

God's dwelling with man

If you would like to get “*the ultimate goal of God with His creation*” across in one sentence, *what then* would it be?

So often we forget even *the most central things in our lives*. But only if we keep bringing them up to our mind, we can keep the right focus, pursue a clear goal and preserve the right direction.

God, however, makes *this goal* very clear - from the beginning to the end of His plan of salvation described in the bible: Namely *nothing else than this*: **To dwell among us.**

Already with Adam and Eve He reveals Himself as the One Who was simply “**walking**” with them “**in the garden in the cool of the day**” (Gen 3:8)

And at the very end, at the re-creation of all things, it will *still* be the same, deepest heart intention of this God Who is love, to *live in union with His people*. When it is said about the “New Jerusalem”: “**Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.**” (Rev. 21:3)

The Tabernacle/ Tent of Meeting

From the beginning God had *a plan* to bring this fallen creation back to Him, that He wanted to fulfill in stages.

A first central step for *His chosen people* who were just freed from slavery was - *besides the giving of the law* - **to establish a sanctuary, a dwelling place for Him in their midst**, which was the center of their camp. Where His glory rested and from where they got instruction and guidance.

YHWH is a God Who *proclaims the end from the beginning* (cf. Isa 46:10), and the tabernacle, *beyond its obvious function*, already was a picture of the deeper way how we can *get back* into His presence; into the true communion with Him, which will matter most forever:

Considering the divine model, the way *first* goes through the courtyard, in which the altar is found; where we identify with the sacrifice slaughtered on it for us - *which Jesus has truly fulfilled*. Where we further cleanse ourselves *in repentance from sin*, symbolized by the brazen laver wash basin. (Cf. Eph 5: 25-27: “...**just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, (...) holy and blameless.**“)

The next step is to enter into the sanctuary where the seven-branched candlestick stands; on earth as it is in heaven, of which we are told: “**In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.**“ (Rev 4:5) Together with *His body burning with the oil of the Holy Spirit*, it also symbolizes *Jesus Himself*, the slaughtered “**Lamb**” that “**had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.**“ (Rev 5,6) Both *He* is “the light of the world” and we as His body which is inseparably linked with Him.

(Jn 8:12, “**I am the light of the world.**” Mt 5,14: “**You are the light of the world.**”)

Just as the “Bread of Life”, which again is first of all *He*. But *one with Him we too* are dwelling in the presence of YHWH like the twelve showbreads (standing for the 12 tribes or God's people); whereby our “original substance” (our old man: our soulish will, our unrenewed thoughts, feelings, etc.) must likewise first be crushed, ground, reshaped, and baked in the heat of the fire, before we finally *consistently remain as a pleasing fragrance* before His throne.

In doing so - *always connected to Jesus* (cf. Heb 7:25) - we continually stay in prayer, which rises up to Him like incense from the altar of incense (out of the *back then* “**twelve gold dishes filled with incense**” - Num 7:86), and finally will trigger His just judgment and coming;

when our burning intercession is carried right before His heavenly throne, especially by the 24 elders, who are - *as we on earth* - simultaneously in worship and praise:

“**Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s people.**” (Rev 5,8)

The direct presence of the LORD is finally expressed in the Ark of the Covenant, which was located behind it in the Holy of Holies.

It was not until *Jesus' sacrificial death* that the curtain in the temple was torn down, that kept it shut and separated from the *simple sanctuary* up to that point. But now it is accessible to all of us, insofar as we - *led by and surrendered to the Holy Spirit* - get on this *here described path* of sanctification and separation, of abiding and worshiping before Him.

The Tent of David

Later *the temple* was built in which, nevertheless, the same principles continued to prevail.

Still *only levitical priests* could enter the sanctuary, and *only once a year* the high priest in the Holy of Holies.

However, *one man* at that time broke through this order radically, above all as a prophetic sign for the *coming, last*, up to the *messianic time*.

It was *David* who (himself a picture for the Messiah and coming Prince of Peace) brought *the Ark of the Covenant* back to Jerusalem in his days and had it put in a *simple tent* there. On the one hand the common sacrifices were continued to be made there in *this city of His* (such as the burnt offering, which also stands for our total surrender to God until our flesh is consumed in abiding before Him and turns into *His nature of holy fire!*) On the other hand David introduced a whole new practice, a *heartfelt, joyful, musical praise* that took place 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, before God's presence:

“David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint their fellow Levites as musicians to make a joyful sound with musical instruments: lyres, harps and cymbals.” (1Chr 15,16)

“He appointed some of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, to extol, thank, and praise the Lord, the God of Israel. (...) They were to play the lyres and harps, Asaph was to sound the cymbals, and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests were to blow the trumpets regularly before the ark of the covenant of God.

