

WHEN GOD CAME DOWN

2 Chronicles 6:41 ... "Arise, O Lord God, to your resting place, you and the ark of your strength..."
7:1-2 ... "When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house."

Today's study is remarkable in that it marks one of the few times in recorded history when God actually came down to earth. The background for the story is that David had wanted to build a temple for God, but God would not allow him because he had once killed a man. When David's son Solomon became king, God gave him the responsibility of building the temple. 2 Chronicles tells us how Solomon built the temple and dedicated it to God. Solomon prays in 6:41 for God to come and dwell in his temple. And 7:1-2 tells us that God's spirit did exactly that. In fact, his arrival was so spectacular that he sent fire from heaven to burn the sacrifices on the temple's altar. And, God's presence in the temple was so powerful, the priests could not enter it.

We have said before that often in the Old Testament when it tells that "the Lord appeared" to someone, it was actually Jesus. Jesus walked in the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. Jesus appeared to several prophets and priests. And in 2 Chronicles 7:12 we learn that the Lord – apparently Jesus – appeared to Solomon and confirmed he was pleased with the new temple. The sad thing about the children of Israel, is that they repeatedly fell into disbelief and were distracted by other gods. When they sinned against God, his presence left the temple.

God came down again in the form of the Holy Spirit after Jesus returned to heaven. That was the best gift God has ever given anyone. The Holy Spirit does not live in a temple of stone in Jerusalem. He lives in the soul of every believer. If you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit lives within you and is your guide, advocate, provider, counselor and protector.

This story about Solomon and the temple is an important lesson for us. When we please God, his presence makes our lives good and his promises provide us with everything we need. When we sin, God steps aside and allows us to suffer alone until we repent and restore the relationship. Just like the children of Israel, we are in and out, in and out of a relationship that honors God. If you want to smooth out the wrinkles in your life and prevent some of the misery you cause for yourself, stay plugged into Jesus and live in obedience to him. Honor him with your thoughts and deeds, and he will be like a brother to you.

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