

**The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.**  
**The Tree of Life from the week ending 04/17/05**  
**What it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery. Part 12.**  
**The Shekinah glory and the greatest relationships you have in life.**

In our study of what it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery, we have been looking at the mystery of the Shekinah glory. We continue with the story of Nadab and Abihu, the eldest sons of Aaron who was the first high priest of Israel and the brother of Moses. One day, in a state of intoxication, they took unauthorized fire from the altar of incense in front of the veil. They went inside the tent and lit some incense, started a fire, and looked behind the veil. This was a forbidden place, except once a year, when the high priest could enter twice on the day of atonement; it was where the Shekinah glory dwelt. This is the story of Lev 10:1-3, *Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the Lord spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'" So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.*

In verses 8-10, we have the story of what happened to these two men before they went into the holy of holies, *The Lord then spoke to Aaron, saying, "Do not drink wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, so that you may not die, it is a perpetual statute throughout your generations and so as to make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean, and so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them through Moses."*

You must make a distinction between what you are doing in worship and what you are doing when you are on your own. No spiritual function should be fulfilled under the influence of alcohol. Nadab was to be the next high priest in Israel when Aaron died, and Abihu would be one of his assistants. In Lev 10:1, they bust through the veil with strange fire. The only light in the tabernacle is the Shekinah glory or the presence of Jesus Christ. Above the mercy seat, inside the holy of holies, Jesus Christ as the God of Israel dwelt between the cherubs, but He wasn't visible. Even Moses was not permitted to see Him. So, these two stumbling drunks break through the veil with a fire in their hand, and here is the Shekinah glory inside the holy of holies. This is a perfect illustration of human viewpoint breaking its way in on God and being totally consumed. They went in with the idea that they were going to pour out their offering between the cherubs and worship God their own way. This was blasphemy, and notice what happens, Lev 10:2, *And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord.*

Lev 10:3, *Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the Lord spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'" So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.*

The lesson to learn here is that the Lord will not put up with sloppiness, whether from alcohol or ignorance. These priests died the sin unto death for attempting to put unauthorized light in the holy of holies. We also see that Christ is the light of the world and the light in the holy of holies; God will not allow human works or creature credit to interfere with His divine plan. But, we also learn that our situation is different! We have Jesus Christ indwelling us! God always has commands, directions or mandates; this means that a right thing must be done in a right way. God has mandates about how worship must be conducted; we are commanded to worship God in Spirit and in truth (the filling of the Holy Spirit) and perception of Bible doctrine (Eph 5:18b; Joh 4:23-24). In the O.T., the commands concerning the Shekinah glory had to be followed precisely.

How much more, now that the Shekinah glory is in us, should we be precise and accurate in our worship? In the O.T., they died because they did not follow God's directions precisely. Many in the Church-age who take the communion elements without following the directions precisely are sick physically, weak mentally, and some have even died (1Co 11:28-30).

There's another lesson to be learned: we are to have possession of our senses when we worship the Lord and perceive Bible doctrine. God has rules for Israel and rules for us, and when it comes to the holy of holies, we do it God's way or we don't do it at all!

There is a second blasphemy; it deals with the wars concerning the Philistines in the time of Eli the prophet in 1Sa 4. It's the story of Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Eli was the high priest and a very old man, and his sons served as priests in the tabernacle located at Shiloh. The Jews had just been defeated in battle by the Philistines (a judgment for their apostasy and rejection of doctrine). So, they decided that they needed a good luck charm. At this time there was very little doctrine being taught, and everything was falling apart spiritually which even affected the military of Israel. Normally, when Israel was defeated in war, they would turn to the Lord, but in losing this battle, the Jews instead looked for good luck. They decided to go down and get the ark in the holy of holies at Shiloh. Because of their apostasy, they didn't realize the consequences, but ignorance is no excuse. During this time of apostasy, the Lord was not dwelling there. This brings out the fact, that it's not the man or the vessel God uses, but the presence of the Shekinah glory that is important; the ark was nothing without the glory. The two sons of Eli, who were priests, went into the holy of holies and took the ark.

