



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"A Temple for His Fire"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Passages (TLV): Ex. 25:8-9; 27:20-21; 34:6-7; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-5; Heb. 3:6; 2 Chr. 6:14-21; 7:1-16; Acts 2:2-4; Rom 12:1; Matt. 5:14-16

Chanukah is not only about remembering a miracle long ago; it is a season that invites us to stop and look honestly at the condition of the Temple today. When the Maccabees finally reclaimed Jerusalem, they did not find a glorious sanctuary ready for worship. They found ruin. The Temple had been neglected, plundered, and defiled after years of compromise and spiritual abandonment. Yet they did not turn away. They cleansed it. They took inventory. They replaced what was missing as best they could. And even with only one day's worth of oil, they chose not to delay—they lit the menorah and trusted God to meet them in their obedience.

That same call comes to us. Chanukah means *dedication*, and it becomes a holy invitation to pray, "Lord, search me and know me." It is a time to ask, *Who have You called me to be? Is this Temple what You intended it to be?* We may feel inadequate, aware that we fall short and lack the oil to keep the light burning. Yet we can still come and say, "Lord, I give You all I am." This season calls us to renew our commitment, reorder what has slipped into disarray, and surrender ourselves again as His dwelling place.

1. FORMED TO BE HIS DWELLING: STONES ASSEMBLED FOR HIS PRESENCE

From the beginning, the Temple was always about one thing: God's desire to dwell among His people. Before there was a Temple of stone, there was the Tabernacle—a holy place designed by God Himself. *"Have them make a Sanctuary for Me, so that I may dwell among them"* (Exod. 25:8). This was not Moses' idea. It was God's heart. The Creator of heaven and earth wanted to be in the midst of His people. He wanted relationship, nearness, presence. That same desire ultimately led to Immanuel—God with us—and now, through Messiah, to God dwelling in us.

Scripture tells us that WE are that dwelling place. Individually and together, we are being built into His house: *"In Him the whole building... is growing into a holy temple for the Lord"* (Eph. 2:21-22); *"you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house"* (1 Pet. 2:5). The King of the universe has chosen to make His home in living stones like us. Yet He is not casual about His dwelling place. What mattered was never the outward structure but what was happening inside. The Temple bore His Name—His reputation. When God proclaimed His Name, He revealed His character: *"compassionate and gracious... abundant in lovingkindness and truth"* (Exod. 34:6-7). If we are the Temple that bears His Name, then our lives are meant to reflect that character in an ever-increasing way. The question becomes deeply personal: when those closest to us look at this Temple, do they see a growing reflection of who He truly is?

2. Set Apart for His Glory Alone: Dedication Without Divided Loyalties

To dedicate something is to set it apart—to make it *kadosh*, holy. A dedicated phone line or serve is not shared. A dedicated life belongs fully to one purpose. Yet so often we treat our lives like a pie chart, giving God a slice while holding the rest for ourselves. But the Temple was never a multipurpose space. It existed for one reason alone: God's dwelling. In the same way, we are not His only on certain days or in certain moments. We are His—always His.

When Solomon dedicated the Temple, fire fell from heaven and the glory of Adonai filled the house. God declared, *"I have chosen and consecrated this House so that My Name may be there"*

forever" (2 Chron. 7:16). Yet He also warned that divided hearts would turn a glorious Temple into a byword. The Lord is zealous for His people, like a faithful husband who will not share his bride. Still, His zeal is full of mercy, calling His people back: *"when My people, over whom My Name is called, humble themselves and pray... then I will hear from heaven and forgive"* (2 Chron. 7:14). Now, in Messiah, that dedication continues as we are called to offer something greater than animals on an altar: *"to present your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy, acceptable to God"* (Rom. 12:1). This Temple belongs to Him alone.

3. FILLED WITH HIS FLAME: THE LIGHT THAT NEVER GOES OUT

In God's house, the light was never meant to go out. *"To cause a lamp to burn continually"* (Exod. 27:20) was His command. Even in the darkest hours of the night, the menorah burned. God does not slumber or sleep. His presence is constant. When the Maccabees cleansed the Temple, they refused to wait for perfect conditions. With only one day's worth of oil, they lit the lamp anyway, trusting God to supply what they lacked. And He did. Their obedient insufficiency became the place of His miracle.

So it is with us. We are now the Temple of the Holy Spirit, filled with the oil of His anointing. At Shavuot, *"tongues like fire... settled on each one of them... They were all filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh"* (Acts 2:3–4). Yeshua tells us, *"You are the light of the world... let your light shine"* (Matt. 5:14–16). This light is not seasonal. It shines at home, at work, in traffic, in ordinary moments. As the Spirit rules this Temple, His fruit grows—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. When we give Him all we have, He makes up what we lack, and His light continues to shine.

CONCLUSION

The Lord is not just visiting this Temple—He is moving in. That changes everything. When guests come, we straighten up what can be seen and shove the mess into drawers. But when someone moves in, nothing stays hidden. To surrender this Temple means inviting Him to open every drawer, every closet, every hidden place – praying, "Lord, I don't just want to look clean. I want to be clean. Do a deep cleaning in me." The mess can feel overwhelming. But if we surrender control and say, "It's all Yours," we can trust that He has a vision for this Temple where He desires to dwell. He knows how to remove what doesn't belong, even the stains and smells only He can heal. And this is not a one-time work. Like a garden, neglect leads not to order but to weeds. So daily we return and pray, "Search me and know me." We invite Him again to maintain what He has cleansed, that this Temple might remain a holy dwelling for Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What parts of your life feel most like the neglected areas of the Temple?
2. How does knowing that God *wants* to dwell with you change your view of dedication?
3. Where might your heart still be divided in loyalty or affection?
4. What does it look like for God's light to shine through you in everyday moments?
5. What practical step can you take this week to care for the "garden" of your heart?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu Malkeinu, our Father and our King, we offer You this Temple—our lives. Search us and know us. Open every drawer, every hidden place, and show us what does not belong in Your dwelling. We surrender control and invite You to move in fully. Cleanse us, Lord. Not just to look clean, but to be clean. Fill us with Your Spirit, with holy fire, and let Your light shine through us in every place. Make us a sanctuary—holy, pure, and set apart for You alone. In the name of Yeshua, Amen.