

I Am: Part 6  
I Am Present  
Pastor James Bell

**Yahweh Shammah: I Am Present**

John 1:1–2 NLT

1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He existed in the beginning with God.

John 8:58 NLT

58 Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!”

Exodus 25:8–9 NLT

8 “Have the people of Israel build me a holy sanctuary so I can live among them. 9 You must build this Tabernacle and its furnishings exactly according to the pattern I will show you.

Exodus 40:34–35 NLT

34 Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. 35 Moses could no longer enter the Tabernacle because the cloud had settled down over it, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.

1 Chronicles 22:6–10 NLT

6 Then David sent for his son Solomon and instructed him to build a Temple for the LORD, the God of Israel. 7 “My son, I wanted to build a Temple to honor the name of the LORD my God,” David told him. 8 “But the LORD said to me, ‘You have killed many men in the battles you have fought. And since you have shed so much blood in my sight, you will not be the one to build a Temple to honor my name. 9 But you will have a son who will be a man of peace. I will give him peace with his enemies in all the surrounding lands. His name will be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel during his reign. 10 He is the one who will build a Temple to honor my name. He will be my son, and I will be his father. And I will secure the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.’

1 Kings 8:10–11 NLT

10 When the priests came out of the Holy Place, a thick cloud filled the Temple of the LORD. 11 The priests could not continue their service because of the cloud, for the glorious presence of the LORD filled the Temple of the LORD.

As we have read these few passages of scripture we see a common theme. God wanted to be present with His people. But His presence was contingent to their obedience. Let's use the example of our current jobs. When we got hired we agreed to give our time to labor for our employer for exchange of "X" amount per hour or per job. So what happens when we fail to meet the agreed conditions.

In Exodus 32 while the Israelites was waiting for Moses to come back down the mountain they had Aaron built a golden calf. But in their waiting they had already vowed to keep the covenant that God had made with them. That if they obey all of His commands that they would be a treasured possession, a Kingdom of priest, and a holy nation. And here they are already breaking their end of the covenant. They were already setting a precedent of rebellion. Rebellion is a broader form of disobedience. It is open defiance to the one of authority.

1 Kings 11:9–11 NLT

9 The LORD was very angry with Solomon, for his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. 10 He had warned Solomon specifically about worshiping other gods, but Solomon did not listen to the LORD's command. 11 So now the LORD said to him, "Since you have not kept my covenant and have disobeyed my decrees, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your servants.

This same defiance can be seen with Solomon. God had vowed to continue Solomons dynasty if he would simply obey. But Solomons rebellious disobedience would cause the temple to destroyed. It didn't happen immediately but his disobedience caused a chain of events that would led to the exile of Israel and the destruction of the temple.

But before the destruction of the temple God would remove His presence. Although God did allow for the temple to be destroyed He showed Ezekiel the progression of its cause. Turn with me to Ezekiel:

Ezekiel 8:4–5 NLT

4 Suddenly, the glory of the God of Israel was there, just as I had seen it before in the valley. 5 Then the LORD said to me, "Son of man, look toward the north." So I looked, and there to the north, beside the entrance to the gate near the altar, stood the idol that had made the LORD so jealous.

The first violation was an idol that blocked the entrance. This initial act of obedience caused the LORD to become jealous. A violation at the threshold itself.

Exodus 34:14 NLT

14 You must worship no other gods, for the LORD, whose very name is Jealous, is a God who is jealous about his relationship with you.

Exodus 20:5 NLT

5 You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me.

Because Solomon was king and his position served as a parent role he caused the chain reaction of idol worship from generation to generation.

Ezekiel 8:6–12 NLT

6 “Son of man,” he said, “do you see what they are doing? Do you see the detestable sins the people of Israel are committing to drive me from my Temple? But come, and you will see even more detestable sins than these!” 7 Then he brought me to the door of the Temple courtyard, where I could see a hole in the wall. 8 He said to me, “Now, son of man, dig into the wall.” So I dug into the wall and found a hidden doorway. 9 “Go in,” he said, “and see the wicked and detestable sins they are committing in there!” 10 So I went in and saw the walls covered with engravings of all kinds of crawling animals and detestable creatures. I also saw the various idols worshiped by the people of Israel. 11 Seventy leaders of Israel were standing there with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan in the center. Each of them held an incense burner, from which a cloud of incense rose above their heads. 12 Then the LORD said to me, “Son of man, have you seen what the leaders of Israel are doing with their idols in dark rooms? They are saying, ‘The LORD doesn’t see us; he has deserted our land!’ ”

Worship of idols behind closed doors. The first appearance of the singular idol could be viewed as a fluke in the eyes of men. But when not addressed and confronted it becomes more idols that many do not see because they are done in secret. The suggestion that God does not see us. This progression shows that it has moved from the entrance which would be our minds to the inners of our hearts. The very thought that God does not see shows the lack of the fear of God.