*1Sa 4:1-4, Thus the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle and camped beside Ebenezer while the Philistines camped in Aphek. And the Philistines drew up in battle array to meet Israel. When the battle spread, Israel was defeated before the Philistines who killed about four thousand men on the battlefield. When the people came into the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us take to ourselves from Shiloh the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that it may come among us and deliver us from the power of our enemies." So the people sent to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts who sits above the cherubim; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.*

In the next battle, the Jews, who had the ark, were clobbered. 1Sa 4:5-10, *And it happened as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, that all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth resounded. And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, "What does the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" Then they understood that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp. And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "God has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. "Woe to us! Who shall deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who smote the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. "Take courage and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews, as they have been slaves to you; therefore, be men and fight." So the Philistines fought and Israel was defeated, and every man fled to his tent, and the slaughter was very great; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.*

The results of this terrible defeat were that Hophni and Phinehas were killed, and the ark of the covenant was taken by the Philistines and put in their heathen temple. When Eli, age 98, heard the news, he dropped dead, 1Sa 4:12-18, *Now a man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes torn and dust on his head. When he came, behold, Eli was sitting on his seat by the road eagerly watching, because his heart was trembling for the ark of God. So the man came to tell it in the city, and all the city cried out. When Eli heard the noise of the outcry, he said, "What does the noise of this commotion mean?" Then the man came hurriedly and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety-eight years old, and his eyes were set so that he could not see. And the man said to Eli, "I am the one who came from the battle line. Indeed, I escaped from the battle line today." And he said, "How did things go, my son?" Then the one who*

*brought the news answered and said, "Israel has fled before the Philistines and there has also been a great slaughter among the people, and your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been taken." And it came about when he mentioned the ark of God that Eli fell off the seat backward beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. Thus he judged Israel forty years.*

The wife of Phinehas heard of the death of her husband in battle; her reaction is recorded in 1Sa 4:19, *Now his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was pregnant and about to give birth; and when she heard the news that the ark of God was taken and that her father-in-law and her husband had died, she kneeled down and gave birth, for her pains came upon her.* When she heard that the ark of God was taken and that her father in law and her husband had died, she kneeled down and gave birth. 1Sa 4:20, *And about the time of her death the women who stood by her said to her, "Do not be afraid, for you have given birth to a son." But she did not answer or pay attention.* She was in terrible pain and she was dying and there was a good reason for her not paying attention. 1Sa 4:21, *And she called the boy Ichabod, saying, "The glory has departed from Israel," because the ark of God was taken and because of her father-in-law and her husband.*

During this period of apostasy Jesus Christ had departed from Israel, and the name Ichabod actually means there is "no glory." The Shekinah glory or *kabodh* had departed from Israel because they had violated every principle of doctrine related to the Shekinah glory. Learning God's procedures is especially hindered by the two great enemies of the Christian: ignorance and arrogance. The energy of ignorance is arrogance which comes from life in the cosmic system. When it comes right down to it, everyone is either living in the PPOG or in the cosmic system. That's why Jam 4:4 says, *You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Or 1Jo 2:15, *Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

So, there is a distinct sound regarding the accuracy of the plan of God. It is about one pattern, model, or example that is to be followed. The sound must be distinct, the message must be accurate, and the isagogics, categories and exegesis must be correct. 2Ti 2:15 is a distinct sound passage, *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling "accurately" the word of truth.*

Today, the accuracy and the perfection of the Word of God is being totally rejected. Many believers think that if they are sincere they can impress God. However, accuracy is the order of the day especially in the Church-age. The distinct sound is the issue, and if your pastor is not accurate in what he teaches than you will not have the accurate information needed to live in the PPOG.

Our next principle concerning the Shekinah glory has to do with the four different dwelling places of the Shekinah glory. Israel had a series of sacred buildings in which the Shekinah glory dwelt: 1) The tabernacle of Exo 25,40, 33, Lev 9:23, Num 16:42. This was called literally the tent of the meeting or the place where God met Moses and the people. 2) The more permanent structure, the temple of Solomon in 1Ki 8 and 2Ch 5, Isa 37:16. 3) The temple of Zerubbabel mentioned in Haggai 2 and Zec 2:5 as being the place of the dwelling of the Shekinah glory. There is also a tabernacle temple in heaven which memorialized both Christology and soteriology, in Rev 11:19, 13:6, 15:5. All of these buildings are sacred because of the presence of TLJC as the Shekinah glory and the God of Israel. These sacred buildings also portrayed and spoke of TLJC and His work during His First Advent. There are no longer any sacred buildings in the Church-age. The sacred buildings of Israel have been replaced by something more unique. The body of every believer is now indwelt by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit which makes his body a sacred building for TLJC as the Shekinah glory. Therefore in the Church-age, the only sacred building for the indwelling of Jesus Christ is the body of every believer.