That day David first appointed Asaph and his associates to give praise to the Lord in this manner: Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced. (...)

David left Asaph and his associates before the ark of the covenant of the Lord to minister there regularly, according to each day's requirements.” (1Chr 16, 4-37)

The restoration

While *the Tabernacle* shows the sincerity of our sin and the way back to God, the *Tent of David* is a prophetic foreshadow of the last days, even into the millennial kingdom.

Hereby there is a prophecy that speaks precisely into our present time. Where God is bringing His people, who were scattered for almost 2000 years throughout the world, but whose identity He yet caused to be preserved, back into *His or their land*. Where *along with this exact thing* He yet promises *even more*:

“For I will give the command, and I will shake the people of Israel among all the nations (...)

“In that day I will restore David's fallen shelter - I will repair its broken walls and restore its ruins - and will rebuild it as it used to be, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name,” declares the Lord, who will do these things. “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills, and I will bring my people Israel back from exile. “They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,” says the Lord your God.” (Am 9: 9-15)

We see that this promised restoration of David's Shelter, first and foremost, has clearly to do with the re-gathering of the people of Israel back to the land, through which God in that time (according to Ez 36: 19-36) concretely proves *His faithfulness towards His Word* and as a consequence thereof *the holiness of His name* on them before the eyes of all nations. (See especially Ez 36,23f.)

Beyond that it points already to the restoration of the *kingship of David*, which is promised through the Messiah, for example when it said:

““The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteous Savior. (...) who brought the descendants of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.' Then they will live in their own land.”“
(Jer 23: 5-8)

“And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.” (Jes 9: 6f.)

It was exactly what the disciples were expecting at that time from *the Risen Jesus, Who had just taught them about the Kingdom of God for forty days*, when they asked Him right before His ascension:

“Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.” (Acts 1: 6f.)

- Whereby he thus *confirmed this*, declaring it just to be *a matter of time!* Since *first* the gospel still had to be brought to *all nations of the world* by the power of the Holy Spirit!

However, in addition to the restoration of the *house of David*, this word of the rebuilding of the “Tabernacle of David” still points in a central way also to *the reestablishment of this type of worship* David introduced at that time (also in direct preparation for the *then immediately following*, partial manifestation of *the Kingdom of God on earth* in Solomon's Jerusalem):

It was characterized by a passionate, heartfelt, joyful, musical worship in God's presence. The direct, intimate communion with Him without the need of a mediating priesthood or clergy, religious rites, extensive structures ect., which was radical at that time.

David himself did not even descend from the priestly tribe of Levi, whom, according to law, the service in the sanctuary was reserved for, but from Judah. However, it was already a picture of what God later wanted to do - *even all over the world* - and what He is indeed fulfilling in our time.

Namely, to establish that kind of continual worship by His worldwide people, which prepares the way for Jesus' return; and beforehand, *as indicated in the word of Amos above*, will result in a great harvest, that is promised for these last days.

James also quotes *this same prophetic word* in Acts 15: 16f., however, adds that this event will contribute to *a multitude of people from all nations* seeking God:

“After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things'- things known from long ago.”

A new song

We see today *in all parts of the world* how God is leading His church into this *place of worship*, He calls people *everywhere* to establish (24/7) houses of prayer, where His praise is increasingly not ceasing anymore. How the word of Mal 1:11 is more and more fulfilled, where the Most High promises:

“My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to me, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty.”

We see God causing this “New Song” to come forth, that *in many places* is connected with Jesus coming back - *along with bringing righteous judgment* - and raising up the kingdom of the Father on earth:

“Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. (...) Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.” (Ps 96: 1.13; cf. Ps 98)

“Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of his faithful people. (...) May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, to carry out the sentence written against them—this is the glory of all his faithful people. Praise the Lord.” (Ps 149: 1-9)

“Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the ends of the earth (...) Let them give glory to the Lord and proclaim his praise in the islands. The Lord will march out like a champion, like a warrior he will stir up his zeal; with a shout he will raise the battle cry and will triumph over his enemies. "For a long time I have kept silent, I have been quiet and held myself back. But now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant. I will lay waste the mountains and hills...” (Jes 42: 10-15)

“And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” (Rev 5: 9f.)

Eternal meaning

Thus it will be *this musical praise, this heartfelt adoration motivated by passionate love*, that will literally get, “draw” and move Jesus to return in power, to take the throne of David in His city of Jerusalem, and to reign (first for a thousand years on *this earth*, and then forevermore in *the newly created Jerusalem coming down from heaven* - see Revelation 20/21) with His saints.