Ezekiel 8:13–14 NLT

13 Then the LORD added, “Come, and I will show you even more detestable sins than these!” 14 He brought me to the north gate of the LORD’s Temple, and some women were sitting there, weeping for the god Tammuz.

The third abomination escalates further: women in an outer court weep for Tammuz, the Babylonian god/goddess of fertility. Their worship rejected Yahweh's role of providing fertility as part of the covenant promise. Their reliance to another deity other than the God who called them to Himself. But we must view this as spiritual intimacy. The worship that took place inside now moved its way outwardly. What was once done in secret became open in defiance.

The north gate was the place of the outer courts. A place reserved for communal worship, teaching, and prayer. The place of the temple to have an intimate encounter with the Living God. Their worship to a dead and false god corrupted this sacred place. Intimacy with God was compromised. When our worship is compromised then we are void of intimacy with God. When we neglect the full counsel of God's word we are neglecting intimacy with God. The outer courts of our spirit has been compromised.

Ezekiel 8:15–18 NLT

15 "Have you seen this?" he asked. "But I will show you even more detestable sins than these!" 16 Then he brought me into the inner courtyard of the LORD's Temple. At the entrance to the sanctuary, between the entry room and the bronze altar, there were about twenty-five men with their backs to the sanctuary of the LORD. They were facing east, bowing low to the ground, worshiping the sun! 17 "Have you seen this, son of man?" he asked. "Is it nothing to the people of Judah that they commit these detestable sins, leading the whole nation into violence, thumbing their noses at me, and provoking my anger? 18 Therefore, I will respond in fury. I will neither pity nor spare them. And though they cry for mercy, I will not listen."

The inner is the holy of holy. Or the most holy. This is where the ark which represents God's presence is at. The position of the ark faced east as it sat on the western wall of the temple. These men faced away from the presences of God and worshipped the sun. They essentially turned their backs on God and worshipped another SON!

With each incident the LORD asked Ezekiel a rhetorical question: Do you see or have you seen what they are doing? This progression of represents not just additional sin of disobedience but bolder sin of disobedience. What are the first two commandments?

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make idols.

These two aren't first just by happenstance. They are purposeful because they will be the first to remove Yahweh Shammah. I Am Present.

The progression of their continuous sin caused the Presence of the LORD to be removed. This same truth is even profound within our fellowship with God.

Romans 2:4–8 NLT

4 Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin? 5 But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 He will judge everyone according to what they have done. 7 He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers. 8 But he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness.

Romans 2:13–16 NLT

13 For merely listening to the law doesn't make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in his sight. 14 Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. 15 They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. 16 And this is the message I proclaim—that the day is coming when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge everyone's secret life.

Ephesians 2:19–22 NLT

19 So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. 20 Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. 21 We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. 22 Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

Luke 17:20–21 NLT

20 One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, "When will the Kingdom of God come?" Jesus replied, "The Kingdom of God can't be detected by visible signs. 21 You won't be able to say, 'Here it is!' or 'It's over there!' For the Kingdom of God is already among you."

Ezekiel 33:15–16 NLT

15 For instance, they might give back a debtor's security, return what they have stolen, and obey my life-giving laws, no longer doing what is evil. If they do this, then they will surely live and not die. 16 None of their past sins will be brought up again, for they have done what is just and right, and they will surely live.

Ezekiel 36:26–28 NLT

26 And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. 27 And I will put my

Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.  
28 “And you will live in Israel, the land I gave your ancestors long ago. You will be my people, and I will be your God.

Believers today are living temples of the Holy Spirit. The principle remains unchanged — God’s presence dwells within us through obedience to His commandments and covenant faithfulness. Persistent disobedience creates spiritual distance that mirrors Israel’s exile and the removal of God’s presence from the temple. The presence that sustains, guides, and empowers us gradually diminishes when we prioritize our will over His.

Ezekiel 48:35 NLT

35 ...from that day the name of the city will be ‘The LORD Is There.’”

The name Yahweh Shammah—“The LORD Is There” or “The LORD is Present”— becomes both a promise and a warning: God desires to be present with us, but that presence is contingent on our willingness to remain in covenant obedience. Just like Israel’s stipulation was obedience, ours is as well. God’s presence wasn’t withdrawn permanently when they failed. Instead, restoration and covenant renewal made His dwelling possible. This reveals that God’s presence responds to covenant faithfulness, but His mercy ensures that broken covenant can be restored.