Rev. 21-22

When Jesus returns the whole world will be full of God's presence.