

God's Human Temple

This ugly old decrepit body is not me. It's merely the container in which I have dwelt for many, many, years and by means of which I'm able to move, communicate and perform an ever diminishing number of physical tasks. What you see in the mirror is not you either. None of us can see ourselves or see each other. We see only the temporary container God has given us to use while here on earth as, hopefully, we prepare, in this time / space dimensionality, for our eternal purpose. Seven times in Scripture the human body is called the Temple. That should be a convincing testimony as to the validity of this observation.

In Old Testament times, what was the Temple? It was a structure, a place of worship and a place where God as the Shekinah-glory dwelt when the Israelites, God's chosen people were spiritually right with Him. Those who are born-again and are thereby also spiritually right with God, have temple-bodies, where God, as the Holy Spirit now dwells. That is why God has called the body a Temple. A previous essay titled The Temple of God referred to this analogy. However it dealt primarily with keeping the temple clean and healthy. Here we will compare very briefly the temple's structure, furniture and purpose as it relates to the human temple.

Before, what is called Solomon's Temple was built as a stationary house for the Shekinah-glory, the Israelites, in accordance with God's instruction to Moses, had constructed a portable Temple called, the Tabernacle that they transported with them during their wilderness wanderings and also during their advancement through the Promised Land for a total of 487 years until the stationary Temple was completed around 1004 BC. The Tabernacle consisted of a courtyard and a tent-building the inside of which were of two spaces separated by a heavy curtain. The first space was called the Holy place, and inner space was called the Holy of Holies. In the Holy place, immediately on the right as one entered, was the table of shewbread where 12 loaves of bread were placed and replaced daily. To the left was a 7-fold lamp stand made of a single piece of solid gold. All 7 lamps were kept lighted continuously, fueled by a reservoir of oil. Beyond, and to the right, at the far end of the Holy place was the table of

incense. Beyond this was the very thick curtain, which separated the Holy place from the Holy of Holies. Inside was the Ark of the Covenant on which sat the solid gold mercy seat. This is where God as the Shekina-glory would ‘sit’.

In order to grasp how beautiful and appropriate it is for Scripture to claim that the physical body of every redeemed Christian is a Temple, consider the following:

- We may consider the outer court as the physical human body just as is the tent which houses the soul/spirit in the first chamber, that is the Holy Place and the Holy Spirit in the inner chamber, that is the Holy of Holies place. While the Jews did not know it, this was all about Jesus.
- The table of shewbread held symbolically the body and blood of Christ.
- The lamp stand was Jesus as the light of the world, or the inner and only light within the Temple. Oil is often referred to symbolically as the Holy Spirit, who fuels the inner light.
- The incense table symbolized a place for prayers, the sweet scent of incense, symbolizing the prayers emanating from the soul which itself is in the Holy place. The Holy of Holies, God’s place of residence could be considered the new heart or spirit wherein the Holy Spirit dwells
- In the saved person, we have the body, a soul filled with the knowledge and essence of Jesus’ Word, and the human spirit now inexorably joined with the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- Within our body/temple the curtain does not exist as the separating barrier that it did in the temple and in the tabernacle. There is now an open door between the Holy Place where the human soul/spirit resides and the Holy of Holies where the Holy Spirit dwells. That this would be so in the temple of the redeemed was symbolized by the ripping of the curtain as Jesus died on the cross.

It might be said that the body, soul and spirit trinity exists as the structure of the unsaved soul as well. However, the Holy Place is absent any of the temple furniture. There is none of Gods light, or effectual prayer or worship. The Holy of Holies is also dark and

completely empty. The soul/spirit is in that dark outer chamber blindly, unknowingly in what we might call a death-watch. That dark empty Holy of Holies is a very inviting place for demons who are continually seeking such places in which to dwell. It is very likely that there are many of these demons occupying the temples that walk among us.

Isn't the analogy of the temple that God has offered most beautiful and appropriate? Anyone who takes his or her Christian faith seriously should find in this message, an implied command to take good care of the body, because it was given to each of us by God for a potentially divine purpose. Potentially, because it can only serve a divine purpose, if the residing soul/spirit has accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. It is then that the Holy of Holies becomes occupied by the Holy Spirit. Each of God's sons and daughters has a divine purpose here which each is obligated to understand and fulfill. The body is an important tool in implementing that purpose. Therefore it should, as God's Temple, be respected, properly nourished and cared for.

In comparing the human body with the Old Testament Temple, this paper has barely scratched the surface in describing the similarities. The more detail one examines the more startling the likeness becomes. All seven references to the body being a Temple appear in Paul's letters to the Corinthians.

In John 2:19 Jesus called His own body the Temple of God. Therefore, this body as a Temple being the dwelling place of God is a New Testament revelation. When God gave His specific instructions exactly how to construct the Tabernacle and the Temple, it is evident that He had these similarities in mind so that later these things could be understood and God's glorious plan for His own saints could be appreciated.