

Church of God

Sunday School



THE TABERNACLE #12 – THE SHEKINAH GLORY

DAILY READINGS:

- ❑ **Monday:** When the pattern was followed, the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:31-35).
- ❑ **Tuesday:** Examples of the Shekinah Glory (Exodus 24:16; 33:9; 1 Kings 8:10; Matthew 17:5).
- ❑ **Wednesday:** The glory of the Lord is a defense (Exodus 14:19-20; Isaiah 4:5).
- ❑ **Thursday:** The glory of the Lord gives guidance (Exodus 33:15; 40:36-38; Acts 8:26-39).
- ❑ **Friday:** Men who failed to follow the pattern (Leviticus 10:1-2; 2 Samuel 4:11; 6:6-7).
- ❑ **Saturday:** The glory of the Lord is a witness (Exodus 25:22; Matthew 5:14; 18:20; John 13:35).

MEMORY VERSE: *"And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims."*
—Exodus 25:22

The Importance of Following the Pattern

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve enjoyed being in God's presence. But when they sinned, they "hid themselves from the presence of the LORD" (Genesis 3:8). Sin separated them from God. Yet, God did not give up on restoring that relationship. The journey through the Tabernacle shows the importance of this to God. He gave Moses a detailed pattern for building it and for how worship should take place. These instructions were not only for Israel. They were examples of the spiritual work Jesus accomplished through His death and Resurrection. Through the pattern, God was teaching us how to come back into His presence and have a right relationship with Him.

Moses did "all that the LORD commanded him" (Exodus 40:16). He followed the pattern exactly (Exodus 25:40). "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Exodus 40:34). Numbers 17:7-8 calls it "the tabernacle of witness." This was because God's presence was a "witness" of His desire to dwell among His people (Exodus 25:8).

Consider, would God's glory have filled the Tabernacle if Moses ignored the details? Many people today think God does not care about the small details of our lives—how we live, dress, or worship. However, if God cared so much about His Old Testament dwelling place (the Tabernacle), why would He be less concerned about His New Testament dwelling place (our bodies)?



God's Presence Came and Abode

The "glory of the LORD [the cloud; Exodus 40:35] abode" (Exodus 24:16). Jewish teachers used a unique word for "abode"—*Shekinah*. It means "Him who dwelled." When God dwelled among His people, it was often called the *Shekinah Glory*. Examples of God's presence in a "cloud" are Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:16), the Tabernacle (Exodus 33:9), Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 8:10), and the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5).

Today, God does not dwell in a cloud, on a mountain, or in a physical tent. Jesus opened the way for God's ultimate plan—to dwell *within* His people. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will *dwell with them*, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Revelation 21:3).

The Glory of the Lord Is Our Defense

The glory of the Lord protected the Israelites. When they were trapped between the Red Sea and the Egyptian army, "the pillar of the cloud" came between the Egyptians and the "camp of Israel" (Exodus 14:19-20). The cloud was "darkness" to the Egyptians but "gave light by night" to the Israelites." Because of God's protection, "the one came not near the other all the night" (Exodus 14:20).

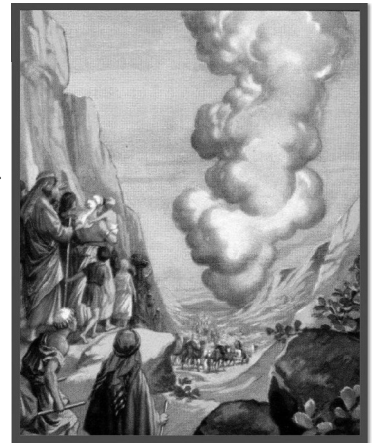
In the same way, God's presence protects us against the enemy's weapons today. Isaiah 4:5 says, "The glory shall be a defence." Without the Shekinah Glory, the Tabernacle would have been just another tent in the wilderness. Likewise, without God's presence in our lives, we will become an empty tabernacle. We may believe all the right doctrines and live by the standard of holiness. But if God's presence is not in our lives, we will lose our protection from the enemy's traps.

The Glory of the Lord Gives Guidance

Moses understood God's presence was necessary for direction (Exodus 33:15). When the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, Israel followed it (Exodus 40:36). When the cloud remained, Israel did not move either (Exodus 40:37). God's presence guided them "throughout all their journeys" (Exodus 40:38).

