

“Enlarge the Place of Thy Tent”Lesson
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Summary*Isaiah 54; In the last days, Zion and her stakes shall be established, and Israel shall be gathered in mercy and tenderness—They shall triumph—Compare 3 Nephi 22.**Isaiah 55; Come and drink: Salvation is free—The Lord will make an everlasting covenant with Israel—Seek the Lord while he is near.**Isaiah 56; All who keep the commandments shall be exalted—The sons of strangers will join Israel—The Lord will gather others to the house of Israel.**Isaiah 63; Second Coming shall be a day of vengeance and also the year of the redeemed of the Lord—Then shall the saints praise the Lord and acknowledge him as their father.**Isaiah 64; Israel prays for the Second Coming and for the salvation that shall then be hers.**Isaiah 65; Ancient Israel rejected for rejecting the Lord—The Lord's people will rejoice and triumph during the Millennium.***Supplemental
Holy Land and
Jewish
insights:**

Living in the “City of Our Lord” with Our Lord: The imagery of dwelling places such as tents with their poles (stakes) and curtains may represent the organized facilities and order of heaven. “. . . they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.” (*Ether 13:5*) “. . . It should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord . . . and it should be built unto the house of Israel.” (*Ether 13:5*) It seems that the “camp” of Israel was organized in a “City of the Lord” which was likened to the “House of the Lord.” The families were on the outside; the priests (Levites) were next. They surrounded the holiest place (the Ark) where the Lord’s prophet communed with God. It may be likened to the terms telestial, terrestrial and celestial.

Will God Dwell Among Us Again? “. . . it seems, the ancient Israelites were commanded to build a sanctuary so that God may dwell amongst them (*Exodus 25:8*). The Tabernacle became the place to which sacrifices were brought in times of joy and in times of sadness. It became the place to which Moses retired when he wanted to communicate with God. When the Children of Israel camped in the desert, the Tabernacle was erected at the very center of the camp; when they moved, the Tabernacle was taken apart, and was moved with them. Physically and spiritually it was the central object for the Children of Israel and it was through the Tabernacle that they felt their connection with God.” (*Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.*)

King Benjamin’s Organized Camp: Even in the Book of Mormon, such an organized camp could be imagined as a special holy convocation was being held. “. . . they came up to the temple, they pitched their tents round about, every man according to his family . . . with the door thereof towards the temple, that thereby they might remain in their tents and hear the words which king Benjamin should speak unto them;” (*Mosiah 2:5-6*)

Israel’s Camp—a Preparatory Exercise of Living with God: “Balaam’s eyes opened . . . , he stood on a lofty summit overlooking the camp of the People of Israel in the plain below . . . Balaam blessed the nation, predicting its victory over Edom and Moab . . . Balaam, seeing Israel’s tents arranged in such a way that each family was assured of its privacy, praised the nation he had come to curse, with the words: “How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, thy dwelling places, O Israel!” (*Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr. - Numbers 24:5*)

Stakes of Ancient Zion: Is it possible that the areas of responsibility and assigned living were “staked” out, that there were stakes, poles or standards that identified the living areas? “The Israelites shall camp each with his standard under the banners of their ancestral house’ (*Numbers 2:2*). The standards borne by the 12 tribes served the same purpose as heraldic devices. Their colors and emblems were: Reuben red; emblem mandrakes. Simeon green; emblem the town of Shechem. Levi white, black and red; emblem the Urim and Thummim (*Deuteronomy 33:9*). Judah azure; emblem a lion. Issachar black; emblem a strong- boned ass or sun and moon. Zebulun white; emblem

a ship. Dan sapphire; emblem a tent or a lion. Naphtali rose; emblem a hind. Asher aquamarine; emblem an olive-tree. Ephraim and Manasseh black, embroidered with a picture of Egypt; emblem: Ephraim, a bullock and Manasseh, a wild ox. Benjamin 12 colors; emblem a wolf.” *Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.*)

Sacred Curtains: In the ancient days, the inner two courtyards were draped or had curtains draped between the stakes or poles and cords so that the sacredness and dignity of the priestly area and the Lord’s habitation were maintained. “Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.” *(Isaiah 33:20)*

Stakes of Modern Zion: In the latter-days, an organizational unit called “Stakes of Zion” may have the same purpose in reminding us to live in dignity and sacredness and commune with God as a community. “Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion.” *(Doctrine & Covenants 101:21)*

Temple Mariages: When Jews marry, since they do not have a temple, a ‘Huppah’ is used. It is a remnant of the ancient temple garments, a Tallit, supported by four poles or stakes! “Today, the term *huppah* refers to the decorative canopy under which the wedding ceremony is performed . . . among Orthodox Jews, the preferred custom is to erect the *huppah* outside . . . underneath the stars, because of God’s assurance to Abraham that He would make his descendants “as numerous as the stars of the heavens” (Genesis 22:17).” *(Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.)*

Symbolism of Blood: Anciently, sacrifices in the Temple were rituals that taught the principle of atonement. The blood of the first-born, unblemished animal became a symbol of the blood of the “First Born Lamb of God.” It may be that to emphasize the principle of bringing Him into our lives, the Children of Israel were instructed to refrain from eating any blood. “The absolute prohibition to consume blood is one of the few laws in the Bible that is commanded not only to Jews but to all men (Genesis 9:4). The dietary laws, the laws of *kashrut*, command us to drain and remove all the blood from cattle, beasts and fowl.” *(Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.)*

Symbolism of Red: In that sense, even the color of blood (red) has stayed symbolic for Jews. “. . . there are Ashkenazim who attempt to protect their toddlers from harm by tying a red ribbon around their wrists.” *(Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.)* Anciently, the sacrifice of a rare, red calf, mentioned in the Book of Numbers 19:1-9, was for purification from sin. “In biblical times, the heifer was first slaughtered outside the Israelite camp and then burned. Its ashes were kept in a pure place and, when needed, were mixed with clear spring water . . . (for) . . . the ritually impure person . . .” “Obviously such an animal was very rare and apparently the ceremony was performed only a very few times in all of ancient Jewish history.” “. . . the red heifer was an agent of both purity and impurity. This paradox has puzzled the rabbis and the law remains one of the few in the Torah for which no rational explanation can be found.” *(Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.)*

Lilly of the Field is Red: There is a tiny, yet prolific flower in Israel that we have come to know to be the “Lilly of the field.” It is a deeply red anemone. Its springtime decoration of Israel, like millions of droplets of blood, is a reminder of His springtime redemption for all people. (See the Poem, “Lilies of Red”)

Puzzle Pieces Restored: Someday, when the sacred teachings given in latter-day restored temples (the Lord’s Houses) can be given to all of God’s children, we will be able to enlarge the place of the Lord’s House and live in “The City of the Lord” - a millennial expectation!

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