One of the main reasons for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is to provide a temple or a sanctuary for the indwelling of TLJC. The physical body, because of the presence of the OSN has to be prepared for the indwelling of Christ, 1Co 3:16-20, *Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, "He is the one who catches the wise in their craftiness"; Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*

As a believer, your life now belongs to God, and therefore you have a tremendous potential for the greatest happiness the world has ever known. It is God's life; therefore it is not to be one that is filled with boredom, depression, insecurity, cheating, and lying. God wants you to have what He has, perfect happiness and total contentment.

There is a difference between the indwelling of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The ministry of God the Holy Spirit is for the purpose of power or enablement. However, this does not explain why Jesus Christ indwells your body. Now we're talking about motivation and the significance of growing up spiritually. 2Co 6:16, *Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.* There's your motivation; TLJC now dwells in your body. Remember that in the O.T., He dwelt "among" them, but now He dwells "in us."

So, all the buildings that we are told were sacred in the O.T. were sacred only because of the presence of the Shekinah glory. Your body therefore is now a sacred dwelling place. Jesus Christ did not indwell Moses, Abraham, or anyone else in the O.T. Jesus Christ does not indwell anyone in the Tribulation, including the 144,000 evangelists, and Jesus Christ doesn't indwell anyone in the Millennium or in the eternal state.

While the baptism of the Spirit is the means of forming the Royal Family of God, the indwelling of Christ is both the sign of that royalty and another expression of the uniqueness of the Church-age. This is vital information, because if you understand the indwelling of Christ, your relationships with people will improve, your relationship with life will improve, and you will not be a sucker for what the world and popular Christianity are offering you. You are indwelt by the One who made you royal family. When Jesus Christ was resurrected, ascended, and seated at the right hand of God the Father, He received the title "King of kings and Lord of lords" but there was no royal family. At that time there were no royal kings and royal lords. Therefore, a brand new dispensation was authorized in order to call out a royal family for our Lord's great title of aristocracy, "King of kings and Lord of lords, the bright and morning star." Heb 1 says that *He was originally made lower than angels*, He became true humanity to accomplish this victory. God the Father in the Church-age is holding a victory parade, and you are part of it.

You are a member of the church, the *ekklesia*, which means the called out ones. During the Church-age a royal family is being called out in order that there might be a *sign* of royalty; God has given you the indwelling of TLJC.

The Bible must be interpreted in the time that it was written, and at that time there were certain signs that a person was royalty. Royalty was obvious; royalty had manners and protocol. You are distinguished as royal family by the fact that Jesus Christ indwells your body.

So under **Point 1**, we see that, while the baptism of the Spirit is the *means* of forming the Royal Family of God, the indwelling of Christ is the *sign* of that royalty and another reason why the Church-age is so unique.

**Point 2.** Along with the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit in Eph 1:13-14, the indwelling of Christ is a guarantee of our existing escrow blessings. In the O.T., He indwelt those sacred

buildings as a sign of protection and blessing. He is the same yesterday, today and forever, and He indwells your body for the same reason (Heb 13:8). Every believer is a member of the Royal Family in the Church-age. That's why there is no place for one member of the Royal Family to be running another member of the Royal Family down.

Christ indwells your body first of all, as a sign of Royal Family, and secondly, as a guarantee of the most fantastic assets which are invisible but real. Thirdly, the indwelling of Christ guarantees eternal security; you cannot lose your salvation. Jesus Christ indwells your body for security and protection and a guarantee that you have eternal life. The moment you die, you are absent from the body and face to face with the Lord. You cannot see Him now, but the minute you die you will be face to face with Him. *2Co 5:6-8, Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight, we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.*

You are a member of the Royal Family, not because of you, but because He is living within you. The fourth reason why Christ indwells you is for the purpose of motivation. The greatest and highest motivational virtue is personal love for God, and that includes personal love for the person who indwells you, TLJC. This is why we are to stay away from relationships that take us away from Bible doctrine and our relationship with God. This is an introduction to the fifth reason why Jesus Christ indwells your body. Many believers today have people emphasis over God emphasis, focusing in on unity rather than doctrine. As a Christian, you are to be kind to your fellow man and operate in agape love, but you are not to compromise your doctrinal convictions. Your experience with God is much more important than your experience with people. However, most believers cannot talk about their relationship with God because they do not know that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit indwell their body or why. The members of the Trinity are closer to you than people; they are living right inside of you.

Our number one priority is our relationship with God, not people, and that is when believers start to grow up and become spiritual adults. People will let you down; God will not. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit indwell your body, and they are closer to you than all the people in the world.