In the New Testament, God's presence continued to guide His people. The Holy Spirit directed Philip to go "and join thyself to this chariot" (Acts 8:29). Because of God's guidance and Philip's obedience, an Ethiopian official was given an understanding of the Gospel.

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would guide His people "into all truth" (John 16:13). In every decision of life, God's Spirit provides the guidance that His people need. He knows the best way to live, the dangers ahead, and where the enemy is hiding. To be "led by the Spirit of God" as "the sons of God" (Romans 8:14) is to have divine guidance. It is a privilege to hear the Holy Spirit say, "This is the way, walk ye in it" (Isaiah 30:21).



The Glory of the Lord Is a Witness

The Cherubims (representing God's people) faced "the mercy seat" (Christ) and also faced "one to another" (Exodus 25:20). The glory of the Lord in our midst requires God's people working together in unity with our eyes on Christ. God's family is to be "builded together for an habitation of God [God's dwelling place] through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22). Just as the literal body requires all parts to work together, so it is with the body of Christ (the church). When God's people work together in unity, the glory of the Lord shines through. That is the church's most outstanding feature (Revelation 21:11).

The Bible gives warnings about people who did not follow God's pattern: Nadab, Abihu, Hophni, Phinehas, and Uzzah. Their disobedience resulted in death (Leviticus 10:1-2; 2 Samuel 4:11; 2 Samuel 6:6-7). What happens if we fail to follow God's pattern today? God's people are standing on the Word ("a sea of glass") and have "victory" (Revelation 15:2). To step away from God's Word (His pattern) leads to defeat and losing His presence.

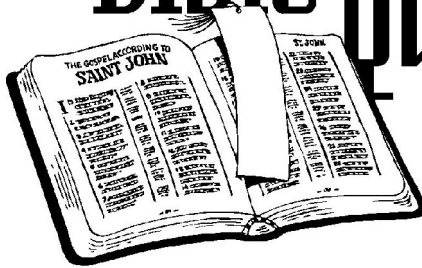
When God's people have His presence in their lives, they are "the light of the world." They are like "a city that is set on a hill [that] cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:14). If we want the world to see the church, see the truth, and know where to come, we MUST have the glory of God in our midst.

Exodus 25:22 says, "And there [in the midst of God's people] I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee." Matthew 18:20 promises, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

What a privilege to have God's Spirit "in the midst" in our individual lives and also when we gather for worship services. When we have God's presence, we will have the love of God for our brothers and sisters. John 13:35 tells us this "love" is a witness to "all men" that "ye are my disciples."

The glory of the Lord is our defense, our guide, and a witness to a world desperately in need of the Savior!

Bible Quiz



1. Why did Adam and Eve hide from God's presence?

2. In giving the pattern for the Tabernacle, what was God trying to teach the Israelites and us today?

3. God's dwelling place in the Old Testament was _____, and His dwelling place in the New Testament is _____.

4. What does the word *Shekinah* mean? _____

5. DEFENSE: The pillar of cloud was _____ to the Egyptian army, but it gave _____ by night to the Israelites.

6. GUIDANCE: What did Israel do when the cloud lifted from off the Tabernacle? _____

7. WITNESS: The glory of the Lord in our midst requires God's people working together in _____ with our eyes on Christ.

8. Who died in 2 Samuel, Chapter 6, because the pattern for transporting the Ark was not followed?

9. Whose example did Israel follow instead of following God's pattern?

<h2>Warning!</h2>	
2 Samuel, Chapter 6	
	<p>Failing to Follow the Pattern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transporting the Ark on a cart • Following the Philistines' example <p style="text-align: center;">Having a Form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Samuel 6:5 "David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments." • Good singing & instrument playing does not always mean God is pleased <p style="text-align: center;">The glory of the Lord requires following God's "due order."</p>

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Match the verses to the descriptions



_____ Provides Defense



_____ Gives Guidance

- A. **Revelation 21:10-11** "And he ... shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem [the church], descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God."
- B. **Exodus 40:36** "When the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys."
- C. **Isaiah 4:5** "The glory shall be a defence."
- D. **Matthew 18:20** "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."



_____ Is in the Midst



_____ Is the Church's Most Outstanding Feature

"In the Old Testament, the New is hidden; in the New Testament, the Old lies open."