So the prophet Isaiah finally promises for this coming time:

“When the oppressor is no more, and destruction has ceased, and he who tramples underfoot has vanished from the land, then a throne will be established in steadfast love, and on it will sit in faithfulness in the tent of David one who judges and seeks justice and is swift to do righteousness.” (Isa 16: 4f. ESV)

Specifically in the “Tent of David” the Messiah is prophesied to take his place. - Not in a *palace* or the like, but in *this place of direct presence, worship and praise*. Whereby *already back then in the tabernacle of Moses the Kerubim-adorned cover plate of the Ark of the Covenant* indicated the *throne of God* Who rules among these heavenly beings.

May we begin *now* to set up this throne for Him, Who is dwelling in **“the praises of Israel.”** (Ps 22,4 ESV)

May we *already now* get to know Him in this place of prayer, worship and praise! *Already now* be deeply connected with Him in it and interact with Him out of it, how we will *then* continue to do *in its essence* for all eternity.

May we *already now* become more and more aligned with His will and His ways, which are so much higher than ours (cf. Isa 55: 9), but are crucial for us to get to know them and walk in them more and more; especially in this upcoming time, which will be challenging, but also glorious and powerful!

We can only *love* Him if we *know* Him; and we can only *know* Him if we *give Him our time* very concretely.

May we love His presence as David loved it; prepare a place for it in our midst and not depart from it anymore.

Every single revival in history - including the one at Pentecost - was invariably always associated with prior *unanimous prayer*. (Cf. Acts 2: 1) - Which is why *unity in the Spirit and in prayer between the children of God from various confessional backgrounds* is an important part of this prayer movement that is initiated by the Holy Spirit in our days!

Thus, likewise the coming outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh, promised in Joel 3, will certainly depend on *whether - or in which intensity - God's people have prepared themselves in advance, have come together in humility, and - by remaining in His presence and His Word - are themselves awakened, filled with His Spirit and renewed by Him in their whole being.*

Building His house

The reality of this sanctuary where His presence finds a resting place, this house of God which He calls a "house of prayer for all nations" (cf. Is 56: 7), will ultimately be established *more than anywhere else in the specific place* God has chosen for Him *from the beginning and for ever*; where *already David* brought the ark and worshiped: Which is in the heart of the city of *Jerusalem*. (Compare 2Chr 3:1; Isa 56:7; 24:23; Ez 43: 4-7; Ps 2:6; ...)

But this is far from being the *only fulfillment*, as *the above mentioned scriptures* make clear, where God promises that *the whole world* will give praise and honor to His name.

Therefore, *this present call* goes out to *us all*, to build His house: In us personally, but also *sacred places of collective prayer full of His presence*, which are absolutely important to it!

The book of Haggai is *one single call* to build "His Temple". - To create a holy place *according to His conditions*, where He is able to come down and rest with His glory - even in *our worshiping communities*. To get out of a self-centered, relatively fruitless life, because we know it's time to participate in *building on it!*

Because: **"Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin? (...) Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the Lord. "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the Lord Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house."** (Hag 1: 4-9)

„This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the Lord Almighty. ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the Lord Almighty.“ (Hag 2: 6-9)

God promises *glory* if a dwelling place is prepared for Him, and *this* will always be the result of genuine devotion to Him in worship and praise. To the abundance, of course, when Jesus returns, but *in its nature* likewise *already before*, as even during the completion of the temple in Jerusalem in the times of *Solomon*, the "*King of Peace*", who is likewise already a picture of the *gloriously returning Messiah*, Whose arrival is near ! Where it says:

„The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the Lord.

Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the Lord and sang: "He is good; his love endures forever."

Then the temple of the Lord was filled with the cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God.“ (2 Chr 5: 13f.)

"When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, "He is good; his love endures forever."“ (2Chr 7: 3)

And soon will be fulfilled what Isaiah announces:

“In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.” (Isa 11:10)

May we *already now* tune into *this very song* that heaven is singing! Of which our Bridegroom desires so much that His Bride hears it, agrees with it with her whole being and proclaims it for His glory. In *the same way* in which already David loved to do it, who has completely hit God's heart with it.

He is worthy of our everlasting worship: As in heaven so on earth!

And *now is the time* the Most High calls His people to do it. More than ever, because the coming of His Kingdom on earth is closer than ever. And He wants to be moved by our praise, our song, our prayer; to do that which He will do only when His people are ready for it and unite with Him in it; when a “critical mass” of saints is found on earth, who welcome Him *in a worthy manner* as king among themselves. Because yes, it is real:

“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (Rev 5:12)

“The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!”” (Rev 22:17)

“Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty— he is the King of glory.” (Ps 24: 6ff.)

... **“Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,”** says the Lord Almighty.“ (Mal 3: 1)